

Community

Ultra-light plane crash claims life of pilot

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

A Brampton man is dead after the Ultra-Light plane he was flying crashed into an open field near Winston Churchill Boulevard and 17 Sideroad Saturday night.

William Leo King, 49, of River Road in Brampton, was doing circuit patterns from a private field runway when his plane may have stalled and nose-dived to the ground, killing him instantly, according to investigators.

"Initial indications reveal the Ultra-Light plane stalled at an insufficient altitude for him to recover," said Rick Pilson, an operational investigator with the Transportation Safety Board of Canada which is investigating the crash.

He explained that Mr. King, who had only owned this par-

ticular aircraft, a Challenger II, for three weeks, was performing a generally accepted practice of circuit riding which involves lift-off, following a pattern, and doing a landing but accelerating as soon as the plane touches the ground to repeat the same procedure.

"It's like taking off, going around and landing again and again and again," said Mr. Pilson, who believes Mr. King had already done a few of these circuits before crashing.

From his investigation, Mr. Pilson is certain the plane was experiencing no engine failure or structural failure during the flight. As well, an autopsy performed Sunday on the victim revealed nothing was wrong with the pilot.

Mr. Pilson explained that a stalled engine isn't regarded as

engine failure because airplanes frequently stall in the air. Usually, the stall occurs at an altitude where the pilot can recover.

When Mr. King's Ultra-Light stalled, it was only 100 to 200 feet in the air, he said.

In an Ultra-Light aircraft, the pilot sits in a cockpit situated beneath the plane's cloth wings. Mr. King's cockpit has a covering which was not being used during the flight but Mr. Pilson said the covering wouldn't have saved Mr. King.

Caledon QPP are assisting the Safety Board with their investigation.

The board investigates all fatal aircraft accidents to identify any safety deficiencies that may exist. "If deficiencies pop up, we advise the appropriate parties that these need to be looked at," said Mr. Pilson.

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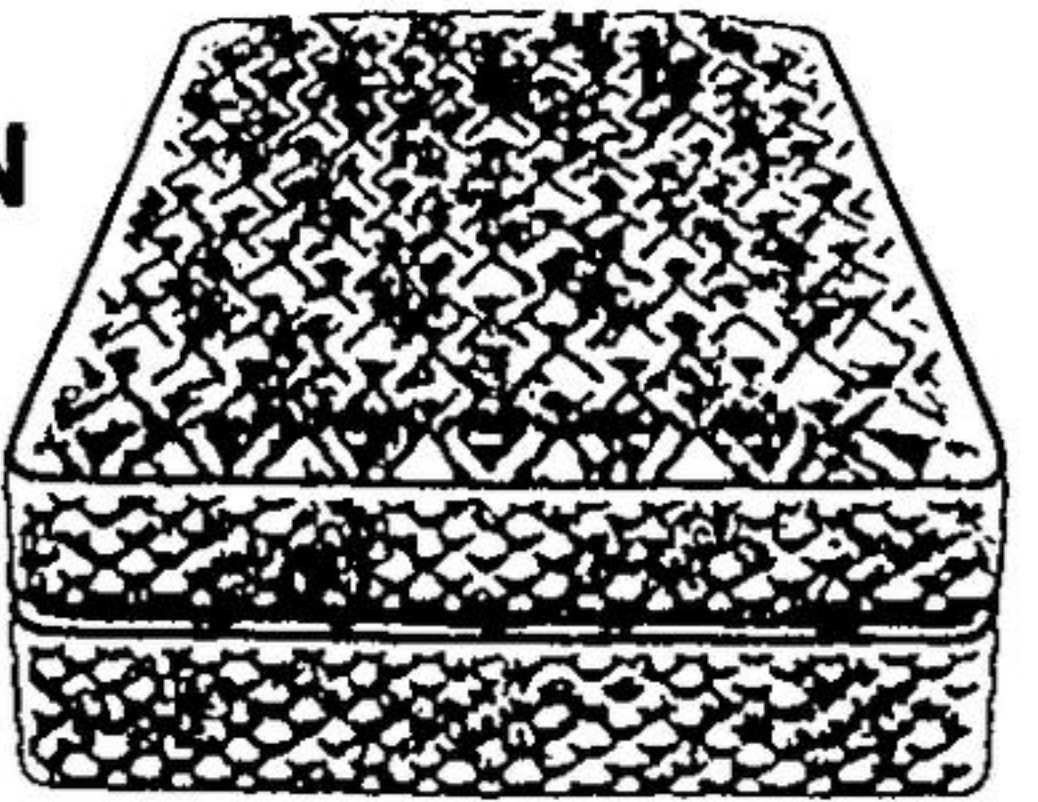


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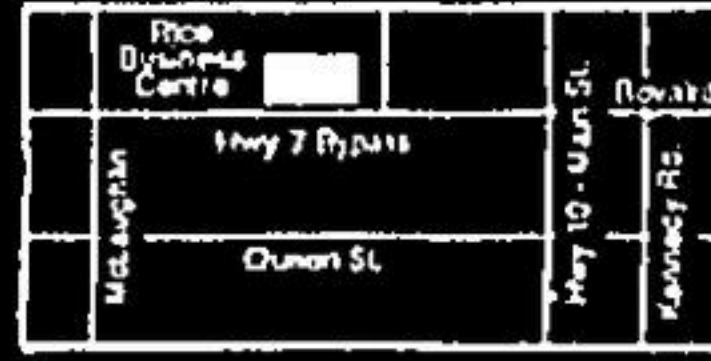
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