The following is a comparison type review of the Lowrance HST-WSBL and Airmar P66 transducers. This review is a freshwater application on an 18ft Raven with the transducers mounted side by side on the transom.

This is what the manufacturer had to say about their products:-

Airmar P66: Price R1350.00

Best of a New Generation!

The P66 is the **best performing** and most popular, transom-mount, TRIDUCER® Multisensor in the market for many reasons. Foremost, the 50kHz and 200 kHz, oversized, ceramic element produces **focused beams**, highlighting detail in the water column and in the bottom structure.

Setting the Industry Standard!

Because of its **hydrodynamic shape**, water coming off the transom flows smoothly under the transducer face. This results in **accurate, high- speed, depth readings and clear display images**. Going a step further, the P66 TRIDUCER Multisensor also incorporates a **patented noise-suppression system**. The result is a 5 to 8 knot (6 to 9 MPH) improvement over standard construction through improved shielding from noise and vibration. And the plastic release bracket lets the P66 rotate up to **protect the housing if struck from the front**. Transducer can be removed from bracket **without the use of tools** for easy service and storage.

Fishing Applications:

Lake and inshore all-around saltwater fishing for small to mid-size outboard boats size: 5 m to 8 m (18' to 25')

Specifications:

Elements	Single
Dual Frequency	50kHz and 200kHz
Coverage area of 50kHz @ -3dB	45°
Coverage area of 200kHz @ -3dB	11°

Lowrance HST-WSBL: Price R1020.00

No manufacturer comments.

Specifications:

Elements	Single
Dual Frequency	83kHz and 200kHz
Coverage area of 83kHz @ -3dB	60°
Coverage area of 200kHz @ -3dB	20°

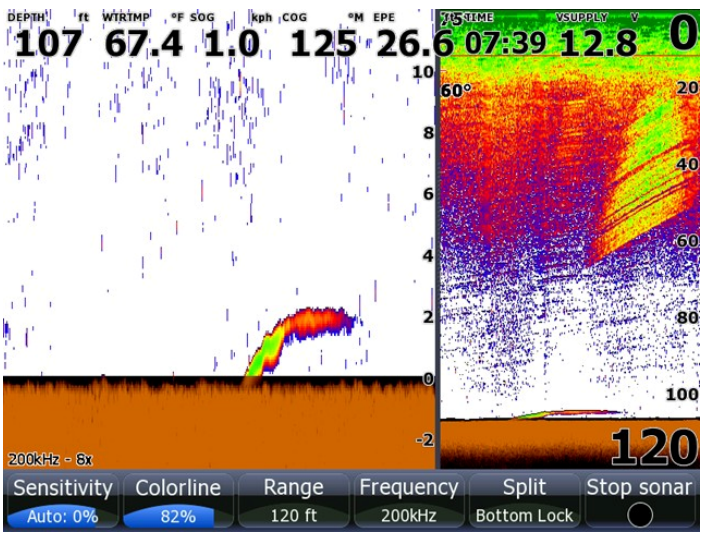
On the Water Test:

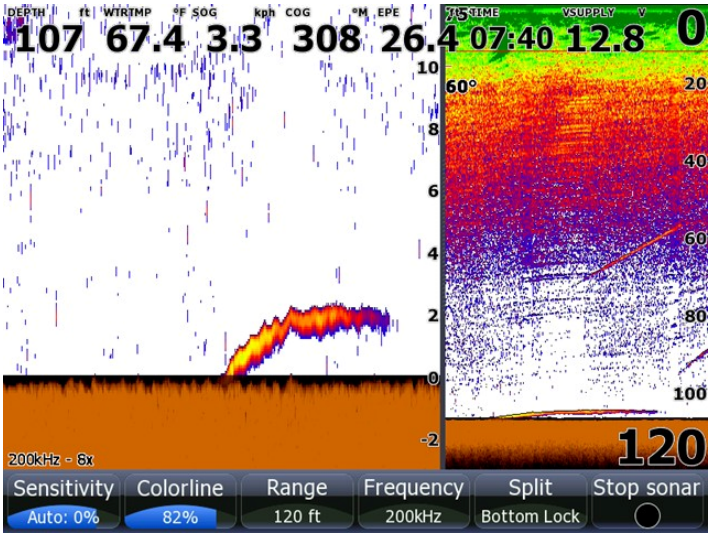
My test subject was the famous '2lb Tennis Ball'. This is a marker buoy with a lead weight attached to the end and a tennis ball tied 3ft from the weight to represent a typical 2lb fish.

1. **Deep Target Separation**: The first test to see if the transducers would detect a '2lb fish' sitting a couple of feet off the bottom at a depth of more than 100ft. Both transducers did an excellent job, with the P66 having a slightly stronger return than the HST-WSBL. The screen shots are of the sonar screen split between full depth range and bottom lock. The bottom lock had a range of 12ft from the bottom.

Rating:

P66 9/10
HST-WSBL 8/10



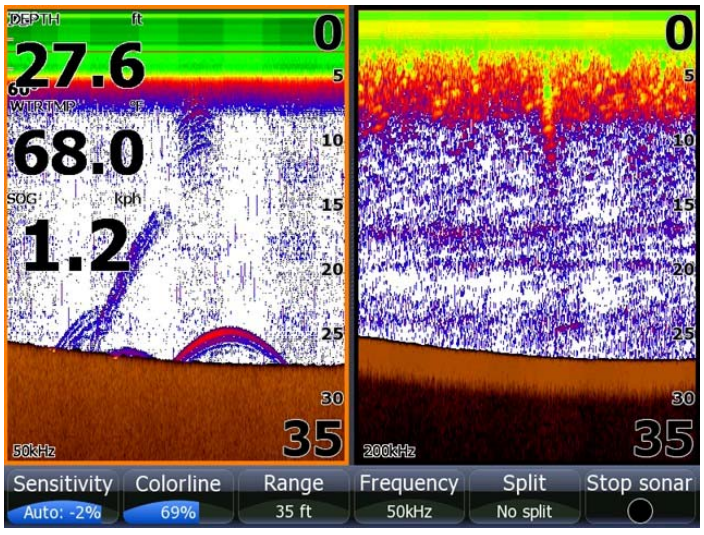


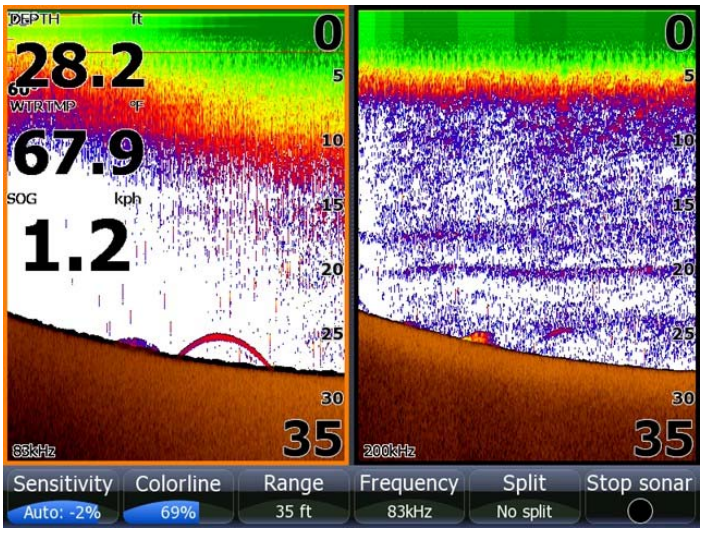
2. **Dual Frequency**: The next test was to see how the 2 frequencies would perform at a depth of 27ft with the same test subject a couple of feet off the bottom. The 50kHz 45° cone of the P66 seemed just as effective as the 83kHz 60° of the HST-WSBL. The return was certainly stronger with the P66 with a cleaner background (less ringing), but the definition of the HST-WSBL seemed crisper.

The 200kHz on both units seemed very similar with the P66 picking up the marker buoy line a little clearer, but both performed equally well detecting the thermocline at 20ft.

Rating:

P66 9/10
HST-WSBL 9/10





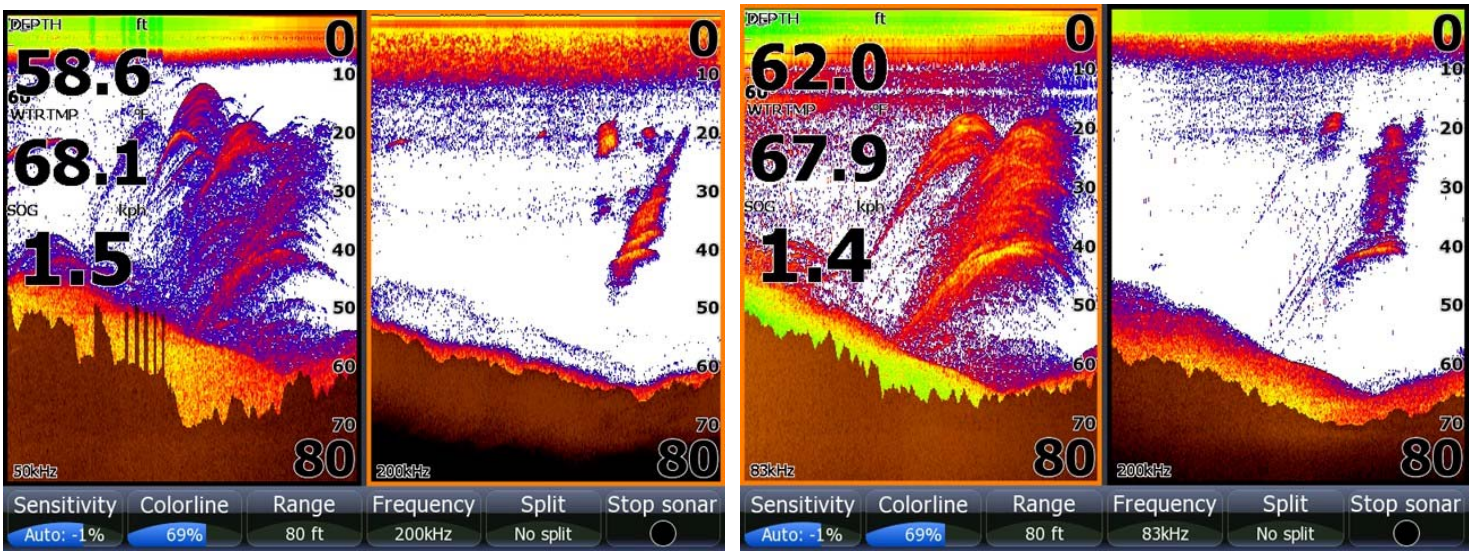
3. **Large Structure**: The next test was to see how the dual frequencies of the two transducers would represent large structure such as a tree.

The 50kHz of the P66 didn't overpower the branches allowing easier recognition of fish holding near the tree as can be seen by the arch just to the top right of the temperature overlay. The P66 also gave a good return of the tree's main branches that passed directly beneath the transducer in the 200kHz range.

The big wide arches of the 83kHz gives a very strong and clear return on the HST-WSBL, but unfortunately would over power any arches of fish holding near the tree. The 200kHz return was just as sufficient giving a return only slightly weaker than that of the P66.

Rating:

P66	9/10
HST-WSBL	7/10



4. **Speed Test**: This last test was to see at what speed the two would lose the bottom / signal.

P66

Mirror Smooth	+80kph
Slight Chop	71kph

HST-WSBL

Mirror Smooth	60kph
Slight Chop	25kph

Conclusion:

From a freshwater relatively shallow perspective I believe both transducers do a great job. I have left both transducers on my boat and will be doing an on-going comparison, so if something really fantastic, or not so fantastic happens I will keep you posted in this thread.

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