

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	DHC-1 Chipmunk 22A, G-BWUV
No & Type of Engines:	1 De Havilland Gipsy Major 10 MK2 piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1952
Date & Time (UTC):	20 February 2009 at 1529 hrs
Location:	Wombledon Airfield, Harome, North Yorkshire
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Minor) Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Aircraft damaged beyond economic repair
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	59 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	416 hours (of which 303 were on type) Last 90 days - n/k hours Last 28 days - n/k hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

Engine power was lost at 300 feet after takeoff and the aircraft was damaged in the forced landing that followed.

History of the flight

The aircraft had taken off from Runway 29 at Wombledon Airfield and reached a height of 300 feet when the engine suddenly lost all power. The pilot selected full flap and attempted a forced landing straight ahead but the aircraft struck a hedge and wire fence. The wire fence caught in the right undercarriage leg, yawing the aircraft to the right and bringing it rapidly to a halt. The aircraft was severely damaged but the pilot suffered only minor injury and exited normally.

It was found that, upon rotating the engine, the left magneto contact breaker did not open at all and the right magneto was set to open too far. This meant that the left magneto would have been incapable of producing a spark and the right only a weak and mistimed spark. Since the pilot reports that prior to the accident the aircraft had flown for 15 minutes with no problems, it would appear that the left magneto setting slipped some time after his pre-takeoff checks, leaving operation on the deficient right magneto. This may have caused fouled plugs, which further reduced the engine's power output.