

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198901534**

Schempp Hirth "Mini Nimbus B"

16 February 1989

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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.

This accident was not the subject of an on site investigation therefore the accident location was not inspected as part of the investigation.

Occurrence Number: 198901534 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 13 km NNW of Horsham VIC
Date: 16 February 1989 **Time:** 1800
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Details: Schempp Hirth "Mini
Nimbus B"
Registration: VH-UIW
Serial Number: 93
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: 13 km NNW of Horsham
VIC
Departure Time: N/A
Destination: Horsham VIC

Approved for Release: June 28th 1989

Circumstances:

After a cross country soaring flight, the pilot made an outlanding in a paddock short of his destination. The pilot reported that the paddock was about one kilometre wide and one and one half kilometres long, covered in short dry grass with some scattered thistles. While waiting for the tug aircraft to arrive, the pilot inspected the paddock and decided that a takeoff into the west would be the best course of action. The wind at the time was approximately five knots from the south-west. The pilot reported that the takeoff was normal with the glider lifting off at about 40-45 knots. While flying at about two feet above the ground, waiting for the tug aircraft to lift off, the right wingtip of the glider hit a large thistle or group of thistles. The glider swung to the right, the left wingtip lifted and the right wingtip contacted the ground. The glider was then 90 degrees to the tug and at about 20 degrees of bank. The tow rope was released and the glider swung almost 180 degrees from the takeoff direction. The glider remained airborne for about another 40 metres before the left wing and tail section hit the ground, bringing the aircraft to rest shortly thereafter. The pilot advised that although he thought he was extremely unlucky for this accident to have occurred, he now thinks that the paddock was not a suitable takeoff area.

Significant Factors:

Significant Factors The following factor was considered relevant to the development of the accident

1. Takeoff area selected by the pilot was not suitable for the proposed operation. Bureau of Air Safety Investigation, Canberra