

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199701529**

**Col Winton
Sportsman**

11 May 1997

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NOTE: All air safety occurrences reported to the ATSB are categorised and recorded. For a detailed explanation on Category definitions please refer to the ATSB website at www.atsb.gov.au.

Occurrence Number: 199701529 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 5km SW Coomera
State: QLD **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Sunday 11 May 1997
Time: 1420 hours **Time Zone** EST
Highest Injury Level: Fatal
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total
Crew	1	0	0	0	1
Ground	0	0	0	0	0
Passenger	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	0	0	1

Aircraft Manufacturer: Col Winton
Aircraft Model: Sportsman
Aircraft Registration: 10-1371 **Serial Number:**
Type of Operation: Non-commercial Pleasure/Travel
Damage to Aircraft: Substantial
Departure Point: Coomera QLD
Departure Time:
Destination: Coomera QLD

Crew Details:

		Hours on	
<u>Role</u>	<u>Class of Licence</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Hours Total</u>
Pilot-In-Command	Private	102.0	183

Approved for Release: Tuesday, October 28, 1997

Circumstances

A witness reported observing the aircraft operating in the area for some minutes prior to the accident. His attention was first drawn to the aircraft as it approached his position from the north-east. It then passed over the first of two timbered ridge lines about 1 km in front of the witness. The aircraft then turned left and descended into the valley behind the first ridge. It remained out of sight for 2 - 3 minutes before re-appearing, this time in the valley in front of the first ridge line. The aircraft then turned left and flew towards the ridge line. The witness heard the engine power increase and saw the aircraft enter a climb in what appeared to be an attempt fly over the ridge. At a point near the top of the ridge the aircraft banked sharply left and disappeared into the trees. The witness reported that the aircraft appeared to be operating normally up to this time.

The aircraft had earlier departed from a private airstrip in the Mandolin area, between Tamborine Village and Canungra. The pilot had flown to Albatross Field where he spent 20-30 minutes. He indicated that he intended to fly back to Frazer's Field. A witness at Albatross Field who saw the aircraft depart reported that the aircraft appeared to be operating normally during the departure. The pilot appeared healthy and in good spirits.

Wreckage and Impact information

The initial impact occurred when the left wing struck the uppermost branches of a tall tree near the crest of the ridge line while the aircraft was banked steeply left and descending. The slope of the ridge in this area was 25-30 degrees. The aircraft then struck the branches of several other trees and continued to turn through approximately 360 degrees before it struck the ground in a steep nose low attitude.

Examination of the aircraft did not reveal any pre-existing fault or condition which may have contributed to the accident.

There was a quantity of fuel remaining in both wing tanks. A visual check of the fuel showed it to be clean. There was no fire.

The evidence showed that the engine was developing significant power at impact. All three blades of the carbon fibre propeller showed evidence of rotational damage. The outer third of one blade had separated. The engine mounts had compressed during impact to the extent that the engine starter ring gear had cut into the engine support beams while rotating at high speed.

Pilot Information

The pilot's aeronautical experience was approximately 183 hours, including 53 hours on glider aircraft, 28 hours on Cessna 172 aircraft, and 102 hours on the accident aircraft.

There was no evidence to suggest that the pilot was not in good health at the time of the accident.

Analysis

The reason for the aircraft striking the trees near the crest of the ridge could not be positively determined. However, it appears that the aircraft did not have adequate performance to climb above the crest of the ridge. This may have been exacerbated by the effects of wind and turbulence, or the aircraft may have stalled when the pilot attempted to turn back towards the valley.
