

AAIB Bulletin No: 8/94

Ref: EW/G94/01/14

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-161 Cherokee Warrior II, G-BPMR

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1984

Date & Time (UTC): 29 January 1994 at 1450 hrs

Location: Bishop's Tachbrook, Warwickshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 3

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Nose leg collapsed, propeller bent, cowling crushed

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 17 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 52 hours (all on type)
Last 90 days - N/K
Last 28 days - N/K

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was returning from Wellesbourne to Coventry with the pilot and three passengers on board when, after completing two turns over Warwick at 2,000 feet and flying on towards Coventry, the engine began to run roughly and then lost all power. The pilot applied carburettor heat and checked engine and fuel contents gauges, and the contents indicated sufficient fuel. He changed tanks and switched on the electric fuel pump. He then attempted to restart the engine, without success. By this stage the aircraft had descended to some 800 to 1,000 feet agl. The pilot selected a large field for a forced landing and transmitted a 'MAYDAY' call. He reported that he had to conduct a downwind approach into the field in order to avoid the nearby A40 road. The landing was carried out at about 70 kt and the pilot had to apply sufficient braking to avoid a barn. The aircraft came to a sudden stop at the end of the landing run due to the nosewheel digging into some soft ground, which caused collapse of the nose leg and bending of the propeller. The pilot and his passengers were uninjured, however, and evacuated the aircraft, the pilot having switched off the electrical system.

Subsequent inspection of the engine by a maintenance organisation found no defects which could be related to the engine failure. The pilot reported that there had been broken cloud at 2,200 feet and the temperature was +10°C. He considered that he may have experienced a fuel restriction or encountered carburettor icing. A meteorological aftercast quoted a temperature of + 6°C at 2,000 feet with 95% relative humidity, conditions which would be likely to cause serious induction icing at cruise power.