

Piper J3C-65 Cub, G-KIRK

AAIB Bulletin No: 2/98 Ref: EW/G97/12/12 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper J3C-65 Cub, G-KIRK
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental A65-8F piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1944
Date & Time (UTC):	26 December 1997 at 1115 hrs
Location:	Brent Knoll, Somerset
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Left-hand landing gear, right-hand wing strut, propeller, fuselage fabric and cabin windows
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	52 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	6,000 hours (of which 1,000 were on type) Last 90 days - 26 hours Last 28 days - 3 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and enquires by AAIB

Having crossed the Bristol Channel, the pilot positioned the aircraft at 500 feet agl downwind to land in a field to the west of the village. However, as the pilot closed the throttle the engine stopped. He therefore turned the aircraft into wind, but after completing about 160° of the turn a main landing gear wheel touched the ground. At this point the aircraft was reportedly about 30 feet from a hedge and travelling at approximately 15 to 18 mph. The aircraft struck the hedge and came to rest. The occupants, who were not injured, encountered some difficulty in vacating the cockpit, but the pilot managed to relay a message on the RT, via an airborne aircraft, to Cardiff Airport Approach that they had landed and there were no injuries, or fire.

The aircraft was subsequently removed to an engineering facility for examination. An adequate quantity of fuel was found in the fuel tanks and the engine was free to rotate. Another propeller was fitted and a series of engine power runs carried out, with no faults found.

A weather aftercast was obtained from the Meteorological Office at Bracknell for the accident area

for the applicable date and time. The weather was:

Visibility: 25 to 30 km

Cloud: SCT/BKN base 2,000 feet, BKN base 12,000 feet

Wind/Temperatures/RH:

Surface: 270°/12 kt gusting 25-30 kt temp +8°C, dew point +5°C, RH 81%

2,000 feet 330°/35 kt, temp +6°C, dew point +3°C, RH 82%

When these figures were plotted on a Carburettor Icing Probability Chart, they gave a probability of serious carburettor icing at any power.