

# Piper PA-31 Navajo, G-FILL

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Category: 1.2

## INCIDENT

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Piper PA-31 Navajo, G-FILL

**No & Type of Engines:** 2 Lycoming TIO-540-A2C piston engines

**Year of Manufacture:** 1979

**Date & Time (UTC):** 6 December 2002 at 1000 hrs

**Location:** Peterborough (Milton)

**Type of Flight:** Private

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1

Passengers -  
None

**Injuries:** Crew - None

Passengers - N/A

**Nature of Damage:** Propellers damaged and engine shock loaded

**Commander's Licence:** Airline Transport Pilots Licence

**Commander's Age:** 59 years

**Commander's Flying Experience:** 6,667 hours (of which 145 were on type)

Last 90 days - 42 hours

Last 28 days - 6 hours

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

The pilot was preparing to takeoff on a grass runway at a private airstrip near Peterborough but as power was applied the aircraft swung to the left. The pilot reduced power and attempted to counter the swing using right rudder pedal nose wheel steering. Initially this appeared ineffective so he increased the amount of right nose wheel steering input. At this point, however, the aircraft turned to the right and started to skid across the grass towards the right side of the strip. It turned through more than 90° in the process reaching a maximum speed of approximately 20 kt. The pilot closed both throttles but was unable to prevent the aircraft from departing the runway and entering a ploughed field. The left landing gear leg sunk into the surface causing the left propeller to strike the ground and stop. The right propeller also struck the ground but continued to rotate.

There had been recent rain on the airfield and the surface was described as soft and wet. The pilot reported that a more gradual application of power might have reduced the left swing enabling him to maintain better directional control of the aircraft.