

AIB Bulletin

12/85

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Aircraft type and registration: Cessna 421B G-BBSU (light twin engined fixed wing aircraft)

Year of Manufacture: 1974

Date and time (GMT): 2 February 1985 at 1330 hrs

Location: Staverton Aerodrome, Cheltenham

Type of flight: Private (pleasure)

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — 4

Injuries: Crew — None Passengers — None

Nature of damage: Damage to structure in area of nose wheel

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: N/K

Commander's total flying experience: 200 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot.

On returning to Staverton after approximately 30 minutes of flying in the local area the aircraft completed two touch and go landings. After a go-around from the third approach the landing gear was retracted. When the landing gear was re-selected downwind only two green lights

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were obtained together with the gear in transit red light. The aircraft left the circuit and unsuccessful attempts were made to obtain 3 greens using both electrical and manual recycling together with the application of positive G, negative G, and sideslip. Several tower fly pasts were then made during which the nose gear was observed to be trailing by approximately 30°.

The aircraft was landed on runway 27 and the nose wheel was held off with elevator. During the landing roll the mixtures were cut, the propellers feathered and the magnetos, alternators and battery switches were selected off. As the nose sank onto the runway the nosewheel was seen to strike the ground and propel the nose gear into the wheel well. The nose structure scraped along the runway for about 50 yards and all the occupants left the aircraft without injury as soon as it came to rest.

Subsequent investigation showed that the nose oleo had not fully extended causing the nose wheel fork to foul the door operating mechanism and preventing it from lowering fully. The nose oleo was found to be pressurised to the correct value but it would only extend 4½ inches and not the full 7 inches. The sliding member of the oleo moves within a steel bush which is coated on the inside bearing surface with a plastic bearing material. Corrosion of the steel beneath this bearing material had forced it inwards onto the sliding member, causing it to jam in the position as found.