

## Piper PA-20 Pacer (Modified), G-BFMR

<b>AAIB Bulletin No: 10/2003</b>	<b>Ref: EW/G2003/07/15</b>	<b>Category: 1.3</b>
<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Piper PA-20 Pacer (Modified), G-BFMR	
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	1 Lycoming O-320-B2C piston engine	
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1950	
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	15 July 2003 at 2141 hrs	
<b>Location:</b>	Headcorn Aerodrome, Kent	
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	Private	
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew - 1 (Minor)	Passengers - None
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	Undercarriage collapsed	
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	Private Pilot's Licence	
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	51 years	
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	1,190 hours (of which 689 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 26 hours	
	Last 28 days - 11 hours	
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Upon returning to Headcorn Aerodrome from a farm strip, the pilot joined the circuit at 2,000 feet and commenced a straight in approach for Runway 11. The descent was accomplished using full sideslip to the left, with a small amount of power maintained to avoid 'shock cooling' of the engine.

After the round-out the aircraft touched down normally, just beyond the threshold. The pilot then taxied down the runway at what he described as a "reasonably high speed"; however, after having reached a point approximately two-thirds of the way along the runway, he decided to fly another circuit.

The throttle was advanced and the aircraft climbed away on full power but, as it reached a height of approximately 50 feet, the engine suddenly stopped. An attempt was made to land ahead in a small field bounding the far end of the runway but the landing gear caught a substantial electric fence, bringing the aircraft to rest in a distance described as "about 10 feet". The passenger was unhurt but the pilot suffered minor injuries; both were able to vacate the aircraft without assistance.

In his report, the pilot assessed the cause of his accident as an interruption of the supply of fuel to the engine. This had been caused by the fuel collector in the left wing tank, the tank selected for the approach to land, having become uncovered during the prolonged sideslip to the left. He believed that this allowed air to be drawn into the fuel system, that the air ultimately reached the engine as the aircraft was climbing out, and that any residual fuel in the pipework and carburettor had been consumed during the descent, taxi, and initial climb-out. The pilot noted that the PA-20, unlike some

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other Piper single-engined aircraft, is not fitted with a header tank in the lines between the fuel tanks and engine.