

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28R-201 Cherokee Arrow III, G-OARO	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-360-C1C6 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1988 (Serial no: 2837006)	
Date & Time (UTC):	26 March 2013 at 1200 hrs	
Location:	Bembridge Airport, Isle of Wight	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Shock loading to engine, damage to landing gear, right wing and propeller	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	61 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	371 hours (of which 10 were on type) Last 90 days - 3 hours Last 28 days - 1 hour	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The pilot reduced engine power too early on short finals, causing the aircraft to sink and strike soft ground before the paved runway surface. The aircraft, which suffered substantial damage, continued forward onto the runway and was taxied clear before being shut down.

History of the flight

The pilot departed from Wycombe Air Park for the flight to Bembridge, flying in company with another aircraft. The occupants of both aircraft were members of the same group; the passenger on the accident aircraft was also a pilot and it was intended that he would act as pilot-in-command for the return leg to Wycombe.

The pilot was familiar with Bembridge, having last flown there some seven weeks earlier in a Cessna 172. The flight proceeded normally in fine weather conditions. The pilot identified an easterly wind and planned to land on Runway 12, a hard runway 837 m long and 23 m wide, with a threshold displaced by 24 m. The runway was the same width as that at the pilot's home base at Wycombe, but 100 m longer.

The pilot attempted to contact Bembridge on their Air/Ground frequency but received no reply. As the aircraft neared the airfield, he saw that the circuit was clear and proceeded to position for Runway 12 while making blind radio transmissions. The aircraft turned left onto

final approach but was somewhat high and slightly fast. The pilot corrected, and reported regaining the ideal approach path at about 1 nm from the runway, with speed reducing to approach speed.

The pilot throttled back just before the aircraft reached the paved runway surface. It sank and struck the soft ground before rolling onto the runway. Although the nose landing gear had evidently been damaged, the pilot was able to taxi along the runway before vacating and shutting down. A later inspection of the threshold

area showed that the aircraft had touched down about 18 m short of the runway, creating deep ruts in the soft ground. It was judged that most of the aircraft damage had occurred as it transitioned from the soft ground to the hard runway.

The pilot reported that he had reduced power too early, causing the aircraft to land short. The soft ground had added to the severity of the damage caused when the aircraft made contact with the edge of the paved surface.