

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Gemini Flash IIA, G-MVTC	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 503 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1989	
Date & Time (UTC):	27 January 2008 at 1500 hrs	
Location:	Arclid Airfield, near Sandbach, Cheshire	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Severe damage to fuselage, wing and propeller, beyond economical repair	
Commander's Licence:	Student pilot	
Commander's Age:	42 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	226 hours (of which 20 were on type) Last 90 days - 2 hours Last 28 days - 2 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Summary

On finals to Runway 29 at Arclid the pilot experienced a high rate of descent and contacted the ground before the runway threshold. The nosewheel dug into the ground and the aircraft cartwheeled.

History of the flight

The Gemini Flash is a two-seat flexible-wing microlight aircraft. The student pilot had performed several circuits and landings with a club instructor, using Runway 02 at Arclid. The instructor then briefed him for a solo exercise, with the instruction to change to the shorter Runway 29 for landing if the wind veered and increased in strength.

The pilot took off and completed the solo exercises. Returning to Arclid, he noted from the windsock that the wind had increased in strength from when he had taken off and was from the west. He joined the circuit, left-hand, for Runway 02 but found the approach turbulent, he applied power and performed a missed approach from a low height. He performed a second approach to Runway 02 but this was again turbulent and this time he performed the go-around at a greater height, positioning for a left-hand circuit for Runway 29. The surface wind, which was about 8 kt, had been forecast as being from 240° but, at this point, was from about 290°.

Turning onto base leg for Runway 29, the pilot saw the airspeed indicator showing 55 mph and considered that the height was correct. Turning finals, he passed over a line of trees and checked there was good clearance; he believes that the airspeed at that point was 60 mph. On final approach he checked the airspeed and saw 55 mph but also noticed a high sink rate, while still in a level attitude. The pilot applied full power and

pushed forward the control bar, to climb away, but the aircraft hit the ground. The ground marks showed that the nosewheel sank into the ground, and the aircraft cartwheeled, coming to rest short of the threshold for Runway 29, with the pilot hanging in his straps. The pilot considers that a downdraft on finals certainly contributed to the high sink rate.