

Field Test C.Scope CS1220XD



Fig.1. The C.Scope CS1220XD detector.



Fig.2. CS1220XD control panel.

In the November 2016 issue of *Treasure Hunting* magazine I wrote an article referring to my first ever detector with a discriminating facility, the C.Scope CS1220B. Those who read the article will have gathered that I see it as probably the best detector I have ever used. That is with regards to length of time without seeking a change and amount of finds that were made while it was in use. Furthermore I have to say that through promotions and flexible mates, I have been fortunate enough to use a fair few detectors over the years.

On the strength of the aforementioned *Treasure Hunting* magazine article I was asked by C.Scope if I would be willing to write up a field test on the upgraded version of the 1220B the CS1220XD model. I have used one before, but only a couple of times, and I'm afraid that memory has long since faded. The CS1220XD has been on the market a while now, having first appeared back in 1991; it was then re-launched in 2006 due to its on-going

popularity, and I believe high sales volume.

As somebody who doesn't need much of an excuse to go detecting, and with a machine that is clearly standing the test of time, I jumped at the chance. I still had a couple of uncultivated fields that have already (by me) been done to death, and I saw this as an excellent opportunity to test the CS1220XD as these fields only produce the very occasional good find.

Instruction Manual

On the day of arrival the detector remained in the box until the instruction manual had been read through a couple of times. In the past I, like many others, have been too keen to get under way and missed some crucial information that could have resulted in a much better finds rate. Once you've been out in the field and have then decided to read the manual, you don't always fancy going over the same area again.

I will deal with the manual first. I dug out my E-Trac manual (all 92 pages of it), and have to say if you want technology then this is probably the way to go. However, if you like to do your detecting on site as opposed to reading about it in books, then you will be relieved to know the CS1220XD manual has just 19 pages of easy to read and understand information.

First Impressions

Once assembled I was immediately impressed with the feel of the detector, it weighs in at around 1.7kg and is well balanced (Fig.1). The control panel (Fig.2) consists of four main functional switches, three push buttons and a finds signal meter, a feature of which I'm a big fan on any detector; the meter also displays a battery check when used in conjunction with the sensitivity switch.

Fig.3. Mode settings.



Fig.4. Modern 50p coin.

Fig.5. Some of the larger iron finds.





Fig.6. A large iron pin.

Fig.7. Various nails.



Fig.8. Musket shot.

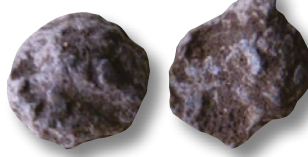


Fig.9. Decorative stud.



Figs.10a & b. Cloth or bag seal.



Fig.11. Copper-alloy plate and a belt stiffener.



Fig.12. Roman bronze coins.

The switch in the bottom right hand corner of the control panel (Fig.3) operates the four detecting modes. Meter Audio Disc and Meter Disc are pre-programmed settings; the manual recommends that Meter Audio Disc is used when getting to know the detector. This is advice I will wholeheartedly agree with. As with all detectors, I believe, it's best to start with the factory settings. GD1 and GD2 are programs you can set to your own specifications; they are not in the slightest bit complicated, as with the rest of the operating instruction manual these programs are set out in simple layman's terms.

Before any serious detecting I carried out a few 'in air' tests. Small Roman bronzes were setting the detector off at 5-6 inches (14cm) hammered silver pennies around 7-8 inches (19cm) with the more solid Roman *denarius* producing a signal at least an inch further. A small lead steel yard weight set the detector buzzing at an incredible 14 inches (35.5cm). Various other size items were tested and I would say all returned more than satisfactory results.

There's nothing like mud to test a detector's true capabilities, but before heading for the fields I set up a test bed on my rhubarb patch. It was clearly the right thing to do as I soon discovered that very deep buried hammered and

small Roman bronzes (while always giving a positive signal with the detector set on Meter Audio Disc), if I switched to a GD program, even with the bottom end discrimination, the signal although still there would fade. Once you know this, it is in no way a problem as the meter still registers something worth digging as it will hover in the neutral, or go to a positive position.

Once I had familiarised myself with the settings (several hours of burying and recovering items on my test bed) it was off to the fields.

Testing in the Field

My first trip out was just a couple of hours and, as I was still getting to know the detector, I thought it best to dig everything. On a field that was still very rough ploughed I can't say I was anticipating many finds, but I did manage to start on a bit of a high as on my very first furrow, up from a considerable depth, came a 50p piece (Fig.4). By its nearly new condition it clearly hadn't been in the ground very long; the rest of the session was spent digging mainly iron (Figs.5 & 6). I find the pin shown in Fig.6 interesting. I'm sure some reader will correct me, but I think it might be the retaining pin off a very old cartwheel.

I wouldn't normally dig nails (Fig.7),

but I'm pleased I dug these as some were Roman, which pointed to other possible Roman finds in the area. I had in the past found a few Roman bronzes on the other side of what is a very large field. I found that the CS1220XD coped quite well with the conditions, considering any detector would struggle with ruts deep enough to hide the local hares until I was virtually on top of them.

An immediate noticeable plus for the CS1220XD, was when you inevitably crashed it into the high sides of the furrows there was no false signal. If I had taken my current detector onto this field, as a result of the mega ruts, it would have been pinging off all the time.

Over the next couple of days I unearthed two musket shot that had clearly found their target when they were originally fired (Fig.8), a copper-alloy stud with a mother of pearl setting (Fig.9), and a cloth or bag seal (Figs.10a & b).

Within that two day window I managed to find a bit of the field that was drier



Fig.13. Very small Roman bronze coin.



Figs.16a & b. Obverse and reverse of a hammered silver penny.



Figs.18a & b. Obverse and reverse of a Queen Anne sixpence.

Figs.14a & b. Obverse and reverse of an Elizabeth II shilling.



Fig.19. An unusual Roman find.



Fig.15. Modern copper coinage.

Fig.17. Commonwealth penny.



and quite a bit flatter (much to the relief of myself and the CS1220XD) as I soon unearthed a trio of buttons. I had been over the site with my E-Trac previously, but when I'd done so either I or the E-Trac wasn't awake, as the smallest of the buttons was found in one of my footprints. I know it was my footprint as it followed a defined detectorist's path across the field. Along with the buttons came a pot mend and a much damaged open end thimble. I also recovered two small iron part-objects one of which appears to be a small steel yard weight.

After spending a fair bit of time in the Meter Audio Disc setting, I switched to the GD2 program with the minimum amount of discrimination. This resulted in a few less small, unwanted items. I finished the session with part of a copper-alloy plate that had once been quite crudely attached to another object and a decorative belt stiffener (Fig.11).

I had another field close by, but I wanted at least one more session on the only field that the CS1220XD had so

far been on. Sticking to the flatter area my theory regarding the Roman nails proved correct as in one small corner the CS1220XD picked up on five fair condition Roman bronze coins (Fig 12). I also found a tiny bronze coin that come from a depth that would have tested the range of far more sophisticated machines (Fig.13).

On the same day I had a deeply buried, nice condition but tarnished, 1953 Elizabeth II shilling (Figs.14a & b).

Having decided to move fields I was encouraged to see that my next destination had been left for a spring crop and had only been lightly raked leaving large areas flat. Fields that have had just a shallow pull through are not always the best for detecting, but it was nice to get away from the ankle breaking conditions of the previous site.

This particular field turned out to be a bit of a challenge. I had searched the site extensively soon after harvest, so it wasn't surprising good signals were few and far between. However, the XD did manage to locate three pre-decimal coins (Fig.15)

and its first hammered coin – a rather distressed but nonetheless welcome Edward silver penny (Figs.16a & b). This was followed by an equally welcome Commonwealth penny (Fig.17). Continuing with the silver on the same morning a worn smooth Queen Ann sixpence was recovered (Figs.18a & b).

Having had a rest from the ruts I felt motivated to give them one more try. I returned to the area where the Roman bronze coins had come from and found, completely encased in a clump of earth, a mystery (Fig.19). It's almost certainly Roman and in its original shape. It has a pattern on top of the bow which would have been enamelled and is tiny, at only 18mm long. It could possibly be a stud or belt fitment but I'm unable to find an exact likeness in any of my reference books; I'm sure some reader will know what it is.

On that same outing I recovered a jetton (Fig.20). In spite of the damage I was really pleased with this find as it came from around 8 inches down and was tilted on one side. It only gave a faint signal initially but a positive meter reading. Out of all the finds made with the XD the jetton was the one that told me most about the detector.

I spent one session on pasture where I believe they used to hold markets up until the early 1960s. The site is heavily contaminated so a high discrimination setting was used. The session resulted in eight pre-decimal pennies (Figs.21 & 22) with the three in Fig.22 coming from three consecutive swings of the detector.



Fig.20. A damaged jetton.



Fig.21. Pre-decimal copper pennies.



Fig.22. Pre-decimal copper pennies.

Fig.23. Elizabeth II 1 shilling and 2 shilling coins.



Fig.24. A casket key.



Fig.25. My grandson James.

On the same day I also dug two badly tarnished pre-decimal silver coins (Fig.23), and a casket key (Fig.24). Some smaller coins were found but were too poor to photograph. Many large trash items were also located, but overall the XD coped really well on a site with such high levels of contamination.

Overall Summary

Balance and Ease of Use I would rate this detector as good as any I've used.

Depth Capabilities It does drift away a bit on deep, tiny and thin finds, but as previously mentioned if you check the meter it will more than compensate for this.

Battery Life When the CS1220XD arrived it was already installed with a set of eight AA batteries. Altogether well over 35 hours was spent on the field test, in air tests and on my back garden test-bed, without the need to replace them, even then the meter was still showing some amount of life, so I would say it has very good battery life.

Operating Instruction Manual Unfussy, and easy to follow. If you have never picked a detector up before, I can confidently say that this booklet could get you detecting using the CS1220XD within half a day.

Discrimination and Pinpoint Accuracy

On low discrimination settings in the GR1 mode the XD will register positive on more than its fair share of unwanted items, but I would suggest you only adjust gradually so as to avoid missing those deep buried tiny hammered coins. A few back garden tests on different soil types, before any serious detecting, is undoubtedly the best way to work out discrimination levels.

One of the things I love about this detector is how little movement is required to pinpoint signals. Once a target is detected, no more than a slight twitch of the search head will locate the find.

Price The current retail price from C.Scope is £435 including VAT.

I found it difficult to find any negatives with this detector, but I will mention a couple of small issues. The CS1220XD has just the standard 8 inch search head. Its predecessor, the CS1220B, as well as having the standard search head also had a mini 4 inch alternative. Although the smaller one was rarely used, it did come

into its own on deep rutted and highly contaminated sites.

When fully toggled up in my winter gear (a thick jumper and heavy winter coat) I found the arm cup a bit on the short side; a simple arm strap would cure this problem. I must stress these really are only minor issues.

I like this detector a great deal. It comes at a budget price but will perform to a standard of far more expensive models I have used in the past.

Are there better detectors out there? Possibly, if you're technically minded and don't mind spending somewhere between £1400 and £2000. However, if you are happy just to go detecting and don't want to break the bank to do so, then I'm more than happy to recommend C.Scope's CS1220XD.

I said the CS1220XD was easy to operate, but I don't think my grandson James (Fig.25) has quite got the hang of it, but give him a couple more years and I can see our back lawn with more than a few holes in it. TH