

Zenair CH 601HD Zodiac, G-BVZR

AAIB Bulletin No: 12/2004	Ref: EW/G2004/10/09	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Zenair CH 601HD Zodiac, G-BVZR	
No & Type of Engines:	1 ROTAX 912-UL piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1995	
Date & Time (UTC):	19 October 2004 at 1059 hrs	
Location:	Nottingham Airport, Nottinghamshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to main undercarriage legs	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	78 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	987 hours (of which 157 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 6 hours	
	Last 28 days - 2 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

History of the flight

The accident occurred during a landing on Runway 21 at Nottingham Airport. The surface wind was from 160° (M) at 10 kt and occasional light drizzle was falling from overcast cloud at 2,000 ft, making the runway damp. The pilot reported that he achieved a three-point attitude for touchdown, with the aircraft headed slightly to the left of the runway centre line, thus attempting to decrease the crosswind component. However, at the point of touchdown the aircraft experienced a slight yaw to the left, which the pilot countered with right rudder. This caused a severe swing to the right which the pilot was unable to stop. When the aircraft had turned through approximately 90 degrees, the side load caused the left undercarriage leg to shear at a weld point and the left wing contacted the surface, bring the aircraft to a stop. The airport emergency services attended and the pilot and his passenger, who were both uninjured, were able to vacate the aircraft normally.

The pilot reported that the sudden swing to the right may have been caused by a zealous application of right rudder to correct the initial swing to the left.

Tailwheel considerations

Tailwheel aircraft are more prone to groundloop accidents than nosewheel types, primarily because the centre of gravity is located aft of the main wheels. Once a swing has developed, the position of the centre of gravity gives rise to a yawing moment which tends to pivot the aircraft about the main wheels.