

STEARMAN

BOEING MODEL 75

This is a true classic aircraft. It was built during the 1930's and 1940's by the Stearman company, before being bought by Boeing in 1933. It became the primary trainer for all US Navy, US Army Air Forces and the Royal Canadian Air Force aviators during the Second World War, and hundreds are still flying today. Like the DH Tiger Moth and the Douglas DC3, it has stood the test of time and survived.

Following the end of the war there were thousands of surplus Stearmans, and saw use as crop dusters, private sports aircraft, together with aerobatic display vehicles and as a stable platform for wing walking at air shows. Many of these activities and more still use the Stearman throughout the world today.

The identifier used by the US Army was PT, whilst the Navy used N2S, these letters were followed by numbers that signified the numerous different engine ratings the aircraft used, such as PT-17 or N2S-5. So it can be a little confusing trying to figure out which is which, so I usually leave that to the experts!

I have been fortunate enough to be able to photograph this remarkable aircraft many times, as well as flown in them as very stable but highly aerobatic camera platforms.







OPPOSITE: *US training squadrons leading up to and during the Second World War, applied this paint scheme to their 'Recall' or 'Pied Piper' aircraft. In the days before training aircraft had radios of any sort, this was an effective solution to prevent students from getting lost or heading off in the wrong direction during a training session. If a student saw this aircraft, he knew that either he was heading in the wrong direction, or it was time to head back to base. Either way it proved to be a highly visible safety net for the fledgling aviators.*

I really like having an earthy background to my A2A work, as it helps portray a feeling of height.







*My point of view from the open door of the Robinson R44 cameraship, to a two ship Stearman formation off the coast of Western Australia. We are so close that hand signals work well here. **TOP LEFT:** On a dawn sortie, I was surprised to see the blue exhaust flames so clearly, It was something I had never seen.*