

Glaser-Dirks DG-400, G-BPIN

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/2004	Ref: EW/G2004/05/19	Category: 1.3
INCIDENT		
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Glaser-Dirks DG-400, G-BPIN	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 505 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1988	
Date & Time (UTC):	27 May 2004 at 1530 hrs	
Location:	3 miles NW of Lasham, Hampshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Minor damage to the main landing gear and starboard wing	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	67 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	3,545 hours (of which 758 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 32 hours	
	Last 28 days - 26 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

History of the flight

Having completed the pre-flight checks on the motor glider the pilot started the engine without difficulty and departed from Lasham Airfield under power. Upon reaching 2,000 feet agl the pilot shutdown the engine and retracted it into its stowed position in the fuselage. He then used the aircraft as a glider to carry out a cross-country flight to Swindon. Towards the end of the glide back to Lasham the aircraft descended below a safe glidepath for the airfield. The pilot tried to find some lift but was unsuccessful and so he decided to start the engine and return to Lasham. After extending the engine from its stowed position, he pressed the engine start button but the propeller did not rotate and the engine did not start. Due to the low height of the aircraft the pilot concentrated on landing in a field that he had selected prior to attempting to start the engine and did not have time to determine the reasons for the failure of the engine to start. The aircraft landed heavily in the field causing the main landing gear partially to collapse and the wings to flex downwards. The starboard wing entered some vegetation which slewed the aircraft to the right, damaging the starboard wing.

Analysis

The pilot later assessed that the most probable reasons for the engine's failure to start was either that it had not fully extended or that he had accidentally moved the engine extend/retract switch towards the retract position after it had extended. In either case, the interlock microswitch would not have been made which would prevent the engine's starter motor from energising. With the engine extended but not running, the aircraft's performance and handling characteristics are degraded which the pilot thinks contributed to the heavy landing.