

Piper PA-28-161, G-BRJV

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/98 Ref: EW/G98/05/26 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-161, G-BRJV

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

Year of Manufacture: 1988

Date & Time (UTC): 17 May 1998 at 1100 hrs

Location: Kirkbride Airfield, Scotland

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 3

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Damage to front and rear spar attachments and to various left wing ribs. Left wing tip cover cracked and dents to leading edge of left wing

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 52 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 120 hours (of which 98 were on type)
Last 90 days - 3 hours
Last 28 days - 1 hour

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone enquiries by the AAIB

The pilot had flown with three passengers from Newcastle Airport to Kirkbride Airfield for a Fly-in; the weather was good with a light westerly wind. After about an hour on the ground, the pilot and his passengers boarded G-BRJV for the return flight. There were a lot of aircraft movements and, after some delays for traffic reasons, the pilot was cleared to enter the western end of Runway 28 and backtrack expeditiously. He turned tightly onto the runway to allow room for other aircraft exiting the runway. In so doing, he was aware that the left wing of the aircraft had struck a post. He continued taxiing to the beginning of the runway and stopped the aircraft to examine the damage.

The pilot noted a crack in the left wing tip cover and some dents on the leading edge. He checked that there were no loose panels and that he had full and free movements of his flying controls before restarting the engine and calling Kirkbride Radio for take-off clearance. The flight back to Newcastle was uneventful and the pilot detected no abnormal control or trim movements. After landing, the pilot reported the damage to his flying club.

The flying club made an initial assessment of the damage and asked an external engineering organisation to attend and arrange repair. However, when the incoming engineer saw the external damage he would not clear the aircraft to fly in that condition. Then, following road transportation to the repair agency, detailed examination revealed the true extent of damage.

AAIB Bulletin 12/96 contains a report of a fatal accident involving a Pierre Robin DR400/180 aircraft; the left wing separated in flight. There was evidence that the wing had suffered damage in a ground collision with a bale of hay. The investigation concluded that: "It is therefore entirely conceivable that the pilot may have been misled as to the extent of the damage sustained, finding only light scuff marks under the leading edge and believing that it was safe for him to make the return journey before having the wing professionally assessed."