

## Follow-up Action on Occurrence Report

**ACCIDENT TO SCHEIBE SF25E SUPER-FALKE, G-KDFF, AT BOWLAND FOREST GLIDING CLUB, LANCASHIRE ON 15 FEBRUARY 2003**

**(AIRCRAFT CRASHED AFTER ITS TAILWHEEL SNAGGED ON WINCH CABLE)**

**CAA FACTOR NUMBER** : F35/2003  
**FACTOR PUBLICATION DATE** : 14 October 2003  
**OPERATOR** : Private  
**CAA OCCURRENCE NUMBER** : 2003/00912  
**AAIB REPORT** : Bulletin 9/2003

### SYNOPSIS

(From AAIB Report)

On the day of the accident, Runway 12 was in use. The weather was good with clear skies and a surface wind of 120°/ 5 to 10 kt. The left seat pilot had already flown three gliding flights, each lasting 6 minutes. The right seat pilot had flown three flights in G-KDFF prior to the accident flight; these were the only flights flown by G-KDFF during the day. In the club 'Flight and Payment Log', the deputy CFI was annotated as P1 for all these flights. There were no reported aircraft unserviceabilities and no reported co-ordination difficulties between the gliders and G-KDFF.

Prior to engine start on the accident flight, another club member approached the aircraft. He had flown twice in G-KDFF that day with the deputy CFI, and he informed the right seat pilot (deputy CFI) that two gliders were being towed towards the rear of G-KDFF and that a tractor was towing two cables from the winch; the deputy CFI acknowledged this information. Later, the same club member heard the aircraft taxiing and saw it turning on the runway in preparation for takeoff. This club member had used the normal 'circle' take-off point on his takeoffs in G-KDFF and his impression was that, on the accident flight, the aircraft had turned earlier on the runway than he would have expected. He saw the take-off run, during which the aircraft appeared to bump up off the ground twice before lifting off. After lift-off, he observed that the aircraft's nose was lowered slightly and he then turned away. Shortly after, he heard a change in engine noise and, when he looked back he saw G-KDFF diving towards and impacting the ground. He was some 400 metres away from the impact point and ran towards the clubhouse to phone the emergency services.

There were other witnesses to the accident. One of these was standing near the clubhouse with a good view of the runway. He had heard the engine of G-KDFF start and had noticed it taxiing towards the runway. He watched it commence its take-off run and considered that the engine sounded normal. However, as it passed abeam his position, his impression was that it was going slower than normal, was "bumping along the field" and was "struggling to build up speed". However, approximately 100 metres past the clubhouse, it was airborne. With the aircraft clear of the ground, the witness saw a cable "snagged" on the tailwheel of G-KDFF. The aircraft climbed straight ahead to about 100 feet agl before turning right through 90° with the cable still attached. Then, as G-KDFF seemed to be starting a further turn to the right, the aircraft banked sharply to the right and "spun in" to a field just beyond the club boundary.

The driver of the tractor also saw the accident flight as he returned to the winch after laying the winch cables on the runway. His impression was that the aircraft bounced about three times on the ground before getting airborne and that it seemed to climb at a shallower angle than normal. He also saw something attached to the tailwheel and

realised that it was the winch cable. Prior to the accident, the tractor driver had checked with the winch operator as to how the cables should be laid. As instructed, he laid them along the runway and with a slight bow to the right.

Witnesses at the glider launch point also saw the accident and some of these saw one of the cables moving along the ground as G-KDFF took off.

#### **FOLLOW UP ACTION**

The one Safety Recommendation, made by the AAIB following their investigation, is reproduced below, together with the CAA's response.

#### **Recommendation 2003-71**

It is recommended that the British Gliding Association issue guidance to their member clubs to have rules to ensure that, with cables laid on or near the runway, a takeoff by a powered aircraft is only undertaken when the positions of the cables are known to the pilot and the take-off run can remain well clear of the cables.

#### **CAA Response**

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

**CAA Status - Closed**