

Report by James M Brooks, Certificate Number [REDACTED] on an incident at Pitt-Greenville Airport (KPGV) on 1 Jul 2024 involving N9308Q, at approximately 1600 local time.

James M Brooks, PIC

Michael Hudson, Passenger

Weather: approximately 3000 scattered, 10+ mile visibility; flight occurred in VFR conditions throughout

Planned: about 45 – 60 min to climb to approximately 4500' to check out some of the autopilot functions and to run through some JPI EDM features and return for a full stop landing

Preflight: Main tanks approximately full; Aux tanks approximately empty; fuel not serviced prior to flight; basically uneventful except for a few drops of water in the left main tank during the sump check; fully flushed that tank and rechecked all other sumps with no other water found.

Ran all checklists without incident. Green light on the gear showed normal throughout. All indications during runup for both engines were normal. Full power indications on initial takeoff checked and indicated normal for both engines.

Rotated at approximately 107 kts and raised the gear after positive climb. Gear indicated up, climbed out at 120 kts at 1200-1300 fpm on a NW heading. Approaching level off at 4500' and about 4 NM from the field noticed L/H Engine began running rough with #3 cylinder showing a higher EGT on the EDM than the rest of the L/H cylinders but with L/H engine oil pressure and temperatures in normal range. Confirmed with the other occupant a potential L/H engine problem and, while reducing power on L/H engine until roughness abated and EGT reduced, immediately began a turn back toward the airport. With the airport in sight, set up for a left visual pattern for runway 02. Abeam the touchdown point on downwind, placed the gear handle down.

Gear failed to indicate down (no green light). We proceeded to fly south of the field while we initially troubleshot the gear issue. At this point was able to maintain airspeed/altitude with R/H engine increased and L/H engine in a decreased throttle position. We pulled/reset the landing gear circuit breaker and recycled the gear but still were not able to get a positive gear down indication (green light not illuminated). Decided to clear the traffic pattern, started the manual gear extension checklist, and proceeded to fly out west of the field about 3 NM, intending to further troubleshoot the gear and L/H engine issues. At this point, I planned to manually extend the gear and perform a low pass over the runway in order to have ground personnel confirm the status of the both the main and nose gear before attempting a landing.

Approaching approximately 3 NM west of the field, I began to notice it required full power on the R/H engine and reduced power on the L/H engine but it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain altitude (approximately 2000') and airspeed above 100 Kts (single engine blue line). I immediately turned back toward the airport, had the passenger assist in completing the manual gear extension checklist, who reported completing approximately 50-52 cranks of the manual gear extension crank, but indicating that he was ("against the stops") and unable to turn the crank any further.

At this point we were about 2 NM south of the field, still without positive indications the gear was down (no green light), and it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain altitude and airspeed above blue line with the R/H engine at full power and L/H engine at slightly increased power just below the point it would run roughly.

At this point, I was headed directly for the end of runway 02 at a 45 degree angle to final and, at 500' AGL and 90-95 kts, began a very slight descent to maintain that airspeed and to, hopefully, clear the trees along the side of the runway. Just before clearing those trees at about 150' AGL and on a 45 degree angle to final at 95 kts, I lowered flaps to 20 degrees, made a hard left turn coming over the threshold to align the aircraft with the runway heading, quickly leveled the wings, reduced all power, flared the aircraft and touched down on the main gear at about 90 kts. I continued holding the nose gear off the runway until losing elevator authority. At that point, the nose of the aircraft settled onto the runway (the nose gear either never extended or collapsed on landing), the props struck the runway and the aircraft ground to a halt on its nose (no nose gear) with its tail up in the air. I shut off the battery, cut off the fuel and evacuated the aircraft.

Neither occupant reported any injuries. After exiting the aircraft and cleared by emergency responding personnel, we retrieved our personal belongings and left the scene.

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