

Jabiru UL, G-RODG

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Aircraft Type and Registration: Jabiru UL, G-RODG

No & Type of Engines: 1 Jabiru Aircraft Pty 2200A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1999

Date & Time (UTC): 29 November 2000 at 1300 hrs

Location: Eshott, Bockenfield, Felton, Northumberland

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - 1 (Minor) - Passengers - 1 (Minor)

Nature of Damage: Wings, landing gear and propeller damaged

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 56 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 880 hours (of which 178 were on type)

Last 90 days - 25 hours

Last 28 days - 12 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot of the Jabiru was carrying out a short air experience flight with a passenger who had expressed an interest in that type of flying. The weather at the time of the flight was surface wind 190°/10 kt, the visibility was good with a cloud base of 3,000 to 4,000 feet, the temperature was +10°C and QFE 982 mb. Having pulled out the aircraft, the pilot completed the pre-flight inspection and both pilot and passenger secured themselves in their seats. The aircraft departed from Runway 19 at Eshott airfield and the pilot contacted Newcastle approach for a Flight Information Service. The flight was uneventful and, although the upper winds were stronger, the flying conditions were described by the pilot as smooth.

On returning to the airfield the pilot made a gentle descent from the east. The microlight circuit height at Eshott was 500 feet on the QFE. The wind speed had increased slightly and it was intended to land on Runway 19. During the descent at about 400 feet the engine began to lose power and the pilot selected the carburettor heat by pulling knob out in order to clear any carburettor icing although none had been experienced during the flight. At that point the engine stopped and, given the low height, the pilot decided to carry out an emergency landing. His initial

thought was to try and use Runway 26 or 14 but with the engine stopped he considered that he might not make either runway and could strike the surrounding fences. A ploughed field lay ahead and the pilot chose this even though he suspected the surface was soft. He considered landing in the field to be preferable to possibly hitting the fence on attempting to reach the airfield.

The pilot briefed his passenger on the situation and then switched off the main power switch. Knowing that both he and his passenger were securely strapped in the pilot concentrated on carrying out the landing. The flaps were lowered and speed reduced to about 50 kt. As the aircraft touched down the nose landing gear dug into the soft earth and the aircraft tipped over onto its back. The passenger had some difficulty in releasing his harness but with the assistance of the pilot he was able to exit through his door although this was restricted in the amount it would open by the wing strut which was jammed against it. The passenger then went to the other side of the aircraft and opened the door for the pilot. A passer by called the Emergency Services and both occupants were taken by ambulance to hospital where they were treated for minor injuries.

The pilot concluded that the engine had stopped due to severe carburettor icing. He made no distress call because he thought that at such a low height Newcastle Approach would not have heard it. Whilst the soft earth had caused the aircraft to pitch over it was still the better option than trying to stretch the glide and make Runway 26 or 14.