

Steen Skybolt, G-TURN

AAIB Bulletin No: 6/2004	Ref: EW/G2003/07/35	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Steen Skybolt, G-TURN	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-360-C1E6 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1991	
Date & Time (UTC):	10 July 2003 at 1430 hrs	
Location:	Turweston Airfield, Northants	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to aircraft landing gear, propeller and engine	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	42 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	230 hours (of which 57 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 8 hours	
	Last 28 days - 0 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

History of the flight

The pilot purchased the aircraft in May 2002 and at the time of the accident he had accumulated some 230 hours total flying including an AOPA aerobatics course. The Skybolt was the first tail wheel aircraft that the pilot had flown and he completed a 16 hour type conversion. In the following 12 months he flew some 40 hours on the Skybolt which was a combination of general handling and aerobatics; he also flew for 20 hours in a Piper Arrow.

On the day of the accident, the pilot had completed final exams following a demanding study course and was keen to go flying so he went to Turweston and prepared the aircraft. The weather was good with the surface wind 240°/5 kt and good visibility with haze.

The departure was from Runway 27 and the aircraft was climbed to 4,000 feet where some basic aerobatics were carried out before rejoining the right hand circuit for landing on the parallel grass taxiway which is also used as grass Runway 27. The approach was normal and stable but the aircraft touched down heavily and bounced from which the pilot elected to carry out a go-around and so he applied full power. The aircraft yawed to the left, which was not detected or corrected by the pilot due to his lack of forward visibility. Hay baling had been taking place adjacent to the runway and unnoticed by the pilot were a row of bales several feet to the left of the runway edge in the landing

direction. The left main landing gear wheel struck a bale, the impact of which forced the aircraft into the air. Realising that the aircraft was probably damaged, the pilot closed the throttle.

The aircraft floated before touching down on the right main landing gear wheel; it then described an arc to the right, striking a gas operated bird scarer between the two runways. It continued across the metallised surface of Runway 27 before stopping, facing in an easterly direction. The airfield Rescue and Fire Fighting Service attended the scene immediately but the pilot was able to vacate the aircraft unassisted having first turned off the electrical supply and isolated the fuel.

Conclusion

The pilot considered that whilst his concentration may have been affected by the mental effort expended earlier in the day during the exams, he had also not carried out a go around since his conversion training. The lack of forward visibility meant he did not detect the change of heading to the left or see the hay bale obstruction.