

Piper PA-38-112 Tomahawk, G-BNYK

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/2004	Ref: EW/G2004/05/01	Category: 1.3
Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-38-112 Tomahawk, G-BNYK	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-235-L2C piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1982	
Date & Time (UTC):	4 May 2004 at 1525 hrs	
Location:	Full Sutton Airfield, South Yorkshire	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Nose wheel damaged	
Commander's Licence:	Student under supervision	
Commander's Age:	56 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	19 hours (of which 13 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 16 hours	
	Last 28 days - 4 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The student pilot was being instructed for the purposes of obtaining a Private Pilot's Licence. After completing five uneventful dual circuits, the instructor asked if he would like to try one solo circuit. The pilot agreed, feeling that this was within his capabilities and the instructor disembarked the aircraft to observe the flight from the ground. The weather conditions at the time were fine, with nil wind.

The takeoff, circuit and approach to land were satisfactory. As the aircraft passed over the displaced threshold of Runway 22, the pilot reduced power to idle and proceeded to flare. The aircraft landed heavily and bounced, but as the bounce did not feel any worse than previous ones he had experienced, he continued with the landing. The second bounce was more violent and was followed by further bounces. The aircraft eventually came to rest just off the right hand side of the runway, with the nose and right main wheel in a ploughed field. The pilot was uninjured and exited the aircraft to inspect it. The nosewheel fork was bent and the oleo had collapsed, but the engine and propeller appeared to be undamaged.

The pilot believed that the cause of the accident was his initiating the flare too late and then not maintaining control, allowing the nose to drop after the first bounce. With hindsight, he felt that he should have opened the throttle and executed a go-around. After the accident he completed a satisfactory circuit with the instructor in another aircraft.

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The instructor agreed with the pilot's account of the flight, although he felt that the landing appeared to be heavier than normal and that the bounces may have been aggravated by pilot-induced oscillations.