

Boeing Stearman Model 75 *Kaydet*

1943



General History

The Most Basic Boeing

Many flying cadets had to prove their skills in an airplane like this before handling America's World War II fighters and bombers. The Model 75 *Kaydet* was used as a "primary trainer" for both the U.S. Army and Navy. Many aces and flying heroes of World War II took their nervous first flights and solos in one of these biplanes.

Universally called "Stearmans," the airplanes were actually built by the Boeing Aircraft Company, which had purchased the Stearman Aircraft Company in 1934. An out-dated design in the 1940s, the little "two-holer" biplanes were rugged, maneuverable, and ideal for the rigors of military flight training.

After the war, the government had 10,346 *Kaydets* (including equivalent spare parts) and no military use for them. They sold the trainers for a few hundred dollars each. Soon, *Kaydets* took to the air as inexpensive sport planes, seeders, sprayers and crop dusters. Today, the planes are valuable and sought after collectors' items.

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Flight Training

What was primary flight training like during World War II? Navy servicemen called *Kaydets* "Yellow Perils" because of their all-yellow paint scheme and the dangers of getting close to the swarms of inexperienced flyers. Before a student could even touch a *Kaydet*, there was ground training.

After a time, with an instructor in the front cockpit, a student practiced level flight, basic turns and takeoffs and landings. After about eight hours of instruction, a student soloed. That front cockpit looked awfully empty as the inexperienced new pilot coaxed the *Kaydet* into the air alone for the first time! After more practice, more complicated loops, rolls, stalls and spins were mastered. Students commonly graduated from primary flight training with 65 hours aloft over about nine weeks.

About This Aircraft

While some Stearmans' paint schemes recapture the spirit of a bygone era with the colorful U.S. Army or Navy markings of the 1936-1942 period, this Stearman boasts the colorful custom paint scheme of metallic silver and burgundy. It was built in 1943 as a U.S. Navy N2S-5 (the Navy version of the Model E-75, similar to a U.S. Army PT-13D). Assigned Navy bureau number 61178, the plane cost the government about \$9,120 when new.

This crowd-pleasing, air show circuit classic has been modified for special performances, fitted with a 450 horsepower engine and air show extras such as a smoke system.

The aircraft was formerly owned by Astronaut Frank Borman, the commander of the Gemini 7 and Apollo 8 space missions.



Specifications

Type:	Military Trainer Aircraft
First Flight:	X-70 on January 1, 1934
Wingspan:	32 feet 2 inches
Length:	24 feet
Height:	9 feet 2 inches
Wing Area:	297 square feet
Weight, Empty:	2,104 pounds
Weight, Loaded:	2,885 pounds
Power:	One Pratt & Whitney R-985 450 horsepower engine
Normal Crew:	Two
Typical Armament:	None

Performance

Cruise Speed:	110 miles per hour
Top Speed:	150 miles per hour
Range:	505 miles
Service Ceiling:	Approximately 20,800 feet