

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/95

Ref: EW/G95/07/18

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-140 Cherokee, G-SCPL

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-E3D piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1977

Date & Time (UTC): 24 July 1995 at 1245 hrs

Location: Gloucestershire Airport

Type of Flight: Private (Training)

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Damage to nose landing gear and propeller tips; engine frame bent and engine shock loaded

Commander's Licence: Student Pilot

Commander's Age: 68 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 62 hours (all on type)
Last 90 days - 10 hours
Last 28 days - 3 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the Chief Flying Instructor and enquiries of the pilot

The student pilot was returning from his first solo "land away" cross-country flight. The runway in use was 27 and the wind was light westerly; the temperature was 24°C. The aircraft touched down nosewheel first and bounced; the subsequent touchdown was heavier and resulted in damage to the nose landing gear. The propeller tips struck the ground. The aircraft was taxied clear of the runway and shut down.

The Chief Flying Instructor (CFI) reported that the student pilot's PPL training had taken place over a period of about two years and his progress had been erratic. He had, however, successfully completed 8 hours solo flying, mostly in the circuit. The CFI considered that the aircraft had entered a prolonged float on landing, due to the light wind and high ambient temperature, and the pilot had not "held off" sufficiently. He commented that, despite many practices and briefings about the action to be taken in such circumstances the student pilot had chosen not to go-around.

The pilot thought that, during the prolonged float, he may have eased the control column forward slightly to achieve a touchdown. His decision not to go-around was based on the fact that the aircraft had settled onto the runway after the first bounce.