

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198503552**

Modified Sportsman

27 July 1985

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Investigations commenced on or before 30 June 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with Part 2A of the Air Navigation Act 1920.

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

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

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.