

Cessna 172S Skyhawk, G-UFCG

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/2004	Ref: EW/G2004/01/04	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cessna 172S Skyhawk, G-UFCG	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-360-L2A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2003	
Date & Time (UTC):	16 January 2004 at 1240 hrs	
Location:	Newtownards Airfield, Northern Ireland	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to tail of aircraft plus crease in firewall and associated damage to underside of forward fuselage	
Commander's Licence:	Pilot under training	
Commander's Age:	53 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	70 hours (of which 14 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 14 hours	
	Last 28 days - 14 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Earlier on the morning of the accident flight the student had conducted two flights with his instructor. The first of these lasted for more than an hour and consisted of circuit work, including crosswind landings and glide approaches. After a break of approximately 30 minutes the aircraft took off for the second dual flight, which consisted of two standard circuits. The instructor then sent the student off on what was to be his first solo flight in this type of aircraft, although he had achieved approximately 10 hours solo time on Piper PA-28 aircraft. Runway 34 was in use, and the surface wind was reported as 330°-350° at 8 kt.

The first circuit, including the landing and go-around, was uneventful, as were the subsequent circuit and final approach. However, as the pilot flared the aircraft prior to landing it sank heavily onto the runway before bouncing into the air again. Three or four additional bounces ensued before the pilot was able to regain control and bring the aircraft to a halt. The instructor had been observing the proceedings and noted that one of the bounces had resulted in a heavy nose-wheel contact with the runway. This was subsequently found to have caused a crease in the engine firewall, to which the nose leg was attached, together with some associated wrinkling in the skin on the underside of the forward fuselage.

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The pilot attributed the incident to his inexperience and to his overreaction to the initial bounce.