

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-161 Cherokee Warrior II, G-BRJV

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1989

Date & Time (UTC): 18 October 1993 at 1000 hrs

Location: 1/2 mile north east of Dinnington, near Newcastle Airport

Type of Flight: Private (Training)

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Damage to nose landing gear

Commander's Licence: Student Pilot

Commander's Age: 58 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 36 hours (of which 35 were on type)
Last 90 days - 36 hours
Last 28 days - 18 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The purpose of the flight was a solo navigation exercise which had been uneventful up to the stage where the aircraft was re-entering the Newcastle air traffic zone. The pilot had received ATC clearance to proceed to right base for Runway 25. On approaching base leg, power was reduced but the power loss was much greater than expected. The pilot opened the throttle but the engine continued to lose power. The pilot declared an emergency and advised ATC that he intended to make a forced landing. A flying instructor, who was also airborne at the time, advised the pilot to choose a field straight ahead but to watch out for power cables. The aircraft touched down, with full flap selected, in a rough field. After a short ground roll the aircraft came to a halt in a nose down attitude. The flying instructor again contacted the pilot, who was uninjured, and advised him to carry out the shut down checks and to vacate the aircraft.

The maintenance organisation responsible for the aircraft subsequently conducted an investigation of the engine and fuel system. No evidence of a malfunction was found, although the magnetos and carburettor have yet to be checked.

However the pilot considers that, in retrospect, there was a possibility that he may have inadvertently pulled the mixture lever, instead of the carburettor heat control, prior to reducing power on joining base leg.