

INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Sky 90-24 Hot Air Balloon, G-VINO	
No & Type of Engines:	None	
Category:	3	
Year of Manufacture:	1998	
Date & Time (UTC):	10 June 2005 at 2046 hrs	
Location:	Dog House Lane, Todmorden, Yorkshire	
Type of Flight:	Private Flight	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 3
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - 1 (Minor)
Nature of Damage:	Minor burn damage to the envelope	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	57 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	656 hours (all on type) Last 90 days - 6 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

History of the flight

The pilot and three passengers departed a large open playing field area on the east side of the village of Mytholmroyd for a one-hour pleasure flight. The balloon was climbed to 2,000 ft and it tracked in a westerly direction. The weather was CAVOK with the 1,000 ft forecast wind from 090°/09 kt. The flight was uneventful and after one hour the pilot selected a landing site in a field at the top of a steep-sided valley. The balloon passed over the valley and the wooded upslope towards the landing site, touching down in virtually calm wind conditions. Initially the balloon envelope remained inflated and upright with the main burner gas supply control lever in the spring loaded OFF position but with the pilot lights still lit. Given the calm wind

conditions in the lee of the trees, the pilot intended to leave the balloon envelope inflated in order to assist his recovery crew in locating the balloon.

The envelope however, collapsed quickly on top of the basket and burners due to the downdraft created by the wind passing over the trees and valley upslope, upwind of the balloon. The balloon had landed backwards which meant that the flying wires from the collapsed envelope lay across the burners which had rotated through 90° into a horizontal position. One of the 24 flying wires which attach the burners to the balloon envelope contacted the burner gas supply control lever, briefly opening it and releasing propane gas which was ignited by the

pilot lights. A ball of flame passed under the collapsed envelope singing the hair and causing a minor burn to the face of one of the passengers.

effect was sufficient to collapse the envelope. Turning OFF all the gas supplies and extinguishing the pilot lights promptly on landing would have prevented the incident.

Balloon pilot's assessment

The balloon pilot considered that although the wind condition in the lee of the trees was calm, the curl-over