No: 6/86 Ref: 1b

Aircraft type

Piper PA-28-161 G-BFDK

and registration:

No & Type of Engines: One Lycoming 0-320-D3G piston engine

Year of Manufacture:

1977

Date and time (GMT):

4 June 1986 at 1101 hrs

Location:

1½ miles ESE Oddington, Oxfordshire

Type of flight:

Training

Persons on board:

Crew — 1

Passengers — None

Injuries:

Crew — None

Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Nose landing gear, cowling and bulkhead. Right wing tip.

Commander's Licence:

Student Pilot

Commander's Age:

20 years

Commander's total

flying experience:

35 hours (of which 34 were on type)

Information Source:

Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot.

The student pilot had been authorised for a general handling flight in the Oxford area. After approximately 45 minutes of flight and during his return to Kidlington Airfield he completed the rejoin checks. These included switching on the fuel pump and selecting the fuel from the right tank containing 15 gallons to the left tank which had more than 20 gallons. The pilot reported that, after approximately 20 seconds, he heard a dull thud from the engine which then stopped. Fuel was selected back to the right tank but as the engine would not restart the pilot carried out a forced landing. The field in which he landed was very wet and the nose wheel sank into the soft ground causing the nose landing gear to collapse. The pilot was uninjured.

Investigation by the operator showed that there was no fuel in the carburettor. Subsequent examination of the fuel system did not reveal any faults or contamination and confirmed that the fuel contents were as indicated. The engine has since been run satisfactorily to full power on static test. The fuel tank selector is located on the left side panel forward of the pilot's seat and has 3 positions — OFF/L tank/R tank. A button on the selector cover must be depressed and held down to allow the OFF selection to be made.