

Aircraft Type and Registration: Rutan Varieze, G-TIMB

No & Type of Engines: 1 Continental O-200A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1983

Date & Time (UTC): 23 September 1995 at 1059 hrs

Location: Shoreham Airport, West Sussex

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Minor damage to underside of forward fuselage and to nosewheel strut

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 43 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 10,300 hours (of which 353 were on type)
Last 90 days - 110 hours
Last 28 days - 52 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot was giving short familiarisation flights from Shoreham Airport; the weather was good with a surface wind of 330°/10 kt. ATC was very busy and there were long waiting periods between trips. At the end of his third flight, the pilot made an approach to Runway 03 and had been cleared to make a short landing and subsequent backtrack along the runway. He made a smooth landing and, after lowering the nosewheel, commenced maximum braking; shortly afterwards, the nose leg collapsed. Following the aircraft recovery, the pilot could find no obvious reason for the collapse. He considered that the nosewheel may have bounced slightly during the application of maximum braking and this may have caused the failure. However, he had previously repaired a nosewheel bracket for a permit renewal and surmised that this bracket may have moved, causing the collapse. The bracket was so badly damaged that he could not determine whether it had moved prior to the accident.