ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Rotorsport UK MT-03, G-CFAI
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912ULS piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	2008
Date & Time (UTC):	26 April 2009 at 1143 hrs
Location:	Popham Airfield, Hampshire
Type of Flight:	Training
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Extensive damage to rotors, propeller and mast, and minor damage to the fuselage
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	48 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	83 hours (of which 20 were on type) Last 90 days - 12 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

On his first solo flight in a gyroplane, the student pilot made insufficient allowance for the runway slope and a crosswind. Immediately after landing, the gyroplane rolled onto its side and was extensively damaged. The pilot was uninjured.

History of the flight

The student, who held a National Private Pilot's Licence for aeroplanes, was learning to fly gyroplanes at Popham Airfield. He had flown the previous day with his instructor who considered that he was ready to fly his first solo. However, as an additional check he asked the student to fly once more with an independent instructor, prior to his first solo flight.

The next morning the weather at Popham was good, with the surface wind from 170˚ at 10 kt; runway 21, which has a left to right slope across it, was in use. The second instructor flew for 45 minutes with the student and agreed that he was ready to fly solo. He also gave the student a comprehensive brief on the differences that he would notice in the aircraft's handling characteristics when flying without an instructor in the back. The student was then authorised by his primary instructor and departed on his first solo gyroplane flight.

The student reported that the aircraft felt much lighter without an instructor and that the takeoff and circuit proceeded without incident. The student turned

onto finals and positioned the aircraft for a power-off approach at 70 mph with the wind from the left. Just before the round-out the student straightened the aircraft with his rudders, and commenced a flare, which lasted for about 100 yards. As the mainwheels touched down, the nose yawed sharply to the right. When the nosewheel touched the ground, the aircraft, which was almost stationary, yawed rapidly to the left and rolled onto its right side. The pilot, who was uninjured, switched off the magnetos and the master switch and vacated the cockpit. There was no fire.

The student considered that the accident was the result of insufficient into-wind control to counter the crosswind and the runway slope. He also recalled that a small amount of right drift had built up during the flare.