

No: 12/92

Ref: EW/G92/09/28

Category: 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-34-200T Seneca III, G-BOCW
No & Type of Engines: 2 Continental TSIO-360-KB piston engines
Year of Manufacture: 1988
Date & Time (UTC): 29 September 1992 at 2130 hrs
Location: Prestwick Airport, Strathclyde
Type of Flight: Private (training)
Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage: General damage to the underside of the fuselage; damage to the right aileron, left fuel tank and propeller
Commander's Licence: Student Pilot
Commander's Age: 23 years
Commander's Flying Experience: 177 hours (of which 22 were on type)
Last 90 days - 22 hours
Last 28 days - 22 hours
Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Three aircraft were carrying out night circuit training on runway 13; the circuit direction was, initially lefthand. The routine weather report for 2120 hrs contained the following:

Surface wind	110°/9 kt
Visibility	10 km
Weather	Rain
Cloud	1 okta base 1,200 feet 3 oktas base 1,500 feet 6 oktas base 1,800 feet
Temperature	+15°C
Dew point	+13°C

Following a noise complaint, the Airport Authority asked if the circuit direction could be changed. ATC asked the three aircraft to change to righthand circuits; this was agreed. The accident aircraft, callsign AYR CW, was downwind righthand with AYR CR and AYR 26 ahead; the first in the

sequence, AYR CR, carried out a go-around and reported low cloud in the circuit. He asked to continue with lefthand circuits and this was agreed by ATC. Weather conditions were reported to have been deteriorating rapidly, with reducing visibility and lowering cloudbase. AYR CW was told that he was number 2 to approach but he was unable to see the one ahead. AYR 26 carried out a go-around and instructed both the other aircraft to land from their next approach. AYR CW turned onto final approach and was lined up by 500 feet agl; clearance to land was given. The pilot reported that he closed the throttles late in the flare and it was then that the landing gear warning horn sounded; this was quickly followed by the noise of the propellers striking the runway. He decided that it would be imprudent to attempt to go-around and continued with the landing. He reported the wheels-up landing to ATC and the appropriate emergency procedures were instigated. The pilot escaped without injury.

The pilot considered that the change of circuit direction, the deteriorating weather conditions and the consequent problem of identifying the positions of the other two aircraft proved a major distraction which caused him to omit both the downwind and final checks.