North American T-6G Harvard, G-BKRA

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INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	North American T-6G Harvard, G-BKRA
No & Type of Engines:	1 Pratt & Whitney R1340-AN1 piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1951
Date & Time (UTC):	14 March 2000 at 1150 hrs
Location:	Leeds Bradford International Airport, Yorkshire
Type of Flight:	Training
Persons on Board:	Crew 2 - Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew None - Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Minor damage to starboard wing tip. Possible undercarriage damage
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilots Licence
Commander's Age:	36 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	4,500 hours (of which 150 were on type) Last 90 days - 150 hours Last 28 days - 70 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Theaircraft was to depart from Leeds Bradford Airport and carry out a one hourtype familiarisation flight for a student pilot. The commander occupied the front seat and the student was seatedin the rear. The actual weather at thetime the aircraft taxied was wind 280°/20 to 30 kt with the direction varyingbetween 280° and 320°.

Theaircraft was to depart from Runway 32 and was cleared to enter and, ifrequired, to back track Runway 14. Thepilot chose to use the maximum runway length and commenced taxiing along Runway14. Although the wind speed was higherthan forecast no control difficulties were experienced and the aircraft feltstable. In order to expedite the backtrack the pilot increased his speed which although faster than normal did notseem excessive. Shortly afterincreasing the speed a marked tail wheel shimmy developed. In order to avoid damage to the tail wheelunit the pilot gently eased the controls forward to what he considered was apoint just beyond neutral, and almost immediately the tail wheel unlockedmaking it free to castor. Given thestrength and direction of the tail wind component the aircraft immediatelyground looped to the right through 270°.

TheFlight Manual for the Harvard gives the following guidance for DownwindTaxiing:

> The control stick shouldbe held forward to prevent the tail from being lifted off the ground by windpressures on the undersurface of the elevators.

NOTE

If the control stick is full forward, the tail wheel will unlock andfree-swivel. To ensure steeringengagement, the stick must be held a few inches aft of the full forwardposition.

Thepilot considered that he moved the control stick too far forward causing thetail wheel to unlock which initiated the ground loop. Nevertheless, he concluded that if he had been taxiing at a lowerspeed the situation would have been manageable and no damage would haveoccurred.