

ACCIDENT

involving the glider registered HB-1932

Event:	Loss of control near high ground.
Probable cause:	Inadequate control of flight parameters.

Consequences and damage:	Pilot injured, aircraft destroyed.
Type of aircraft:	Centrair 101 A « Pégase » glider.
Date and time:	Tuesday 2 April 2002 at around 16 h 00.
Owner:	Club.
Place:	Valernes (04), west face of the Hongrie rock, 4.5 km east of Sisteron aerodrome.
Type of flight:	Local.
Persons on board:	Pilot.
Licenses and experience:	Pilot, aged 46, VV issued by Switzerland in 1996, 240 flying hours of which 33 on type and 12 in the previous 30 days.
Meteorological conditions:	Estimated at the accident site at 1,500 metres: wind 120° at 150°/20 to 30 kt, temperature 5 °C. Estimated by the tow-plane pilot before take-off: wind 180°/5 to 10 kt.

Circumstances

The glider and the tow-plane took off at 15 h 30 from Sisteron aerodrome. A few minutes later, the glider was released at the Beaume Mountain, around ten kilometres from the aerodrome. At around 16 h 20, the wreckage was noticed by the pilot of another glider flying on the west slope of the Hongrie Rocks. It was located about 35 metres from a mid-voltage electric line, on the service track giving access to the relay pylon installed on the summit.

Flying conditions on the day made it impossible to perform circuits because of a thick layer of cirrus cloud at altitude. The conditions might have lent themselves to local slope flying under instruction or solo. However, several people using the aerodrome described the day as a poor day for gliding. Many of the club members did not fly that day.

No witnesses observed HB-1932 flying from the time the pilot released the tow cable. The pilot, seriously injured, did not remember anything about the time just before the collision with the ground. Because of damage to the GPS, the flight

data could not be read out.

Examination of the site and the wreckage showed that the glider had struck the ground wings levelled at a high vertical speed and a very low horizontal speed.

The pilot had been gliding at Sisteron for several years. He knew the area and the aerology very well. He was on a course with his club at the beginning of the season. Before the accident, he had flown several times with an instructor and solo.



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