ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Vans RV-6A, G-RVSA
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-360-A4M piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	2004
Date & Time (UTC):	30 August 2008 at 1349 hrs
Location:	Fishburn Airstrip, Co. Durham
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Serious) Passengers - 1 (Minor)
Nature of Damage:	Damage to nosewheel, propeller, canopy and tail
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	74 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	185 hours (of which 86 were on type) Last 90 days - 10 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

The aircraft touched down on Runway 26 at Fishburn and bounced twice before the nose landing gear made firm contact with the soft, grass surface of the runway. The nose landing gear then appeared to become partially embedded in the ground and the aircraft nosed over onto its back.

History of the flight

Following an uneventful flight from North Weald to Fishburn, the aircraft made an approach to land on Runway 26. This runway is approximately 600 metres in length, and has a mown grass surface with a slight uphill slope. The weather was good with the wind at 2,000 ft noted by the pilot to be from 270° at 10 kt. The visibility was estimated at 15 km and there was scattered cloud at 2,500 ft.

The aircraft was initially slightly high on the approach but the pilot considered it satisfactory and corrected by reducing power. The initial touchdown was followed by a low bounce, probably caused by an undulation in the runway surface. A second low bounce followed, although at this stage the landing still appeared to be normal. After the third contact with the runway, the aircraft pitched nose up to a height of approximately four feet before falling back onto the runway on the main landing gear. The aircraft pitched forward and began to decelerate sharply. The deceleration continued until the ground

speed was about 10 kt, when the aircraft nosed over onto its back. From examination of the damage to the runway surface, it appears that following the firm nose wheel contact it dug into the soft grass causing the aircraft to nose over.

Both occupants were able to exit the cockpit through the canopy and received assistance from the Airfield Rescue and Fire Fighting Service. The air ambulance attended the scene to provide treatment for the injuries.

Conclusions

The pilot's assessment of the cause of the accident was a firm touchdown on the nose landing gear, causing the aircraft to pitch forward onto its back.