

Piper PA-34-200, G-TEST

AAIB Bulletin No:	10/98	Ref:	EW/G98/06/36	Category:	1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-34-200, G-TEST				
No & Type of Engines:	2 Lycoming IO-360-C1E6 piston engine				
Year of Manufacture:	1974				
Date & Time (UTC):	27 June 1998 at 1300 hrs				
Location:	Stapleford Tawney Airfield, Essex				
Type of Flight:	Private				
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - 3				
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - None				
Nature of Damage:	Damaged nosewheel				
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence				
Commander's Age:	25 years				
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,216 hours (of which 224 were on type)				
	Last 90 days - 138 hours				
	Last 28 days - 52 hours				
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot				

The pilot had planned a private flight from Stapleford Tawney Airfield, Essex. When he returned the runway in use was Runway 22L. This runway is 1,077 metres in length, the first 610 metres has an asphalt surface and the remainder is grass; there is also a displaced threshold leaving only 440 metres of the asphalt surface available for landing aircraft. There was no significant cloud or weather and the reported surface wind was 240 /14 kt. Whilst on the downwind leg the pilot selected the landing gear down and confirmed that he had three green lights indicating that the gear was down and locked. The nosegear position was also checked via the mirror on the left engine cowling and the three green lights were confirmed when the aircraft was on short finals. After a normal landing on the asphalt surface and when the aircraft was at moderate taxi speed, the pilot vacated the runway to the left onto a grass area where he stopped and completed the after landing checks. He then continued to taxi at a slow pace and after approximately 100 metres the nosewheel collapsed. As the pilot shutdown the engines he was aware that the unsafe gear warning horn was sounding. The pilot informed ATC, completed the shutdown procedures and evacuated the aircraft with the passengers. The airfield fire and rescue services attended promptly. An engineering inspection by the maintenance agency revealed that the nose gear drag link had been bent prior to the accident, this had affected the geometric locking and allowed the gear to collapse. It was not possible to ascertain when this item had become damaged.

