

Field Test

Fisher ID Edge

Last year I was introduced to a remarkable little detector called the Fisher ID Excel. I can recall being very pleased with the test results. The machine was nicely balanced, light, easy to set up, and both steady and sensitive in operation. What more could you want from a detector?

Some three weeks before writing this I was given the opportunity to try out another detector that has the "edge" - in fact, that's its name. It is called the Fisher ID Edge.

It could be said that the ID Edge is the son of the ID Excel. It has many similarities and is the equal of the Excel in all areas - clearly it is a son to be proud of! But apart from all the familiar family features it offers a lot more benefits besides and has, in fact, become a specialised three-in-one detector.

Programming has additional features to enhance detecting flexibility including separate volume adjustment, programmed notch facility, a setting for old coins and relics, a mode for modern coins, a gold jewellery setting, superior target separation, trash rejection, and a fast auto ground balance system.

The ID Edge is delivered well packaged, only requiring a few minutes of your time to assemble the component parts together. Adjust the shaft sections to suit your own comfortable detecting length, connect the coil plug into the control box (without crossing the threads), and you are ready to go.

On this detector Fisher has also included a range of factory pre-sets, which should be used until you are familiar with the settings and are able to set your own detecting parameters.

I remember that when I was testing the Excel ground conditions were dry and hard due to the lack of a little rain. Well, somebody up there must have remembered my comments because this time as soon as I stepped out of the door the heavens fell on me. I've never seen so much rain. Yet it is enthusiasm for detecting that separates the men from the boys - or so I kept telling myself.

Description & Controls

Like its predecessor, the ID Edge weighs in at a fatigue-free and long detecting bout low weight at only 2.76lb.

The attractive-looking control box is styled in a light blue and yellow livery, fitted out with a seven digital control touchpad fascia and LCD display. This ensemble provides a constant readout of

up to scratch with a numerical indication. The two 9 volt PP3 batteries will operate for approximately 20 hours. When 6 volts are indicated, around one hour of life remains before batteries will require changing.

Menu Touchpad

Pressing this control enables adjustment of three settings with the up and down arrows: Discrimination, Volume, and Sensitivity. Each time you press the menu touchpad each control will flash in turn while adjustment is being made; once settings are completed, press the Pinpoint touchpad to continue searching.

Discrimination Touchpad

Pressing the menu button will start the Disc schematic flashing, providing a range of -36 to +22. Pressing the arrow buttons



all current settings; it also remembers your last settings when switched off.

On/Off Touchpad

Pressing this touchpad turns the detector on, and informs you if the batteries are

will alter the Disc position up or down. The effects are as follows: -36 (no targets rejected) to +22 (all targets except copper or silver rejected). So should you set your discrimination to maximum, copper and silver will not be eliminated. Discrimination affects only the audio side, so you still get an accurate ID reading. (New to this detector is a Factory Preset for old and hammered coins, which will help in the initial stages; test before going out detecting).

Volume

This new addition to the Edge allows the operator to effectively alter the volume to his or her own liking, especially when

experiencing strong winds or other background noise. Starting with V1 up to V9, adjustment is set with the up and down arrows when the "V" icon is flashing.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity is adjusted by pressing the menu touchpad until the Sens schematic starts flashing. This enables adjustment from "1" to a maximum of "10" with the up and down arrows. As with most detectors, setting the sensitivity to the higher level provides the greatest depth potential, but this is only possible if ground conditions allow. Any fluctuation in signal response will suggest high mineralisation, the effects of which can be reduced by lowering the sensitivity to a more stable position. (In field trials even a setting of "1" yielded good results).

Notch Touchpad

The Notch touchpad, a new control, enables you to select between the notch discrimination options. Pressing the touchpad repeatedly will select the following:-

- Off - No Notch selected
- FL - Foil Notch
- Sc - Nickel Notch
- Pt - Pull Tab Notch
- Ice - Zinc Notch

The Notch mode is only active if you are in the disc mode and not in (All Metal).

If and when a Notch is activated, the LCD "Notch" icon will stay on.

Pinpoint Touchpad

To exit the menu settings at any time after making an adjustment to controls, just press and release the Pinpoint touchpad to return and continue detecting.

Pinpointing

Once a signal is received during detecting and you are satisfied with the audio/target ID information, the Precision Visual Pinpoint Mode will be activated by pressing and holding the Pinpoint touchpad in order to zero onto the target. Audio intensity increases the closer you get, at the same time the two digit ("0" deepest -



"99" closer) on the LCD screen will increase in value as you approach the centre of the find. Unlike the usual depth gauge reading, this allows more understanding of the size, shape and location of the find.

Mode Touchpad

The Mode touchpad toggles between motion audio and visual disc operation, to a true all metal single tone detection. To switch between the two modes while searching, press the arrow down/mode touchpad. The LCD "All Metal" icon will stay on if All Metal mode is selected.

One feature I particularly liked about both the ID Excel and ID Edge was this all metal mode; this is because visual ID is constant throughout operation. The numerical ID feature works in both search modes, although the benefit of four tone audio discrimination is only available in Disc mode. All targets on the LCD meter, ferrous or non-ferrous on a plus or minus scale, are available while detecting.

The target ID valuation is an advantage especially on beach or relic sites, where an understanding of the signal value saves the necessity to recover every target.

Factory Preset Touchpad

This function, with new and improved options on the ID Edge, can be used as a quick setup facility when learning to use or becoming familiar with the ID Edge. But it can also be utilised as an aide de camp when considering particular target opportunities during detecting.

CP - Preset Off (User preference of disc and notch)

OC - Old Coins (Target ID Range

accepted: + 5 to + 12 and + 16 to + 36)

JL - Gold Jewellery (Target ID Range accepted: 0 to + 18)

NC - New Coins (Target ID Range accepted: + 8 to + 12 and + 20 to + 36)

Factory preset modes are set by pressing the FP touchpad, but will only operate in Disc, and not in All Metal.

Tone Audio System

The four tone audio system combined with the visual target ID provides lots of information to aid discrimination. While sweeping the coil over a target you will hear one of four tones:-

- Low tone = Iron objects (ferrous)
- Low/Mid tone = Foil, nickel, round tabs
- Mid/High tone = Square tabs, 2p coins and pennies
- High tone = Copper, silver coins.

A Bell-Tone, accompanied by an "OL" on the LCD screen indicates a large or shallow target; lifting the coil will avoid any possibility of overload and inaccurate ID.

When detecting in All Metal, you will only get a single tone for all metal targets the coil picks up, but you will get an accurate numerical valuation on the LCD screen in the same fashion as the Disc mode, plus the potential for greater depth.

Field Trials

I've explained many of the features and benefits that make the ID Edge a suitable detecting platform, now I had the opportunity to try all this under realistic detecting conditions.

Despite the awful change in the weather nothing was going to stop me

getting out and putting this little beauty to work. So, armed with just about every bit of weather gear at my disposal, I ventured forth. There at least seemed to be some promising breaks in the clouds.

Having stopped to talk to the farmer, and having confirmed that the fields I wanted to search were still available I was ready to go. I'm sure that the farmer thought I must be a sandwich short of a picnic venturing out in such awful weather



conditions, especially when they - much harder people than us "townies" - had already decided that the fireside was the best place to be.

Ground balancing was just a formality and the ID Edge settled nicely into a quiet detecting mode; I felt I had been here before. The sensitivity was positioned at "8" out of the range of "10". This seemed to be adequate, and I didn't feel the need to increase it - especially as it was possible that it could have been reduced and still provide the same depth benefits.

The advantage of this detector over the ID Excel in having an adjustable volume control was becoming apparent, as the wind by now was like a raging bull. My closed back headphone volume had to be increased to overcome the turmoil going on outside.

Searching had been going on for some time judging by the time on my watch, but this is something you tend not to notice when detecting seems so effortless. Little or no fatigue was apparent, especially compared

with what I normally feel at this point - but I was wind battered!

Some reasonable finds had already accumulated during this time including: a small buckle, a worn George III penny, various Victorian bronze coins, an old brass finger ring, a much worn Elizabeth I silver threepence, a broken crotal bell (I haven't picked up a whole one for some while), and other bronze coins too worn to recognise. But I was getting wetter and covered with sticky mud; perhaps the farmer's viewpoint was right?

The numerical ID system works very well and is accurate, so there seems little reason why you should need to increase discrimination too much, unless you purposely want to cut out particular objects within the audio range. Test a few artefacts before detecting so as to be sure of your audio discrimination setting.

I was very comfortable with this detector; it has everything you will need for successful detecting and more. It offers sensitivity, easy programming, and performance that you can't fault. This to my mind is what gives it the "edge". **TH**