

AAIB Bulletin No: 11/94

Ref: EW/G94/08/15

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Jodel D112, G-BDJD

No & Type of Engines: 1 Continental A65 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1977

Date & Time (UTC): 20 August 1994 at 1115 hrs

Location: East Fortune Airfield, Lothian Region

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Tailwheel, propeller, left main gear leg and minor damage to the left wing

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 32 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 195 hours (of which 75 were on type)
Last 90 days - 6 hours
Last 28 days - 3 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot plus telephone enquiries

The pilot was practising circuits on tarmac Runway 23 at East Fortune. The weather was fine but the surface wind was gusting from between west and north west at a mean speed of 15 kt. Three approaches were successfully flown in what the pilot described as rough conditions but on the fourth approach the turbulence was severe.

The aircraft landed heavily and tail first. Immediately after touchdown it veered uncontrollably to the left and struck a bale of hay beside the edge of the runway at a speed of approximately 20 kt. On examining the aircraft for damage the pilot noticed, amongst other things, that one of the tailwheel castoring springs had broken. He attributed the heavy landing to the wind conditions but the remainder of the damage was inflicted when the aircraft struck the hay bale. It seems probable that the loss of directional control was caused by the remaining undamaged tailwheel spring which, lacking a counterbalancing spring, deflected the tailwheel to the left.