

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198503552**

**Modified Sportsman**

**27 July 1985**

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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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

**Occurrence Number:** 198503552  
**Location:** Toogoolawah QLD  
**Date:** 27 July 1985  
**Highest Injury Level:** Fatal  
**Injuries:**

**Occurrence Type:** Accident

**Time:** 1215

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	1	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Aircraft Details:** Modified Sportsman  
**Registration:** Not Registered  
**Serial Number:**  
**Operation Type:** Private  
**Damage Level:** Destroyed  
**Departure Point:** Toogoolawah QLD  
**Departure Time:** 1215  
**Destination:** Toogoolawah QLD

**Approved for Release:** March 7th 1986

#### **Circumstances:**

Before take-off the pilot had been briefed on the operation of the aircraft by the owner. The owner had suggested the pilot make a short flight along the strip or that if he had the "feel" of the aircraft he could complete a circuit before landing. After becoming airborne the aircraft initially flew about 25 feet above the strip before entering a shallow climb. At a height of between 100 and 150 feet the engine noise suddenly ceased and pieces of the propeller were observed falling from the aircraft. The aircraft continued straight ahead for a short time before commencing a turn to the left. During the turn, the left wing and nose dropped and the aircraft struck the ground in a steep nose down attitude. Inspection of the wreckage revealed that one of the three propeller blades had disintegrated. The blade had failed due to the progressive propagation of spanwise splits along its length. Similar spanwise splits were also found in the other two blades. The splits were found to have originated from radial cracking at the hub of the blade which had been caused by local overstressing of the wood in the area of the blade retainers. Also, the widely spaced power strokes of the four stroke engine fitted to the aircraft would have contributed to the spanwise splitting of the propeller blades. The propeller manufacturer does not recommend the use of this type of propeller with the engine fitted to the aircraft. No other defects were found with the aircraft that could have contributed to the occurrence. Following the propeller failure, the pilot inadvertently stalled the aircraft while attempting to manoeuvre it for landing.