

So, it's goodbye from him and it's hello from me!

Peter Davis picks up the reins as PCS National Coach

WORDS Jon Cooke

Goodbye from Ray...

I would like to express my gratitude to Ray Newall who has recently completed his term as National Coach. This will undoubtedly give him the extra time needed to complete his Van's RV7, which I look forward to seeing fly in the near future. He has been of great assistance in advancing a number of areas within the Pilot Coaching Scheme, and I am glad to say that he is going to continue his role as a PCS Coach 'up north'.

The incoming National Coach, Peter Davis, introduces himself below. I look

forward to a good working relationship with Peter and offer him a warm welcome on behalf of all of the LAA. With changes to licensing in the UK upon us, it is going to be a busy and challenging time for all.

Peter kindly organised the Pilot Coaching Scheme event at Northampton Sywell on 26 July. The weather was particularly kind on the day given the weeks of rain which preceded it. This, coupled with the planning and hard work put in by Peter and the local Strut, made the event a success.



Outgoing PCS National Coach, Ray Newall.

Was it a 'press gang' or did I volunteer?

By Peter Davis, the new PCS National Coach



Perhaps on reflection, it was a combination of both! The PCS Coaching Day at Brighton in April was fated with a lowering cloud base and reducing

visibility, and although my remit for the day was, as an LAA Coach, to assist Ray Newall with the events of the day, as a CAA Display Authorisation Evaluator (DAE) I had the renewal of a couple of DAs for two Extra pilots to take care of as well. The following day, I received a phone call from Ray with thanks for my assistance at the event, followed by the comment, 'We have been talking about you!'

Ray had held the position of LAA National Coach for a few years and had previously indicated his desire to retire this year to pursue his building and flying projects. Within 24 hours Jon Cooke, our PCS Chairman, was on the phone with the request that I consider taking over from Ray at the end of the season. Approximately ten days thereafter, I accepted the position, so here I am!

CHANGING TIMES

In December 2007, I managed to 'escape' from my seven days a week vocation, after over five years of operating what is still considered as

one of the most prestigious Flight Centres in the UK at Coventry Airport, resulting in semi-retirement. However, I soon realised that I was far too young to retire.

I come from a Fleet Air Arm family and had the advantage of learning to fly gliders for free at an early age at one of the many naval bases where we were stationed. This I firmly believe taught me that the brain, hands and feet need to fly in close formation together and if any one of those elements should inadvertently go to sleep at a critical stage (like landing!), then the whole process of returning to earth in completeness could turn to a 'ball of string'.

GLIDING FORWARD

Realising that with gliders you only get one attempt at landing, and with a desire to expand on my aviation knowledge, I did the transition to powered flight in a Tiger Moth. Once qualified, I could boredom loom if I did no more than occasionally hire an aircraft to take friends sightseeing over their house and village, so I vowed that I would not become a licence lapse statistic and would fly anything that I could get my grubby hands on. From those early days, I have been fortunate to fly in and spend extended time in some very GA

friendly countries and have over the years, attained Australian, New Zealand and US Commercial licences and associated ratings. My flying has been varied to say the least, from charter work in New Zealand and the US, to glider towing in Australia, including being a jump pilot in a DH Beaver and a C206 in Parakai New Zealand, and then on to Ag work (crop dusting) in Ag Cats, Pawnees and Fletchers in the North and South Islands. One may well ask what use a Commercial Seaplane rating is here in the UK, but I have landed in some very exciting locations with a bunch of eager fishermen, keen to hand out the spare salmon and the dollars at the end of the trip!

A LOT QUICKER

Back to the UK and owning a range of aircraft from Pitts (1 and 2 hole) to a brace of Christen Eagles, Extra 200, Extra 300L etc has once again reminded me of the very early days of my tailwheel flight training using the feet and the hands (brain first!), but all happening a lot quicker in these kind of aircraft! Then on to display flying for the last ten years after I had gained further aerobatic and formation training in the Antipodes and subsequently appointed as a CAA DAE.



Peter Davis is looking forward to talking about your training needs.

COACHING ACCESS

PILOT COACHING SCHEME E-MAIL

To process your enquiries about training more effectively, a new e-mail has been set up (coaching@laa.uk.com) which will forward all enquiries to the National Coach. You can also still contact coaches individually via their e-mail addresses, which you will find on the LAA website under 'Training'.

POPHAM PCS DAY - 5 OCTOBER

The final PCS event for 2008 is on 5 October at Popham. We will have two free coaching sessions in the morning, between 1000-1100 and 1130-1230. These slots are for those members who wish to take advantage of the 'one hour with an instructor' requirements for revalidation of their two-year PPL SEP rating, although all coaches/instructors will be available to provide any training advice and fly with you.

When did you last practice a forced landing, a stall, spin, slow flight or an EFATO? Have you done a recent short field take off/landing or a bad weather circuit?

Would members requiring coaching please advise Penny Sharpe at LAA HQ, tel: 01280 846786 or penny.sharpe@laa.uk.com, by Monday 29 September 2008. Let her know the level of coaching you require; your type of aircraft; your aircraft registration number and your ETA Popham.

You can turn up on the day and participate in the afternoon fun of flour bombing and spot landing (a £2 fee will be made; we have a 'CAA exception' for the flour bombing). There are prizes for the winners! A special concession has been offered by Popham's management of FREE landings for the day.

Contact call Will Greenwood(LAA/PCS) on 07850 811704 for more details.

I have been very lucky (perhaps in the right place at the right time) to fly a variety of LAA types over the years, together with some very exciting and unusual aircraft – from seaplanes to some quite remarkable aircraft such as the Grumman Agcat, a few of the vintage Wacos, a Curtis Jenny, and even a New Standard D-25 which takes four paying passengers up front!

Back to the present day and my remit to further expand the excellent facility we have

with the LAA Pilot Coaching Scheme, which is there for every member. All of our coaches are CAA-rated instructors and revalidation examiners, so members should make use of this opportunity to expand their aviation ambitions, or just take some refresher training.

One aspect I learned when I first started flying was from an old retired Ag pilot from Montana named Sam, who reminded me that at 81 years of age (he was still flying, albeit not

crop dusting), every flight he made was still a training flight and from every flight, he learned something, either about the aircraft or himself.

Irrespective of how many hours we have, we never stop learning. The moment we become complacent and think we know it all is, perhaps, the time to call it a day and hang up the goggles!

You can contact me with any training queries at coaching@laa.uk.com