

**I**N July 1995 I was asked by *The Searcher* to write a field test report on the White's Classic II and said at the time that it was powerful, easy to use and outstanding value for money. I have now been asked to field test the new White's Classic II SL and I obviously wanted to see if there were any improvements to what was already an excellent machine.

Upon opening the box, to say I was pleasantly surprised would be incorrect – I was totally amazed! The machine that I had used last year had been totally transformed into a much lighter version and I could hardly wait to put it together and put it through its paces. At a quick glance, the controls seemed pretty much the same as before, but as I looked it over in detail, there were three very important changes and each of these have improved the machine 100%. The first change is the power pack containing 8 small penlight batteries (purchased in two packs of four). On the old model, it was run by 3 PP3 batteries, so the new version will be 50% cheaper. Added to this is the fact that the new pack will last an incredible 80 hours and this was

proved by my not having to change batteries once throughout a very exhaustive series of tests for *The Searcher*.

The second point was that the coil could be removed, or more importantly, different sized coils could be added at a later date. I'm not sure if White's recommend this, but I tried both the 9 1/2 in. and 6 1/2 in. coils and they both worked fine on the sites that I used them on, in varying types of soil and mineralisation.

Lastly, the old type White's Classic II had a simple motion All Metal/Discrim switch. This has been replaced with a "pinpoint" switch just under the stem (trigger switch) and is the conventional disc/all metal/all metal retune style. Put these changes together and you have the makings of a very good machine. It was now time to see if it was as good as it looked.

#### BENCH TEST

I tried a variety of targets over the searchcoil to see at what point iron was going to be "knocked out" and small thin section hammered coins left in. This turned out to be very simple as most "small" iron was taken out at the lowest setting (nil) whilst still locating a quarter hammered coin. It was now out into the field.

#### FIELD TEST

I was very fortunate in that one of my major farmers was late in

ploughing up his fields. Although he was drilling almost immediately, he didn't mind me continuing to search as long as I stopped when the green shoots started coming through (and gave him a bottle of whisky for Christmas!). With so many fields at my disposal and no work for ten days, I was looking forward to getting out in the fresh air with the Classic II SL.

#### Field One

This was still stubble, but I deliberately chose it because I had searched it only the week before and I wanted to see how the finds compared. The field had produced nothing much older than Georgian, but lots of it and this was confirmed by the Classic II. After a solid eight hours searching, I had 25 Georgian/Victorian coins, 14 buckles, 60 plus buttons, three lead weights, three thimbles, one and a half jews harps, two rings (base metal) and a broken seal. Added to this were lots of broken non-ferrous items which gave good signals at very respectable depths. I must add that I also found a lot of non-ferrous rubbish, but being non-ferrous I would have dug it with any metal detector. With iron I found that the Classic II ignored the vast majority of it (I tested an area in all metal then tested it in discrim). The bits that I "heard" were either virtually on the surface where the machine appeared to "overload" or deep large pieces of iron that would be

dug on most machines such as plough shears and horseshoes. After just a few minutes I was able to identify the surface iron by checking the signal in "pinpoint" and thereby ignored it throughout the remainder of the test.

Looking back, I was very pleased with my finds which were similar to those found on the last occasion with a top of the range model. A friend had been using another model which was much more expensive than the Classic II SL and struggled due to the amount of iron – but not this machine.

### **Field Two**

This was a small 15 acre field directly behind the farmer's house. It is not one that I particularly wanted to search as it is the opposite side of the estate from where my best finds have come, but the farmer's son, aged 12, had been asking to come along for weeks and now seemed a good time to take him. I set up the Classic II and ten seconds later he had a cart-wheel penny in his hand! The find was not that good, but it was the first time he had found anything with a metal detector and the smile on his face was something I'll never forget. This continued throughout the day and I was very late leaving because he simply didn't want to finish. Our combined finds included nothing rare or unusual but once he had worked out how to pinpoint correctly our finds seemed pretty much the same. We compared quite a few signals in the morning and all but a few VERY deep targets were located with both machines.

### **Fields Three and Four**


The following weekend I had the chance to join our club on what we already knew was a good site. The main field was a good 200 acres and a smaller one ran alongside. They were both under stubble and it was still difficult to work, despite the recent snow and heavy frost. I therefore took the chance to try out a different coil and the one I chose was the White's Blue Max 600 coil (about 7 in.). Note – if you own a Spectrum and haven't got this coil yet, then you don't know what you are missing!

After using this machine and coil for half an hour, I had two badly corroded Roman "grots" and about a dozen 303s, but more importantly I had virtually no "chatter" off the wet stubble, unlike the people detecting around me. In fact several people actually stopped detecting and drove home because it was so bad. After about another dozen 303s I went back to the car and put on the White's polo coil (9 1/2 in.) to see how it would cope. As expected, detecting was harder than before because the stubble kept pushing up through the hole in the centre of the coil, but I did manage to find another two Roman coins at very good depths. In the afternoon I moved over to the second field as the stubble was much shorter and easier to work. I kept the larger coil on and found another seven Roman bronzes scattered throughout the area which made a total of eleven by the time darkness fell. Eleven might not seem a lot to some people but there were about 40 detector users out on site, most

of whom had much more powerful machines than myself and yet only four people found as much as I had.

Over the next few evenings I had the chance to try out this machine again and again, all with equally excellent results and as I speak, I have yet to change the batteries, even after a good fifty plus hours use!

### **CONCLUSION**

Over the past ten years I have had the opportunity to try out virtually all of the metal detectors as they became available. During that time I have seen perhaps half a dozen that stood out from the rest and this new model from White's will now be added to the list! It is light, VERY light, easy to use, has a good pinpoint and the ability to change coils. Add to that up to eighty hours of battery life and you have got incredible value for money at just £220.00. I am not going to waste your time by going on and on but if you are a novice with a relatively cheap machine OR you have a powerful metal detector already and want a back-up, then buy this machine now!! I understand that this price is only a launch price and that it will shortly be increased – so don't delay. Even if this machine is put up by say £30, it would still give excellent value for money, but at this moment in time it is a bargain. The White's Classic II SL can be purchased at all major metal detecting dealers or, in Scotland only, direct from **White's Electronics (UK) Ltd., 13 Harbour Road, Inverness IV1 1SY.** Tel: 01463 223456. 

### **PLEASE NOTE**

**To use the BM950 loop – 9.5" – 25cm – or other BM loops successfully on this unit additional components would be required to make it compatible.**

**We do know of, however, many people who use this loop to good effect without these components realising, of course, that in some areas the ground balance could be affected.**

**For a quotation please contact White's.**