

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Easy Raider J2.2(2), G-CBXF	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Jabiru Aircraft Pty 2200A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2002	
Date & Time (UTC):	3 June 2007 at 1427 hrs	
Location:	Seaton Delavel, Newcastle	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Minor)	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to the engine mount and cowls, propeller, wing fabric, rudder and undercarriage	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	60 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	692 hours (of which 185 were on type) Last 90 days - 10 hours Last 28 days - 6 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The aircraft suffered an in-flight engine failure, probably as a result of carburettor icing. Options for landing were limited, and the pilot had to land down wind into a cornfield. During the landing roll the aircraft pitched forward and onto its back. The pilot suffered only bruising and was able to vacate the aircraft without difficulty.

History of the flight

The aircraft took off from a farm strip 13 nm north of Newcastle Airport. The intended route took the aircraft west then south of the Newcastle Control Zone, and included a landing at Fishburn Airfield, 23 nm south of Newcastle Airport. From Fishburn, the intention was

to return to the farm strip via a coastal route to the east of Newcastle.

The aircraft departed Fishburn at 1400 hrs with fair weather conditions and an easterly wind of less than 5 kt. As the aircraft approached the coast at South Shields, flying at 1,400 ft, the pilot could see a sea mist encroaching onto the land ahead, obscuring parts of the coast. He increased power and commenced a shallow dive in order to reach a point quickly where he could turn inland away from the poorer conditions. (He was prevented from turning inland immediately by the presence of the Newcastle Control Zone.) At this point the engine faltered; the pilot applied carburettor heat and

noted a slight drop in engine speed. Carburettor heat was returned to cold after 30 or 40 seconds and the engine ran normally for a short while. Then without further warning the engine speed reduced to idle. The pilot did not have an adequate view of the beach at this point, so he turned inland, at a height between 700 ft and 800 ft. As he did so the engine stopped.

Options for forced landing were limited, with the majority of fields containing either standing crops or cattle, and with power lines crossing the area. There was also insufficient height or time to turn back into wind, so the pilot committed to a downwind landing into a cornfield. He was aware of the risk that the aircraft would turn over on landing in the crop, described as between 60 and 70 cm high. The aircraft touched down in the intended field, but after a short ground roll it pitched forward onto its back and quickly came to rest. The pilot was wearing

a full harness and was able to release himself before vacating the aircraft through the left door. Eyewitnesses alerted the emergency services and went to assist the pilot. However, the pilot had suffered only bruising where he had been wearing the harness.

Discussion

The pilot attributed the engine problems to carburettor icing. He felt that more frequent use of carburettor heat may have avoided the situation. He also stated that the speed at which the mist had rolled in from the sea had surprised him, and that he had been preoccupied with quickly getting to a position from where he could turn inland. From the weather information supplied by the pilot (temperature 14.2°C, dew-point 11.2°C), the conditions, when plotted on a chart widely used to predict the likelihood of carburettor icing, represented a 'serious risk' of carburettor icing at all power settings.