

Piper PA-28-161, G-BJCA, 21 May 1996

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/96 Ref: EW/G96/05/16 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:Piper PA-28-161, G-BJCA

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

Year of Manufacture:1979

Date & Time (UTC):21 May 1996 at 1427 hrs

Location:Wellesbourne Mountford Aerodrome

Type of Flight:Private

Persons on Board:Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries:Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage:Substantial to outer left wing, engine cowling, propeller and spinner

Commander's Licence:Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age:37 years

Commander's Flying Experience:159 hours (of which 47 were on type)

Last 90 days - 6 hours

Last 28 days - 5 hours

Information Source:Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft departed Duxford at 1340 hrs and routed north of Cranfield and south of Northampton en route for Wellsbourne Mountford. The weather on the day was unsettled with good visibility and scattered cloud at 3,000 feet but isolated thunderstorms were forecast, with variable surface winds gusting up to 20 kt. As the aircraft approached Northampton the pilot had to manoeuvre clear of a storm and, as he set himself up for an approach to Runway 18 at Wellesbourne, he noticed a further storm approaching the field from the southwest.

As he joined downwind, in-flight weather conditions deteriorated becoming very turbulent with light to moderate rain. On hearing a reported surface wind from 240° the pilot requested a landing on the grass strip to the right of Runway 18, allowing him to land more into wind. He made an expeditious approach to the strip in order to avoid the approaching storm front and reported that this approach speed was 70 to 75 kt which led to a higher than normal ground speed on touchdown. After landing the pilot applied right rudder to correct for the gusty crosswind but, as the surface wind

conditions fluctuated, the aircraft veered to the right and collided with a parked aircraft substantially damaging its rear fuselage, elevator and left aileron. The pilot and passengers vacated the aircraft without injury.

The pilot concluded that he should have continued downwind delaying his approach until the storm conditions had subsided. Furthermore he reported that his approach and landing speeds were faster than the ideal.