

AAIB Bulletin No: 10/95 **Ref:** EW/G95/08/11 **Category:** 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-161 Cherokee Warrior II, G-BTKT

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1982

Date & Time (UTC): 8 August 1995 at 1602 hrs

Location: Shoreham Airport, West Sussex

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Extensive damage to left-hand wingtip, aileron and flap, left-hand and nose landing gear, engine mounting frame and propeller

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence with IMC Rating

Commander's Age: 70 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 120 hours (of which 7 were on type)
Last 90 days - 8 hours
Last 28 days - 8 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot was returning to Shoreham after a cross-country flight from Bourn, during which the periodic en route FREDA checks had not indicated a problem with any of the aircraft's systems. Being unfamiliar with Shoreham, the pilot declined an ATC offer of an entry directly onto a 'left base' leg and elected to perform a standard overhead 'join' and 1,100 ft downwind leg in preparation for a landing on Runway 03, Shoreham's hard-surfaced runway. Because of other traffic the pilot extended the downwind leg of the circuit over the sea, to ensure adequate separation.

The pilot states that, on finals, he had full flap extended, carburettor heat applied, fuel pump on, mixture fully rich and 1,500 RPM on the engine. On crossing the coast he noted that he was 'low on the glide path'; he opened the throttle to adjust the height of the aeroplane but found that the engine would not respond. The pilot believes that at this point he was at a height of some 150 to 200 feet above the runway. He made a rapid judgement that he could not safely clear the railway embankment ahead and turned to the right, making an emergency landing in a small field at right angles to the

runway heading. The only obstruction was a causeway across the field some 2'6" high and the aircraft's contact with this causeway resulted in extensive damage to the propeller and left-hand wing. There was no fire and the pilot and passenger left the aircraft by the cabin door.

Damage to the engine mounting frame precluded test-running of the engine after the accident, although it was noted that the crankshaft rotated smoothly. Further examination of the airframe and engine did not show any apparent defect which would explain the failure of the engine to deliver the increased power demanded on late finals. The pilot stresses his belief that, whatever the cause of the loss of power response, the decision to make a forced landing prevented a more serious accident as continuation of the approach would have resulted in either a collision with the railway embankment or a stall from a low height.