

Piper PA-28-161, G-BSIB

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| AAIB Bulletin No: | 10/99 | Ref: | EW/G99/07/02 | Category: | 1.3 |
| Aircraft Type and Registration: | Piper PA-28-161, G-BSIB | | | | |
| No & Type of Engines: | 1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine | | | | |
| Year of Manufacture: | 1980 | | | | |
| Date & Time (UTC): | 3 July 1999 at 1219 hrs | | | | |
| Location: | Halfpenny Green, West Midlands | | | | |
| Type of Flight: | Private (Training) | | | | |
| Persons on Board: | Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1 | | | | |
| Injuries: | Crew - None - Passengers - None | | | | |
| Nature of Damage: | Left wing detached at wing root which rendered the aircraft beyond economic repair | | | | |
| Commander's Licence: | Private Pilot's Licence | | | | |
| Commander's Age: | 51 years | | | | |
| Commander's Flying Experience: | 97 hours (of which 20 were on type) Last 90 days - 8 hours Last 28 days - 3 hours | | | | |
| Information Source: | Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the CFI of the flying club plus AFISO's report and telephone enquiries | | | | |

Halfpenny Green airfield has three asphalt landing strips and an airship mooring post. Runway 28 is 775 metres long but Runway 34 is longer, having a landing distance available of 1,000 metres and a total length of 1,195 metres. The airship mooring post is south of Runway 28 near the control tower and hangars. The weather was fine with a surface wind from 240° to 260° at between 5 and 15 kt.

The pilot of G-BSIB was returning from a navigation exercise. He requested joining instructions at about 1210 hrs and although Runway 28 was active, an airship was landing and so he was informed that he should join the circuit for a landing on Runway 34. By the time G-BSIB was overhead the airfield the airship had vacated Runway 28 and so the pilot was invited to land on that runway. However, there were two other aircraft in the vicinity. The pilot of G-BSIB was not sure where they were but he was sure that the approach to Runway 34 was clear and so he elected to continue his approach to Runway 34.

The runway change resulted in a crosswind component of 5 to 15 kt with the possibility of a slight tailwind component. G-BSIB's pilot approached Runway 34 high and fast. The aircraft floated for a long time and touched down well beyond the mid-point of the runway. Despite heavy braking it ran

off the end of the runway, penetrated a post and wire fence, and came to rest embedded in the airfield boundary hedge. The pilot appreciated that the aircraft was likely to collide with the fence and he had time to switch off the magnetos and engine fuel supply. The occupants were unhurt and able to vacate unaided through the normal exit door.

The pilot generally agreed with the CFI's assessment of events and their cause but he thought that following his 'finals' RTF call, the AFISO had informed him that the surface wind was 260°/15 kt. In his own account, the supervising AFISO stated that the wind information given was 230° at 10 kt. He saw the aircraft very high on a steep approach and it floated for some time above the runway. He realised that it would not stop on the runway and sounded the crash alarm before the aircraft had touched down.

The CFI commented that he was concerned by the safety implications of a new fence in the over-run area of Runway 22 which is only 640 metres long and which slopes downwards towards the end. This fence is supported by concrete posts which, he felt, were likely to be less forgiving than the 8 inch diameter wooden post which G-BSIB struck with its left wing, snapping the post (removing the wing at the same time). He also suggested that the airfield wind sock should be re-sited nearer the centre of the airfield.

The airfield management stated that the new fence needed to be substantial because there was a public road just beyond it and the CAA had not objected to the design of the fence. Moreover, although the UKAIP for Halfpenny Green dated 17 December 1998 shows the windsock in the central area, this is incorrect. For some considerable time the windsock at Halfpenny Green has been sited near the airfield perimeter to keep the central area clear for para-dropping.