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Note: This book covers earlier models manufactured by Bounty Hunter Corporation.

Stay tuned for the next update of this book which will include online all diagrams, graphics and photos along with our current model lineup.

The Bounty Hunter Series included in this book follows:

1. Quick Draw
2. Sharp Shooter
3. Big Bud SE
4. Big Bud SED
5. Big Bud XL
6. Big Bud Pro Select 220
7. Big Bud Pro Select 220-D

Part I.

TREASURE AND HOW TO FIND IT! USING YOUR BOUNTY HUNTER METAL DETECTOR

By Mickey Cochran

DISCLAIMER: The Author, Publisher, and Manufacturer of Bounty Hunter Products take no responsibility for any injuries, mishaps, or legal action that may concur when utilizing Bounty Hunter Equipment or applying any of the techniques listed in this book. It is the sole responsibility of the reader to take every precaution necessary when pursuing metal detecting as a hobby.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Always gain permission when detecting on private property.
2. Learn all of your state and federal laws and know how they apply to metal detecting.
3. Be careful to wear protective clothing especially to guard yourself from the elements.
4. Wear gloves at all times when recovering metal objects.
5. Do not wear headphones when it is critical to be able to hear any oncoming traffic or imminent threats from wild animals.
6. Pace yourself and try to take a restful break at least every hour.

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An Introduction to the Hobby of Metal Detecting

Metal detecting is a true art form. Those who are willing to devote time and dedicated effort to the hobby are the ones who will gain the most rewards. A metal detector is similar to a musical instrument, only after many hours of study and practice will the operator gain sufficient mastery over the unit. Fortunately, the Bounty Hunter metal detector is relatively easy to learn. Just the same though, mastery can take many years of diligent practice. Be aware, the hobby of metal detecting, no matter what level of equipment you have at your disposal, demands patience.

Metal detecting is one of the most interesting, and can be, one of the most profitable hobbies you will ever delve into. The hobby itself revolves under many different areas of the general term of "Treasure Hunting". With this book, we will explore all of the major areas that will enhance your capabilities and possibilities of applying your Bounty Hunter metal detector.

First and foremost, you'll find that no other hobby encompasses so many areas of study:

1. History: Literally everything you find with your Bounty Hunter will reveal a piece of history.
2. Geography: As your treasure hunting pursuits increase, you'll discover tools such as maps and research as indispensable and find yourself learning more about local geography.
3. Geology: If you decide to apply your Bounty Hunter as a gold prospecting tool, you'll soon acquire a lot of expertise in understanding the origins of gold, thereby increasing your geological knowledge.
4. Coin Collecting: As you accumulate many old coins, you will find yourself immersed in a new hobby of coin collecting-An extensive study in itself, and certainly, a good lesson in economics throughout history.
5. Archaeology: This is a natural offshoot of metal detecting since you will want to properly research the origins of the many relics you discover while metal detecting.

These are only a few of the areas of study that you will apply as an integral part of metal detecting. Most of all, you're going to find your newfound hobby as a lot of fun-tremendous possibilities are awaiting you and your Bounty Hunter metal detector! This book was written with the intention to be as comprehensive as possible-enhancing your unit's operation manual by focusing mainly on the application of your Bounty Hunter.

Many uses can be derived from your Bounty Hunter metal detector: relic hunting, coin-shooting, cache hunting, gold prospecting, jewelry hunting and even practical uses around the house such as finding parts to your lawnmower. The techniques offered in this book will increase your capability to eliminate the frustrating learning curve that is normally encountered when first acquiring a metal detector. Not only will you learn to operate your detector more efficiently, but you will also realize the many possible applications for your Bounty Hunter. This book, in combination with your operations manual, will give you a solid foundation in applying and operating your Bounty Hunter metal detector.

An Overview of the Earlier Bounty Hunter Metal Detecting Line

The Bounty Hunter Series was introduced over two decades ago. There were many versions of the Bounty Hunter manufactured under different model names. This book will focus on earlier models including the following:

Quick Draw

Sharp Shooter

Big Bud SE

Big Bud SED

Big Bud XL

Big Bud Pro Select 220

Big Bud Pro Select 220-D

Even though there were a wide variety of models produced under the Bounty Hunter name, they all utilize the same principles of application. Therefore, many of the tips and techniques illustrated in this book will be applicable to all Bounty Hunter models, this especially includes the Big Bud series: 'Big Bud', Big Bud Jr., Bid Bud Pro SE, and the Big Bud Pro SED.

For instance, two older Bounty Hunter models, the 'Big Bud' and Big Bud Jr., both only offered a single tone for identification of targets, yet they both had a meter system for target ID. Along with the many general treasure hunting techniques illustrated in this book, any of the techniques focusing on how to decipher meter readings will also have their application for older models such as these. The Big Bud Pro SE introduced three-tone target identification along with a visual target ID. The Big Bud Pro SED brought in a unique Bounty Hunter innovation: simultaneous target ID with depth readout! The SED offered a digital bar graph on both the target ID and depth reading. The Big Bud Pro Select 220 offered the same features as the SED but utilized an analog meter system instead of the digital bar graph.

The Select 220-D, introduced in 1995, has brought back the digital readout but utilizes individual arrows to point out the probable target ID and depth reading.

Bounty Hunter Corporation has innovated many changes accelerating the metal detecting industry standard beyond the conventional present-day technology. The performance of the Bounty Hunter detector, from its lowest end to its highest end, far exceed any challenge posed by most types of metal detecting situations.

Air Testing Your Metal Detector

We will first approach learning to test our Bounty Hunter indoors. The main objective in this is to understand every function of our unit before attempting to take it outdoors to the field.

Air Testing Set-Up

Items needed for proper air testing:

An Older Pull-tab (Complete with circular tab & beaver tail)

A Nickel

A Dime

A Copper Penny (Any penny dated pre-'82)

A Zinc Penny (Any penny dated post-'82)

A Silver Ring

A Gold Ring

A Piece of Solid Iron or a Nail

Assemble your detector as per instructions from your operations manual making sure that there is enough slack in the cable where the coil meets the lower stem to allow for flip-flopping at different angles. Place your detector lengthwise on a table with the coil hanging over the edge. Now position the coil so that it faces upwards towards the ceiling as illustrated. To eliminate any possible false signaling make sure that there are no electronic devices turned on nearby such as TV's and Radios.

Air Testing in the "DISC" mode:

Turn your unit on as per the instructions in your Operations Manual. We will start by testing the unit in the "DISC" mode.

Quick Draw, Sharp Shooter _ Press the DISC touchpad on top of the control box. The mode indicator will now have an arrow at "DISC".

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Make sure the toggle switch is in the "DISC" left position-Also, be careful that the Blanker toggle switch on the right side of the control box is in the middle position; otherwise, you will not be able to air test anything less than 2-4 inches from the coil.

Other Bounty Hunters _ The same instructions under the Select 220-D applies. If your Bounty Hunter has a Blanker, be careful that it is turned off-follow your operations manual to determine if your blanker is set in the off position.

Other required settings applied to all models: Make sure that your Disc/Notch control is turned completely counterclockwise. Turn your Sensitivity 3/4's or more. If turned too high, you may get chattering and false signals.

In the "DISC" mode, all items to be tested will require movement. When operating in the field, this would mean slowly sweeping the coil over the target. When air testing, you will be required to sweep the target slowly over the coil. When sweeping coins or rings, be aware that the targeted area will be much more receptive if the coin or ring is swept flat instead of at an angle. Most coins and rings fall flat on the ground and usually do not end up being dug at angles; even though, there are rare cases where a coin can be dug up on its edge. Be careful not to sweep the target too close to the coil or a double-signal may be emitted-three inches from the surface of the coil should suffice for this air test. Remove all jewelry, bracelets, and watches from your hands or wrist before attempting to air test.

Let's start by slowly sweeping your sample nickel across the coil. Notice that the detector emits a low tone and indicates "Nickel" on the readout. Observe your meter/readout carefully making sure that you're getting a good ID indication. Sometimes there will be slight variation and the ID indicator may jump back and forth and your tones may vary; for instance, one time you sweep the nickel it may read pull-tab-another time, it may read nickel. To minimize this from occurring, try lowering the coin closer to the coil. Experiment with turning down the Sensitivity; sometimes, if the Sensitivity is set too high, false signaling will occur. Be careful not to sweep the coin too quickly over the coil; this also applies when sweeping your coil in the field.

Our next test involves the ominous pull-tab. Try sweeping the pull-tab slowly across the coil being careful to follow the same procedure used for the nickel air test. Notice the different tone being emitted by the pull-tab from the nickel-a medium tone.

We will now experiment with eliminating the pull-tab. Turn the Disc/Notch variable control clockwise slowly, while sweeping the pull-tab, until the pull-tab no longer emits a tone. Now try sweeping a dime over the coil and notice that it is now being detected. This is a great setting if you're only looking for silver or copper coins. Nickels, pull-tabs, gold rings, etc. will all be eliminated with this setting. Most trash items will also be eliminated. Experiment with all of your targets and observe closely how your detector reacts.

Note: Some gold rings will fall in the pull-tab range and some small gold rings may not be detected in the DISC mode. The ALL METALS air test will demonstrate how to detect small gold rings.

This completes our Air Test for operating in the DISC mode.

Air Testing in the "NOTCH" Mode:

Our next setting on the On/Off mode switch is "NOTCH". This mode of operation allows for bringing in nickels while eliminating most pull-tabs and still detecting silver and copper coins.

Quick Draw _ The following air test does not apply to the Quick Draw. The Quick Draw does not have a manual "NOTCH" mode of operation. The "NOTCH" on the Quick Draw is really an "AUTO NOTCH" mode of operation which will be covered in the next air test procedure.

Sharp Shooter _ Press the NOTCH touchpad on top of the control box. The mode indicator will now have an arrow under "NOTCH".

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Turn the On/Off mode switch to the "NOTCH" position. Make sure the toggle switch is in the "DISC" left position-Also, be careful that the Blanker toggle switch on the left side of the control box is in the middle position; otherwise, you will not be able to air test anything under 2-4 inches.

Other Bounty Hunters _ The same instructions under the Select 220-D applies. If your Bounty Hunter has a Blanker, be careful that it is turned off-follow your operations manual to determine if your blanker is set in the off position.

Settings: Have the Disc/Notch control set at around the pull-tab indication (Around 11:00). Sensitivity: around 3/4's of a turn clockwise.

The goal would be to eliminate the pull-tab while still detecting your nickel. This is very tricky and requires very small increments of adjustments on the Disc/Notch variable control.

Slowly sweep the pull-tab over the coil and listen for the medium tone. If you're not getting a medium tone, try turning up the Disc/Notch control until the medium tone comes in. Now, try turning the Disc/Notch control counterclockwise in small increments until the tone disappears. Once the tone has disappeared, try sweeping the nickel across the coil to determine if it is still being detected. If the nickel is not being detected, turn the Disc/Notch control in clockwise motions just a hair until the nickel is being detected. Once you've achieved bringing in the nickel tone and eliminating the pull-tab tone, you're properly set in the manual "NOTCH" mode. A large percentage of your gold rings will be detected in this mode of operation-about 85% to be more exact. The gold ring you have as a sample may or may not emit a tone with this setting. Experiment with the rest of your targets to find out how your detector will react.

Air Testing in the "AUTO NOTCH" Mode:

The "AUTO NOTCH" will automatically eliminate most pull-tabs while still detecting nickels, silver, and copper coins. It's very similar to a camera set at automatic exposure. No adjustment is necessary. This mode of operation is normally used when coin-shooting, especially in trashy areas where the pull-tab medium tones would otherwise constantly go off.

Quick Draw _ Press the NOTCH touchpad on top of the control box. The mode indicator will now have an arrow under "AUTO NOTCH".

Sharp Shooter _ Press the AUTO NOTCH touchpad on top of the control box. The mode indicator will now have an arrow under "NOTCH".

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Turn the On/Off mode switch to the "AUTO NOTCH" position. Make sure the toggle switch is in the "DISC" left position-Again, be careful that the Blanker toggle switch on the left side of the control box is in the middle position; otherwise, you will not be able to air test anything under 2-4 inches.

Other Bounty Hunters _ The same instructions under the Select 220-D applies. Be careful that the Blanker is turned off-follow your operations manual to determine if your blanker is set in the off position.

Settings: The Disc/Notch control will now have effect as an Auto Notch Width Window-The Auto Notch Width control is a new feature introduced by Bounty Hunter; The Quick Draw, Sharp Shooter, Select 220-D, and the Big Bud XL are the models that offer this particular feature. To start off the air test for these units, turn the Disc/Notch Width control completely counterclockwise. On any older model Bounty Hunter, the Disc/Notch control will have no effect on the unit when operating in "AUTO NOTCH" so no setting is required.

Sensitivity: Adjust it around 3/4's of a turn clockwise.

Slowly sweep the pull-tab over the coil to determine if the detector has eliminated it. Now sweep the nickel slowly to make sure that it is still emitting a low tone. All silver, copper, and brass items will emit a high tone. The iron should still be completely rejected.

We have now completed air testing in all three of the Discrimination modes. You should have a good idea on how your metal detector is reacting to different types of metal. Iron has been rejected in all three of the Discrimination modes. Our next air test entails utilizing the ALL METALS mode of operation.

Air Testing in the All Metals Mode:

Before air testing in the ALL METALS mode, we need to first consider what types of application would apply when operating in the ALL METALS mode.

1. Relic Hunting

Because many relics are made of iron, it's important when relic hunting to operate in the ALL METALS mode. This will guarantee detection of all possible iron relics.

2. Cache Hunting

When cache hunting, depth is very critical-ALL METALS mode of operation guarantees your best depth capability for larger objects buried deeply.

3. Pinpointing

Coin-Shooting becomes frustrating unless you know how to pinpoint properly. No-Motion ALL METALS allows for easy pinpointing since no movement is required to isolate your target. The Quick Draw still requires movement in the ALL METALS mode to detect a target. Even so, pinpointing can be easier in the ALL METALS mode on the Quick Draw especially if the metal is oxidized iron.

Quick Draw, Sharp Shooter _ Press the ALL METAL touchpad on top of the control box. Or turn the unit off and then back on. When first turning the unit on, the detector defaults to the ALL METAL mode. The mode indicator will now have an arrow over "ALL METAL".

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Turn the On/Off mode switch to any mode position. Make sure the toggle switch is in the "ALL METAL" middle position-In this mode, no other feature on the unit except the Ground Balance adjustment will affect the operation of the unit. In other words, the Sensitivity control, the Disc/Notch variable control and the Blanker toggle switch are all shut down when operating in the ALL METAL mode.

Other Bounty Hunters _ The same instructions under the Select 220-D applies.

When air testing in the ALL METAL mode, all of your sample targets will emit the same tone without variation. No movement is required to gain a signal from the detector. Note: On the Quick Draw, movement is still required to gain a signal.

Sharp Shooter notes:

When operating the Sharp Shooter, always hit your RETUNE touchpad when operating in ALL METAL mode. This will guarantee depth and allow the machine to set itself for sampling the air. This will also apply when operating the unit in the field. Hit your RETUNE touchpad while sweeping your coil over the ground so the detector can automatically track the ground's mineralization. Once the unit has adjusted to the ground, you usually will not have to hit your RETUNE touchpad again.

Select 220 notes:

The Select 220 offers manual ground balancing. Because of this, the user is required to adjust the Ground Balance knob for proper ALL METALS operation. The toggle switch has a momentary TUNE position which will lock in whatever position the Ground Balance knob is set at. By turning the Ground Balance knob counterclockwise, and hitting the TUNE switch with every new position, you can adjust for different levels of ground mineralization which affects the sensitivity level of the ALL METALS mode. This will be explained in detail further on in the book.

Notes for Other Bounty Hunters:

Everything stated under the 220 notes also applies to all of the older Big Buds except the Big Bud XL. The XL is similar to the Sharp Shooter in that it is an automatic ground balance with a RETUNE switch driven by a toggle instead of the touchpad.

Experiment with all of your targets in the ALL METALS mode. Notice that the target can be held still above the coil and still cause your detector to emit a tone (The Quick Draw still requires movement to detect a target in the ALL METALS mode). All tones are now the same pitch and do not vary.

Battery Life & Care

Batteries are very critical in the operation of your Bounty Hunter. If your detector ever malfunctions, it usually can be attributed to bad batteries.

A few precautionary measures can add life to your batteries, prevent damage and increase performance.

1. Use Headphones: By using headphones you're stressing the batteries far less, especially on the audio side, and consequently increasing their life.
2. Buy Quality Batteries: for longer life and maximum performance, Alkaline batteries are necessary.
3. Switching Batteries: By switching the left battery with the right, halfway through their estimated life, you will be balancing the energy draw. One of the batteries drives the audio on your unit and has more drain on average than the other battery.
4. Store Batteries Properly: Never leave your batteries in the unit for long periods when not using your detector. Battery leakage can occur damaging the battery compartment and possibly the circuitry.
5. Rechargeables: 9-Volt Rechargeable batteries can be used in the Bounty Hunter but do not expect the same life or performance that a commercial Alkaline battery provides.

Further Notes on Batteries:

The best way to increase your battery life is to use headphones whenever possible. It is recommended to use headphones with left/right volume controls which adds to the versatility of your unit.

Alkaline batteries, in comparison with carbon cell batteries, will increase the performance of your Bounty Hunter and are highly recommended by the manufacturer. Keep in mind, other 9-volt batteries do work but with a major sacrifice in performance and longevity. For instance, it is possible to use rechargeable batteries-only be forewarned, they do not last very long-maybe 4-5 hours only. External rechargeable battery units are now available for 9-volt batteries. Carry extra rechargeables to insure being able to hunt for a full day. This is your option and is not recommended by the manufacturer.

Taking the Bounty Hunter to the Field

After having properly learned how to air test your detector, you are now more prepared to hit the field. As a foundation, air testing makes you more aware of what to expect in the field. No doubt, the field will pose many new problems that air testing does not solve.

The first question that comes to mind is: Where to detect? Well, most pro detectorists got their start hunting parks, swimming areas, or steelyards. If you've got a yard, start there. You may be surprised at all the types of metal and coins laying in your own yard. If you've got a manicured yard or hunting a manicured park, follow the "Trapdoor Method" recovery technique listed in this chapter.

Tools and Set-Up:

A garden trowel is usually appropriate and sufficient for coin-shooting. This tool will require you to pinpoint the target to avoid too much digging; in the process, you will be careful not to leave any trace of your recovery holes. Most coins are found 6 inches or less in the ground. With your garden trowel and your detector let's start by operating our detector in the Auto Notch mode.

Coil Size:

Since we will start by detecting coins, utilize the smallest coil that you have. The Bounty Hunter line offers four different size coils which can be used to good effect for different types of applications. Refer to the chapter: ACCESSORIES. The ideal coil for coin-shooting in trashy areas is the 4-Inch coil. The standard 8" or 7.25" coils work well when there isn't too much trash. If you only have the 10" coil, expect a lot of erratic signals when attempting to detect in any type of trash-laden area. This includes yards, parks, swimming areas and steelyards. To avoid this when coin-shooting, try to detect the middle of ball fields, soccer fields, or football fields. Usually, there isn't as much trash in these types of areas, so you will not get any erratic signals from your detector. For cache hunting or relic hunting in wide open fields with sparse trash, the 10" coil is unmatched. A detector was designed to ID one type of metal at a time; any time there is more than one piece of metal under the coil, the detector will not know which metal to identify and will appear to be emitting erratic, false signals.

Quick Draw _ Press the NOTCH touchpad on top of the control box. The mode indicator will now have an arrow over "NOTCH".

Sharp Shooter _ Press the AUTO NOTCH touchpad on top of the control box.

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Turn the On/Off mode switch to the AUTO NOTCH position. Make sure the toggle switch is in the DISC left position.

Other Bounty Hunters _ The same instructions under the Select 220-D applies.

Other settings to utilize: Sensitivity at about three-quarters of a turn. Disc/Notch control completely counterclockwise.

In this mode of operation, the Quick Draw, Sharp Shooter, Big Bud XL and Select 220-D will emit a high, medium or low tone depending on where the Disc/Notch variable control is set at. This control has now turned into an Auto Notch Width control on these particular units. On the Big Bud SE, SED, and Select 220, a high and low tone will only be emitted. In starting off, we will only focus on the high tones that are repeatable. After turning the unit on and adjusting your detector to the previous settings stated for each model, we will make a slow half-circle swing. You will probably notice, as you're making this swing, some faint signals and maybe one or two loud signals. If not, take a step forward and do another half-circle swing. When you do hear a signal, try to isolate the spot where the signal was being emitted. Now carefully shorten your swing over the same spot to determine if it's a repeatable signal. We will only dig repeatable signals since most faint non-repeatable signals are trash metal.

This may seem a little confusing at first; but, with practice, you will tune into the good signals and separate them from the faint non-repeatable signals. After finding your first repeatable solid signal, we will then attempt to properly pinpoint the target. Try drawing an "X" over the spot where the tone is being emitted. If the target appears large, it may be something other than a coin such as a soda can (these can oxidize and cause the detector to ID it as a penny/dime or quarter), a toy, a sprinkler head (since most of them are made of brass, the detector will identify it as a copper or silver coin), or even possibly a pipe (usually this is rare since most pipe is eliminated in the DISC mode). Now that we've determined the center point of where the target is located, we can begin recovering the target.

Always dig around the outside of the center point of the target to avoid damaging the target with the sharp point of your spade. As we remove the soil, we will then go back over the spot to determine if the coin is still in the hole. If we're no longer getting a tone, then we should sweep the coil over the removed dirt to see if we hadn't already dug the object. If we're no longer getting a tone over the hole, or over the mound of dirt removed, there usually is a reason:

1. The target is still in the hole but out of detection range. This can occur when digging the target; it may have fallen from your spade deeper into the hole. To solve this, simply remove more dirt from the bottom of the hole and check the dirt removed with your detector.
2. The target was made of iron and had caused your detector to emit a good signal by creating a halo effect. Once the halo effect was dispersed by the digging, the signal usually no longer exists. Sometimes, you can determine if this is true by going into your ALL METALS mode of operation and seeing if the object can be detected.
3. The target is buried very deep and would have normally been out of the range of the detector except that it had increased its conductivity by leaving a small trail of oxidation as it fell deeper into the ground over the years.

More than likely, you did not lose your signal and are probably holding your first retrieved target from your metal detector. Let's not stop with this first target; we need to carefully continue our hunt following the previous procedure. Dig only the high tones and ignore the low tones for now. Our goal is to become accustomed to our detector and how it reacts on coins. Later, we will cover in detail what to expect from low tones and medium tones in the DISC mode.

HOW DEEP DOES MY DETECTOR GO?

The first question posed by the novice detectorist is: How deep does my detector go? There are a lot of factors that come into play when determining the depth capability of a detector. The following considerations, as they apply to the Bounty Hunter, may assist you in gaining an idea of the many influences on depth capability.

1. Size of Object: This is the most important factor that will influence the depth of your Bounty Hunter. For instance, you may only be able to detect a quarter at 6-8 inches but a large container of hundreds of quarters can possibly be detected at 3 feet and upwards.
2. Matrix of the Soil: The mineral content of the soil you're detecting in will undoubtedly affect the depth capability of your detector.

3. Operator's Expertise: The more you practice with your Bounty Hunter the more likely you will tune in to your detector and begin to find deeper objects that beginners would walk right over.

4. Sensitivity Control: Your Bounty Hunter's SENSITIVITY control can be adjusted to maximize depth, but you have to be careful not to ride your SENSITIVITY too high or you may also get a lot of false signaling.

5. DISC Mode: Whenever operating in the DISC mode, you will lose a little sensitivity; when you do feel you need the extra depth, it is best to operate in the ALL METALS mode-especially on larger deeper targets.

6. Conductivity: The length of time an object was buried greatly influences its conductivity. For instance, a dime buried 50 years may be detected up to 10 inches; yet, a dime freshly buried may only be detected up to 6 inches or less.

WHERE CAN I HUNT WITH MY DETECTOR?

The possibilities are truly endless. Just imagine, anywhere there's grass or dirt and people have been there, metal objects will be found! For instance, I've hunted dirt parking lots near nightclubs-now, these folks that patronize a place like this are likely to stumble to their vehicles, fumble for their keys, and unknowingly pull everything out of their pockets along with their keys. One of my nicer finds at a nightclub parking lot was a gold money clip.

Surprisingly, sandboxes at parks can pan out some amazing items. You would think that only new coins and toys would be all you would find in a sandbox. I remember testing a detector out in a sandbox, not expecting to find anything but newer coins. Within 5 minutes, I knew somebody had already been there with a detector because no silver or copper coins were detected. Even though, they had set up their discrimination level so high that they left behind the zinc pennies and nickels. One low tone I got near the swing set turned out to be a gold wedding band. So, do not limit the possibilities by ignoring what you would consider an unlikely place to find anything of value. You'd be amazed!

Whenever you see dirt or a grassy area, consider the possibilities. What appears to be an empty lot, could be a potential site for valuable finds. The lot could have been the location of an 1800s home, or where the county fair was held in the 1930s. Sometimes a little research in the local library will reveal these types of potential sites.

In conclusion, where to hunt is only limited by your own imagination.

Accessory Items to Enhance Your Detector's Capabilities

The hobby of metal detecting is very dependent on the tools at your disposal. In fact, the hobby wouldn't even exist if not for the manufacturing of the detector itself. Due to this, you should understand the importance of accessory items and how they greatly influence your detector's capabilities.

Headphones

One of the most important accessory items is a good set of headphones. Headphones not only increase your battery life, but also assist in eliminating extraneous noises that may decrease the audibility of the internal speaker. Some faint signals, especially in ALL METALS mode, can be more easily detected. Usually these faint signals mean that a target is so deep, it's out of the detector's normal range of detection. Inconspicuous hunting is another good reason to use headphones. When hunting a public recreation area, a lot of attention is drawn to the "beeps and squawks" being emitted by your detector. To lessen attention, headphones will at least eliminate your noisy presence.

Bounty Hunter detectors require the use of stereo headphones; mono headphones will not work. Another requirement is that the headphones have a quarter-inch plug to adapt to the Bounty Hunter's quarter-inch headphone jack. For increased versatility, look for headphones with individual volume controls for left and right adjustment. Since your Bounty Hunter doesn't have a volume control, this is a versatile feature that you will become dependent on. Bounty Hunter headphones are available and include all of these features. Even though, you may find a similar set at your local electronics supplier that will perform well.

My recommendation: Use headphones!

Optional Coil Systems

Your Bounty Hunter probably came with what is considered a standard coil system. This could have been the 7.25" Coil, 8" Coil or even the 10" Magnum Coil. All of these coils perform well for different types of hunting.

The 4-Inch Gold Nugget Coil System

One of the most useful coils available from Bounty Hunter is the 4" Gold Nugget Coil System. The "Gold Nugget" name is deceptive. Not only is it an excellent nugget-shooting coil, it's probably the best coin-shooting coil available for your Bounty Hunter. Because of its smaller circumference, this coil will perform unbelievably well in any area with trash metal. Most coin-shooting areas will have more trash than you'd want to deal with. The 4-Inch has the capability of isolating each piece of metal increasing the detector's capability to identify each object individually. Whenever using the standard size coils, or especially the 10" Magnum Coil, in a trashy area, your detector will act very erratic; mainly because everywhere you place your coil, there is likelihood of more than one piece of metal located under the coil. A masking problem also occurs—a gold ring located near a pull-tab will be masked by the pull-tab giving the detector either erratic signals or a trash signal that you would not normally dig. The 4-Inch Coil will eliminate this problem and guarantee accurate target retrieval. Additionally, pinpointing is narrowed down to a 4-inch circumference. Even your trash-to-treasure ratio will be minimized.

My recommendation: The coil of choice when coin-shooting is the 4-Inch.

No doubt, the 4-Inch Gold Nugget Coil would also be the coil of choice for gold prospecting. The smaller the coil the more sensitive to smaller items. Because of the unusually high mineral conditions normally encountered when gold prospecting, the 4-Inch Gold Nugget Coil adapts better to the mineralization without decreasing in sensitivity during ground balancing.

7.25" and 8" Coils

The 7.25" or 8" Coils are versatile and can be applied in all types of hunting. They are not as specialized as the 4" or 10" Coils but will serve your needs sufficiently. If coin-shooting in a minimal trash area, these coils will perform well. You will cover more search area quicker than the 4-Inch. Just be aware of the masking problem that may occur and why your detector may start acting erratic due to more than one piece of metal under the coil. It's also a little more difficult to pinpoint with one of these as compared to the 4-Inch. Again, these coils can be used in all types of hunting, just not as effectively as the 4-Inch-especially when coin-shooting in a trashy area.

My recommendation: For all-around versatility, use the 7.25" or 8" coil systems.

10" Magnum Coil

This coil is the coil of choice for relic hunting or cache hunting. Much more sensitive to larger objects than the smaller coils. You will gain depth and cover more territory in less effort. Do not attempt to coin-shoot with this coil in a trash-laden area; if you do, expect your detector to act very erratic. Pinpointing coins or smaller objects becomes difficult.

My recommendation: If you're hunting for relics or large deep treasure, use the 10" Magnum Coil.

Carrying Bags

A good carrying bag will protect your investment by shielding your detector from the elements. Transporting your detector safely can also be insured. You may be quite a distance from your vehicle one day and find a sudden downpour preventing you from protecting your detector. With a waterproof carrying bag nearby, you may prevent permanent damage from occurring. Most carrying bags have external pockets to accommodate extra accessories, batteries or your lunch-an added convenience to having a carrying bag.

Look for a thick vinyl carrying bag with a shoulder strap. These will allow you to hike a good distance with your hands free. Hard-shell carrying cases are very impractical; not only are they heavy but difficult to transport since you would not be able to throw it over your shoulder. The only advantage to a hard-shell case would be transporting your detector by air.

My recommendation: A carrying bag is optional-It won't prevent damage to your detector if you accidentally ran over it; but, it will insure your detector from being damaged in normal transport or from damp weather.

Hunting Pouches

A hunting pouch is a necessity especially when coin-shooting. All hunting pouches usually have a belt loop; some have a tie-on strap. By utilizing a double-pocket hunting pouch, it's more convenient to pick up the trash metal while, at the same time, separating your good finds. This is convenient when you have a grounds keeper from the school yard you're hunting inquiring to what you're doing. Just show him the pocket full of trash metal, and he will support your efforts. Hunting pouches are available from Bounty Hunter, your local metal detector dealer, or you may try your local hardware store-nail aprons work quite well.

My recommendation: Whenever coin-shooting or relic hunting, wear a hunting pouch and help clean up the environment of all the trash metal you dig. This will also prevent you from having to dig the same trash if you returned to the site at another time.

Digging Tools

This can be a very critical decision. There are many choices and each one of them would be predetermined by what conditions you will be hunting in. For coin-shooting you can effectively use a knife, a small garden trowel, a probe (a long screwdriver for instance), etc. Whenever you are hunting a yard or a park you should consider using the least conspicuous tool possible-like a small garden trowel. Most coins are found 6 inches or less in the soil and do not justify a large shovel to dig them up. Always remember, you're pursuing a hobby that requires a lot of respect for property, and by using a small digging tool, you will appear harmless in the field. When and if you are going to use your Bounty Hunter for larger objects besides coins, such as caches and relics, then you may have to resort to using a larger digging tool since you'll be detecting further depths. Fortunately, most of this type of hunting is done in more remote areas and should not warrant having to be methodical in your digging approach to protect grass. Even though, always be careful to cover your holes wherever you hunt. Be respectful of property and always attempt to leave the area in the exact same condition as when you arrived.

Many different types of digging tools are available. Avid detectorists are making their own customized digging tools that fill their particular needs. The type of digging tool you would use is usually predetermined by the type of soil conditions you have to contend with. In hard, impacted soil conditions, the ideal tool would be a small pick; in sandy beach areas, a sifting tool would be ideal. Digging tools of all kinds are available from metal detector dealers, hardware stores, mail-order companies, etc.

My recommendation: Buy as many different digging tools as you can. You will encounter a lot less frustration if you always have the right tool at your disposal.

Novelty Accessories

The following specialty items are not available from Bounty Hunter but can be found through mail-order companies that usually advertise in treasure hunting magazines.

There are many other types of accessories available for detectors that are normally considered optional but may be of a necessity to you. Rain or dust covers are available that allow you to hunt in weather conditions that would otherwise be impossible. Different types of lighting equipment are available that allow for nighttime hunting. Coil wheels can be purchased that will take the weight off of the machine and make it easy to swing the coil all day. Take note, these wheels only work on relatively flat surfaces such as beaches.

Part II.

TREASURE AND HOW TO FIND IT! USING YOUR BOUNTY HUNTER METAL DETECTOR

By Mickey Cochran

DISCLAIMER: The Author, Publisher, and Manufacturer of Bounty Hunter Products take no responsibility for any injuries, mishaps, or legal action that may concur when utilizing Bounty Hunter Equipment or applying any of the techniques listed in this book. It is the sole responsibility of the reader to take every precaution necessary when pursuing metal detecting as a hobby.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Always gain permission when detecting on private property.
2. Learn all of your state and federal laws and know how they apply to metal detecting.
3. Be careful to wear protective clothing especially to guard yourself from the elements.
4. Wear gloves at all times when recovering metal objects.
5. Do not wear headphones when it is critical to be able to hear any oncoming traffic or imminent threats from wild animals.
6. Pace yourself and try to take a restful break at least every hour.

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COINSHOOTING

This is probably the most popular application for metal detector enthusiasts. Coin-shooting opportunities abound. Even your own yard may have some interesting old coins. Most coin-shooters are striving to find silver coins. Clad coins (current circulation) usually only become tedious to retrieve when attempting to find the older coins. In fact, the ubiquitous memorial penny seems to get in the way and become a burden as you're hunting for older coins. The pre-1959 pennies (Wheaties) and the pre-1965 silver coins are the minimum objective of the avid coin-shooter.

To set up our detector for coin-shooting, we have a few choices to make. Depending on what type of area we're hunting in and the level of trash to deal with, will usually determine the mode of operation.

1. Trashy Areas: Because of the many pull-tabs in trash-laden areas, it's usually best to hunt in the NOTCH or AUTO NOTCH mode. The reason being is that the pull-tab medium signals will start driving you nuts. In these modes of operation, you will eliminate most of the tones for pull-tabs and bring in all of your nickels at a low tone. Many low tones will still bring up balls of foil, scrunched up pull-tabs, the beaver tails (pull-tabs broken in half) and other small aluminum items.

Coil Recommendation: Use the 4" Coil if at all possible. The 7.25" or 8" will suffice but expect some erratic signals. Do not even attempt to use the 10" coil system.

2. Moderately Trashy Areas: The DISC mode will perform well since you don't have to deal with as many medium tones being emitted by pull-tabs. If you want to pick up mainly coins, and are not concerned with gold rings, turn your DISC/NOTCH variable control up until a sound is no longer being emitted by pull-tabs. The detector will only emit high tones for copper, silver, and brass items. Some oxidized iron and cans will still be detected and cannot be completely eliminated.

Coil Recommendation: The 7.25" or 8" will perform well since you will be able to cover more area than with the 4". Even then, the 4" will still perform excellent in moderately trashy areas as well. The 10" may suffice depending on the level of trash. Do not expect your Bounty Hunter to ID more than one target under the coil at a time. Because of the 10" diameter, it's difficult to avoid sweeping the coil over more than one item at a time.

3. Minimum Trashy Areas: Again, the DISC mode of operation would perform well. Be sure not to waste your time digging medium tones unless you have suspect that it's a valuable target.

Coil Recommendation: The 10" will perform well since the trash would be sparse; be aware though, pinpointing a coin is difficult with the 10" Coil; however, there is a tradeoff of additional depth. The 7.25" and 8" would also work well. The 4" would be impractical since it would take many sweeps before making a hit. Even then, I still consider the 4" the ultimate coin-shooting coil.

Quick Draw _ Both the DISC and the NOTCH are good coin-shooting modes. The NOTCH on the Quick Draw is the same mode as the AUTO NOTCH on the other Bounty Hunters. By adjusting the AUTO NOTCH width control clockwise, zinc pennies will be eliminated along with some screw caps, etc.

Sharp Shooter, Big Bud Select 220-D and Other Bounty Hunters _ All three modes: DISC, NOTCH and AUTO NOTCH, can be used effectively for coin-shooting. The type of area you're hunting would determine which mode would be ideal. If you're only wanting to detect silver and copper coins, use the DISC mode with the DISC/NOTCH control turned clockwise around "Pull Tab" or higher. This will eliminate most trash metal while detecting mostly coins.

NOTCH MODE:

The NOTCH can be used if you're hunting an area with one type of recurring pull-tab and you want to bring in your nickels. To properly adjust the NOTCH, start with the DISC/NOTCH variable control at around the "Pull Tab" indication and turn slowly counterclockwise until it disappears. Be very careful to turn in small increments since you may accidentally eliminate your nickels if turned too far.

AUTO NOTCH MODE:

The AUTO NOTCH can be used if you do not want to go through the trouble of manually adjusting for pull-tab elimination on the DISC/NOTCH variable control. Be aware, that a small percentage of pull-tabs will still emit a low tone and indicate "Nickel" on the ID readout.

Pinpointing when Coin-Shooting:

The no-motion ALL METALS mode can be used for pinpointing in minimal to moderately trashy areas. If an area has a lot of trash around the coin, the ALL METALS will constantly go off making it difficult to isolate the target you had originally detected in the DISC mode. If you have a manual ground adjust, as on the Big Bud Select 220 series, you can detune or desensitize your unit. The surrounding trash metal will no longer affect the detector's signals making it simple to isolate the original target detected in the DISC mode. To do this, simply turn the ground adjust knob further counterclockwise from the point where it normally ground balances. This type of detuning is essentially only overcompensating for the mineral conditions you're hunting in, which in turn decreases sensitivity. None of this applies to the Quick Draw. The Quick Draw does not have a no-motion ALL METALS mode; motion is required to detect a target. On this unit, as on all Bounty Hunters, the ALL METALS is still effective for determining if a false signal is oxidized iron.

JEWELRY HUNTING

Jewelry hunting can be very elusive. I've gone out on days with full intentions of finding rings and not finding one. And then, on other days, I've found upwards of 14 rings in one day! Jewelry can consist of all types of metal, especially silver and gold. To properly set up our detector for jewelry hunting, we will orient all settings to bring in the gold items. The silver will still be detected if we are digging our high tones with indications on the readout from "Penny/Dime" to "\$1". To eliminate a good percentage of trash metal, we will ignore all of our "Pull Tab" readings-unless you have suspicion/intuition that it's a valuable target. The small percentage of gold rings that fall in the "Pull Tab" range does not make it worth digging thousands of pull-tabs. I've found that 85%-90% of the gold rings I've encountered, both in the field and air testing, will read "Nickel"; larger 10k Gold Rings, like class rings, will read at "Zinc Penny". One day I decided to experiment with this and dug every "Pull Tab" indication emitted-Not one gold ring-only hundreds of pull-tabs.

Quick Draw _ The DISC mode would be preferable for jewelry hunting. The NOTCH, being really an AUTO NOTCH on the Quick Draw, would work well in certain circumstances, especially heavy trash-laden areas. In both modes, keep the DISC/NOTCH variable control, full low, turned completely counterclockwise. This will guarantee that most precious metal will not go by undetected. Dig only the low tones-medium tones if the meter indicates "Zinc Penny". All medium tones with the "Pull Tab" indication should be ignored unless you want to work very hard at finding that particular gold ring that falls in that range.

Sharp Shooter, Big Bud Select 220-D,

and Other Bounty Hunters _ All three modes: DISC, NOTCH and AUTO NOTCH, can be used effectively for jewelry hunting. The type of area you're hunting would determine which mode would be ideal. Remember, keep your DISC/NOTCH control turned completely counterclockwise to insure that you're not missing most valuable targets.

On occasion, digging medium tones may prove worthwhile. For instance, if you're hunting the outfield of a ball field, there is some likelihood that a "Pull Tab" reading may be a worthwhile target. Try to use a little deduction when deciding when and when not to dig a questionable target. It is seldom that someone is going to open a soda can in the outfield of a baseball field. Yet, there is a good possibility rings are lost from attempting to catch that fly ball or even throwing the ball and the ring on their finger with it. As is expected, you will still find some pull-tabs in the outfield of a ball field.

One of the most difficult items to detect is a gold chain. Considering that the gold chain is not likely to be bunched up when lost, there is very little target area for the detector to hit. The only effective approach to detecting gold chains is hunting in the ALL METALS mode. Unfortunately, having to dig every trash item makes it very impractical. Some small gold rings can also be difficult to detect in the DISC mode, making the ALL METALS a better mode of operation for specialized jewelry hunting.

In conclusion, when looking for gold jewelry items expect to dig a lot of pull-tabs. Even when only digging the "Nickel" readings, you will encounter many pull-tabs in your efforts.

GOLD PROSPECTING

Metal detectors have been instrumental in creating another gold rush in the last two decades. Older gold mines that have long closed down have reopened using metal detectors as the main tool for gold retrieval. Today, metal detectors are used in every aspect of gold prospecting. From searching out the mother lode to finding "placer" deposits, metal detectors have been found to be indispensable.

The most important approach to gold prospecting, especially if you're a novice, would be lots of research. It's a good idea to spend some time understanding how gold forms and where you're likely to find it through research. The Bounty Hunter metal detector comes standard with a waterproof coil allowing for more versatility when gold prospecting. A lot of nuggets and flakes of gold are discovered in stream beds. These nuggets and flakes usually originated from an outcrop in higher regions that were washed down by rain to be eventually carried away by streams-called alluvial gold. When prospecting with a metal detector it is very difficult to find the flakes of gold because of their small size. Nuggets are easily detected and can be found in stream beds, especially where a stream slows down or takes a sharp turn. Gold nuggets usually will accumulate in these areas because of its limited buoyancy and flakes will usually be carried further downstream.

Gold nuggets can also be found in dry river beds, mountain sides, and even in deserts. How many nuggets you find will be dependent on how serious you are about acquiring the necessary knowledge to make it a profitable hobby and on how willing you're to work diligently at it.

Gold prospecting poses totally different challenges than coin-shooting or jewelry hunting. Utilizing a metal detector to retrieve gold is still a relatively new art form. Requiring patience and stamina that no other metal detecting application can compete with, gold nugget shooting will test your perseverance. All of the Bounty Hunters can be utilized for gold prospecting; even so, there are different levels of performance offered by each model. For instance, prospecting with the Quick Draw or the Sharp Shooter would be at a hobby level; prospecting with the Big Bud Select 220-D can be performed at a professional level. Manual ground balancing on the Select 220-D allows for more manipulation than the automatic ground balancing offered on the Quick Draw and Sharp Shooter.

Quick Draw and Sharp Shooter _ Set the unit in the ALL METALS mode of operation. When encountering black sand or wet salt conditions, expect the unit to become erratic and emit false signals. You're dependent on the factory presets when operating in the ALL METALS mode. Usually this facilitates hunting under normal conditions but can cause problems when hunting in highly mineralized conditions.

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Operate in the ALL METALS mode. In the ALL METALS mode, all other controls will no longer affect the operation; only the GROUND BALANCE control will influence the unit's operation. To properly ground balance while still retaining maximum sensitivity will be the objective. The procedure follows: Raise the coil about waist level. Turn the Ground Balance control counterclockwise from "Preset". Hit your momentary "TUNE" position on your toggle switch. Now, lower the coil to see if there is any tone caused by mineral conditions. If a tone is emitted, repeat the procedure. To avoid losing sensitivity, turn the Ground Balance control in very small increments. The Big Bud Select 220 series can easily eliminate black sand by following the same ground balancing procedure outlined. When nugget-shooting in a highly mineralized area, you may have to ground balance frequently. Pockets of black sand may cause your detector to go off even after properly ground balancing. Some of the "concentrates" may have small flakes of gold; be careful to "pan out" all of the possibilities. Many prospectors utilize a variety of tools when prospecting such as dredges, dry washes, gold pans, etc. along with their metal detector.

Other Bounty Hunters _ Any of the older Big Buds that have a manual ground balance can be applied in the same manner as outlined for the Select 220-D.

RELIC HUNTING

What is a relic? Something that has survived the passage of time is a limited definition. A relic can be anything of historical value, personal value, associated cultural value-in fact, anything that reflects another age. There truly is no price that can be put on a relic. Relics aren't being made today; they are being copied. Relics are time capsules of history. Every relic has a story to tell. In fact, many objects that you now possess will eventually be relics in another age. We are only caretakers of our present possessions. Because a relic is impossible to define, we can only make allusion to what we are looking for when operating a detector.

Relics have historical value that cannot be put into monetary terms. Certainly, there are instances where collectors have paid substantially for a relic. Usually relics have much more value to the local museum where the community's history is held in reverence. If you ever find anything that you feel would be of historical significance for your local community, contact your local museum and let them know the exact location and depth of the item you found. This will enhance the local lore of your community and may even add another page to a history book.

Where Relics Can Be Found:

The best place to start is researching in your local library. Look up the old newspapers and find out more about your community's history. Discover what historical events may have taken place in your locality. Where the historical landmarks are hidden from present-day progress. Try to pinpoint these locations on a map. Many times there are new buildings and pavement over where the historical event took place or where once stood the historical landmark. Imagine all of the relics laying under that pavement that probably will never be retrieved.

Hopefully, in other circumstances, you may find that an empty lot or a farmer's field exists where the historical event took place. Remember, have respect for private property and gain permission from the owner of the land before detecting.

Never hunt a state or federal park unless you obtain permission from the proper authorities. When acquiring permission, be sure to write down their names. These areas are usually off limits to detecting, rock hunting, fossil hunting, etc. Good areas to hunt for relics can be old abandoned homes, plowed fields, remote woodlands, mountains, ghost towns, mining camps (be extremely careful when hunting around mine shafts) and if your home is fairly old, in your own backyard. Again, it is advised to always gain permission when hunting private property.

How To Set Up Your Detector for Relic Hunting:

Considering many relics are made of iron, you will have to operate in the ALL METALS mode. The Bounty Hunter will eliminate most iron in the DISC mode. Unless the iron has oxidized from sitting in the ground many years, you will not get a signal in the DISC mode.

Quick Draw _ Push the "ALL METALS" touchpad and make sure the indicator arrow is over the "ALL METALS" position. The unit will still require motion to detect a target; iron will now be detected.

Sharp Shooter _ Push the "ALL METALS" touchpad and make sure the indicator arrow is over the "ALL METALS" position. The unit does not require motion to detect a target; iron objects will now be detected.

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Push the toggle switch to the center "ALL METALS" position. Follow the procedure outlined in your manual for proper ground balancing. The unit does not require motion to detect a target; iron objects will now be detected.

Other Bounty Hunters _ For units with manual ground balance, follow the procedure under the Select 220-D. For units with automatic ground balance, follow the procedure under Sharp Shooter.

CACHE HUNTING

A cache (rhymes with "stash") is anything of value that is usually hidden or buried to prevent theft. Many eccentrics who didn't trust in banks, of course you don't have to be an eccentric to not to trust in banks today, would hide their life savings near their homestead-for instance, buried on their property under the old oak tree. Burying their valuables was safer than hiding them in their home where a burglar would expect to find it. In attempting to pinpoint where a cache is located near a homestead, use your deductive powers. Where would you hide your savings if you lived on this property? Next to the second fence post to the left of the gate? Under the bedroom window where you could keep a vigilance when sleeping? How about behind the large stone next to the well? By attempting to deduce the primary cache hiding spots, you're gaining the ingenuity required of the avid detectorist.

To approach cache hunting, as many detectorists have erroneously done, in the DISC mode is completely futile. There is only one way to detect for caches: In the ALL METALS mode! This can be frustrating when hunting in a heavily trashed area since all trash will emit a signal.

But, there is a good reason why it is so necessary to hunt in the ALL METALS mode. For instance, if a cache is hidden in a metal box, the detector will eliminate it in the DISC mode of operation. Some caches are buried so deep, that they cannot be detected in the DISC mode. Larger objects buried deeply are easier to detect in the ALL METALS mode. It's also easier to delineate the size of the target with no-motion ALL METALS mode because as long as the coil is over the target a continuous tone will be emitted. Therefore, if an object is three feet wide, a constant tone will be emitted as you sweep the coil over the target for an estimated three feet plus.

Quick Draw _ Push the "ALL METALS" touchpad and make sure the indicator arrow is under the "ALL METALS" position. The unit will still require motion to detect a target; all metal will now be detected.

Sharp Shooter _ Push the "ALL METALS" touchpad and make sure the indicator arrow is under the "ALL METALS" position. The unit does not require motion to detect a target; all metal will now be detected.

Big Bud Select 220-D _ Push the toggle switch to the center "ALL METALS" position. Follow the procedure outlined in your manual for proper ground balancing. The unit does not require motion to detect a target; all metal will now be detected.

Other Bounty Hunters _ For manual ground balance, follow the procedure under the Select 220-D. For automatic ground balance, follow the procedure under Sharp Shooter.

Other considerations: Use the largest coil you have at your disposal, preferably the 10" Magnum coil system.

To illustrate a standard approach to cache hunting we need to create a scenario. Imagine that a friend had told you that he wants you to help find his late great granddad's hidden gold. The gold is suspected to be located near his granddad's cabin deep in the woods. There is probability that a lot of iron and trash metal is strewn throughout the yard. To approach this scenario professionally would require a methodical plan. The first step in the process would be to grid out an area about 20' by 20'. This can be done with stakes and string. Using the largest coil at your disposal and operating in the ALL METALS mode, you will sweep in a wide half-circle manner. If you're operating a Bounty Hunter with manual ground balance, make sure you're properly ground balanced. Start in one corner of the gridded area and follow the string all the way up one side. Dig every signal you encounter. Carefully discard all of the trash metal to one side. After thoroughly covering the 20' by 20' area, go over it one more time making sure no signals are being emitted. Go on to the next designated area and follow the same procedure. It's hard, tedious work. But, it will at least guarantee that you have approached the site professionally and insure that if the cache is there, you will recover it. If any of the cabin still stands, be sure to search the walls, door frames and the floor. You will have to be especially careful about which signals to pay attention to since you may be encountering other metals like nails, pipes or wiring.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Undoubtedly, being aware of the possibilities and application capabilities of your metal detector will increase your finds. As a detectorist, the proverbial question should always be: How can I increase my finds? Every tip and technique that is acquired will give you an edge whenever you're in the field.

With determination and an unquenchable desire to absorb any knowledge related to metal detecting, I've found the hobby to be far more rewarding. By haphazardly approaching metal detecting as a part-time hobby, and not taking an avid interest in the science of metal detecting, you're limiting the possibilities and potential of the hobby. Not only will you find the hobby frustrating at times, but you may be walking over valuable targets that could have been easily retrieved by properly studying how you can effectively apply your detector. Start a library of related books and magazines; subscribe to every major treasure magazine especially: Western & Eastern Treasure, Lost Treasure, and Gold & Treasure; go to your local library and research local treasure stories for leads; and, most of all, become totally immersed in the hobby by detecting every chance you get!

MODES OF OPERATION

To Hunt in Discrimination or All Metals?

The Bounty Hunter metal detector has two main modes of operation: Discrimination and All Metals. In the DISC mode, movement is required for a target to be detected; in the ALL METALS mode, no movement is required to detect the target. On the Quick Draw, motion is still required to detect in the ALL METALS mode. Which mode of operation to hunt in is usually predetermined by what you're hunting for.

For Instance-

Discrimination: Coin-shooting and jewelry hunting are more effectively performed in the Disc mode. There are exceptions, when hunting for small gold rings or gold chains, ALL METALS mode will guarantee detection.

All Metals: Relic hunting and cache hunting can be performed more effectively in the ALL METALS mode.

Applying Your Choices for Mode of Operation

Coin-shooting is one of the most popular applications for metal detectors. Usually, you don't have to drive very far to find a potential site to coin-shoot. Parks, school yards, ball fields, soccer fields, football fields, yards, abandoned movie theaters, old mobile home sites, swimming areas, dirt parking lots, and even sandboxes are only a few of the many potential sites for coin-shooting. Anywhere there's dirt or grass and people have been there is a potential coin-shooting site.

Discrimination is the best mode of operation for coin-shooting while ALL METALS is useful for pinpointing or finding small gold rings or gold chains when jewelry hunting. All of the Bounty Hunters offer three modes of operating in Discrimination: DISC, NOTCH and AUTO NOTCH. The Quick Draw offers two modes of operating in Discrimination: DISC and NOTCH.

When operating in the first position DISC mode:

The level of discrimination will be determined by the Disc/Notch variable control. When turning the control clockwise, you will be increasing the level of discrimination; when turning the control counterclockwise, you will be decreasing the level of discrimination. If you're only wanting to detect coins, turn the variable control past pull-tab or screw cap, and the detector will only detect copper or silver coins and eliminate most trash metal.

Now here's the dividing line, whenever you're focusing on detecting nickels and gold rings, you would have to turn the variable control completely counterclockwise. This would guarantee that all valuable targets including gold, nickels, silver & copper coins are detectable. The main problem with detecting nickels and gold rings is that you will have to dig the ominous "beaver tails" and other scrunched up pull-tabs that fall under the same tone and target reading.

Pinpointing Techniques

There are many effective techniques for pinpointing your detected targets. By making an effort of pinpointing accurately before digging, you will save yourself the time and frustration involved in digging a crater.

1. Drawing an "X"

This is a simple but effective technique. After receiving a signal, swing the coil a couple of more times horizontally making sure it is a repeatable signal. Now swing the coil vertically at the same point you have determined the target to be attempting to draw an "X". When you have your signal centered on the "X", attempt to dig within a 5-inch circumference.

2. The Pendulum

With this technique, you will raise your coil a few inches above the targeted area waving it more like a pendulum listening carefully where the signal seems to be the strongest. Try drawing an "X" at the same height over the target making sure you have centered where the target is located. Now slowly lower your coil making sure you're still getting your strongest signal at the center of the "X".

3. "All Metals" Pinpointing (As Applied to No-Motion ALL METALS)

By using your ALL METALS mode, you can determine the size of the target along with its location. It's important that you do not tune your Ground Balance for its highest threshold when using this mode for pinpointing. The reason you have the capability of determining a target's size in ALL METALS is because no motion is required when you're over the target. A continuous tone will be emitted as long as the detector is over the target. This makes it easy to delineate the size of a target while pinpointing at the same time.

Notes for Units with Manual Ground Balancing:

When coin-shooting, it's important to adjust the Ground Balance so that it is over compensating for the mineral condition you're hunting in. In other words, adjust your Ground Balance another quarter-turn counterclockwise after adjusting for mineralization. You will lose depth, but it will be far easier to pinpoint small targets like coins, especially in heavily trashed areas. If your detector is Ground Balanced for its maximum threshold, as is described in your operations manual, you will get too many signals in heavily trashed areas to determine the location of the target.

When to Use the Blanker Mode on the Big Bud Series

When contending with a lot of surface trash, it is recommended to use your Blanker. This will not guarantee that you will detect a good target directly underneath a trash object, or will it guarantee that all surface trash will be eliminated, but the odds will be on your side.

If you are looking for targets or coins that are older, you will more likely find them deeper and not on the surface-therefore, using your Blanker will focus your energies. You will no longer be picking up the surface clad coins which can be time consuming in itself.

The following tip applies to any Big Bud, with a Blanker mode, that doesn't have a depth meter such as the Special Edition: With the blanker on, you can double-check your target for its depth capability by turning on the Blanker to determine if the target is deeper than four inches or shallower. If your Blanker is set at four inches and you are no longer getting a tone on the same target that you were detecting before turning the Blanker on, then the target is shallower than four inches. This is also a good technique to use on the Select 220-D to confirm the readout on the depth meter.

The Blanker works even more efficiently when using the 4-Inch coil. Because of the narrow focus of the 4-Inch coil, there is even less interference from the surface trash increasing receptiveness to treasure items. It is recommended though to operate the Blanker at 2 inches instead of the maximum 4 inches when operating with the 4-Inch coil system. Because of the smaller diameter there is a loss of depth which would limit the depth capability when operating in the Blanker mode.

The most obvious advantage of using your Blanker system is when you're well aware that the object you're looking for is 2 inches or deeper.

Manual Notch Techniques

The NOTCH Mode, along with the Disc/Notch variable control, allows for adapting to special hunting circumstances. For example, one type of pull-tab may be recurring in an area that you're hunting in. If you wanted to eliminate this one particular type of pull-tab while bringing in nickels and most gold rings the NOTCH Mode in combination with the Disc/Notch control can do it. By turning the Disc/Notch control counterclockwise from "Pull Tab" setting while operating in the NOTCH mode, you will still bring in nickels and most gold rings while eliminating that particular pull-tab. Note: The Quick Draw's NOTCH mode is really an AUTO NOTCH; the Disc/Notch control turns into an Auto Notch Width control which does not work as a manual Notch.

Hunting Near Sidewalks

When a coin is dropped on a sidewalk, it usually ends up right on the outside edges where it rolled off. Because sidewalks usually have the most pedestrian traffic, you can be guaranteed that many coins were dropped. When detecting near sidewalks, it is usually a good idea to determine if there is any steel re-bar in the concrete. To determine this, just wave the coil over it in All Metals-If there is re-bar in the sidewalk, it is usually difficult to detect near it without getting false signals in the DISC mode. If there isn't any metal in the concrete, you will be able to effectively hunt the very edges of it without false signaling. Even if you were not getting false signals from the iron re-bar, the target will usually still be canceled out because of the nearness of the iron. Iron will cancel out any treasure that may be located near it. The 4-Inch coil can overcome this to a large degree; it allows your detector to isolate targets closer to the re-bar than a larger coil would.

Heavily Trashed Areas

Always remember that many good targets are located directly next to a trash object. When this occurs, the detector will not be able to detect the good target. There are many ways to get by this. One of the most effective ways, is to use the 4-Inch Coil System. The 4-Inch Coil System has a narrower detection field and is more capable of isolating the good target even though it might be closely located to a piece of trash.

Another effective technique is to detect the same area at different angles allowing more for the possibility of slicing the target separate from the trash metal.

Of course, if you have a lot of patience, you can always excavate the area of all the trash freeing up more possibilities of detecting the treasure targets.

Hunting Near Metal Structures

If you're in the Disc mode and you're hunting near a fence post made of iron, you may be getting a signal from the same post. To determine if it's the post giving you a signal, just lift the coil a couple of feet over the same spot where the signal was being emitted and see if you are still getting a signal. If you are getting a signal, even though you are now out of range of the possible target, then the post is causing it. This also applies to playground equipment, bleachers at ball parks, etc. To gain a closer detection proximity to the post, try the 4-Inch coil system.

Deep Targets and Depth Meter/Readouts

If you're getting a reading of 10" on your Bud with a depth meter/readout system, it's likely that the Target ID readout system may not be identifying the target properly. This is because targets that are 8" or deeper are difficult to be identified by the detector. The Target ID readout may be locking on 50¢ when in reality the target turns out to be a dime or penny. If you have suspect that there are old coins in one area, dig all of your deeper signals. Most of the time you will have to use your intuition to decide if the target would be worth digging. This is one of the major disadvantages of not having a depth readout; you never know whether the target is out of accurate ID'ing range and therefore, cannot truly depend on the ID readout system if the target detected is deep.

Sometimes deep targets can be difficult to retrieve. Such as in hard clay soil conditions. If this is the case, it might benefit you not to spend too much time trying to dig one target when in the interim you could have uncovered six other targets that were buried 6" inches or less. This is another advantage of having a depth meter system. Although, be forewarned, a depth readout can make you lazy and leave behind some deep valuable targets.

One of the things to take into consideration is a geological term called stratification. Stratification is defined as a formation or deposition of layers, as of rock or sediments. Over time, soil can build up and define periods of time by its layers-the deeper the layer of soil, the earlier the period of time it was deposited. This is relative to detecting in that you are more than likely going to find older coins at greater depths than more recent coins. When you do find an older coin at a certain depth, there is likelihood that other old coins will be found at that same depth; these coins were more than likely lost at the same relative time. Keep this in mind when you get lazy and decide to skip a target because it's too deep.

Audio & Visual References/What to Listen and Watch For

Usually when a target emits all three tones in the DISC mode, it's not worth digging. Even if the target emits two tones it's likely trash metal; although, deeper targets will usually emit more than one tone. There are occasions where a good target will emit a false tone but still emit the single true tone most of the time.

When the target ID meter locks in on one item and the tone remains consistent, you'll likely have a worthy target. If the pitch is high but weak instead of bell-like, then it is usually caused by oxidized metal such as cans, iron scrap, bottle caps, etc.

If you hear a double-signal, two tones emitted with one sweep, it is more than likely that the target is shallow. By lifting your coil another inch or two above the target, the double-signal should be eliminated.

While pinpointing, you may notice that the tone is emitted across a larger area than is usual with coins-this could mean that it is a can or possibly even a large piece of scrap metal. As of, when coin-shooting, I've never dug a large tone to find something truly worthwhile other than auto parts, cans, pipes, etc.

Essentially, when coin-shooting, look for repeatable signals, Target ID's on the meter that do not jump around, a short bell-like tone that emits only within a small area, and one tone instead of two or three different tones.

By following these guidelines, you will minimize the time you would have spent digging trash items while applying the retrieved lost time to digging treasure.

The Low Tone Blues

The three-tone target ID on the Bounty Hunter series allows for a reference point by audio output. You will normally be digging only the low and the high tones while ignoring medium tones except on special occasion.

The most difficult differentiation to make is when to dig a low tone. Low tones can be items such as beaver tails (broken in half pull-tabs), foil, scrunched-up pull-tabs, oxidized pull-tabs, nickels, and on rare occasion gold rings. You will have to combine different strategies to determine when and when not to dig a low tone. To develop this technique further requires a lot of practice and experimentation.

What variables are necessary to determine when and when not to dig a low tone?

1. Where you're hunting-

Where you're hunting will predetermine whether digging low tones would be worth the effort. When hunting a heavily trashed area, with thousands of pull-tabs to contend with, digging every low tone can be frustrating. Although, hunting in a swimming area or sandbox usually proves worthwhile to dig low tones.

2. Where the target ID lands-

Careful observation of your Target ID Meter/Readout is great assistance when determining whether to dig the low tones. When the Meter/Readout indicates foil while emitting a low tone, you'll find accuracy is a law of averages that can only be determined by practice and experimentation.

Note: There are times when a nickel reading will be foil, usually denser or balled up. We all are "foiled by foil" in our hunting pursuits; it's all part of the treasure hunting challenge.

3. Whether the tone is repeatable-

Whether the tone repeats the signal is another important reference. When the Bounty Hunter's ID won't lock on with one repeatable tone being emitted, law of averages dictates it as a trash item. Even though, there are occasions when the target could have a mixed alloy like a pocket knife or a watch that will cause the erratic signals. Try experimenting and dig signals you're unsure about; eventually, you will begin to tune in to your instrument and its responses on different types of metal.

4. Whether it does not jump up to a medium or high tone-

Medium tones are generally ignored-Unless you're in an old area where there is a possibility of finding Indian Head pennies. Indian Heads usually generate a medium tone and indicate on the meter/readout "Pull Tab" or "Zinc Penny".

Target ID Meter/Readout

The ID Readout outweighs the three-tone audio output in determining the type of target being detected. For instance, a zinc penny will emit a medium tone like a pull-tab but usually registers on the Target ID Readout as a zinc penny. No doubt, both types of references combined increase your detection abilities. All of the Bounty Hunter detectors covered in this book include Target ID Readout systems. Target ID Readouts should never be underestimated. The first impression of a user is that the Readout lists different denominations for coins, therefore when a target ID is locked on, it should be the coin that is displayed. Of course, this is not always true because there are so many types and sizes of metal that may have the exact reading as a particular coin. The coins on a Readout system should be considered symbols for reference. So that when a target is locked on "quarter" for instance it could mean that the target could also be a large brass item, a medal, a large silver ring, maybe even an oxidized tin can. So with the visual reference of a Readout system in combination with the audio output, you are more likely able to guesstimate what the object may be. Visualize the denominations of coins on your Readout as symbols only.

Depth Meter/Readout

The Select 220 series offers a depth meter that locks on simultaneously with the target reading. This depth reference can be used for easier recovery and better target identification.

If the meter registers a target as being on the surface, you will not have to waste energy in attempting to dig a deeper hole. Usually by scraping the surface the target will appear. If a target is deeper, you know that you will have to immerse your digging tool deeper into the soil in an attempt to get under the target.

If your depth meter is registering a target as being 8 inches or deeper, you cannot depend on what the target ID meter is registering. This could mean that if you're getting a target reading of trash it may still be treasure or vice versa.

METER MAINTENANCE For Analog Meter Systems

(Excludes All Digital Readouts)

The main problem with analog meters is that they can easily build up a static charge on the window. This can be caused by attempting to clean the window with a dry cloth, shipping the unit by air, detecting near power lines, etc. To determine if your unit has static buildup, wave your finger right above the meter. If the meter jumps around and does not sit still, you have static buildup. The detector will not ID properly if there is any static buildup. You can resolve this problem by using an antistatic liquid in a spray bottle. Most electronic stores carry a product for static problems. Just spray a small amount on the window then wipe it dry with a cloth. Test the window again for static charge by rubbing your finger on it. If the needle still jumps, follow the same procedure.

Maintenance for Meter or Digital Readout Windows

Sometimes a window may completely fall off. The window is held on to the control panel by double-sided tape. The reason for this is so that the manufacturer will have easy access to your meter system in case adjustment is required. When replacing the window on an analog meter system, always spray both the inside and outside with an antistatic formula; digital readouts are not affected by static buildup. If the older tape has lost its tackiness, replace it with new double-sided tape being careful to cut it to match the mounting areas.

OTHER USES FOR YOUR BOUNTY HUNTER

It's surprising how many uses are applicable with your Bounty Hunter. These applications fall outside of the "Treasure Hunting" category. To illustrate a few:

1. You can use your Bounty Hunter for finding survey landmarks or stakes that delineate property lines. To do this, you need to keep in mind what types of metal they are made of. Most landmarks and stakes are made of iron. Because of this, you cannot operate your Bounty Hunter in the DISC mode for you will not be able to detect iron objects. Fortunately, there usually is not a lot of trash metal to contend with when hunting for landmarks, and you should have no trouble operating in the ALL METALS mode.
2. Plumbing is also another application. If you ever need to find a shutoff valve or possibly a pipe, that is not too deep, your Bounty Hunter may also fill your needs. Again, you have to consider what type of metal you're detecting. If your shutoff valve is made of brass, you will be able to detect it in the DISC mode. If any of your plumbing fittings you're looking for are made of iron or galvanized steel you will have to operate in the ALL METALS mode to be able to detect them.
3. Finding nails in boards before breaking or wearing out your saw blade on it, is also an excellent application for your Bounty Hunter. Remember, your Bounty Hunter will usually not pick up a nail in the DISC Mode-use the All Metals Motion Mode. Many lumber yards are using metal detectors for this same purpose.
4. If you're into archery, you know how expensive it can be to lose metal arrowheads. The Bounty Hunter has been used effectively to recover arrowheads for many serious archers.
5. Studs in walls can be found in the ALL METALS mode because of the nails used to hang the drywall. If you're looking for a sturdy place to hang that heavy picture frame, pull out your Bounty Hunter.

6. Sharp trash metal can be cleared out of play areas or swimming areas for further safety.

7. Lost equipment parts can be recovered: tractors, lawnmowers, etc.

These are only a few of the many possible applications for your Bounty Hunter metal detector. I'm sure you will think of other practical ways to use your Bounty Hunter for good effect. The possible applications are truly endless!

IN CONCLUSION

If you're not turning over the stone, you're not finding anything. With diligent practice and application of your Bounty Hunter, you'll be able to recover many valuable objects. As the saying goes: practice makes perfect! With all the theory, tips and techniques offered by this book, it is only one important step in the process of mastering your Bounty Hunter. The best learning experience is when you're operating your detector in the field. This book hopefully has provided you with a foundation to base your learning experience on and can always be used as a reference source.

Don't get discouraged if you feel you aren't learning how to operate your Bounty Hunter as quick as you would like. Most of what you'll learn will depend on how much you practice. There are so many subtle aspects to detecting that cannot be learned from a book. As you work with your Bounty Hunter in the field, you'll acquire more and more knowledge that will cumulate and refine your skills with your Bounty Hunter.

I feel that no matter how many times I swing a coil, there's always something new to learn. Mastering the art of metal detecting can take many years of practice. The many interesting and valuable metal objects that you will dig up, and the many hours of enjoyment gained from swinging your Bounty Hunter coil, will make the learning process enjoyable and certainly not a drudgery.

If you want to read up on more about the hobby of metal detecting, subscribe to one of the major treasure hunting magazines available today:

Gold & Treasure Magazine
PO Box 47
Happy Camp, CA 96039
(916) 493-2062

Lost Treasure
PO Box 1589
Grove, OK 74344
(918) 786-2182

Western & Eastern Treasures
PO Box 18902
Anaheim, CA 92817-9925
(206) 230-9224

..TREASURE HUNTER'S CODE OF ETHICS

1. Respect the rights and property of others.
2. Observe all laws, whether national, state or local.
3. Never destroy historical or archaeological treasures.
4. Leave the land & vegetation as it was. Fill in all holes.
5. All treasure hunters may be judged by the example you set. Always obtain permission before searching any site. Be extremely careful with your probing, picking up and discarding of trash, and ALWAYS COVER YOUR HOLES!

The main code of ethic: DON'T TAKE THE HOBBY TOO SERIOUSLY-HAVE FUN!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Beaver Tail: The tail of a pull-tab separated from the ring-usually giving the same low signal and target indication as nickels and gold rings-

Black Sand (Magnetite): Black iron oxide in mineral form-One of the highest mineral conditions that a detector has to contend with-Commonly occurring in gold prospecting areas-

Cache: Usually any type of concealed treasure consisting of a quantity of money or other valuables-

Clad: Coins that are still in circulation-Usually dating from 1965 and on-

Deep Signal: A barely audible signal-The Bounty Hunter has a "loud alert" system which usually keeps the signals at a highly audible level no matter how deep the target is-

Dighole: An indentation left by other detectorists who have previously hunted an area-

Frequency: Measured electric current-Most Bounty Hunter metal detectors operate at 6.6 kHz/6600 Hz-

Hipmount: When a detector is mounted on a belt around the waist and not mounted on the stem-

Masking: When a good target is eliminated due to the closeness of a trash target-

Memorial: Any penny dated from 1959 and after-

Nullled Out: Whenever a coin will not be detected because of interference from other nearby detectors or a piece of trash metal located too close to the coin-Essentially, a zeroing out of a good target caused by other nearby detectors interfering with the signal-

Signal Interference: When two detectors are too close causing interference, erratic operation or nulling out-

Silver: A silver coin as opposed to a clad coin-Usually dated pre-1965-

Stratification: A layering caused by soil deposition-Deposits of soil build layers above an object over the years causing the object to be buried deeper as time goes by-Geologists utilize stratification to measure time-

VLF: (Very Low Frequency)-Most detectors today are based on the VLF technology-

Wheatie: Any penny pre-1959 with the wheat straw symbol on the reverse of the coin-

Zinc: Any penny dated from 1982 and after-Usually very pitted when dug out of the ground-

The End -- Happy Hunting!