CLASSIC HARVARD PLANE CRASHES AFTER WARBIRDS OVER WANAKA

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A classic plane crash at the Wanaka Airport on Monday morning occurred after the plane veered on landing and then a wheel collapsed.

Two people were uninjured in the crash, which happened during an attempt to land in a 1943 Harvard aircraft about 9.30am.

Warbirds Over Wanaka General Manager Ed Taylor said the aircraft involved in the incident had performed at the airshow on all three days as part of the Roaring 40s Harvard Display team.

"The team has some of the most experienced Warbirds pilots in New Zealand and they put on a magnificent display for the big crowds at the airshow."

His first concern was for the two people on board.

"Aircraft can be repaired but I'm just relieved that both on board walked away without injury".

Taylor? said it was thought the incident resulted from a mechanical fault with a wheel.

"It's understood the aircraft veered to the right on landing. When the aircraft left the tarmac and went onto the grass area one of the wheels collapsed bringing the aircraft to a halt."

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Wanaka Airport emergency services were quickly on the scene but both people on board were unhurt and were able to get out of the aircraft.

A truck has arrived the airfield to remove the aircraft, which has suffered some damage but will be repaired.

Once the aircraft has been removed the runway will be inspected and then fully reopened, Taylor said.

However, the runway has been partially reopened to allow light aircraft to leave.

Air Traffic Control was in place at the airport at the time of the incident and the Civil Aviation Authority have been notified.

Senior sergeant Craig Brown, of the Southern District Command Centre, said the "Harvard plane has crashed on landing and has ended up skidding to the side of the runway."

Fire fighters from Luggate and Wanaka responded to the callout but it was not believed the aircraft caught fire.

Thousands of people turned out for the three-day Warbirds show, which finished on Sunday.

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