

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-235, G-BAMM	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming piston O-540-B4B5 engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1965	
Date & Time (UTC):	5 April 2007 at 1235 hrs	
Location:	Sandown Airport, Isle of Wight	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Nose gear oleo destroyed, propeller bent, damage to nosewheel and engine	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	50 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	363 hours (of which 233 were on type) Last 90 days - 3 hours Last 28 days - 0.83 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot; Occurrence Report Forms submitted to the CAA by airport employees; telephone inquiries to recovery/repair agency	

Synopsis

After a normal approach to land, the aircraft bounced, following which the nose landing gear failed. An assessment of the failure showed it to have resulted from an overload, with no evidence of a pre-existing defect.

As the aircraft crossed the threshold at an airspeed of 80 mph, the pilot closed the throttle and the aircraft touched down, with the main landing gear contacting the ground at about 75 mph, some 5 mph above his target touchdown speed of 70 mph.

History of the flight

After a normal circuit, the pilot began his descent for Runway 23 at an indicated airspeed of 90 mph, with two stages of flap and with the engine set at 1,700 rpm. There was no appreciable crosswind and, having selected the carburettor air control to COLD and full flap at a height of 300 ft, the descent continued normally.

Upon touchdown, the pilot became aware that the aircraft bounced slightly, which he attributed to being slightly fast and the presence of a slight bump in the runway surface. Although there was no headwind, he considered that there was still ample runway available in which to stop. However, to his surprise, as he

lowered the nosewheel onto the runway the aircraft pitched forward until its nose contacted the grass, after which it slid gently along the runway centreline to a halt. After checking that his passenger was not injured and switching off the magnetos and the battery, the pilot and passenger vacated the aircraft unaided.

In his report, the pilot stated that he held the nosewheel off during the bounce, and that there had been no indication to him that it had contacted the ground until

the aircraft finally pitched down onto its nose. He expressed the opinion that the landing had not been heavy, and was unable to explain why the gear had collapsed. However, witnesses saw the aircraft bounce several times, and the gear collapse upon touchdown from the final bounce. This last bounce was described by one witness as “the steepest”.

The engineer who recovered the aircraft reported that the nose leg oleo had failed in bending due to overload.