

Piper PA-46-310P, G-MICZ, 11 October 1997

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Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-46-310P, G-MICZ
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental TSIO-520-BE1 piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1985
Date & Time (UTC):	11 October 1997 at 1515 hrs
Location:	Fowlmere Aerodrome, Royston, Herts
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to nose landing gear and propeller; engine shock loaded
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	49 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	855 hours (of which 300 were on type) Last 90 days - 40 hours Last 28 days - 26 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was on an IFR flight from Krakow Airport, Poland to Fowlmere. Shortly before crossing the English coast, the pilot copied the Stansted ATIS as follows:

Surface wind 090°/7 kt

Visibility 6 km in rain

Cloud Few base 400 feet

Scattered base 900 feet

Broken base 2,800 feet

In the descent, he broke cloud at 4,000 feet and became visual with Fowlmere at about 7 km. He continued the descent and flew a left hand circuit to Runway 07. He checked the wind sock at this time which indicated about 050°/10 kt. The final approach was flown at 90 kt with full flap, reducing to 80 kt at the threshold. Normal braking was applied but the aircraft started to skid to the right with the nose pointing about 30 to the left. The pilot immediately released the brakes and tried to control the aircraft with rudder, however he was unable to prevent it leaving the runway to the right at about the halfway point. It ran across standing crops and came to rest about 15 metres into the field when the nose landing gear collapsed. The pilot, who was wearing lap and diagonal upper torso restraint, carried out the shut down check and vacated the aircraft through the main door; he was uninjured.

The airfield manager made a post accident weather observation at 1540 hrs. It contained the following:

Surface wind: 050° to 060°/10 kt

Visibility 4,000 to 5,000 metres in recent heavy rain

The grass runway surface was very wet and slippery at the time of the accident

In a frank and comprehensive report, the pilot attributed the accident to the very slippery surface, the crosswind, new tyres and a failure on his part to control the skid once it had developed.