

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper J5A Cub Cruiser, G-BSDK

No & Type of Engines: 1 Continental A75-8 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1941

Date & Time (UTC): 19 July 1993 at 1230 hrs

Location: Eaglescott Airfield, Devon

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - Minor Passengers - Minor

Nature of Damage: Extensive to wings & struts, landing gear, engine mounts & propeller. Possibly beyond economical repair.

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 24 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 155 hours (of which 5 were on type)
Last 90 days - 5 hours
Last 28 days - 5 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further telephone inquiries by the AAIB

The main runway at Eaglescott is 08/26, being a 600 metre grass strip. The surface wind was reported as 340°/15 kt. The pilot stated that he lined the aircraft up into wind and commenced the take-off run. With full power applied the aircraft reached 40 mph and the pilot, considering that he could clear the hedge on the northern boundary of the airfield, pulled the stick back to rotate the aircraft. He recalled that the aircraft left the ground but was not climbing, and that the airspeed was decaying. The aircraft collided with the hedge. The pilot and passenger were both wearing full harnesses and escaped with minor injuries. The pilot stated that other pilots he had spoken to considered that the aircraft should have become airborne in the distance available, and he considered that the poor rate of climb may have been caused by downdraughts from the wind coming over the northern boundary hedge.

An observer on the airfield noted that the aircraft had commenced its take-off run from a grass taxiway, adjacent to a hangar on the southern boundary of the airfield, giving a take-off run available of some 220 metres. This taxiway is not normally used for take off and landing, but is parallel to another grass

area which is used as an "emergency strip" of 350 metres length a little further west on the airfield, and has its southern threshold adjacent to another hangar. The observer commented that the pilot, being relatively new to operating from this airfield, may have mistaken one grass strip for the other. He also commented that the aircraft did not appear to become airborne prior to the impact with the hedge.