

Cessna F172M Skyhawk, G-BKLO

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/2004	Ref: EW/G2003/11/23	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cessna F172M Skyhawk, G-BKLO	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-E2D piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1975	
Date & Time (UTC):	27 November 2003 at 1505 hrs	
Location:	Stapleford Aerodrome, Essex	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Creases in forward bulkhead, lower fuselage skin,	Forward frame and forward interior floor panel
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	48 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	320 hours (of which 25 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 15 hours	
	Last 28 days - 6 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The pilot had taken off from Stapleford Airfield for a local cross country flight of around an hour. The weather conditions were good with a light southwesterly wind. On his return he joined the circuit on the downwind leg for Runway 22L. The first 400 metres of landing distance on this runway are asphalt and the remaining 677 metres are grass. As a consequence of the position of other traffic in the circuit the pilot turned onto a long final approach at 3 to 4 miles from the runway. He discovered that because he was now looking directly into the setting sun he was unable to identify the airfield or any known ground features so he decided to go-around.

The second circuit was flown closer to the airfield and the pilot turned onto final approach with the runway in sight at about 1 nm distance. When he started to round out and flare over the runway he was blinded by the glare of the sun and a heavy, bounced landing resulted. The pilot maintained an aft elevator input and the aircraft bounced several times more, whereupon he applied power and went around again. As the aircraft climbed away from the ground the pilot discovered that he now had only limited elevator authority. Using full power he flew a circuit at low level and positioned to land successfully on grass Runway 04L. On inspection the aircraft was found to have suffered significant damage.