

AAIB Bulletin No: 3/93

Ref: EW/G93/01/03

Category: 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Cessna 172 RG Cutlass, G-BOUH

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-360-F1A6 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1981

Date & Time (UTC): 8 January 1993 at 1415 hrs

Location: Westbury-Sub-Mendip, Somerset

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 2

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Substantial to both wings, propeller and landing gear

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence with IMC and Night ratings

Commander's Age: 33 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 208 hours (of which 10 were on type)
Last 90 days - 5 hours
Last 28 days - 1 hour

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was on a flight from Leicester to Westbury-Sub-Mendip, a grass airstrip orientated 11/29 with a length of 540 metres and width of 20 metres. The airstrip is situated on the site of a disused railway line and is positioned on a raised embankment. The weather at the time of the accident was fine with good visibility and a surface wind of 260°/06 kt.

On arrival at the airstrip the pilot examined the runway by completing two low level fly pasts. He elected to land on runway 11 and after completing the normal landing checks positioned the aircraft on long finals in order to give him plenty of time to establish a stabilised approach. After a normal landing the aircraft started to slew to the left. This was corrected but was followed by a further sudden yaw to the left. The left landing gear departed the runway causing the aircraft to descend the bank and collide with a hedge. The pilot and passengers vacated the aircraft using the normal exits without injury.

The pilot reported that he should have examined the airstrip more closely before visiting by air as the dimensions of the strip left little margin for error. The aircraft's departure off the side of the runway was compounded by the fact that it touched down initially two to three feet left of the centre line.