

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Rotorsport UK MTOsport, G-CGPG	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912ULS piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2010 (Serial no: RSUK/MTOS/032)	
Date & Time (UTC):	27 July 2017 at 10:30 hrs	
Location:	Crouch Farm Strip, Swanley, Kent	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Severe damage to rotor blades, rotor mast and propeller and minor damage to tail fin	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	72 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	323 hours (of which 323 were on type) Last 90 days - 10 hours Last 28 days - 1 hour	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

While landing, the gyroplane veered left and the pilot was unable to prevent the rotor from striking the ground. The pilot's assessment is that he experienced windshear at low level and this was caused by an adjacent crop.

History of the flight

The pilot took off from Crouch Farm for a short flight to Rochester Airport but decided to return due to a radio problem. Before landing on the grass Runway 28, he looked at the windsock and assessed that the wind had not changed since his departure, when it was from 230° at 12 kt. Just before touchdown the gyroplane veered left, and the pilot believes that he then moved the control stick too much and either there was not enough airflow over the rudder to maintain directional control or his input to the rudder was insufficient. Consequently the rotor blades struck the ground and the rotor mast broke and collapsed, but the gyroplane remained upright and came to rest near the edge of the runway (Figure 1).

As the rotor blades slowed to a halt, one of them dropped gently into the pilot's lap, without injuring him, and he was able to lift it, unstrap and step out (Figure 2). All three propeller blades were damaged and the pilot assumes they made contact with the rotor during the accident.



Figure 1

Rear view of G-CGPG after it came to rest at the edge of the runway, next to a crop



Figure 2

View showing broken rotor mast and rotor blade resting across the pilot's seat

The pilot later assessed that he had probably experienced low-level windshear, caused by a crop approximately two feet tall which was adjacent to the runway. Usually, if he is unsure of the wind conditions, he makes an assessment during a low level pass along the runway and, had he done this, he may have realised there was a problem. He also noted that he had little recent flying practice and, if he had pressed harder on the rudder pedal and added some power to maintain rudder authority, he could probably have straightened the gyroplane and avoided the accident.