

Piper PA-25-235 Pawnee, G-CMGC

AAIB Bulletin No: 10/2003	Ref: EW/G2003/07/29	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-25-235 Pawnee, G-CMGC	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-540-B2C5 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1977	
Date & Time (UTC):	26 July 2003 at 1400 hrs	
Location:	Midland Gliding Club, Long Mynd, Shropshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Bent / broken rib at trailing edge of wing tip	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	47 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	844 hours (of which 314 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 27 hours	
	Last 28 days - 11 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The aircraft was engaged in glider towing operations. The airfield in question has no fixed direction of takeoff and landing and has a gully at one end and public rights of way bordering two sides. Efficient towing operations require the tow rope to be deposited as close as possible to the launch point, however, efforts are made to ensure that it is not dropped on or dragged across any public rights of way. A number of approach options are available, each having varying advantages and drawbacks, depending upon the wind velocity.

On this occasion the pilot returned from a lengthy tow to find that the wind direction and position of parked gliders constrained his available landing direction. He chose to make a curving approach during which he observed a pedestrian close to his intended touch-down point. In his efforts to remain well clear of the pedestrian he increased his rate of turn and then misjudged his approach such that he arrived at the ground with both a pronounced bank angle and a significant rate of descent. This resulted in the port wing contacting the ground as the undercarriage compressed. The pilot was initially unaware that such contact had occurred.