

INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration: Cessna A152 Aerobat, G-BHAC

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-235-L2C piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1978

Date & Time (UTC): 9 October 1994 at 1415 hrs

Location: Shobdon Aerodrome, Herefordshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Fire damage in engine compartment and lower cowling

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 45 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 108 hours (of which 15 were on type)
Last 90 days - 4 hours
Last 28 days - 2 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft had not been flown that day, so a full pre-flight check was carried out. The engine was primed using three strokes of the priming pump and the starter operated. The engine ran for a few seconds and then stopped. The primer was pumped three times again and the starter engaged for about five seconds following which the engine failed to fire. A further attempt to start without re-priming also failed.

The primer was again pumped three times and the starter operated without the engine firing but this time smoke could be seen coming from the cowling area. The pilot ordered his passenger to evacuate the aircraft following which he switched off the magnetos and the master switch and returned the mixture control to lean/cut off before getting out himself and running to the front. Here he saw flame and smoke coming from the air intake area and, at the suggestion of a bystander, returned to the cabin to retrieve the fire extinguisher which he used successfully to extinguish the fire by directing it into the air intakes.

In his detailed statement the pilot reports that subsequent examination showed that the seat of the fire had been in the air intake box beneath the engine and he believes that fuel due to over-priming or from the carburettor had gathered there. The ignition source may have been a backfire.