

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Maverick 430, G-ONFL
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 503 piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1995 (Serial no: PFA 259-12750)
Date & Time (UTC):	5 October 2013 at 1100 hrs
Location:	North Coates Airfield, Lincolnshire
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Hole in fuselage, left tail lower bracing cable snapped, large tear under fuselage by tail
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	46 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	318 hours (of which 38 were on type) Last 90 days - 3 hours Last 28 days - 2 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

After landing on Runway 23 at North Coates Airfield the aircraft drifted to the right off the runway and hit a marker, causing damage to the aircraft and the marker. The CAA provides guidance concerning frangible markers in CAP 168 - *Licensing of Aerodromes*, which is also referenced by CAP 793 - *Safe Operating Practices at Unlicensed Aerodromes*. The airfield has since replaced their markers with ones of a different design.

Description of the event

The pilot was using North Coates Airfield for local flying. The visibility was reported by the pilot as excellent, with a slight northerly wind. At the end of the second flight of the day, the aircraft touched down on the centreline of grass Runway 23 but later in the landing roll it drifted to the right despite the application of left rudder. The pilot reported that he was not overly concerned as there was a large grass area adjacent to the runway. However, the tail dragger configuration of the aircraft obscured the pilot's forward view and so he did not see a runway marker which the aircraft then struck. The impact resulted in a hole and a large gash in the aircraft fuselage and a snapped bracing cable. There were no problems reported with the rudder system serviceability.

The marker consisted of a triangle of plastic signs held up with a metal frame that was embedded in the ground (Figure 1).



Figure 1
Damaged marker

Similar accidents have occurred in the past at various airfields. In 2004, following one such event, the AAIB recommended that the CAA publish advice covering this issue (AAIB recommendation 2004-106) which the CAA accepted. North Coates Airfield is not a licensed airfield but CAA CAP 793 - *Safe Operating Practices at Unlicensed Aerodromes* states in Chapter 4 'Aerodrome Physical Characteristics':

'The physical characteristics required of a licensed aerodrome are detailed in CAP 168 Licensing of Aerodromes, available via www.caa.co.uk/cap168. While the licensing criteria may not be necessary for safe operation of every type of aircraft, they can be used as guidance on which the layout of an unlicensed aerodrome may be based.'

CAA CAP 168, "Licensing of Aerodromes", paragraph 6.1 states:

'Any aids to air navigation to be sited within a runway strip should be made as light and as frangible as design and function will permit. In this context a frangible object is one which retains its structural integrity and stiffness up to a desired maximum load, but when subjected to a greater load than desired will break, distort or yield in such a manner as to present the minimum hazard to an aeroplane.'

Following this accident, the markers at North Coates Airfield have been replaced with markers of a different design.