

AAIB Bulletin No: 8/95

Ref: EW/G95/06/17

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-18-150 (Modified) Super Cub, G-BJCI

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-360-C2A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1958

Date & Time (UTC): 23 June 1995 at 1750 hrs

Location: Galewood Farm Gliding Site, Northumberland

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Damage to outboard section of left wing; left landing gear collapsed; engine mounts damaged and propeller bent; general damage to firewall and cockpit area

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 60 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 852 hours (of which 580 were on type)
Last 90 days - 8 hours
Last 28 days - 2 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was being used for glider towing; the engine had misfired and when checked on the ground, there had been a "minor mag drop". The pilot removed, cleaned and replaced the lower plug on the No 4 cylinder; this cured the problem. The aircraft was outside a hangar on the southeastern corner of the airfield and the pilot needed to taxi it a distance of about 900 metres, to the western end of the aircraft, to continue glider towing. The planned take-off direction was northeasterly and the surface wind was estimated as 060°/5 kt.

In order to warm the engine and reduce the risk of fouling of the newly cleaned plug, the pilot decided to apply full power and "do a short hop and land at the west end". The aircraft became airborne and flew about 10 feet agl on a westerly heading. As he was about to land, the pilot realised that he had left himself insufficient distance to stop safely so he applied full power and turned 90° left onto a southerly heading. He then decided to continue the turn onto a northeasterly heading in order to land on the prepared runway area. He reported that he pulled slightly harder to make the cut grass area and the aircraft stalled and the left wing dropped. Full power was applied and the control column was eased forward, but the pilot was unable to prevent the left wingtip hitting the ground. The aircraft landed heavily on the left main gear which collapsed; it then swung sharply left and come to rest in a northwesterly direction. The pilot, who was wearing full upper torso restraint, carried out the basic shut down actions and vacated without injury.