

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cessna 175B Skylark, G-ARML
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental Motors Corp GO-300-D piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1961 (Serial no: 175-56995)
Date & Time (UTC):	24 April 2014 at 1720 hrs
Location:	Private airstrip, Slinfold, West Sussex
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - 2
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Nose landing gear detached, damage to propeller, engine, firewall, fuselage skin and cowling
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	34 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	6,000 hours (of which 200 were on type) Last 90 days - 200 hours Last 28 days - 55 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

The aircraft was taking off from a private grass strip when the pilot sensed it was no longer accelerating. He abandoned the takeoff but the aircraft left the runway at slow speed and ran into a ditch. The pilot is not aware of any conclusive reason for the lack of performance but suspects that carburettor icing may have played a part.

History of the flight

The pilot was intending to depart from Slinfold for a local flight; the light wind, from 220° at 05 kt, favoured grass Runway 22, which has a total length of 650 metres. He carried out the normal start-up and power checks before taxiing the aircraft to the start of the runway with flaps set at 20° for a short field takeoff. The takeoff roll was normal until, approaching 45 kt, acceleration appeared to cease and the speed remained steady. A nose-up attitude was progressively adopted but the aircraft would neither accelerate nor lift off and the stall warning sounded.

The pilot realised that he was approaching the point on the runway where he had lifted off on a flight earlier that day and decided that the aircraft's performance was degraded. He decided to abandon the takeoff, closed the throttle and applied full braking but realised that the aircraft would probably fail to stop before the end of the runway. He shut down the

engine using the mixture control before the aircraft left the runway and rolled into a ditch at a speed of about 5 kt, detaching the nose landing gear backwards and striking the propeller on the ground. It came to rest with the mainwheels in the ditch and, after the pilot had switched the electrics and fuel off, all the occupants evacuated using the normal doors.

The pilot could not offer a conclusive explanation for the lack of performance but stated that his personal view was that carburettor icing may have been responsible. He had applied carburettor heat for about 10 seconds as part of the pre-takeoff power checks, but a period of about 5 minutes had elapsed between then and the departure attempt.