

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Miles M65 Gemini 1A, G-AKHP	
No & Type of Engines:	2 Blackburn Cirrus Minor II piston engines	
Year of Manufacture:	1947	
Date & Time (UTC):	27 December 2010 at 1530 hrs	
Location:	North Coates Airfield, Lincolnshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to propellers, engine cowlings and flaps; engines shock-loaded	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	61 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	3,388 hours (of which 93 were on type) Last 90 days - 4 hours Last 28 days - 2 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The pilot did not select the landing gear down prior to touchdown. The aircraft settled on its engine cowlings and slid along the grass runway for a short distance before coming to rest.

History of the flight

The pilot had undertaken a local flight from the airstrip where the aircraft was based, returning some thirty minutes later after an uneventful flight. He carried out what he believed was a normal approach, but at touchdown the aircraft settled onto its underside and the pilot realised the landing gear was not down. The aircraft slid for a short distance along the grass runway before coming to a halt. The pilot, who was

uninjured, made the aircraft safe before leaving the cockpit.

Additional information

The aircraft has a fixed tail wheel and retractable main landing gear whose maximum operating speed is 100 mph. Normally the main landing gear would take approximately 20 seconds to lower and its position when locked would be indicated by two landing gear position lights in the cockpit. The aircraft had a flap limiting speed of 75 mph and, prior to lowering them, the pilot would normally lower the landing gear during the approach to help decelerate the aircraft.

The pilot reported he did not use a written checklist as the checks were straightforward and he was familiar with the aircraft. An unusual braking system and lack of engine fuel mixture controls also meant the normal ‘mixture, gear and brakes’ final approach check he used on other types was not appropriate to this aircraft.

The pilot could think of no reason why he overlooked the landing gear during the approach. There had been no distractions and he was familiar with both the aircraft and the landing strip. The weather had been “good”, with light wind and a 2,000 ft cloud base.

Comment

The pilot reported that normally he flew aircraft types with fixed landing gear. Equally, benign conditions and familiarity with an aircraft and surroundings can lead to unexpected errors. Either factor might have contributed to the pilot’s oversight on this occasion. The pilot reported that he will make use of written checklists when the aircraft is returned to flying condition.