

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Gemini Flash IIA, G-MTIA	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 503 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1987	
Date & Time (UTC):	18 April 2007 at 1700 hrs	
Location:	Caernarfon Airport, Wales	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to keel, front strut and left side strut	
Commander's Licence:	Student pilot	
Commander's Age:	69 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	65 hours (of which 2 were on type) Last 90 days - 5 hours Last 28 days - 3 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

During his first solo flight, the student misjudged the flare and the aircraft landed heavily and bounced. The student initiated a go-around and during the subsequent circuit the aircraft handled normally. On landing, the front strut and the trike keel failed, and the aircraft came to a halt on the runway.

History of the flight

The aircraft was being flown by its owner, who was a student pilot on his first solo flight. The weather was good, with a light wind and good visibility. The student had just completed two circuits for Runway 26 with his instructor; the circuits and landings were assessed as satisfactory. The student was then briefed for a solo flight using the same runway.

The solo circuit progressed normally until after completing the final turn. The student then decided that rather than flying the circuit as he had done when flying with his instructor, he would remain high above an area on the approach which he considered might contain turbulence. He reported that after the area of possible turbulence, he steepened the approach so he could land in the normal place. As he came over the threshold the airspeed and rate of descent were higher than normal. The student reported that he made insufficient allowance for this increased rate of descent during his landing flare. This resulted in a very heavy landing from which the aircraft bounced up to a height of around 20 ft. The student applied power and initiated a go-around.

During the subsequent circuit the aircraft handling was normal. The next approach was flown with a normal approach angle. During the landing, there was no cushioning from the suspension and the front strut and the trike keel broke. The aircraft came to a halt and the pilot exited the aircraft unhurt.

The pilot considers that there may have been a pre-existing partial crack in the keel which may have contributed to its failure during the heavy landing.