

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Pierre Robin R2160 Alpha Sport, G-SACK	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-D2A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1997	
Date & Time (UTC):	30 October 2010 at 1615 hrs	
Location:	River Derwent, East Yorkshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Aircraft ditched	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	28 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	269 hours (of which 160 were on type) Last 90 days - 55 hours Last 28 days - 18 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The aircraft reportedly suffered an engine failure and was ditched into the River Derwent. The pilot and his passenger escaped wet but uninjured.

History of the flight

After a while spent flying aerobatics at about 2,500 ft, the pilot flew a practice forced landing. He reported that, at about 1,000 ft during the subsequent climb out, the aircraft engine started to run rough and then failed. Attempts to restart the engine were unsuccessful, so he selected a suitable field next to the River Derwent in which to land. He reported that his landing options were limited because the aircraft was so low, but also that he was too high to land in his selected field, even using full flap.

The pilot hoped to land in the next field, across the river. However, the aircraft was ditched in the river between the fields, during which it sustained damage to one wing tip. The pilot and his passenger vacated the aircraft as it filled with water and adopted a nose low attitude. With some difficulty, the pilot and passenger were able to reach the bank.

A friend of the pilot had reportedly been filming the aerobatics from the river bank, and was on hand to assist. The aircraft occupants were taken to hospital by air ambulance and were found to be uninjured.

Additional information

A passer-by was reported to the AAIB as commenting

to those involved in the aircraft salvage effort on the level of aerial activity on the immediate area. It was reported that the same aircraft had recently been seen flying low-level passes along the river whilst a person on the river bank took photographs. The aircraft on that occasion was described as being the same as was involved in this accident. An inquiry at the flying club which operated the aircraft revealed that the same pilot was flying G-SACK at the time reported.

AAIB comment

The accident area, being generally flat and agricultural, would appear to offer much better alternatives for

a forced landing than the River Derwent. The pilot described being forced to overshoot his intended field in favour of the next field, beyond the river. There would presumably have needed to be some positive manoeuvring in order to align the aircraft's track with the river, which would appear inconsistent with being unable to reach the field immediately beyond.