

Piper PA-28-161 Cherokee Warrior II, G-BUIJ

AAIB Bulletin No: 8/2004	Ref: EW/G2004/06/05	Category: 1.3
INCIDENT		
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-161 Cherokee Warrior II, G-BUIJ	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1981	
Date & Time (UTC):	7 June 2004 at 1059 hrs	
Location:	Payden Street Strip, near Ashford, Kent	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to both wings, right main landing gear and nose gear.	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	44 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	535 hours (of which 240 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 13 hours	
	Last 28 days - 9 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Earlier in the day the pilot had flown from Blackbushe Airport to Maypole Farm strip (2 ½ nm SSE of Herne Bay, Kent) from where he had telephoned the owner of the private landing strip at Payden Street to request permission to use the strip. This had been granted but the strip owner had cautioned the pilot about the narrowness of the strip and the fact that it was bordered by oil seed rape plants. The pilot noted that Payden Street strip was orientated into the prevailing wind at Maypole Farm and, being only 16 nm distant, he concluded that the weather conditions would be favourable for the proposed flight.

The flight to Payden Street initially proceeded without incident. After some difficulty locating the strip the pilot positioned his aircraft to a right base position for the strip which was orientated approximately 200°(M). The windsock indicated that the wind was blowing directly down the strip, with a speed estimated at 10 kt.

The final approach was a little high, but with buildings short of the threshold and a landing distance of approximately 1,000m available, the pilot was content to continue the approach. The touchdown was

made at an estimated 200m into the strip and the initial part of the landing roll was normal, though the surface was rough. About 400m into the strip and as the pilot was about to commence braking the aircraft veered violently to the left. The pilot had no time to correct the swing and the aircraft entered the crops at approximately 90° to the direction of landing, by which time it was travelling sideways. The aircraft came to a halt with the front part in the crops and the rear part over the strip.

An examination of the aircraft showed that the left wing tip bore damage and witness marks consistent with an initial contact with the crops. The right wing suffered more extensive damage in the form of distortion of the upper skin. The right tyre was ripped from the rim and the nose oleo also suffered damage consistent with the sideways motion of the aircraft.

At the time of the accident, the crops on each side of the 12m wide strip were between 4 and 5 ft tall: the wingspan of the PA-28 is 10.67m. The pilot considered it possible that the aircraft drifted to the left during the landing roll, which would have allowed the left wing tip to contact the crops and initiate the swing to the left. He commented that he had previously operated into strips bordered by wheat and this had not caused any difficulty. Although he was aware that the crop in this case was oil seed rape, he had not appreciated that this crop was much more robust and therefore presented a greater hazard.

The Civil Aviation Authority's General Aviation Safety Information Leaflet (GASIL), Number 4 of 2003, reminds pilots that unlicensed strips and aerodromes are not obliged to conform with the stringent regulations applied to licensed aerodromes, including those applicable to runway dimensions.