

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-161 Cherokee Warrior III, G-WARY	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1997 (Serial no: 2842024)	
Date & Time (UTC):	16 February 2018 at 0940 hrs	
Location:	Shoreham Airport, West Sussex	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	G-WARY wing tip and lower skin damaged, engine shock-load. G-WARZ, wing tip and major disruption to rear fuselage	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	77 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	560 hours (of which 475 were on type) Last 90 days - 14 hours Last 28 days - 1 hour	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further inquiries made by the AAIB	

Synopsis

G-WARY had been parked to the right of a similar PA-28, G-WARZ, and was being taxied by its pilot, occupying the right seat, to the fuel pumps in preparation for a planned cross-country flight. The aircraft (G-WARY) moved forward and the pilot commenced a left turn but, rather than straighten up after having turned through 90° as he intended, G-WARY continued its turn, colliding and becoming interlocked with the parked G-WARZ, causing it severe damage. The pilot was uninjured and considers that he may have applied more left braking than he anticipated. However, his position in the right seat, and therefore his fluency with the throttle and the position of his feet on the rudder pedals, appear to have been the factors in the loss of control of the aircraft.

Sequence of events

The pilot was familiar with the aircraft and the layout of the apron at Shoreham Airport. His intention was to taxi from where G-WARY was parked on the line, next to G-WARZ, to the fuel pumps. As the aircraft moved forward he applied left brake and a small amount of power, carrying out a 90° left turn. He was about to straighten up when, to his surprise, the aircraft continued turning to the left. Before he could close the throttle and apply the brakes, the aircraft left wing caught and drove under the left wing of G-WARZ, turning G-WARY through 180°. It then continued forwards towards the left side of the stationary G-WARZ

until the turning propeller penetrated its rear fuselage and brought everything to a stop. The aircraft were now interlocked and substantial damage was caused to G-WARZ, as shown in Figures 1 and 2.



Figure 1



Figure 2

G-WARY and G-WARZ interlocked
(Pictures courtesy of Shoreham Airport)

Pilot's and instructor's observations

The pilot considered that he may have inadvertently applied more left brake than was required or intended and, before he had a chance to close the throttle, G-WARY had collided with G-WARZ. Shortly after the accident the pilot flew with an instructor. As part of the flight the instructor observed him taxiing the aircraft to understand how the accident had occurred. The instructor noticed that the pilot's foot positioning on the pedals, with his heels resting on the cockpit floor, was not ideal for positive and effective brake control. The pilot considers that this, and his unfamiliarity with operating the aircraft from the right seat, were significant factors.

AAIB comment

The pilot was the sole occupant of the aircraft and was in the right seat. In this type of aircraft it is usual for the pilot in command (PIC) to occupy the left seat and operate the throttle with the right hand. The pilot had 475 hours as PIC on type and would be more used to controlling the throttle from the left seat. The pilot's belief that he applied more left brake than was required could also mean that there was insufficient right braking applied, leading to an imbalance. This was probably due to a combination of his seating position and the position of his feet on the rudder pedals. It is therefore likely that these aspects affected his fluency with the throttle and brakes and were significant causal factors during the rapid onset of the collision.