Europa, G-BWZT

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/2003	**Ref: EW/G2002/10/11**	**Category: 1.3**
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Europa, G-BWZT	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912-UL piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1997	
Date & Time (UTC):	13 October 2002 at 1435 hrs	
Location:	1 mile north-east of Crowfield Airfield, Suffolk	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to cowling and propeller	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilots Licence	
Commander's Age:	59 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	359 hours (of which 173 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 18 hours	
	Last 28 days - 4 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further AAIB enquiries	

The owner pilot, accompanied by a passenger (also a qualified pilot), took off from Crowfields grass Runway 13 for a short duration local flight. The weather was fine with light winds, visibility in excess of 10 km, and broken cloud at 2,000 feet. Temperature and dew point were not reported but conditions were damp and overall conditions were forecast to worsen. The takeoff was normal and the gear and flaps were raised as the aircraft crossed the upwind end of the runway. The passenger observed that maximum rpm was achieved throughout the takeoff run and the initial climb. However, at between 150 and 200 feet agl there was a loss of power. Unable to maintain height, and with no suitable landing area directly ahead, the pilot turned the aircraft gently to the left and, with the landing gear retracted to avoid the risk of overturning, carried out a forced landing in a large field of stubble. The aircraft was shut down and both pilots vacated the aircraft without injury. Subsequently the aircraft's landing gear was lowered and it was towed back to the airfield.

At the time the pilot attributed the power loss to possible fuel starvation, however the carburettor bowls were checked and found to be full of uncontaminated fuel. Subsequently the filters and both the mechanical and electrical fuel pumps were checked and found satisfactory. The pilot believed that the Rotax engine installation was not prone to carburettor icing but with hindsight, and with the apparent serviceable condition of the fuel system and the damp conditions at the time of takeoff, he considered carburettor icing to be a possibility. The fuel in use was unleaded motor fuel.

Since the accident the aircraft has been repaired and flown, at the time of writing, some five to eight hours without further incident.