AAIB Bulletin No: 12/94 **Ref: EW/G94/10/17** **Category: 2.3**

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Campbell Cricket, G-GYRO	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 532 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1991	
Date & Time (UTC):	15 October 1994 at 1645 hrs	
Location:	Weston Zoyland Airfield, Somerset	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - Minor	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Nosewheel collapse; impact damage to rotor blades and rotor head; propeller destroyed	
Commander's Licence:	Student Pilot	
Commander's Age:	51 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	72 hours (of which 12 were on type) Last 90 days - 8 hours Last 28 days - 6 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted jointly by the pilot and his instructor	

The weather at Weston Zoyland was fine but the total lack of any surface wind was a handicap to gyroplanes without pre-rotator equipment such as G-GYRO because of the difficulty in achieving a reasonable rotor speed before beginning the take-off ground roll. The problem was exacerbated to some extent by division of the tarmac runway into two sections: one for gyroplanes and another for model aircraft.

After some 3 1/2 hours of training that day, interspersed with breaks, the student had progressed through four training sessions to the stage of 'high hops' which involved taking off and climbing to about 100 feet agl before reducing power and landing straight ahead. On the final 'hop' the student became airborne before the take-off safety marker and climbed to about 100 feet. In the climb the airspeed was slightly higher than during previous hops and the aircraft penetrated more runway. On seeing the shorter runway length ahead in which to land, the student substantially reduced both engine power and aircraft pitch attitude resulting in a steep approach. The aircraft touched down heavily and nosewheel first before rolling to the left whereupon the rotor and propeller struck the ground. The pilot suffered minor abrasions but was otherwise uninjured.

The student's instructor stated that despite the presence of the model aircraft and the lack of wind, there was sufficient runway length for the 'high hops'. In his opinion, the student's concern that he might overshoot the end of the runway led him to reduce power too much at too low a height. A heavy landing was then inevitable but the aircraft would not probably not have suffered severe structural damage had it remained upright.