

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Beech 76 Duchess, G-MULT	
No & Type of Engines:	2 Lycoming O-360-A1G6D piston engines	
Year of Manufacture:	1981	
Date & Time (UTC):	11 June 2009 at 1621 hrs	
Location:	Bournemouth Airport	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Both propellers bent and engines shock-loaded. Damage to right wing skin, lower fuselage and right engine exhaust	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	34 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	2,793 hours (of which approx 1,165 were on type) Last 90 days - 172 hours Last 28 days - 60 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

During a touch-and-go landing the nose and right landing gears retracted due to the landing gear selector being in the UP position. In the opinion of the instructor the landing gear selector was knocked, accidentally, by the student's knee.

History of the flight

The flight was an MEP/IR Revalidation Proficiency Check. The flight proceeded normally, and to a high standard, until the visual circuits. The student flew an asymmetric circuit, and on final approach, the instructor checked for, and confirmed, 'three greens'. This was followed soon after by the student carrying out the

asymmetric committal checks, which included verbally confirming 'three greens'.

The aircraft landed normally on the mainwheels, followed by the nosewheel. The instructor had raised the flaps, and was centralising the trims, when he became aware of the landing gear warning horn. He saw that the landing gear selector was in the UP position and the student immediately lowered it, but not before the nose and right landing gears collapsed.

At that moment the instructor noticed the proximity of the student's knee to the landing gear selector, and

guessed his knee must have knocked it. The student found that, when operating the rudders, or even just shifting in his seat to get comfortable, his knee touched the landing gear selector.

Other information

The previous day the student had flown with a different instructor in the same aircraft to practise for his MEP/IR Revalidation Proficiency check. During the 'Before Starting Engine' checks, the instructor noticed that the landing gear selector was in the UP position. The instructor asked the instructor of the accident flight if he knew anything about this as he had operated the previous flight, but he did not. Apart from this, the instructor reported that the student had flown to a good standard, and was ready for his proficiency check.

Comments by the instructor of the accident flight

In the instructor's opinion the accident was caused by the student inadvertently knocking the landing gear selector to the UP position with his right knee during a touch-and-go. He did not believe that there was anything that he could have done at the time

of the accident to prevent it. He commented that before the flight he could have checked the student's seating position, although this was not something that he was in the habit of doing, nor had he heard of other instructors doing so on a regular basis, but it might have prevented this accident. This is relevant given the report of the landing gear selector having been found in the UP position the previous day, the significance of which the instructor did not realize at the time. With hindsight, the landing gear selector had almost certainly been knocked by the same student in the same way. The instructor commented that he will check students' seating positions from now on.

Other Beech 76 aircraft in the operator's fleet have a metal guard below the landing gear selector to prevent this kind of accident. The instructor understands that, since the accident, the operator has spoken to its maintenance organization about fitting such guards to all their aircraft, but have been advised that this may not be straightforward as EASA might view it as a 'modification'.