

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Rans S6-ESD XI (Modified) Coyote II, G-MZIY	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 582-48 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1997 (Serial no: PFA 204-13184)	
Date & Time (UTC):	21 September 2014 at 1530 hrs	
Location:	Near Derby, Derbyshire	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Minor)	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Severe damage to forward fuselage, engine compartment and main flying surfaces	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	63 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	3,452 hours (of which 1 was on type) Last 90 days - 76 hours Last 28 days - 28 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the instructor pilot and verbal report from aircraft owner	

Synopsis

During a training flight, the pilot undergoing training appeared to become unwell and passed control to his instructor. The instructor flew the microlight back to the airstrip in use but, on landing, the microlight bounced and the instructor opted to fly a go-around. At this point, the other pilot appeared inadvertently to apply right rudder pedal, which the instructor was unable to counter. The microlight yawed right and departed from controlled flight, crashing to the right of the airstrip.

History of the flight

The aircraft owner held a National Private Pilot's Licence and had about 90 hours experience flying flex-wing microlights. He was undergoing conversion training to qualify him to fly fixed-wing microlights, such as G-MZIY, which he had recently purchased. He had completed six hours training on a Thruster T600N microlight, which his instructor reported had gone well. On the day of the accident, the aircraft owner was to fly in his own aircraft with his instructor for the first time. Apart from about 30 minutes flying as a passenger with the microlight's previous owner, as part of the purchase process, he had not done any other flying or formal training on the type.

A dual flight was planned from the private airfield; the weather was fine, with a surface wind

from the north-west at 3 to 5 kt. The grass airstrip was designated 01/19, with takeoff and landing being made in the 01 direction. Under the guidance of his instructor, the owner carried out a takeoff and climb, followed by a series of turns, which were all well flown. Soon after, the owner asked his instructor to take control. The instructor described the owner becoming rather agitated and possibly unwell so, concerned for his well-being, he commenced a return to the airfield.

The instructor flew a normal approach to land, but the aircraft bounced on landing and the instructor opted to fly a go-around. He thought the owner had braced himself at this point and had inadvertently applied right rudder pedal, which the instructor was unable to counter. The microlight yawed to the right and the right wing dropped. It struck the ground in a steep nose-down attitude to the right of the airstrip.

The accident was seen by the crew of an East Midlands Ambulance Service helicopter which was operating in the vicinity. The helicopter landed nearby for the crew to render assistance but, although the microlight suffered extensive damage, it was soon established that its occupants had escaped with only minor injuries.

The aircraft owner reported that he had experienced something akin to a panic attack, although he had not experienced anything similar before or since, and knew of no medical reason why he should have done so on this occasion. He thought it possible that it was linked to the unfamiliar sounds and sensations of flying the aircraft for the first time other than as a passenger. He was unsure exactly what had happened to cause the accident itself, but accepted his instructor's view that he had applied right rudder inadvertently. One possibility was that he had momentarily reverted to his previous flex-wing flying techniques, in which throttle is controlled with the right foot. Although his instructor was flying the microlight, he might have made an instinctive foot movement to ensure full power was applied to go around from the bounced landing.

AAIB comment

The reason for the aircraft owner becoming unwell in flight was not established, but did not appear to arise from an existing condition. It is not unknown for student pilots to experience hyperventilation, which can arise through anxiety and produce symptoms that could be interpreted as indicative of a serious physical illness. This has the potential to cause more hyperventilation, which worsens the symptoms, forming a 'vicious circle'. Based on the situation and reports from both occupants, hyperventilation offers a likely explanation in this case.