

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-140 Cherokee, G-BAGX	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-E2A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1967	
Date & Time (UTC):	31 July 2008 at 1640 hrs	
Location:	New York Airstrip, Coningsby, Lincolnshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to the left wing	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	48 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	355 hours (of which 85 were on type) Last 90 days - 195 hours Last 28 days - 19 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

Prior to the approach to New York, an airstrip near RAF Coningsby, the pilot had identified the windsock and noted that it indicated a calm wind. During the landing on the grass Runway 09, the pilot became aware of excessive ground speed. This excess speed did not seem to abate, despite full braking, and the aircraft then struck a hedge at the end of the runway. The pilot then noted that the windsock indicated a strong wind from the west. Shortly after the accident a rainstorm passed through the area and some 45 minutes later the wind was calm again.

History of the flight

The pilot's intention was to fly the aircraft from Little Staughton airfield to its home airfield at New York, near

Coningsby. Prior to the flight the pilot had consulted the Waddington TAF and checked the reported winds as being 10-15 kt and from east-south-east. The pilot also contacted RAF Coningsby to advise them of the flight and to obtain their current weather; this was reported as being overcast in drizzle with a wind of 11 kt from 125°.

The pilot departed without incident but on passing Peterborough he experienced deteriorating weather and entered IMC. About 7 miles from New York, the visibility improved and the rest of the flight was conducted in VFR.

On arrival at New York the pilot conducted a flypast to

observe the windsock which was hanging limply by the pole indicating little or no wind. Due to the reported winds from Waddington and RAF Coningsby the pilot elected to use the grass Runway 09.

As the pilot started his flare and closed the throttle, he became aware of excessive ground speed. As the aircraft touched down it still carried excess speed, which did not seem to abate despite the application of full braking. There was insufficient runway left to take off again so the pilot elected to remain on the ground and attempt to stop. As the end of Runway 09 approached the pilot tried to steer the aircraft along the adjacent Runway 17. However, the momentum of the aircraft carried it toward a hedgerow at the end of the runway. The left wing struck the hedge causing the aircraft to swing round before coming to rest.

The pilot was uninjured and, after making the aircraft safe, he exited normally. At this point he checked the windsock and noticed that it now stretched outward, showing a strong wind from the west. Shortly afterwards a rain storm passed through the area; 45 minutes later, when the storm had finished, the wind became calm again.

The pilot assessed the reasons for the runway excursion as being due to the strong tailwind, associated with the approaching storm, and the wet grass on the runway.