

An Interview With Wilson Frazier: "THE PROFESSOR" - SONAR and GPS

By: David Hagood

In the fishing industry and especially in the field of marine electronics, you rarely meet the experts, the guys that really understand how a particular product works. Most of the electronic masterminds are in the home office or a laboratory and not out in the field where the weekend angler or even the pros get an opportunity to pick their brains about how to best use a product. Not only are they not available, but most of the electronic gurus are engineers or PhD's that can't relate their knowledge in terms that the average angler can understand.

This is not the case with Lowrance Electronics. We on the ABA staff and many of our members have come to know and appreciate a man that is a true exception in the marine electronics field. He is at the top of the field in his knowledge and understanding of marine electronics, but he isn't stuck in a lab or office! He's out in the field talking to the anglers that use Lowrance products, helping them to get the most out of their Lowrance equipment.

He is now being called a professor by many pros and weekend anglers alike. This title is appropriate because this person is a walking textbook on one of the most vital areas of equipment to the success of any tournament angler and he is eager to share his knowledge in terms that can be readily understood.

The "Lowrance Professor" is sixty-two year old Wilson Frazier who knows more about these units than anyone you will ever have the opportunity to meet. Wilson has been working with Lowrance for just over 25 years. He has seen it all, from the first flashers to paper graphs to LCD screens, GPS units, to combined GPS/Sonar in full living color with screens as big as a laptop.

Wilson spends a lot of time working

directly with anglers in the field. At one point, he was doing about 14 shows a year, meeting people and explaining the latest Lowrance Electronics and their use. Now he spends time not only at shows, but at tournament sites as well, helping anglers with their units and attempting to educate them in the process.

Many of our anglers have met or seen Wilson at these events. He has been at the last 3 ABA championships, the Triton Owners tournaments and worked about 25 or more tournament events last year.



Wilson Frazier, "The Professor", gives a seminar at a boat show.

I recently sat down with Wilson and, as usual, he was kind enough to school me on the basics of using the new Lowrance Electronics. What I enjoy most about talking with Wilson is his straight forward, no nonsense approach to educating people on the latest electronics. He really enjoys talking about electronics with people he meets. For him, it's a labor of love. When I asked him to sit down for this interview, I told him I needed him for about 30 minutes and when we finished, we had talked for more than an hour and a half.

The first question I asked Wilson was: "What are some really simple things anglers can do to take advantage of the Lowrance Electronic units today?" Wilson is not one to hold back so he

very quickly responded: "It is not teaching them how to use this piece of equipment. It is unlearning them from what they think they know that they don't. It's getting them to start looking at the machine for what it is and that is very simple. The machine only measures distance. It does not know bass from beer cans. It does not know Christmas trees from poison ivy or soft wood from white oak. All the unit knows is how far away the object is and how hard the signal came back."

"With that being said, it is actually very simple. Forget all of the stuff you have seen written, talked about on TV. This guy says if you turn the gain way up and the sensitivity way up and the ping speed up and sideways and turn the surface clutter down or up or off and put it on fish ID, in other words fiddling with it when you do not know what you are doing. The question is why are you fiddling with it? Because if it was your company, you would make it work right out of the box to give the customer the best possible performance they could get without having to fiddle with it."

ABA: "So Auto is a good thing!"

Wilson: "Auto is probably your best friend."

ABA: "We use to have to set depths and these days we don't even have to worry about that. It changes automatically and you even have split screens whether it is GPS/Sonar or split screens for zooming."

Wilson: "The processors now automatically adjust when you get in shallow water and up when you get in deeper water."

ABA: "So are you saying we should not be changing many settings?"

Wilson: "There are items in the menu of your sonar that I highly advise that you never put your finger on. Don't punch it,

don't turn in on, and don't think you know what you are doing, because you don't. One is do not turn on fish ID unless you enjoy watching cartoons. When you turn this on you will deprogram the unit by 25%. You just eliminated 25% of the targets under you. The spread you had (cone angle), you just drastically reduced it."

ABA: "What is the biggest change you have seen with Lowrance Units?"
Wilson: "Color is the biggest. Since the first LCD came out I have told consumers and I have still not changed my mind, buy the most pixels with the most power. The power levels are all getting about the same, but the pixel counts keep going up and up! Screens are getting both sharper and bigger in the process and that is good for the customer."

ABA: "What is the biggest misconception about using a GPS today?"
Wilson: "There are 3 big ones. The GPS only knows where the GPS antenna is located, not where you are or your boat. If you are going to mark a spot make sure you have the antenna right on top of the object. Many people will place the front of the boat over the object and not even be close because the antenna is on the back of the boat. Another one is marking a spot so you can return to it. Most people will mark a spot with one way point. You should use two so you can return to the spot accurately. Using the second way point allows you to return to the same spot in

"Auto is probably your best friend."

the exact same way. The third is marking the spot on the unit itself. Today the Lowrance units allow you to zoom in much closer to the area where you are located. Are you looking at the unit when you mark it at a .5 mile or .05 miles?"

Wilson then gave me a thirty minute talk about distance, lining up and proper use of the GPS to really take advantage of it when you want to get exactly on the same location. It is absolutely amazing to me just how much this man knows about these Lowrance units.

ABA: "How can anglers get some of this information you have?"

Wilson: "Well, I am actually putting together a book on this and we are working on a website with more information as well."

ABA: "How can people get in touch with you about this book when you get it ready?"

Wilson: "They can see me at various boat shows across the south giving seminars "It Ain't TV" is one way. The other is by email at: basslures@comcast.net and my website will be up soon at: www.itsainttv.com. Of course anglers will see me out at tournaments"

Next time you are at big tournament and see the Lowrance sign, look for Wilson. You will probably notice the pipe smoking professor pretty quick. He is the one educating an angler on his Lowrance unit.



Many pros now place a GPS unit on both the front and on the console of their bass boats.

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We Lead, We Find, You Win.™

Top 50 Triton Boat Owners National Ranking (As of 02/08/2005)

Nat. Rank	Name	Points	Nat. Rank	Name	Points	Nat. Rank	Name	Points
1	Stanley Williams	791	61	Keith Malone	760	189	Michael E Fowler	603
2	Chuck Herrin	789	67	David Willis	757	189	Gary R Lee	603
3	Gary Thacker	788	73	Jimmy Yarbrough	755	189	Bill Peeler	603
5	Jim Holsonback	787	91	John Brannen	751	202	Larry Graddy	594
6	Frank Denyak	786	95	John Russell	750	204	Steve Nomd	593
8	Don Morris	786	106	Joe Angelone	746	235	Pat Patterson	578
11	Bobby Clark	785	112	Aron Hicks	744	245	Bill Shepard	575
21	Pat Anderson	779	137	Joe VanHooser	724	252	Burnell Hamey	573
28	Dallas Hinkle	777	141	Wilson Barrow JR	718	261	A.J. Clare	570
28	Michael L Daniel	777	146	Chris Bihn	677	279	Joe Thorpe	566
32	Norman Ligon	775	147	Richard Godwin	657	288	Edward Razo	564
38	Quillie Trott, SR.	773	152	Gary Paul	636	290	Jason Pierce	563
39	Craig Maxwell	772	153	Ronald Yeatts	631	290	Alan Cotten	563
41	Sal Riccobene	771	164	Robert A. Dean	622	290	Norman McKinney	563
49	Ronald Timmer	768	167	Norman Foskey	620	295	John A. Goin	562
53	Joseph C Campbell, JR	765	170	David Andrew Long	619	314	Rick Bystryzky	556
59	Eugene Moment	762	171	Jeremy Bound	618	320	Robert C. Watson	554
60	Robert Blake	761	178	Richard Thi Walker	611	341	Michael L Adams	544