

Pitts S-1C, G-BRCI

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/99 Ref: EW/G99/03/15 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Pitts S-1C, G-BRCI

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-A2B piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1970

Date & Time (UTC): 15 March 1999 at 1400 hrs

Location: Tatenhill Airfield, Staffordshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Propeller damaged, engine shock loaded and tailplane assembly damaged

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 33 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 3,500 hours (None on type)

Last 90 days - 120 hours

Last 28 days - 40 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was being sold on the day of the accident. Earlier in the day the pilot, who was the new owner, had seen the aircraft land on the grass Runway 26 whilst being flown by the former owner. The aircraft had landed well down the runway away from the touchdown end. The former owner later had some discussion with the new owner during which he advised him that he should use the grass runway, rather than the hard runway, because he was new to the type and the handling would be easier. He also advised him that the grass runway was quite wet.

The pilot was intending to fly a few circuits to familiarise himself with the aircraft. The reported surface wind was 250°/4 kt. He commenced the take-off roll on Runway 26 grass and initially the acceleration appeared to be normal. At a speed of about 40 kt the aircraft ran through a very soft and wet part of the runway and decelerated. At this point there were some crossing wheel tracks in the grass and the aircraft tipped over forwards, struck the propeller on the ground and came to rest in an inverted position. The pilot who was wearing a full harness was able to vacate the aircraft unassisted and uninjured. The runway had not been in use during the winter season due to its very

wet condition. The pilot assessed the cause of the accident as the runway being in an unsuitable condition for use.