

Piper PA-28RT-201, G-BPZM

AAIB Bulletin No: 11/2000 **Ref: EW/G2000/09/17** **Category: 1.3**

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28RT-201, G-BPZM

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming IO-360-C1C6 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1979

Date & Time (UTC): 18 September 2000 at 1342 hrs

Location: Exeter Airport

Type of Flight: Training

Persons on Board: Crew - 2 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Superficial damage to underside of fuselage and propeller badly damaged

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence with Instructor Rating

Commander's Age: 68 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 20,000 hours (of which 508 were on type)

Last 90 days - 40 hours

Last 28 days - 5 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft had returned to the circuit following a local area, training sortie. An instructor and student pilot were carrying out a series of 'touch and go' landings on Runway 26 of which three had already been completed to a high standard. The weather was, surface wind 220°/03 kt, visibility 10 km, no significant weather, cloud FEW at 600 feet, SCT at 3,000 feet, temperature +16°C and dew point +10°C.

On the fourth circuit another aircraft was cleared to 'enter and backtrack' the runway and so it was decided to extend the downwind leg and carry out a flapless approach for a 'touch and go' once the preceding aircraft had cleared the runway. On turning finals, the other aircraft was cleared to take off and the instructor informed ATC they would 'continue for a go around' which was approved. The departing aircraft became airborne and the instructor on late finals requested and was cleared for a 'touch and go'. The aircraft made a normal flare but settled onto the runway with the landing gear retracted and skidded to a halt. The aircraft accident procedures were initiated and the airport Rescue and Fire Fighting Service attended immediately. The emergency shutdown drills were completed and both pilots departed the aircraft through the normal exit.

The training organisation had only recently acquired the Piper Arrow to complement their existing Beechcraft Duchess and Piper Warrior aircraft. In order to try and harmonise operations, the lowering of the Arrow landing gear was left until the base leg, which was where the Duchess landing gear was normally selected. Since, for training purposes, many landings by the Duchess were made under asymmetric power, the landing gear was not lowered until a landing on the runway was assured, and this was determined on the base leg. The operator has revised the procedures, which now requires the landing gear to be lowered at the beginning of the downwind leg.

The instructor concluded that there had been two main contributory factors leading to the accident. He had allowed himself to become distracted by the other traffic and developed a feeling of confidence in his student, who had demonstrated a high level of competence and had been performing the checks well.