

Piper PA-28-161, G-BSXB

AAIB Bulletin No: 3/2001

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Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-161, G-BSXB

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-D3G piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1984

Date & Time (UTC): 23 August 2000 at 1820 hrs

Location: Gloucestershire Airport

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Propeller damage and engine shock loading check

Commander's Licence: Student Pilot

Commander's Age: 44 years

Commander's Flying Experience: Unknown

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form completed by the pilot and his instructor, plus telephone enquiries

The student pilot was carrying out solo landing practice to tarmac Runway 04 with a surface wind of 080° at 10 kt. Just before touchdown the student thought he was slightly off the centreline and near to the grass on the right side of the runway, with the aircraft heading into wind. As it touched down, the aircraft swung further to the right and it was obvious to the pilot that he had insufficient time and space in which to steer the aircraft back towards the runway centreline. The pilot accepted the situation and braked to halt in a straight line. The aircraft went off the runway on to the grass and came to a halt after the intersection with Runway 36. During its 20 metre traverse of the grass, the aircraft's nose wheel ran over a rabbit hole which caused the aircraft's nose to drop sufficiently for the propeller to strike the ground resulting in minor 'nick' damage to one blade, but no damage to the landing gear. On reflection, the student stated that the right main wheel touched down first and he thought he might have touched the toe brake because he had a lot of right rudder applied.

The student pilot's instructor stated that the student flew a normal circuit pattern and approach. The instructor saw the aircraft leave the runway and come to a halt so he went to the aircraft and inspected it for major damage. Finding none he taxied the aircraft to the maintenance hangar for a detailed damage inspection.

After the accident the student pilot went abroad to work and the AAIB were unable to contact him. The pilot's instructor submitted the report.