

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-38-112 Tomahawk, G-RVRR	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-235-L2C piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1979 (Serial no: 38-79A0199)	
Date & Time (UTC):	15 May 2018 at 1600 hrs	
Location:	Compton Abbas Airfield, Wiltshire	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damaged beyond economic repair	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	27 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	656 hours (of which 626 were on type) Last 90 days - 127 hours Last 28 days - 57 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the aircraft commander	

Synopsis

During a second attempted touch-and-go on grass Runway 08 at Compton Abbas Airfield, the aircraft failed to climb and struck a hedge. Both occupants were uninjured.

History of the flight

The aircraft commander, who held a Flight Instructor rating, was undertaking a grass runway familiarisation flight and currency check on another pilot. As part of this, the pilot-under-check planned a navigation exercise from Exeter to Compton Abbas, an airfield situated at 811 ft amsl with an 803 m long grass runway orientated 08/26.

The aircraft, at near the Maximum Takeoff Weight permissible, departed Exeter at 1502 hrs and arrived overhead Compton Abbas approximately one hour later. The weather was fine with a 10-15 kt wind from 350° and a temperature of 16°C. The pilot-under-check flew the first approach and landing to Runway 08 with two stages of flap selected. However, as the touchdown point was long into the runway, he immediately applied full power and went around. Two pilots on the ground also witnessed this touch-and-go and they estimated that the aircraft touched down in the last 200 m of the runway.

On the second approach, the aircraft commander stated that the pilot-under-check landed the aircraft near to the beginning of the runway intending to perform a touch-and-go. After touchdown, the pilot-under-check selected one stage of flap for a short field takeoff and

applied full power. However, the aircraft commander stated that although the aircraft accelerated and rotated normally, the aircraft barely climbed, and it collided with the top of a hedge that was over 400 m beyond the end of the runway. After the aircraft had come to rest, both occupants, who were wearing 3-point harnesses, were able to vacate the aircraft without assistance.

This landing was observed by a Flight Instructor who was approximately abeam the Runway 08 threshold, near some airfield hangars. He estimated that the aircraft was at 50 ft aal, 150 m beyond the landing threshold, although he did not see the aircraft touch down as he lost sight of it behind the hangars.

The aircraft commander is unsure why the aircraft failed to climb but, although he considers them unlikely, stated that possible factors may have been carburettor icing (despite the engine not appearing to run roughly) or an area of local sink caused by the interaction of the crosswind with the hill on which the airfield is situated.