

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Topsy Nipper T.66 Series 2, G-ARBP	
No & type of Engines:	1 Volkswagen 1834 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1960	
Date & Time (UTC):	7 October 2006 at 1555 hrs	
Location:	Seighford Airfield, Staffordshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to wing leading edges and propeller	
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	79 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	7,322 hours (of which 1,269 were on type) Last 90 days - 15 hours Last 28 days - 8 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

After engine start, accomplished by hand-swinging the propeller, the aircraft moved forward, displacing the main wheel chocks. It finally came to rest against a tree and fence post having damaged the wing leading edges and propeller. The pilot was uninjured.

History of the flight

Following some maintenance on the engine, the pilot moved the aircraft to a disused part of the airfield with the intention of carrying out an engine run. The aircraft was parked with the brakes applied and the main wheels chocked. Due to heavy rain the previous evening, the pan was wet and contaminated with mud, and several clumps of moss.

Engine start, on this aircraft, required the hand-swinging of the propeller so, as a safety measure, the pilot had set the engine throttle by inserting a 'peg', which limited the throttle movement and thus restricted the engine to about 1,200 rpm. After inserting the peg, the pilot placed a map in a stowage located close to the throttle, and he then hand-swung the propeller to start the engine. Once the engine fired, the aircraft started to move forward, displacing the wheel chocks. The aircraft continued to move forward, striking tree branches and a fence post, before finally coming to rest. The damage was limited to the leading edges of both wings and propeller. The pilot was not injured.

The pilot thought that it was possible that when he stowed his map he may have knocked the throttle; despite the 'peg' being installed the throttle lever could still move forward and attain about 1,800 rpm. Due to the wet ground, the wheels and brakes had become 'wetted', reducing the effectiveness of the brakes.

This, in combination with the possible higher throttle setting, allowed the aircraft to move forward once the engine started. The other factor was the wet and muddy ground and the moss, which allowed the chocks to slip and move away from the main wheels once the aircraft started to move.