

Piper L21B (Modified), G-BIRH

AAIB Bulletin No: 5/97 Ref: EW/G97/03/16 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper L21B (Modified), G-BIRH
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320 piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1955
Date & Time (UTC):	16 March 1997 at 1505 hrs
Location:	Shobdon Aerodrome, Hereford and Worcester
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Propeller blades bent and engine shock loaded
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	70 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,603 hours (71 of which were on type) Last 90 days - 8 hours Last 28 days - 3 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot had flown seven uneventful flights in strong wind conditions the previous day and had been cautious when manoeuvring on the ground because he was aware that the aircraft was susceptible to tipping onto its nose if mishandled. On the day of the accident, he was again cautious whilst on the ground although the surface wind was less strong; the actual wind was 270°/5 to 10 kt. After completing seven flights, he was taxiing, at walking pace, in an easterly direction alongside the grass runway to position for another take off; he was holding the control column forward to prevent the wind lifting the aircraft tail. As he turned the aircraft right to enter the runway, he moved the control column to the left; he was aware of a slight upslope bringing G-BIRH to a stop and the aircraft tail lifting off the ground. Even though he rapidly closed the throttle, the aircraft continued to rotate, the propeller struck the ground and the engine stopped.

The pilot was being very cautious for the conditions but can only surmise that he must have opened the throttle too much, with the control column held forward, as he turned right and encountered the upslope.