

## Piper PA-34-200-2 Seneca, G-BATR, 4 August 2002

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<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Piper PA-34-200-2 Seneca, G-BATR	
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	2 Lycoming LIO-360-C1E6 piston engines	
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1972	
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	4 August 2002 at 1010 hrs	
<b>Location:</b>	Woodchurch, Kent	
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	Private	
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	Crew - 1	Passengers - 3
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew - None	Passengers - None
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	Damaged beyond economic repair	
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	Basic Commercial Pilots Licence with Instructors Rating	
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	23 years	
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	699 hours (of which 10 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 15 hours	
	Last 28 days - 7 hours	
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone enquiries	

The pilot and three friends planned a flight from Biggin Hill, Kent to Woodchurch, Kent to attend an air display. Isolated heavy rain showers were forecast for the time of arrival, but the weather conditions were expected to improve as the day progressed. The wind was light but variable in the vicinity of storms.

Woodchurch is a private airstrip near Ashford. The airfield is 160 feet above mean sea level and has a single grass runway orientated 21/03. Runway 21 is 830 metres long with a slight upslope in the touchdown area, which changes to a downslope further along the runway, before becoming level at the 03 end. The grass had been cut short for the air display and the underlying surface was firm.

The flight from Biggin Hill progressed uneventfully but, on arrival at Woodchurch, the airfield was experiencing a heavy rain shower and the pilot held whilst waiting for conditions to improve. After two orbits the rain had eased, and the pilot positioned the aircraft for an approach to Runway 21. In his report he stated that the touchdown was normal and at the correct point and speed.

After touchdown the pilot raised the flaps, in accordance with normal procedures, and started braking. Initial retardation was slight but the deceleration seemed to cease with about one third of the runway remaining. The aircraft overran the landing strip and struck a hedge before coming to rest in the corner of an adjacent field. The pilot shut off the aircraft's fuel and electrics, and he and the passengers vacated the aircraft uninjured through the normal exits.

During an examination of the aircraft, it was not possible to inspect the aircraft's braking system, but the pilot reported that he had noticed skid marks on the grass runway leading up to the position where the aircraft came to rest. This would seem to indicate that the wheels were locked and that the brakes were therefore operating normally.

The aircraft was close to maximum landing weight, and the performance section of the aircraft manual indicates that the landing distance required from 50 feet on a dry tarmac surface is about 580 metres. CAA Safety Sense Leaflet 7B, Performance states that if *'grass is wet and very short, the surface may be slippery and (landing) distances may increase by up to 60%'*.