

## Re: GPS 76 very early comments

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- *From:* Arthur Hass <ed@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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JF Mezei wrote:

Ok, Took the 76 for a bike ride. A GPS only comes to full life when it is in motion.

1- Garmin Bike mount.

Surprisingly, it survived the short 30km bike ride, but it is flimsy and I certainly wouldn't trust it. You HAVE to put the lanyard around the handlebar to catch it when it will eventually fall.

The bike mount is does not support the unit via its centre of gravity. The support is towards the front of the unit. The latch that "locks" the unit in unlatched itself during the ride, but the unit only slid forward in the cradle about 1cm, so plenty of time to pull it back in and reclose the latch. However, because the support point is towards the front of the unit, it means that most of the unit is actually aft of the handlebar. One has to be carefull when going up hills that your knee doesn't kick the GPS off under certain circumstances (because the unit is so far back).

I complained to Garmin about the 76CS hanging down behind the bars. Clearly, the designer(s) was not a cyclist. I finally purchased a Minoura Spacegrip:

<https://shop.sunrisecyclery.com/item/12570/>

I had an old Garmin mount from my III+ that had broken, so I sawed it off flat so I could mount my Gilsson to it using Velcro. The results can be seen (1st two photos) at:

<http://arthurhass.fotopic.net/c901941.html>

I have not tested this on the road yet, but it has to be superior to the Garmin mount by a long shot. Of course, I intend to put a 76CS lanyard around the bars/computer (or somewhere secure).

If I shake the receiver in my hand, I hear nothing loose in it. But while on the bike, there was a lot of noise of stuff that appeared loose.

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And after about 15 minutes, the unit started to have its display go off for half a second and come back on. Later in the ride, the unit would just shut off. I suspect vibration and batteries. I had that with the GPS II+ but only with duracell batteries. (use of some scotch tape around the batteries tends to fix the problem on the II+, not sure about this unit since batteries are stored in a totally different compartment.

I put a double layer of paper towels on top of the batteries. I have not had any problems with it shutting off. If I do in the future, I will add another layer or two.

However, when I started, I waited until the unit had locked in, but as soon as I got on the bike, it beeped telling me it had lost satellite fix. It eventually regained it and I set off once more and this time it \*seemed\* to work. However, as soon as I was in a treed area, the GPS often would lose the fix. I don't recall this happening with my II+. Anyone have a comment on GPSII+ vs 76 in terms of sensitivity ?

This is why I use the Gilsson. It improves reception dramatically. Loosing a lock is now a rarity.

Because of the position on the bike, perhaps the antenna of the 76 is just enough aft compared to that of the II+ that my body provides way more shade.

When the unit was shutting off regularly, I noticed one more design flaw. The satellite page (the first one you see after all the warnings) does not have the battery level. The unit would often shut off just after it got to that page, so I had no idea of what it thought was the battery level. The GPSII+ was superior on that level because it had the battery level on the first page (and no stupid warnings to please lawyers).

The "trip computer" accessed though MENU-MENU-ENTER is a nice feature. It has good advantage over the II+ because you can easily reset all of the values with one function. On the II+, it was a lengthy process to reset individual fields one by one. However, while riding the bike, that function is useless because the titles are unreadable. Another "windows weenie" design where the look was more important than functionality: they put the titles against a grey background, so the contrast is not strong enough to really read it quickly while on the move. Also, much screen real-estate is lost because of the gray background and borders, and this forces the use of smaller fonts which makes it even harder to read the titles. The numbers may be readable, but you don't know what they are.

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SPEED: At first, over flat areas, it seemed to work fine and update. When I went up the first hill, I didn't have a lock due to trees, so I could not gauge. I had noticed however that when slowing down very fast, the GPS would take a few screen update cycles to come to the new slower speed.

But going down the first hill, my bike computer went up to 51km/h, but the GPS only rose to 36km/h. I then tried to set the "Speed filter" to 2 (lowest acceptable value) and then, the GPS consistently indicated a much slower speed (about 60 to 75% of real speed. For instance, going at 20km/h, the GPS would show 12km/h. The GPS II+, despite SA, was pretty good at following the speed.

The GPS shows I reached a max of 39km/h during this trip.

I find that the 76CS is spot on with my cycle computer (very accurately calibrated) almost all the time when using the Gilsson antenna. Measuring 30 –60 mile routes, it is always within 1/10 mile of the cycle computer and routing distance in Mapsource. I was shocked to discover this.

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