Accident

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Quik GTR, G-CHWO
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912ULS piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	2013 (Serial no: 8654)
Date & Time (UTC):	10 June 2021 at 1235 hrs
Location:	North of Cooling, Kent
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2 Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 2 (Minor) Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Aircraft damaged beyond economic repair
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	57 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	5,461 hours (of which 4,326 were on type) Last 90 days - 126 hours Last 28 days - 57 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

The aircraft struck the ground during a simulated engine failure after takeoff due to the commander delaying taking control in sufficient time to prevent the accident.

History of the flight

The commander was carrying out a general skills test with a student, which included performing a practice forced landing (PFL) in an area of open fields 0.6 nm north of Cooling, Kent. The student successfully flew a constant-aspect[1] PFL from 1,400 ft agl into Field A (Figure 1). At a height of approximately 250 ft during the climb-out the commander told the student "Close the throttle, the engine has stopped", simulating an engine failure after takeoff. The commander expected the student to promptly lower the nose and make an approach to Field B, which was directly ahead, however the student did not lower the nose decisively and entered a right turn towards Field C.

Footnote

[1] A constant-aspect approach is an approach flown to a touchdown point in which the angle between the aircraft and the touchdown point remains constant as the aircraft descends, resulting in a curved approach path.

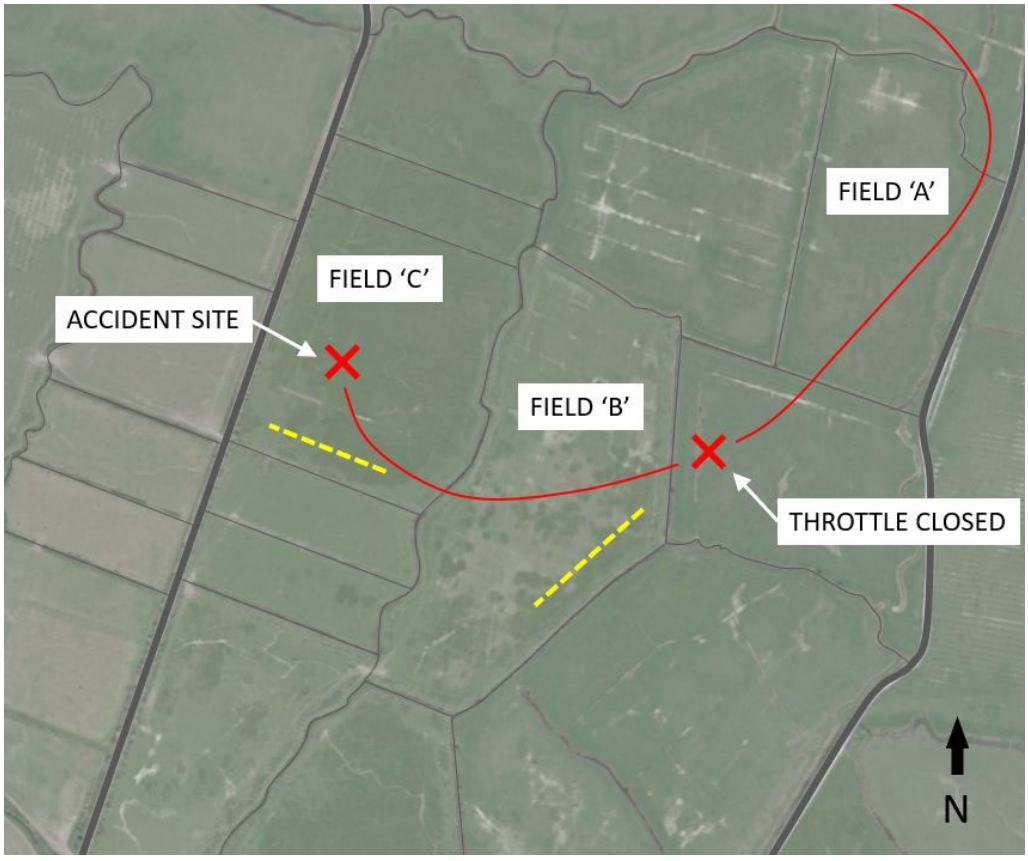

Figure 1

Reported accident flight path, with the commander's expectation of the student's approach paths to Fields B and C marked in yellow (image © 2021 Google)

The commander expected the student to roll out of the turn to approach Field C, parallel to the boundary fence, but the student continued to turn right and descend. The commander opened the throttle but there was insufficient time to prevent the right mainwheel contacting tall grass and the aircraft ground-looped in the field. The commander and student received minor injuries and the aircraft was damaged beyond economic repair.

Discussion

Following the accident the commander stated that the cause of the accident was his delay in taking control from the student whilst there was sufficient time available to prevent the ground contact. He also identified the student's unexpected field selection following the simulated engine failure after takeoff to be a contributory factor.