

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/94

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Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Stampe SV4C, N12426

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-VO-360 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1948

Date & Time (UTC): 16 July 1994 at 1230 hrs

Location: Middleton Sands, Lancashire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - Serious Passengers - Serious

Nature of Damage: Aircraft damaged beyond repair

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence with Flying Instructor Rating

Commander's Age: 42 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 678 hours (of which 82 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and data provided by the passenger

The flight had departed Barton Aerodrome, Manchester for a pleasure flight over eastern Lancashire. As the aircraft passed over Middleton Sands, near Heysham, the engine began to run roughly and lose power. The pilot therefore decided to make a precautionary landing on the beach at Middleton, and the aircraft came to rest just short of a deep gully in the sand.

After the aircraft had stopped, the pilot expressed some doubt as to whether the sand could support its weight and so he taxied round to the right, through about 270°, and took off again on a track almost parallel to the gully. During the initial climb, at about 50 feet above the ground, the engine again lost power and the pilot was unable to prevent the airspeed decreasing to the point at which the aircraft stalled. The left wings dropped and the aircraft struck the ground in a nose down attitude.

There was no fire but both occupants, who had been wearing lap and upper torso safety harnesses as well as crash helmets, suffered severe injuries and they had to be lifted from the wreckage. They were both then taken to hospital and detained for treatment for broken bones and other injuries.