

No: 5/88

Ref: 1c

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Piper PA-28-160, G-ATIS

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Lycoming O-320-D2A piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1965

**Date and Time (UTC):** 2 March 1988 at 1230 hrs

**Location:** Draycott Grass Strip, Chiseldon, near Swindon

**Type of Flight:** Private (pleasure)

**Persons on Board:** Crew -1 Passengers -None

**Injuries:** Crew -1 (minor) Passengers -N/A

**Nature of Damage:** Substantial, to propeller, forward fuselage, left wing, fin and rudder

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence with IMC Rating

**Commander's Age:** 68 years

**Commander's Total Flying Experience:** 983 hours (of which approximately 430 were on type)

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

After a fifty minute local flight, the pilot intended to land back on Runway 36 at the farm strip where the aircraft was based. The runway was grassed, 533 metres long and largely surrounded by barley fields. The pilot estimated the wind as 12 kt from the west, which, although at right angles to the landing direction, was within the cross-wind limit for the aircraft.

The aircraft was inadvertently landed about 2 metres to the right of the right-hand edge of the landing strip in a field of young barley, which had grown to about the same height as the grass on the strip and was the same colour. The pilot reported that, at a ground speed of about 20 miles per hour while he was applying gentle left rudder to steer the aircraft onto the strip, having realised his error, the nose wheel hit a rut, which was possibly frozen. The left wing contacted the ground and the aircraft inverted. The harness, including diagonal upper torso restraint, held, and the pilot sustained only minor injury and evacuated the aircraft via the cockpit window. There was no fire.

The pilot noted that he had been flying from this strip for many years and estimated that he had made around one thousand landings there. The runway was not marked, and the pilot has made suggestions for improvements in this respect. He believes that cloud shadow effects on the even and similar-looking surfaces of the runway and barley fields, may have misled him, and that familiarity may also have been a factor.