

Piper PA-28-180, G-AVNS

AAIB Bulletin No: 12/2000 Ref: EW/G2000/10/12 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-180, G-AVNS

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-360-A4A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1967

Date & Time (UTC): 18 October 2000 at 1555 hrs

Location: Andrewsfield (Saling) Aerodrome, Essex

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Nose gear and propeller damaged

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 24 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 93 hours (of which 36 were on type)

Last 90 days - 3 hours

Last 28 days - 2 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

During take off in a rain shower the pilot noticed that forward visibility was significantly reduced. Since the grass runway was wet he decided to continue rather than abort the take off.

Once airborne the pilot judged that the forward visibility was sufficient to allow a circuit to be flown, and he noticed that visibility through the side windows was significantly better than through the front windscreen. On the first approach to land the limited forward visibility made it difficult to judge the flare and, when the aircraft began to float, the pilot immediately initiated a go-around. For the second approach the pilot introduced a series of 'S' turns and side-slips to use the better visibility available through the side windows in order to judge the approach.

This technique proved successful and the landing flare and initial touched down were uneventful. However, shortly after touchdown the aircraft hit a bump in the runway that launched it back into the air. The pilot's initial reaction was to apply back pressure on the control column to cushion the subsequent touchdown, but with the impaired visibility making it difficult to judge the aircraft's height the aircraft hit the ground again. The pilot started to apply power to initiate a further go-

around but before he could complete the process the nose oleo collapsed and the aircraft came rapidly to a halt on the runway. The pilot and his passenger vacated the aircraft uninjured through the normal exit.

In his report the pilot stated that a slightly dirty windscreen preventing the rain from clearing normally could have caused the poor forward visibility. He also remarked that with hindsight it would have been better to hold clear of the airfield until the rain stopped before landing.