

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Aeroprakt A22-L Foxbat, G-CESI	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912ULS piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2007 (Serial no: PFA 317A-14643)	
Date & Time (UTC):	22 October 2018 at 1553 hrs	
Location:	Colwall Farmstrip, Herefordshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to the nose landing gear, propeller, fire wall and tail wheel	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	63 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	531 hours (of which 185 were on type) Last 90 days - 6 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

Whilst landing, the aircraft struck a recently felled tree trunk causing the aircraft to pitch forward and land on its nosewheel.

History of the flight

The pilot was flying G-CESI (Figure 1) from RNAS Yeovilton to Colwall Farm in Herefordshire with one passenger onboard. Visibility was good with no significant cloud and a light northerly breeze.

Following a normal approach to the north-easterly runway, the pilot flared the aircraft but the tailwheel struck a recently felled tree trunk causing the aircraft to pitch forward and land on its nosewheel. The nose landing gear collapsed and the aircraft slid to a halt. The pilot and passenger were able to exit the aircraft without injury.

Prior to the flight, the pilot was aware that the tree had been felled recently and that the remains might present a hazard. However, the remaining tree trunk was obscured on approach by a hedgerow. The pilot reported that he had flown a lower approach than he had previously flown because the tree was no longer present; this brought his aiming point closer to the hedge. He further reported that low sun made the field appear shorter, which had encouraged him to land as short as possible. The shorter landing caused the aircraft to clip the obscured tree trunk.



Figure 1

G-CESI before the accident

Additionally, the pilot thought that a recent family bereavement may have affected his capacity during this flight.

This accident highlights the potential hazards of flying to farm strips. The CAA publishes guidance on flying to farm strips in the CAA Safety Sense Leaflet 12 - '*Strip Flying*'¹.

Footnote

¹ <http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/20130121SSL12.pdf> (assessed 4 December 2018)