

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-236 Dakota, G-FRGN	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-540-J3A5D piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1994	
Date & Time (UTC):	29 June 2009 at 1545 hrs	
Location:	North Moreton, Oxfordshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to port wing, engine mountings and propeller. Nose landing gear sheared off.	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	65 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	2,594 hours (of which 2,300 were on type) Last 90 days - 13 hours Last 28 days - 12 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The aircraft landed some 200 m into the 800 m long grass runway at a private airstrip. When the brakes were applied, they appeared to have no effect and the aircraft overran the runway, impacting a hedge. The aircraft sustained damage to its port wing, propeller, engine mountings and nose landing gear. The pilot was uninjured and vacated the aircraft through the normal exit.

The pilot had not appreciated that there had been a recent heavy rain shower and the aircraft skidded on the wet grass.

History of the flight

The pilot was returning to a private airstrip at North Moreton following a flight from Oxford (Kidlington) Airport. The weather was generally good with a light easterly wind and CAVOK, but there were some isolated heavy showers. The aircraft joined downwind in the left hand circuit for Runway 35. As the pilot flew past the windsock, she noted that there was a crosswind from the right and that the runway was clear. Full landing flap was set and the IAS reduced on the final approach to 72 kt. The approach was normal and the aircraft touched down approximately 200 m into the 800 m long grass runway. The landing distance for the aircraft on that runway was normally approximately 350 m using moderate braking. The pilot informed Benson ATC

that she had landed and, 100 m after touching down, applied the brakes.

There was no retardation and the pilot thought that the brakes had failed or that the aircraft was skidding on the grass surface. With insufficient distance remaining to initiate a safe go-around, she attempted to veer the aircraft to the left but, having no directional control, the aircraft overran the end of the runway and impacted a substantial hedge. The pilot isolated the aircraft's fuel and electrical systems and vacated the aircraft through the normal exit, uninjured. The aircraft suffered damage to its port wing, propeller, engine mountings and nose landing gear.

The grass was wet from a recent heavy shower and the runway surface had patches of standing water. The pilot had not been aware of this before she landed. Had she known, she would have touched down earlier. Immediate application of the brakes would also have reduced the length of the landing roll.

The CAA's General Aviation Safety Sense Leaflet 7, entitled *Aeroplane Performance*, gives guidance on the safety factors to add to takeoff and landing distances. When landing on wet, slippery grass, it advises that the Landing Distance Required may increase by up to 60%.