

No: 10/90 **Ref:** EW/G90/05/16 **Category:** 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper J3C-65 Cub, G-BILI

No & Type of Engines: 1 Continental A65 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1944

Date and Time (UTC): 9 May 1990 at 1815 hrs

Location: Churn Farm Estates, near White Waltham, Berkshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Right wing leading edge and lift strut damaged

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 26 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 163 hours (of which 28 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and AAIB telephone inquiries.

The pilot reportedly initiated a practice forced landing from 1500 feet above ground, choosing a large horse gallop area as his target. After throttling back the engine he selected carburettor heat on, and during the descent briefly opened the throttle to warm the engine three times. When at 100 feet agl, approaching the selected landing site, the planned go-around was initiated. The engine at first responded normally but then began to run roughly and loose power. Carburettor heat was reselected on, but without apparent effect.

Finding that the aircraft was unable to maintain height above the now rising terrain, the pilot decided to land. As he had by now overflowed most of the originally selected site he chose a second horse gallop area orientated 45° right, and achieved a satisfactory touchdown. However, during the landing roll on the rough ground the right wing leading edge and lift strut struck a bush. The aircraft stopped and both occupants evacuated.

Inspection reportedly found that the lower sparking plug of the forward left cylinder was fouled. After plug swopping and replacement of the lift strut and a lengthy ground run of the engine, the aircraft was flown out the following day. The pilot believes that carburettor icing may have been a factor. The Meteorological Office indicated that at ground level in the area at the time of the accident the ambient temperature was 16-17°C and the relative humidity around 75%. Icing probability charts indicate that in such conditions there is likely to be a high risk of serious carburettor icing at descent power.