

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Skyranger 912(2), G-CCMX	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912UL piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2004 (Serial no: BMAA/HB/255)	
Date & Time (UTC):	21 August 2018 at 1750 hrs	
Location:	Manor Farm, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Aircraft damaged beyond economical repair	
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	67 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	130 hours (of which 61 were on type) Last 90 days - 4 hours Last 28 days - 2 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The pilot flew a high approach and touched down midway along the runway. The aircraft bounced and the pilot commenced a go-around but, during the climb, the aircraft struck some trees. The pilot and passenger were uninjured.

History of the flight

The pilot reported that he was attending an evening fly-in at a local private airstrip near Cheltenham. The flight from his home airfield took approximately 15 minutes and he positioned the aircraft for a landing on Runway 26. There were trees situated at each end of the runway and the pilot stated that he flew a high approach to stay clear of the those. This meant that that the aircraft touched down halfway along the grass runway. It hit a bump and became airborne again, touched down on the nosewheel, and rocked back on to the mainwheels. The pilot was concerned by the oscillation in pitch that was starting to develop and therefore commenced a go-around. However, there was insufficient distance available to clear the trees at the end of the airstrip or to fly around them. As the aircraft approached the trees the pilot allowed the airspeed to reduce, and the aircraft stalled into the canopy.

Rescue and recovery

The aircraft came to rest in the canopy of the trees approximately 10 m above a footpath at the end of Runway 26 (Figure 1). The local Fire and Rescue Service attended the

accident. They cut down adjacent trees in order to use an aerial platform to secure the aircraft and rescue the two occupants, who were uninjured.

The aircraft was relatively undamaged in the accident but was damaged beyond economical repair during the recovery operation.



Figure 1
Aircraft in tree canopy

Additional information

The distance between the trees at each end of the runway is approximately 500 m. At the point the pilot started the go-around there would have been less than 250 m between the aircraft and the trees at the end of the runway, which were over 10 m tall.

The pilot reported that this was the first time that he had visited this airstrip and that everything happened very quickly. Reflecting on the flight, he believes that he should have orbited the airfield in order to become familiar with its layout and to plan his approach. He also believes that he should have made an earlier decision to go-around.

The CAA publishes guidance on flying from airstrips in the CAA Safety Sense Leaflet 12 - *'Strip Flying'*¹.

Footnote

¹ <http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/20130121SSL12.pdf> (assessed 4 December 2018)