

No: 9/92

Ref: EW/G92/06/05

Category: 1c

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Piper PA-38-112 Tomahawk, G-BNPL

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Lycoming O-235-L2C piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1979

**Date & Time (UTC):** 14 June 1992 at 0958 hrs

**Location:** Northampton (Sywell) Aerodrome

**Type of Flight:** Private

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1                      Passengers - None

**Injuries:** Crew - None                      Passengers - N/A

**Nature of Damage:** Damage to nose landing gear engine mountings, lower section of front bulkhead and propeller

**Commander's Licence:** Student Pilot

**Commander's Age:** 24 years

**Commander's Flying Experience:** 38 hours (all on type)  
Last 90 days - 14 hours  
Last 28 days - 3 hours

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone enquiries by AAIB

The aircraft was flown by a student pilot on a cross country flight from Leavesden to Northampton/Sywell aerodrome. In a brief accident report the pilot states that he made a normal approach to runway 25 and at touch down the nose landing gear appeared to collapse. The aircraft came to rest and he got out. A more detailed account of the accident, including the disposition of ground witness marks, was provided by the Northampton/Sywell aerodrome AFISO who observed the accident from the control tower.

At 0943 hrs the pilot called the Northampton/Sywell AFISO for joining and landing instructions. He was advised that runway 25 was in use, left hand circuit, aerodrome QFE 1010 Mbs, and surface wind 250/15 knots. The aircraft was observed to make an unremarkable overhead join into the circuit, and subsequently the pilot reported 'finals' for runway 25. The approach appeared to be stable, although a little flatter than normal, and the aircraft touched down at 0958 hrs at a position 150 metres upwind of the runway threshold and six metres left of the centre line. The nose landing gear made the first contact, leaving a visible indentation in the runway surface. The aircraft then bounced in a low arc

before next contacting the runway again nose landing gear first at a position 195 metres from the threshold and nine metres left of the centre line. At this point the nose landing gear partially collapsed allowing the propeller to make several ground strikes. Again the aircraft bounced and at the next contact, which was at a position 230 metres from the threshold and 15 metres left of centre, the nose landing gear collapsed completely. The aircraft then slid for a further 55 metres before coming to rest. There was no fire and the pilot, who was uninjured, did not vacate the aircraft until assisted by members of the aerodrome fire and rescue services, who also made the aircraft safe and removed its battery.

The weather was fine with no cloud below 10,000 feet, visibility of nine kilometres and surface wind 250°/15 knots. Runway 25 is 700 metres long and 25 metres wide. The surface was dry, the grass short, and the ground firm.