

Maule M5-235C Lunar Rocket, G-CCBF

AAIB Bulletin No: 8/2003	Ref: EW/G2003/05/15	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Maule M5-235C Lunar Rocket, G-CCBF	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming 0-540 J1A5D piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1979	
Date & Time (UTC):	15 May 2003 at 1515 hrs	
Location:	Leicester Airport	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Right undercarriage and main spar broken. Propeller damage	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	53 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	796 hours (of which 1 was on type)	
	Last 90 days - 5 hours	
	Last 28 days - 1 hour	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The aircraft was returning to Leicester following a trip to Fenland Aerodrome. The visibility was excellent and there had been no significant wind on taking off from Fenland. When the aircraft was approximately two miles from Leicester, the passenger, who had been the pilot on the previous sector, pointed out a vertical column of smoke, which thus indicated local light wind conditions.

The aircraft touched down on Runway 10 in the normal three-point attitude and ran straight for approximately 200 metres. With the groundspeed by now having decayed to an estimated 12 kts, the pilot felt a sudden slight lurch and the aircraft started to turn to the right. Application of corrective rudder appeared to be ineffective and the pilot subsequently considered that he applied left differential brake. This caused a violent swing to the left and the right landing gear collapsed inboard under the fuselage. The aircraft came to rest, with the right wing tip in contact with the surface, having slewed through 150° from the runway heading. The pilot turned off the fuel and electrical systems and both occupants, who were uninjured, evacuated the aircraft.

After the incident, the pilot noticed that a breeze had arisen, which, 10 minutes later was registering 130° at 5 kts in the tower. The pilot considers that he had been caught out by the crosswind component and that the effects were exacerbated by his use of differential brake.

Note: This type of aircraft is fitted with a steerable tailwheel with an internal locking mechanism that links it to the rudder. This disconnects the tailwheel from the rudder, once the rudder has reached full travel, and enables castoring to occur; for example when man-handling the aircraft in confined spaces

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or using differential braking. Incidents have occurred in which failure of the locking mechanism has allowed the tailwheel to freely castor at all times, and has resulted in loss of control of the aircraft on the ground. However, in this case, an inspection of the tailwheel assembly following the accident revealed no defect.