

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-25-235 Pawnee, G-BSTH	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-540-B2C5 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1969	
Date & Time (UTC):	11 May 2011 at 2100 hrs	
Location:	Portmoak Airfield, Kinross	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Landing gear shock struts	
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	66 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	310 hours (of which 65 were on type) Last 90 days - 17 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The landing gear shock struts failed after the aircraft stalled and landed heavily on rough ground. The pilot attributed the event to the loss of visibility whilst approaching into a low sun with rainwater droplets on the screen.

History of the flight

The tug pilot had already carried out six glider aero-tows to 2,500 ft that day without incident. Although the flight conditions were somewhat turbulent, the pilot reported that he soon became accustomed to these and was not experiencing any difficulty. On the seventh tow he encountered rain at 2,000 ft. Because of the difficulty of seeing through a rain-affected windscreen, he decided to land as soon as possible and signalled the glider

pilot to release from the cable. This was accomplished successfully. The tug pilot had previously been landing across the field, as had the gliders. On this occasion, however, he chose to land long on the grass runway. As he turned onto the final approach, the combination of the low sun and the rain-affected windscreen restricted his vision.

The final approach was carried out with the aircraft crabbed to allow for the wind, which was blowing across the runway from the left. The aircraft nevertheless failed to maintain the centreline and drifted to the right. It then stalled from a height of about 5 ft and fell firmly onto rough ground to the right of the prepared strip, causing the landing gear shock struts to fail. The pilot shut down

the engine as quickly as possible and exited the aircraft.

windscreen had affected his vision more than he had expected.

The pilot considered that although he had landed successfully into the sun many times before, on this occasion the combination of the low sun and the wet