

Avid Aerobat, G-BUDH

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/98 Ref: EW/G98/01/03 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Avid Aerobat, G-BUDH

No & Type of Engines: 1 Rotax 582 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1992

Date & Time (UTC): 2 January 1998 at 1430 hrs

Location: Ingoe Farm Strip, Northumberland

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Aircraft destroyed

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 36 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 200 hours (of which 96 were on type)
Last 90 days - 16 hours
Last 28 days - 2 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and AAIB inquiries

The Avid Aerobat aircraft is a high-winged monoplane with a tailwheel landing gear. The pilot was taking off on grass Runway 27 following an earlier uneventful flight in the morning. Before take off he refuelled the aircraft with 4 Star petrol, conducted normal pre-flight checks and taxied the length of the runway in order to assess its condition. The grass was described as long and wet; the latter part of Runway 27 sloped downwards and terminated in a deep quarry.

The take off was normal but immediately after lift-off the pilot noticed a smell of petrol and decided to land straight ahead. After landing back he realised that the retardation was too low to stop the aircraft before the end of the runway and therefore applied the brakes fully which caused the aircraft to nose over and come to rest vertically nose down. The pilot was wearing a crash

helmet, in accordance with his normal practice, which received some damage, but he was uninjured and managed to exit the aircraft rapidly, after turning off the engine ignition and electrical master switches. He took the aircraft fire extinguisher with him, a dry powder type. A fire started very shortly thereafter and rapidly spread to the cockpit and the remainder of the fuselage. The pilot pulled the safety ring on the extinguisher but was unable to depress the trigger and could not obtain any extinguishant to tackle the fire, which burnt out the fuselage and most of the wings.

The pilot believed that a fuel leak from a tee-piece connector associated with the fuel primer had occurred. He reported that this had previously worn and leaked, when the aircraft had accumulated 70 operating hours since new, and had been replaced. The aircraft had subsequently flown a further 26 hours until the accident. The connector was apparently destroyed in the fire. The Popular Flying Association (PFA) had not received other reports of problems with this type of connector, which is widely used in Rotax engine installations.

The reason for failure of the fire extinguisher was not established and it was disposed of, however, the pilot did note that it was about five years old and the accident occurred within one month of its 'use by date'.