BAY OF ISLANDS AERO CLUB

Accident Report.

Registration:	ZK-NOL	Nature of Flight: Club Fly-in
Aircraft Model:	Tecnam P96G	Pilot Licence: RAANZ 3184
Date & Time:	01 May 16 @ 1000 NZST	Pilot age: 74
Location:	Private strip @ MATA	Flying hours: 200
POB:	2	Flying hours on type: 170
Injuries (Fatal):	nil	Last 90 days: 5
Injuries (serious):	nil	Taic Ref:
Injuries (minor):	nil	Publishing Ref:
Damage:	Substantial.	

SYNOPSIS. Four aircraft flown by Members of the Bay of Islands Aero Club attended a "Fly-in" to a private strip at Mata, 5.5 nm south of Whangarei, sponsored by the Northern Microlight Club. The weather was overcast (1800ft) with good visibility. A light easterly breeze was blowing down the grass strip with a very slight (1-2 kts) crosswind. The approach of NOL was observed by the club CFI who considered it to be good in terms of speed, altitude and position and the touchdown was observed to be normal but the nose wheel was lowered very quickly causing juddering. After landing, the aircraft veered to port. The pilot attempted to correct the swing to port using full right rudder without effect. The port wing struck a fence post causing the aircraft to swing anticlockwise into the fence with the propellor contacting the fence wire, breaking the propellor and wrapping the wire around the hub. The engine stopped abruptly. The cowling was also damaged.

The pilot of 200 hours had participated in other fly-ins to more difficult fields without incident and is at a loss to understand the cause if the accident.

Factors which may have had influence include:

1. Landing slightly off-centre with the port wheel in the slightly longer grass thus increasing drag to port..
2. The lateral aspects of the strip had a slight slope which could have accentuated the swing.
3. The boundary fence was only 10 -12 metres from the strip
4. The Tecnam Golf has a system which, if the throttle friction is not firm enough, spring-loads the throttle to "full on". A sudden burst of power would accentuate the swing to port. Taking the hand off the throttle in order to apply the brake, could have resulted in such a burst of power. Other pilots have reported that the throttle friction was increasingly difficult to manage. The pilot and passenger were both unaware of any increase in power (which would have been very brief), although the passenger, the club's maintenance officer, was sure the engine was not idling at the time of contacting the fence.
5. As this was the pilot's first time into the Mata field, he relied on the NMC briefing which discussed power lines and pylons but the only description of the strip was its length. No mention was made of the width, sloping surface or the proximity of fences.

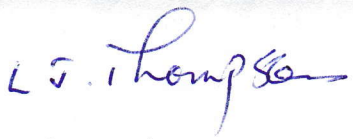
CONCLUSION.

Engineering inspection of the aircraft found no fault with the brakes or nose wheel.

Although no final cause has been determined, it is probable that the drift to port got out of hand for this low-time pilot who was unable to prevent impact with the fence. Contributing causes: narrow runway, sloping sides, slightly longer grass off the runway and the proximity of a fence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The pilot should undergo evaluation with an instructor to ensure his landing technique is sound under varying conditions.
2. That the throttle mechanism on be examined to determine if the default position of the throttle on Rotax engines to "full power", is safe.
3. That organisers of "fly-ins" should provide more detailed information about the strips, preferably with aerial photos, to familiarise less experienced pilots with the field prior to arrival.



Signed: L.J. Thompson.
Safety co-ordinator. Bay of Islands Aero Club.
17 May 2016.