

Zenair CH 601, G-CBUR, 18 October 2002

AAIB Bulletin No: 2/2003	Ref: EW/G2002/10/14	Category: 1.4
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Zenair CH 601, G-CBUR	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912-S piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2002	
Date & Time (UTC):	18 October 2002 at 1635 hrs	
Location:	Wickenby Airfield, Lincolnshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Nose landing gear collapsed, fuselage distorted	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilots Licence	
Commander's Age:	48 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	579 hours (of which 6 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 5 hours	
	Last 28 days - 2 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The owner pilot had built the aircraft himself and the required test flying for the issue of a Permit-to-Fly had been completed. Following this he wished to familiarise himself with the aircraft handling characteristics to which end he was flying it with the certification test pilot as a passenger.

The aircraft made an approach to land on Runway 34 at Wickenby. The reported surface wind was from a northerly direction at 8 to 10 kt. The pilot had decided not to use any flap for landing because he considered that there was a possibility of encountering gusty conditions. The Flight Manual recommends that flap should not be used in gusty conditions because of the possibility of inadvertently exceeding the flap limit speed.

As a result of what the pilot believed to have been a strong gust of wind, the aircraft ballooned during the flare. He attempted to take corrective action by applying power but the nose of the aircraft dropped rapidly, resulting in a heavy nose down landing. The aircraft bounced forward

before coming to rest. The nose landing gear had collapsed and further damage was sustained to the firewall bulkhead and the left wing.

The pilot commented that he had been surprised at how quickly the aircraft nose had dropped after the initial balloon upwards. He considered that this could have been as a result of several effects. Firstly, that the aircraft was lighter than other types he had previously flown and would have had less inertia and thereby lost airspeed more rapidly than he was accustomed to. Secondly that the aircraft may have ballooned high enough to take it out of ground effect thus causing a sudden loss of lift.