

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cessna 172S Skyhawk, G-WACM	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-360-L2A piston engine	
Category:	1.3	
Year of Manufacture:	2001	
Date & Time (UTC):	19 July 2005 at 0920 hrs	
Location:	Wycombe Air Park, High Wycombe	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to lower portion of firewall and distortion of right-hand landing gear leg. Minor damage to aft fuselage from tail strikes	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	36 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	107 hours (of which 35 were on type) Last 90 days - 7 hours Last 28 days - 0.7 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

History of the flight

The pilot was taking a friend for a flight from Wycombe Air Park. The weather was good, with broken cumulus cloud at 3,000 ft and excellent visibility. The wind speed was from 270° at 12 kt, gusting to 20 kt.

The pilot was a week beyond his '30 day' club currency so he flew in the circuit with an instructor for three circuits before setting off with his passenger on a return flight to Silverstone. This local flying took about 40 minutes and the pilot then returned to Wycombe and set up for an approach to Runway 25R, which has a length of 735 m and an asphalt surface. The pilot reports that the

approach was normal but, because of the gusting wind, he used an approach speed of 75 to 80 kt. He considered the approach was stable and that he was just slightly to the left of the runway centreline with the flaps set to 20°. Clearance to land was given at about the time at which he crossed the M40 motorway (about 200 m from the threshold) and his airspeed at the threshold was close to 75 kt, which was above the recommended approach speed. The late ATC call was due to another landing aircraft vacating the runway.

Both the pilot and other witnesses noted that the aircraft touched down nose first and that this resulted in a substantial 'bounce'. The aircraft drifted to the left of the runway in a series of about five further bounces before the pilot was able to bring it to a halt on the grass taxiway, between the asphalt and grass runways. Neither the pilot nor the passenger was injured. The airport emergency service responded promptly and the aircraft was made safe.

Causal factors

The pilot considers that his approach speed was too high and that he should have initiated a go-around, either

before the landing or after the first bounce. He considered that contributory factors in the accident were both his lack of recent flying and some degree of distraction from the previous landing aircraft still on the runway and the resulting late clearance to land. The instructor who had performed the currency check commented that the pilot had flown the three circuits well. She suggested that the poor later landing had been partly due to adding too much speed for the gusty wind, as the pilot appeared to have added 10 to 15 kt rather than a conventional 5 kt. The instructor also commented that the flying club prefers the full 30° flap for landings, the setting recommended by Cessna.