

Incident Report N-37PL

Robert L. Tomlinson

On 4/2/2025, I Robert L. Tomlinson (PIC) was in an ASW-19 a single place glider. Tail number N-37PL. This aircraft was within its annual inspection having no mechanical issues. I requested a tow at approx. 1:50 PM gave him my name and that I wanted to be towed up to 2500 ft. winds were from south at 190 degrees @ 11 MPH, cloud base was 3000 ft. I received this info from AWOS Zephyrhills prior to entering the cockpit. I retracted the gear and released from the tow plane at 2500 north of the airport about 3 miles. I flew east to a cloud to thermal gained 300 ft. then flew north to a large cumulus to thermal reached it at 2300 ft. My plan was to get to 3000 ft as this cloud had a higher base. As I made 4- 360"s in the thermal I noticed the airport was now about 8 miles away, so I turned to the south toward the airport traveling at 64 knots with a sink rate of 8. Looking for a thermal as I headed back home unfortunately, I was unable to gain altitude. At about 3 miles from airport my altitude was only 1000 ft. Knowing at that time I was not going to be able to reach ZPH airport and that there was no out landing spots ahead, just swamp and lots of trees, I spotted a green pasture to my east about 1-1/2 mile. I lowered my gear and opened my spoilers to a speed of 55 knots. After passing over the tree line at the pasture I then noticed a wire fence crossing perpendicular to me ahead. Unable to land because of the fence I retraced the spoilers to glide over the fence. As I came to the fence, I aimed at the center fence pole and pulled back on the stick to glide over. Then I heard the warning, Stall, Stall, Stall. I hit the center pole at about 5 inches down from the top and the wire brought me to a stop that caught on my gear doors. The time was approx. 2:30 PM. The homeowner and sheriff came shortly after. I then drove from Zephyrhills to Clermont to see my Primary care doctor.