

BULLETIN

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD/NORWAY (TRANSLATED FROM NORWEGIAN)

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Aircraft

- type & reg.: Glider PIK 20D Serial no. 20619, OH-530

- year of man.: 1978

Radio call sign: Mike Whisky

Date and time: 1996-04-17 at 1557 hrs

Location: about 7 km south of Starmoen (ENHN), Elverum

Type occurrence.: Accident

Type of flight: Club/ private

Weather cond.: 210°/ 8-10 kts, vis. 10 km, temp. +9° C, sky clear, local
vindvariations of direction and speed due to thermal
currents

Flight cond.: VMC

No. of persons onb.: 1

Injury: Serious

Aircraft damage: Damaged beyond repair

Other damage: Trees

Pilot in Command:

- age: 50 years

- licence: Glider/motorglider exp. 1998-03-06

- fl.experience: Total/ 90d/ 30d/ 3d/ 24 hrs - 594/ 5:30/ 3:50/ 2:00/ 1:00 hrs

Information sources: Reports from p-i-c and The Norwegian Aero Club,
Glidersection

All times given in this report is local time, if not otherwise stated.

SUMMARY

The pilot-in-command (p-i-c) took off from Starmoen 1522 hrs towed by LN-KCH. He released the towline at 1527 hrs 550 m above airfield height. The conditions for soaring was good with strong thermal activity and consequently also areas of down-currents. According to the p-i-c he didn't succeed to center a thermal up-current and gradually lost altitude from 400 m to 300 m. At 300 m he realised that it was

impossible to return to Starmoen and started to prepare for an off-field landing. He selected a small lake surrounded by marsh and transmitted his intentions by radio. As he was flying towards the lake and at an altitude of about 200 m, he realised that the lake was too small for a succesful landing not least because the marsh-area was surrounded by high trees. When passing the lake he made a 90° turn on to the down wind leg. However the glider was at this time so low over the ground that he decided to continue straight ahead towards another marsh partly hidden behind trees. He soon realised that the height of the trees would prevent him from reaching this marsh. Finally he had run out of choices and therefore decided to make a controlled landing in the wood. The landing was made with landing flap and the wheel down. The accident site is about 50 m higher than Starmoen and covered by heavy pinewood. Due to the trees and the deforming of the aircraft structure both consuming energy, the p-i-c escaped the accident fairly well. By the radio he was able to inform an airborne pilot that he had suffered some injury and needed an ambulance.

COMMENTS FROM THE ACCIDENT BOARD

The p-i-c has listed the following causefactors

- he released the towline too low over the ground and in addition to that down wind to Starmoen

- he kept on searching for a suitable up-current longer than he should

From a general point of view the Board considers this accident to be an operational risk connected to this kind of flying activity. However the Board will point out that p-i-c showed insufficient judgement by not returning to Starmoen while he still had that opportunity. By continuing to look for a suitable up-current, he precluded himself from finding a satisfactory off-field landing area.