

FIELD TEST ON THE WHITE'S CLASSIC ID

by John Castle



Background

THE White's Classic series of motion metal detectors have been around for some decades now and have become an established part of the British detecting scene.

There were originally three models in the range, I, II and III, all using 8 in. solid coils. Of these only the III offered an interchangeable coil facility and many users found that the famed Blue Max 9.5 in. polo coil, as featured on top-of-the-range White's units, enhanced the performance of the Classic III.

The III was not really calibrated for this coil, although few users experienced any problems. To prevent any problems at all, White's recalibrated the III for the Blue Max range of coils and this became the Classic III PLUS, giving four units in the Classic range.

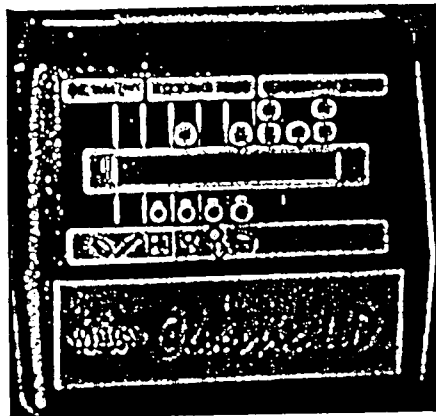
Towards the end of 1996 the range was re-vamped into the S/L series and the range reduced to three - now back to four with the advent of the Classic ID. All are S/L styled, using the same small flat control box as the Spectrum XLT, flagship of the White's range.

Out of the Box

The Classic ID is finished in a rich, glossy black with nomenclature, etc., in black, white and grey. Construction is all-metal, except for the meter housing and the lower stem which are of high-impact ABS plastic. The three-piece stem is adjustable via rotating locking collars and a posi-lok spring-button. Styling is the ubiquitous cranked stem with arm-rest, which can be set to give one of three positions, and an arm-securing strap. Immediately ahead of the foam hand-grip, and within easy reach of the forefinger, is the all-metals/pin-point trigger switch.

A thumb-bolt holds the coil to the lower stem and this, together with the locking collars, needs little pressure to hold them so don't overtighten.

Just two external controls, variable discrimination and sensitivity, plus an internal one for fine tuning the ground balance should this be necessary.



Batteries are 8 AAs held in a drop-in pack and up to an excellent 65 hours can be got from alkalines providing headphones are used. A standard 1/4 in. headphone jack is located at the rear of the control box. Re-chargeable batteries can be used, either inserted into the pack after external charging (White's for legal reasons, cannot officially recommend this method) or by purchas-

ing the optional White's kit which consists of a sealed re-chargeable pack and plug-in charger. There is no battery test as such, a reduced target volume will indicate failing batteries. The meter sits atop of the hand-grip and a black cursor indicates the conductivity of a located target, the further to the right it moves, the "better" the target.

The Classic ID sits naturally in the hand and is light and comfortable. No belt-mount available or needed. It looks good too - a real Black Beauty!

A Good Handbook

The handbook has 32 pages and is of the large, A4 format. All control functions are clearly and concisely described and are accompanied by a large number of diagrams. Read and study, this detector isn't quite as simple as it looks!

Putting it Together

Attach the coil and set stem length, then wind the cable snugly around the stem and attach its Switchcraft plug to the socket at the front of the control box (anybody with shares in Switchcraft should have done pretty well, nearly all current detectors use their plugs!). Two velcro strips are provided to hold the cable. Assuming non-rechargeable batteries are being used, slide the cover part-way from the battery pack and insert the batteries, ensuring correct polarity. Drop the pack into the rear of the control box (note which way round it goes) and snap the two door latches shut.

Foam arm-rest pads are supplied. Simply remove their backing and stick them on. The arm-securing strap can now be closed via its velcro, leaving it just loose enough to be able to remove and replace your arm if necessary.

Stick your 'phones on your nut and you're ready to go!

Coin	Position
Charles I 2d	4
Henry I 1d	3
Edward IV 1/2d	3
Rose farthing	2
Small, broken Roman grot	4

All above iron – great! Now for the great outdoors!

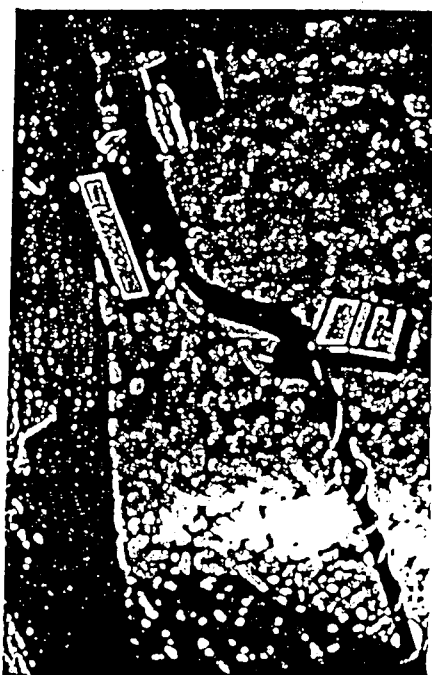
On Site

I did the usual round of beach, park and farm and noted the following:

A cloudy sky and totally deserted beach and, thankfully, the rain held off. Not too much activity there yet this year, a bit early in the season and the weather hasn't exactly been kind very often. Of course I found some decimal coins and three pre-decimal, two very grotty ha'pennies and a ditto farthing. To my surprise the Classic ID was quiet on the wet sand, no falsing. I did get some when I turned the sensitivity above the "P". Not much to find here, so I buried a £1 coin in the sand. A strong signal and clear meter Id. at six inches, so no problem finding them on wet sand. One find I did make there was a 1/2p at a similar depth. No trouble finding those pesky things either! I passed the coin over a large iron bar sticking out of the sand and got a strong audio, but the meter remained firmly at the number one, iron, position. Very good iron Id! I dug a few of the signals that caused the meter to bounce all over the place. They were all irregular-shaped pieces of iron junk and crown bottle caps. Good audio though, so checking the meter on this detector is vital. Basically, the audio tells you something has been located and the meter indicates whether or not you should dig it. A very good no-nonsense system.

Two parks were visited. The first is actually a common and is large, with many areas hopelessly overgrown. I found a mown patch near a building which is used for social functions. The ring-pulls were horrendous, I haven't experienced them this bad in years. I decided to go for the deep signals only. Far too many shallow signals to operate in all-metal, so I searched in disc. and

checked each one in pin-point, only going for the fainter ones. This got me mostly pre-decimal plus a few decimal (even these are getting deep on some sites now). Smallest find was a tiny lapel badge of the Royal Life Saving Society. Ground mineralisation isn't too bad in this area of the common, so I was able to set sensitivity high with very few false signals. Just one ring, but not precious metal. Very thin though and about five inches down. Not bad! Depths generally were to about seven inches or so. One oddity, found in a different park, which seemed to be both good and bad was a brass door-knob with rusty



iron spindle attached and nearly ten inches deep.

Couldn't find any ploughed fields on our sites, all under crops! Except that is, a large corner of one field which wasn't sown for some reason. This was a ground/iron test really, because I knew the ground was very mineralised and iron nails, etc., are very prolific. In discriminate mode the Classic ID was lovely and quiet, even with sensitivity set above the "P" mark. Just the occasional "spit" as some iron tried to break through. The meter stayed firmly on iron nearly all the time. I switched to all-metal hunting which confirmed the presence of zillions of iron nails, one at almost every pace forwards! The meter still stayed on

iron.

There were a few exceptions. Good, solid readings higher up the meter scale found me digging at least some non-ferrous targets. Some were non-ferrous junk but the others were finds. Best was a small double-looped buckle. Depths are never too good on this bad site, but the Classic ID did very well, bearing in mind its price.

Sensitivity is always important of course, but never more than on a site such as this. The difference in signal intensity between very bad ground and a small target is very small and, to be successful, a detector has to be able to sense the difference between returned differing frequencies on these very weak signals. Yes, we all want depth, but sensitivity is of equal or greater importance on bad sites containing very small finds. The Classic ID passed A1 for depth and sensitivity!

Final Thoughts

The White's Classic ID is a welcome addition to their successful range of Classics. It is light and easy to use with very good battery life. Just switch on, set sensitivity and discrimination and off you go! The meter is excellent as is iron/ground reject. I suppose I am biased here, because I like meters. I think anybody would like this one! It is essential to check the meter as, with the discrimination set at the levels we require to accept those small targets, some iron would read good. The meter identified it nearly always, only large iron rings fooling it. I did feel that a smaller coil would be useful at times and there is a good choice. They are: 4, 6 and 8 inch in addition to the standard 9.5 inch one. There is also the mighty 15 inch, which would be ideal for very deep hoards and larger targets such as bronze axes.

A great beginner's detector, but one for the advanced user too. Nice one, White's!

The Classic ID is available at £395 from White's dealers nationwide. For further information contact White's Electronics (UK), 13 Harbour Road, Inverness IV1 1SY. Tel: 01463 223456.

