

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Team Minimax, G-MYAT	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 447 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1992	
Date & Time (UTC):	16 June 2007 at 1100 hrs	
Location:	1 mile west of Ditchling Beacon, Sussex	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Left wing spar, spinner and propeller broken, starboard floor panel damaged	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	43 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	410 hours Last 90 days - N/K Last 28 days - N/K	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone conversation	

Synopsis

During a cross-country flight the pilot encountered increasingly strong winds. He elected to carry out a precautionary landing, which was not successful.

History of the flight

The aircraft was being flown from a private strip in Norfolk to Sandown, Isle of Wight, with an en route stop for refuelling at Laindon in Essex. At 0730 hrs he had obtained weather information from Norwich Airport which included a wind estimate of 220° at 10 to 12 kt.

After crossing the Thames Estuary, at a point approximately five miles west of Southend, the pilot

became aware that the wind was increasing. By the time he reached Tunbridge Wells he considered that he needed to carry out a precautionary landing. He began looking for a suitable site and continued to do so for some 15 minutes. When Brighton came into view he was in the region of Ditchling Beacon.

The conditions became very turbulent, with the aircraft rising and sinking dramatically. He considered that it was wise to land as soon as possible rather than delay his landing in the hope of finding an ideal site. As he descended, it appeared to him that the wind was becoming stronger. He turned on to his final approach with full

flap lowered and an indicated airspeed of 55 mph, at which point his ground speed appeared to him to be between 15 and 20 mph. Nonetheless he considered that the approach was progressing well until he reached a height of approximately 10 feet above ground level, at which point a powerful gust caused the aircraft to roll to the right, through a large angle, prompting him to apply full left rudder and full left aileron. This levelled the aircraft but the left wing then struck the ground which also caused the nose to come into ground contact.

Pilot's comment

The pilot subsequently judged the wind strength to have been 30 to 35 kt at the accident site. He considered, in retrospect, that his choice of landing site involving approaching in the lee of a large hill during strong wind conditions, was not wise.