

Steen Skybolt, G-BRIS

AAIB Bulletin No: 1/2004	Ref: EW/G2003/09/22	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Steen Skybolt, G-BRIS	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-360-A1A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1988	
Date & Time (UTC):	21 September 2003 at 1500 hrs	
Location:	Eggesford Airfield, Devon	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Major damage to aircraft	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence with Instrument Rating	
Commander's Age:	66 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,616 hours (of which 60 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 14 hours	
	Last 28 days - 1 hour	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Having flown some aerobatics the previous day in G-BRIS, the pilot flew from Exeter Airport to Eggesford Airfield to carry out some circuit practice. On departure from Exeter, the weather was good and the surface wind was reported as 180°/08 kt. The pilot considered that a crosswind component of up to 12 kt would be acceptable for his circuits. Eggesford Airfield has a grass runway, orientated 11/29 and was 630 metres long and 10 metres wide. The pilot had flown from the airfield on previous occasions.

On arrival at Eggesford, the pilot noted that the windsock indicated a surface wind similar to that at Exeter and made an uneventful landing on Runway 11. He then taxied back to the threshold and took-off for a normal circuit. On final approach, he was aware of an increased crosswind but continued. His target threshold speed was 70 kt for a planned three-pointer landing. Over the threshold, the speed was slightly high and the aircraft bounced three times. Forward visibility is restricted in the normal landing attitude but the pilot realised that the aircraft had drifted downwind during the bounces and was now on the mown grass verge of the runway. At this point on the runway, the airfield boundary hedge converges with the runway and as it came into his view, the pilot applied right rudder pedal and brake. Unfortunately, he was unable to prevent the left wing tips from contacting the hedge and the aircraft swung around and into a gateway. G-BRIS came to rest nose down. There was no fire and the pilot was able to slide the canopy back and evacuate the aircraft.

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Immediately after the accident, the pilot noted that the wind at the accident point was gusting at around 20 kt. On reflection, he considered that he had failed to appreciate that the surface wind at Eggesford, which is some 400 feet higher than Exeter, could be stronger than the wind at Exeter. Nevertheless, on his approach, he had become aware of an increased crosswind and an early decision to go-around at that point would have been the best option. The pilot also commented that he had been wearing a five-point aerobatic harness and this may have protected him from injury.