

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-140 Cherokee, G-ATPN	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-E2A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1966	
Date & Time (UTC):	2 May 2011 at 1240 hrs	
Location:	Norwich Airport, Norfolk	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - 1 (Serious)
Nature of Damage:	None	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	58 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	91 hours (of which 63 were on type) Last 90 days - 8 hours Last 28 days - 2 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and subsequent AAIB enquiries	

Synopsis

After landing at Norwich Airport with a single stage of flap selected, the pilot omitted to retract the flaps when completing the 'After Landing' checklist. As a result the flaps were not secured. When the passenger exited the aircraft she stepped on the flap and fell to the ground, sustaining a serious fracture to one leg. The pilot considered that the accident was the result of the high workload caused by the challenging conditions experienced during landing and operating at an unfamiliar airfield, which had distracted him from properly following the checklist.

History of the flight

Following an uneventful flight from Southend, the pilot selected one stage of flap during approach to Norwich Airport. After landing, he taxied the aircraft as instructed by ATC and was marshalled on to the parking area. After the engine had been shut down, the passenger exited the aircraft onto the right wing and while reaching for the hand grip to aid her step down from the wing, she fell to the ground. It became apparent that the flaps had not been raised from the first stage position and were therefore unsecured. As the passenger stepped on the flap, it moved downwards, causing her to fall. She sustained an injury to her left leg, which was subsequently diagnosed as a serious fracture requiring operative treatment.

Discussion

The pilot reported that the flight to Norwich was the most distant “land away” he had attempted since gaining his PPL. He was progressively attempting longer and more complex flights in order to gain experience, and this was the first time he had landed at Norwich. Runway 09 was in use and the reported wind was 060° at 18 kt. The pilot found the landing challenging at his level of experience, given the wind conditions and the fact that Norwich was an unfamiliar airport. He had initially considered a flapless approach, but then elected to select one stage of flap. He described the landing as safe, but heavier than he generally achieved. In addition, taxiing at an unfamiliar airfield and the new experience of being marshalled onto the parking area completely occupied his attention up to the point where the engine was shut down. While he recalled completing the ‘*After Landing*’ and ‘*Engine Shutdown*’ checks, the pilot acknowledged that he clearly missed the ‘*Flaps UP*’ item. He reported that he may have treated this checklist item superficially as he believed the

flaps were already retracted. He did not recall touching the flap control, and a quick glance out of the window reinforced his belief that the flaps were retracted as the flap appeared to be aligned with the aileron. The pilot and passenger had flown together on a number of occasions and both were familiar with the specific aircraft. The passenger was accustomed to exiting the aircraft, in the manner adopted on this occasion, having done so safely on numerous occasions.

The pilot considered that the accident was the result of high workload caused by the challenging conditions during landing and operating at an unfamiliar airfield, which had distracted him from following the checklist properly. In addition, the fact that he had initially considered a flapless approach may have led to a mindset that the flaps were already up. In order to prevent a similar occurrence in the future, the pilot has added a further item to ensure the flaps are up, to the ‘*After Shutdown*’ section of his checklist.