

**No:** 4/89

**Ref:** EW/G88/10/08

**Category:** 1c

**Aircraft Type**

**and Registration:** Piper PA-28R-200, G-AZSN

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Lycoming IO-360-C1C piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1970

**Date and Time (UTC):** 2 October 1988 at 1735 hrs

**Location:** South of Axbridge, Avon

**Type of Flight:** Private (pleasure)

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1 Passengers - 2

**Injuries:** Crew - Minor Passengers - Minor

**Nature of Damage:** Nose landing gear collapsed, propeller, nosecowl, engine supports damaged, fuselage distorted

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence

**Commander's Age:** 50 years

**Commander's Total Flying Experience:** 75 hours (of which 8 were on type)

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was engaged on a VFR flight at 2000 ft amsl from Southampton to Bristol Lulsgate. All pre-flight checks had been normal and fuel levels are reported to have been 1 to 2 inches below the tabs. Before clearing entry into the Bristol SRA, ATC requested the pilot to orbit over Cheddar reservoir.

On entering the orbit the pilot reduced speed, altering the power controls from the cruise settings of 24 inches manifold pressure and 2400 RPM to 18 inches/2500 RPM, and reports adjusting the mixture control to fully rich. The fuel pump was switched "ON". The pilot then lowered the landing gear and increased manifold pressure to 22 inches at which the engine began to run roughly. The pilot returned manifold pressure to 18 inches, selected "ALTERNATE AIR" and changed fuel tanks. He found that he could not obtain more than 20 inches manifold pressure without the engine running roughly and he was losing altitude. He did not raise the landing gear. He declared an emergency and, realising that he would not be able to reach Bristol, prepared for a forced landing. He de-selected "ALTERNATE AIR" and attempted to obtain 22 inches manifold pressure but no change in engine behaviour was found.

He achieved a successful touch-down in a selected field but the grass was wet and retardation poor. At the far end of the field, at about 20 kts, the aircraft went through a wire fence and came to rest astride a water filled dyke. During the ground run it had struck and injured a sheep but had avoided a flock of sheep clustered on one side of the field and had passed under power lines and between their supporting pylons.

An Engineer's examination of the aircraft failed to identify any technical defect.