

IN A WORLD OF INSTANT gratification, where gigabytes and download speeds affect buying habits from computers to cell phones, patience is quickly becoming a forgotten commodity. Professional anglers are no different.

They demand the best electronics, the fastest boats, the finest tackle and the newest baits. Power fishing seems right at home in this environment – running the bank, keeping the trolling motor turned up, and casting jigs, spinnerbaits, crankbaits and jerkbaits as fast as they can be thrown. But Elite Series anglers also recognize that sometimes they must step off the merry-go-round and take a more deliberate approach to power fishing.

It's important to note that "patience" is a relative term. Aaron Martens' definition might not match the interpretation of Rick Clunn.

Though Clunn is considered a very patient angler, he was quoted recently as saying, "I don't have the patience to tie the knots Aaron uses, let alone fish like him."

Mike Iaconelli and Shaw Grigsby have their own views on the subject, just as they have their own favorite tournament strategies. But all four anglers agree that patience is crucial to this form of bass fishing.

BASS Times interviewed these four pros, and here are their Top 5 keys to patient power fishing. Although they explain it in their own ways, each of these Elite Series pros realizes that patience – even when power fishing – is crucial to bass fishing success.

1 Don't confuse power fishing with speed fishing.

"When most people think of power fishing," said Martens, "they picture someone moving quickly through an area picking off the active fish and covering a lot of water. But you don't have to always fish fast."

Iaconelli agrees. "Just because you're throwing a jig or a crankbait doesn't mean you need to move fast and run and gun. Sometimes slower is better."

2 Develop a routine and stick with it.

At times, Clunn uses several lures when power fishing. "I want to present my baits with the best opportunity to trigger strikes," said the four-time Classic winner. "I will throw at the same target multiple times with each lure and give the fish multiple looks from multiple angles."

Martens uses a heavy drop shot rig and sticks to a routine that he duplicates with each pitch.

"If I'm fishing vertical structure, I'll make sure that when my bait hits the water I let out more line so it falls exactly where I pitched it," said Martens. His patented "line strip" is an automatic part of his pitching routine that forces him to be patient.

3 Fish the moment.

A master of fishing the moment, Iaconelli believes an angler must find out what the fish want and then capitalize on that knowledge.

"I don't get caught up worrying about why the 8-pounder I saw

Innovative power fishing

Always the innovator, Aaron Martens uses a heavy drop shot as an extra weapon in certain power fishing situations. This method enables him to cover more water in the same amount of time.

"I can get one-third more pitches with a drop shot than with other presentations," he said.

Martens rigs it with 16-pound Sunline Shooter line and uses a 5/0 O'Shaughnessy hook with a ReBarb as a bait holder. Then, he varies the size of the weight depending on the depth of the water, the type of structure and wind conditions.

Typically, a fat 6-inch Roboworm is his bait of choice. Though not a surprise to most of Martens' fans, he carefully inspects and often replaces his bait each time he senses even a tick when he's pitching.

By the end of each day, he generally has a large pile of "gently used" worms in the bottom of his boat.

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Martens advises anglers to stick to a plan, but don't be afraid to veer from it if it isn't working out.

Photo by Seigo Saito

in practice isn't there. I just make the adjustment to current conditions and move on to the next spot or pattern."

All anglers struggle to catch fish, according to Martens. "When my day isn't working out, just getting one bite might put me back on a pattern," he said. "Sometimes I have to abandon my plans for the day based on that one bite."

4 Be thorough in the presentation.

Grigsby explains how patience applies to pitching a jig. "If I have limited cover in an area, I settle down – like if I'm targeting a tree limb: I pitch to it, then I make another pitch to it, then another, then I fish it slow. And then I shake it. Yesterday I pitched to one tree 10 times. Then, on the 11th pitch, one hit it, but he didn't really eat. Finally, on the 12th pitch, he ate it, and I caught several more fish in the next few minutes pitching to the same tree."

5 Adapt to water and weather conditions.

Clunn carries several different colors and sizes of his signature crankbaits in order to adapt to changing water conditions. "Sometimes I just feel the bass want smaller baits or slower presentations. I have to adjust to different water color, too."

Martens breaks it down even further. "I sometimes adjust to how the fish are positioning. Instead of moving quickly through an area, I might pitch to the opposite side of the same structure, to go from the shady side, for example, to the sunny side looking for a bite. That's how I adapt."

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