

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/95

Ref: EW/G94/11/04

Category: 2.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Montgomerie-Bensen B8MR Autogyro, G-BPFK

No & Type of Engines: 1 Rotax 532 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1991

Date & Time (UTC): 6 November 1994 at 1330 hrs

Location: Enstone Airport, Oxon

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - Serious Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Autogyro destroyed

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence (Aeroplanes) and
Private Pilot's Licence (Gyroplanes)

Commander's Age: 57 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 14,000 hours (of which 300 were on Gyroplanes)
Last 90 days - 20 hours
Last 28 days - 12 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the Airfield
Chief Flying Instructor

The Chief Flying Instructor (CFI) and some students were at the airfield but had not started flying as there was a slight crosswind, and the students had varying experience levels. Runway 26 was in use and the wind was assessed as 200°/04 kt; an aftercast from The Meteorological Office at Bracknell indicated that the wind strength was no more than 10 kt. When the accident pilot arrived, he was offered G-BPFK to fly. Following an initial taxi run to get the feel of the machine, although he had flown it once before, he took off and carried out a tight right-hand circuit at approximately 200 feet agl. As he completed his finals turn, he was seen to dive and the engine power was heard to increase; G-BPFK flew along the runway at low level and at high speed. At the end of the runway, the autogyro went into a steep climb to approximately 250 feet agl. With the airspeed near zero at the top of the climb, G-BPFK turned sharply right through 180° and entered a dive; everything appeared normal although there was no apparent reduction in engine power. After a loss of approximately 150 feet in height, the angle of the dive was seen to increase dramatically and the autogyro impacted the ground almost vertically nose down.

The pilot was unconscious and his crash helmet had come off in the crash. Fortunately there was a doctor on the airfield and she was at the scene of the accident within minutes. Subsequently, following his release from hospital, the pilot could remember nothing of the accident flight.

The CFI stated that the steep climb and associated reduction in airspeed would have caused an associated reduction in rotor RPM; however, the rotor was seen to be still rigid at the apogee of the climb. The result of having a reduction in drag on the rotor and with full power still applied would be to pitch the nose down.