

Bellanca 8GCBC, G-BCSM

AAIB Bulletin No: 3/99 Ref: EW/G99/01/07 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Bellanca 8GCBC, G-BCSM

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-360-C2E piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1974

Date & Time (UTC): 7 January 1999 at 1220 hrs

Location: Sherburn-in-Elmet Aerodrome, Yorkshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1- Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - Minor - Passengers - Minor

Nature of Damage: Substantial

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 62 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 1,588 hours (of which 9 were on type)
Last 90 days - 98 hours
Last 28 days - 23 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot had landed at Sherburn-in-Elmet to pick up a passenger for the return flight to Rufforth, his base airfield. The aircraft was serviceable and the pilot lined up on the grass Runway 11. The surface wind was 140°/07 kt. The surface of the wet runway was reported to be soft and greasy. Shortly after the start of the take-off roll, the aircraft suddenly swung to the left, achieving an angle of 70° to the runway centreline. Despite the application of right brake and rudder, the pilot was unable to correct the swing and he closed the throttle as the aircraft left the runway. It entered a soft ploughed field where it pitched forward and came to rest inverted. Despite substantial damage to the aircraft structure, the pilots' harnesses held them securely in the inverted position and they were able to exit the aircraft with only minor injuries after having jettisoned the cabin door.

The pilot considered that the cause of the accident was insufficient brake effectiveness and rudder power at low speed to correct the swing on the soft and slippery grass surface. He also considered that the swing may have been caused by the tail wheel being cocked at the start of the take-off roll and suddenly encountering a drier patch of runway after skidding during the initial part of the take-off roll.