

Aircraft Type and Registration: Taylor Monoplane, G-SUZY
No & Type of Engines: 1 Volkswagen 1600 piston engine
Year of Manufacture: 1981
Date & Time (UTC): 20 April 1995 at 1125 hrs
Location: Halwell Airstrip, Totnes, Devon
Type of Flight: Private
Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage: Substantial general damage to engine and airframe
Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age: 51 years
Commander's Flying Experience: 382 hours (of which 11 were on type)
Last 90 days - 4 hours
Last 28 days - 4 hours
Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The airstrip was a field of short, dry grass; the surface wind was light and variable from the north and the pilot intended to land diagonally across the field in a northwesterly direction. There were sheep grazing and the pilot made two or three low passes from east to west in an attempt to clear them from the field. He then decided to do a westerly approach and landing to keep clear of the livestock, going around if necessary to land in the originally intended direction. The approach was made at 50 kt and a normal touchdown ensued; initial retardation seemed normal, however, as he passed the midpoint of the field the pilot was uncertain whether the aircraft would stop before the boundary earth bank/hedge. He decided to go-around, applied full power and, when airborne, turned right to give himself more distance. The aircraft struck the hedge and nosed over, coming immediately to rest against the far side of the earth bank. The pilot was wearing full upper torso restraint and was uninjured.

With hindsight, the pilot considered that he should not have attempted a westerly landing in no wind conditions, however, having done so he thought that the decision to go-around had been made too late and maybe continuing the landing would have resulted in less damage. He also felt that pressure from local residents, who objected to the noise made by aircraft, using the airstrip led to a reluctance to carry out more approaches than absolutely necessary.