

Piper PA-28-161, G-BRRM

AAIB Bulletin No: 3/2001

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Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-161, G-BRRM
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1989
Date & Time (UTC):	16 January 2001 at 1345 hrs
Location:	Rochester Airport, Kent
Type of Flight:	Training
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2 - Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 2 (Minor) - Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damaged beyond economic repair: minor damage to vehicles on the ground
Commander's Licence:	Basic Commercial Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	30 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	580 hours (of which 300 were on type) Last 90 days - 70 hours Last 28 days - 26 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft joined the circuit at Rochester Airport to practice touch-and-go landings on Runway 34. The grass runway surface was generally wet but possibly waterlogged in parts: the Landing Distance Available (LDA) is 773 metres. The surface wind was variable at 5 kt and there was no other significant weather.

The handling pilot held a Private Pilot's Licence and had a total of 212 hrs, 100 hrs of which were on type. He was doing a routine 6 monthly dual check.

When the aircraft was on the base leg, the instructor suggested that the pilot could use the first approach for "sighting purposes only" and go-around into the lefthand visual circuit. However, when the aircraft was on final approach, on the centreline and at the correct height and speed, it was decided to continue for a touch-and-go landing. The first two stages of flap were selected and the airspeed was reduced to about 70 kt. On landing, the aircraft initially "floated" but, the instructor reported, made a normal touchdown just before the midpoint of the runway.

The instructor lowered the flap lever to select the first stage of flap but missed the gate and selected the flap up. The handling pilot then applied full power; at this point the instructor considered that there was sufficient runway available. However, it soon became apparent that the airspeed was not increasing normally and they were nearing the end of the runway. The instructor took control and flew the aircraft off the runway; the airspeed was about 50 kt. Shortly afterwards, the left main landing gear struck the perimeter fence and detached. The aircraft lost speed, veered to the left and came to rest on some bushes and a wire mesh fence. Both occupants were wearing lap and diagonal upper torso restraint and escaped, with minor injuries, through the door.

In his ATC Occurrence Report, the FISO stated that the aircraft touched down with about half the LDA remaining ie about 390 metres. The instructor considered that the float before touchdown, water on the runway and possibly a slight tailwind were factors in this accident. However, the situation was aggravated by the fact that land flap had not been used and the instructor had inadvertently selected the flap up for the subsequent take off.