

Aeronica AC Champion, G-JTYE

AAIB Bulletin No: 10/98 **Ref:** EW/G98/08/03 **Category:** 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Aeronica AC Champion, G-JTYE

No & Type of Engines: 1 Continental C85-8F piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1946

Date & Time (UTC): 2 August 1998 at 1716 hrs

Location: Longwood Farm, Hampshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Substantial to airframe components

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 63 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 128 hours (of which 35 were on type)
Last 90 days - 11 hours
Last 28 days - 3 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was operating from a grass strip oriented 060°, 650 metres long and 20 metres wide. The runway had a downslope along its axis and a significant down slope from left to right. The surface of the strip was well mown but was bounded by long, unmown grass. The pilot commenced his take off using full power and full aileron to counteract both the slope and the 6 kt crosswind from his left. The aircraft became airborne before full flying speed was achieved and started drifting to the right as it passed the end of a hedge which had been shielding it from the full effect of the crosswind. The aircraft settled back onto the runway but as the right spatted wheel entered the long grass at the edge of the runway, there was insufficient rudder authority to regain the centre line. The pilot thought that he would still be able to complete the take off safely but the drag on the right wheel rapidly yawed the aircraft through 30° to the right towards a line of trees on the strip boundary. The aircraft impacted the base of an oak tree and came to rest inverted having turned through 180°. There was no fire and both occupants, who were wearing full safety harness, were able to evacuate the aircraft uninjured.

The pilot attributed the cause of the accident to his lack of familiarity with the strip combined with the crosswind and runway slopes. He attributed the survival of both occupants to the restraint provided by the full harness that was being worn.