

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Zenair CH 701 STOL, G-BRDB	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912-UL piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2003	
Date & Time (UTC):	25 October 2009 at 1500 hrs	
Location:	Benington Airstrip, Stevenage, Hertfordshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Propeller, cowling, engine, fuselage and wing	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	75 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	452 hours (of which 209 were on type) Last 90 days - 2 hours Last 28 days - 1 hour	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The pilot made an approach to Runway 24 at Benington Airstrip but, due to the low angle of the sun and rain on the windscreen affecting his vision, he executed a go-around and made an approach to Runway 06. This approach was at the correct airspeed but was higher than normal and downwind. The aircraft touched down deep into the grass runway and overran the end of the runway coming to rest on its nose in a ditch. The pilot was uninjured and there was no fire.

History of the flight

The pilot had decided to carry out an engine oil change on his aircraft. In order to ensure that the oil was at the proper temperature, he carried out a short local flight. The aircraft was located at Benington Airstrip which

has a grass runway orientated 06/24, 460 m in length and approximately 18 m wide. He departed from Runway 24 with a surface wind which he estimated as 240°/10 kt.

The pilot flew in the local area for some ten minutes before returning to Benington. Close to the airstrip and prior to the approach, he flew through a small rain shower before joining straight in for Runway 24. On the final approach, the combination of the rain on the windscreen and the low angle of the sun made it difficult to see the runway. The pilot carried out a go-around and positioned the aircraft for an approach to Runway 06, which had the same declared runway length as Runway 24. He stabilised the approach speed at 45 kt

but was a little higher than normal on the approach and also aware that this time there was a tailwind.

The aircraft touched down deeper into the runway than usual and, despite the application of the brakes, the aircraft overran the end of the runway at low speed. The nosewheel dropped into a ditch and the aircraft pitched onto its nose. The pilot was able to exit the aircraft

uninjured and, with the help of others at the airstrip, recovered the aircraft from the ditch.

The pilot considered that the cause of the accident was that he had touched down too far along the runway for the conditions and should have gone around and made another approach.