

ACCIDENT

*involving the Schempp Hirth « Discus » CS glider registered D-0585
and the Rolladen Schneider LS4 glider registered D-3575*

Event:	Mid-air collision between gliders.
Probable cause:	Failure to detect aircraft flying nearby.

Consequences and damage:	Aircraft destroyed.
Type of aircraft:	D-0585: Schempp Hirth « Discus » CS. D-3575: Rolladen Schneider LS4.
Date and time:	Sunday 31 March 2002 at 14 h 40.
Owner:	Private.
Place:	Nibles (04), Gipières ravine.
Type of flight:	Circuits.
Persons on board:	D-0585: pilot. D-3575: pilot.
Licenses and experience:	Pilot of the glider D-0585, VV issued by Germany in 1984, 222 flying hours of which 17 on type. Pilot of the glider D-3575, VV issued by Germany in 1996, 371 flying hours of which 45 on type.
Meteorological conditions:	Estimated at the accident site: wind 330°/10 kt, CAVOK.

Circumstances

The gliders had taken off from Sisteron aerodrome about an hour previously. They were in the same sector at an altitude of 1,800 metres. The pilots were spiralling, one to the left and the other to the right, in two different thermal updrafts. Around ten gliders were flying in each of the updrafts. Just before the collision, the Discus pilot banked at about 30° to the left and the LS4 pilot banked at about 20° to the right. After the impact, both pilots managed to get out of their aircraft and use their emergency parachutes.

The pilots explained that they had not seen each other at any time nor communicated by radio. The Discus pilot was wearing sunglasses with closed protective sides. Both gliders were equipped with reflective strips on the wings.



D-0585/D-3575 on 31 March 2002



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