

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Mainair Blade, G-CEGM
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 582-2V piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1994
Date & Time (UTC):	18 September 2008 at 1300 hrs
Location:	Huthswaite (Baxby) Airfield, Yorkshire
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Serious) Passengers - 1 (Minor)
Nature of Damage:	Damaged beyond economic repair
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	42 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	468 hours (of which 46 were on type) Last 90 days - 69 hours Last 28 days - 13 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

The aircraft lost power shortly after takeoff and struck a hedge. The loss of power was probably caused by contamination of the fuel, which was of unknown age and origin.

History of the flight

On a previous visit to another airstrip the pilot had partially filled the fuel tank with motor gasoline (mogas) of unknown age and origin. On the day of the accident the aircraft was operating from the north-westerly grass runway at Huthswaite in Yorkshire with the pilot and one passenger on board. Shortly after takeoff, at a height of approximately 25 ft and with insufficient runway remaining to land the aircraft within the boundary of the airstrip, the engine

lost power. During the subsequent forced landing the aircraft struck a hedge at the end of the airstrip and was substantially damaged. Despite considerable fuel leakage there was no fire, but the pilot was seriously injured and taken to hospital by air ambulance. The passenger suffered only minor injuries.

Other information

The pilot operated this aircraft regularly from Huthswaite. The north-westerly runway is approximately 320 m long and bounded by hedges at both ends. A survey conducted by North Yorkshire Police immediately after the accident noted that the surface was mown dry grass approximately 5 cm long. The underlying surface was free from mud

and standing water and was mostly firm with softer patches sufficient to support road vehicles.

No official weather reports were available for the location but information from the pilot and police indicated that the day was “fine and dry” with no wind, good visibility and an air temperature at or below 15°C.

An examination of the engine conducted after the accident by the aircraft manufacturer revealed no evidence of a pre-existing mechanical defect. The carburettor contained some water, which may have collected during open storage of the wreckage prior to collection, and there was also a dark brown residue in the fuel filter which indicated some form of contamination.

Safety Sense Leaflet SSL04 - *‘Use of Mogas’*, published by the Civil Aviation Authority, discusses the use of

motor gasoline in aircraft. Issues explored include the greater risk of carburettor icing and vapour lock and the importance of using fresh fuel from a supplier with high turnover of fuel supply. SSL04 can be obtained from the CAA and is available on their website at www.caa.co.uk.

The AAIB has previously reported on several occurrences in which the use of mogas may have been a factor.

Conclusion

The aircraft was serviceable prior to the accident and took off from a runway suitable for its operation. It is likely that the loss of power was caused by contamination of the fuel, which was of unknown age and origin.