

Field Test

The New XP Goldmaxx Power



When I was asked if I would like to test the new Goldmaxx Power from XP, I was a little blasé about it. In the past manufacturers had added a bell here and a whistle there on an existing detector, given it a paint job and a new catchy name, and bingo! - it is now the all singing and dancing new model. Were XP going down that same road? After all, how could they make that many improvements to the current Goldmaxx to warrant the expense to the detectorist of part exchanging it for the new model?

I had been chosen as the messenger and - let's face it - quite a few of them have been shot in the past!

The parcel arrived on Christmas Eve, so I knew I would be opening at least one present on the following day; but - what the heck - I set it up there and then. Who was going to know?

The new model has different controls and other attributes from the previous Goldmaxx so I will start with the controls and the box. The most noticeable difference is the discrimination system. Unlike the previous model that used the discrimination mode separately from tone ID, it is now used in conjunction and called "Iron Threshold", graduated from 1 to 20. With the Iron Threshold pot turned fully anticlockwise it is in Auto. This is the clever bit which most previous Goldmaxx and all new users are really going to appreciate.

Auto Iron Threshold

When in this setting, "coke" and large iron (ie up to a 6in coach bolt) are ignored while the detector retains the ability to register a cut quarter! The detector doesn't null out over the signal: it just isn't heard. However, there are those (myself included) who like to hear everything that is going on under the coil. This is where the Iron

Volume control comes into use. Turn up the Iron Volume and "coke" or any iron will give the unmistakable buzz associated with this control, while leaving all wanted targets free to give a sweet higher-toned signal.

Click out of Auto and the Iron Threshold progressively discriminates against small pieces through to larger sizes of iron. Once, again this can be used in conjunction with the Iron Volume not only to signal (a deep buzz) those pieces that have been discriminated out, but also the larger deeper sizes that normally fool most detectors. No longer need you be fooled by the bane of all detectorists - rusty washers. This machine eats them for breakfast! The Iron Threshold when out of Auto does just what it says. It only discriminates against iron and not coke, foil, or anything of a higher conductivity.

So what are the advantages of this apparent two tier discrimination?

Supposing your fields are inundated with "coke" and/or large iron, then Auto would be the obvious setting. However, if the area being detected is reasonably free of coke, anything from small ferrous upwards can be handled with the remaining sections of Iron Threshold. I would advocate the use of the Iron Volume with this new machine, especially in the initial learning stages; it makes understanding the new Power control so much easier to begin with.

Sensitivity Control

This now has an expanded range making the Goldmaxx Power a very sensitive and deep machine when the conditions

allow. In actual fact, it is now so sensitive I feel that the pre-set mark needs to be moved from the 3 o'clock position to nearer the 12 o'clock for those who have newly purchased the machine.

Silencer

When in the Iron Threshold mode (not in Auto), and used in conjunction with the Silencer, the difference in recovery speed is very apparent - it now becomes super fast. However, as mentioned before, this is at a cost. Coke is now heard and the discrimination of the Iron Threshold doesn't go high enough to eradicate it by the normal means. As on the previous model the Silencer gives the fastest speed when flicked into "0" but has only a small effect on the discrimination. Position "1" provides a slightly slower speed but with an increase in effect on Disc. Position "2" is slower still, but with more of an effect on Disc. Tonal quality will be improved using position "1", and even more so on "2".

Another use of the Silencer is the new way of changing tones. The default setting is three tone. To change to two tone the Silencer switch needs to be flicked from position "1" to "2" twice within two seconds. To change back to three tones the detector must be switched off then on

again. If changing to two tones a word of caution: working out of Auto (Iron Threshold) will give a medium single tone on all non-discriminated targets.

(This is why I advocate the use of the Iron Volume more on this model, as iron will give a deep buzz).

Two Channel Frequency Switch

The other new feature on the Goldmaxx Power is the two channel, two frequency headphone switch. This switch has been designed for all normal headphones, the previous single channel, and the new two channel headphones. This allows users to work in close proximity to another detectorist on a different channel.

The original corded back-phones are supplied as standard. It is up to the individual as to whether they want to avail themselves of the new two-channel cordless headphones.

Iron Volume

When in use, this control will give a low buzz on all discriminated signals. It doesn't effect depth capabilities and should be used to begin with (in my opinion) on higher settings than the previous model.

Ground Reject

Set at the preset mark (12 o'clock) this will alleviate the problem of magnetic hot-rocks and mineralised pottery (terracotta etc). On less trashy ground, turn back to the left (about 11 o'clock) to give an increase in depth. Hot rocks will then give off an unmistakable high-pitched double beep.

Recovery Speed

Another improvement made to the Goldmaxx Power is that of Recovery Speed. The original model had the fastest recovery rate of any detector that I have tested. This has now been further increased to make it 33% faster. This looks good on paper, but it is all relative. If the older model was slow to recover the effect would be more noticeable. However, because it was so fast in the first instance the extra speed of recovery might take a while to discern.

Coils

All the new coils are made from a different material making them lighter than ever. The scuff covers have also been beefed up to a greater thickness; this will be of help to those who like to continually take them off.



Battery Life

Because of the extra power this has now dropped from 70 to 50 hours.

Control Box Bag

Finally, a new easy to clean control-box bag is available, which can be used either for stem installation or hip-mounting.

So it isn't just a bell, a whistle and a lick of paint with this new detector. But how does it perform? I have already mentioned the qualities when in Auto Iron Threshold when trying the Goldmaxx Power out in the house, but the 9in depth

Daz Gittens with the Goldmaxx Power.



on a hammered cut half certainly raised the eyebrows. The previous model only lost 1in on a hammered penny when the Sens is turned down from preset to just on. This one loses 4in and at about half Sens it loses 2in. Sounds a lot? Well, even just switched on it has only slightly less depth than the previous model at the preset mark. The sensitivity really has been expanded, and I thought it will be interesting to see what would happen out in the field.

Field Appraisal

The first field I took the Goldmaxx Power to had been rough ploughed with the turned in stubble just a few inches below the surface; these are not the best conditions to say the least. For those who are waiting for a long list of incredible finds proving how good the new detector performed, sorry to disappoint you; it was not that sort of field, and I am not that sort of field tester.

With the controls at preset and the Iron Threshold in Auto on this land (medium to heavy mineralisation) it was immediately apparent that the detector was unstable. It was no good adjusting the ground reject as the problem was the sensitivity; the detector was just too sensitive! Dropping the control from preset, (3 o'clock) back to 12 o'clock made the detector stable. Employing Auto Iron Threshold meant that I wasn't hearing the discriminated iron and coke signals. I found that having the Iron Volume turned



Edward groat.



Celtic silver units.



Thimble.



Medieval ring brooch.

Selection of items found with the XP Goldmaxx Power.



17th century token - Bocking in Essex.



Groat.



Pilgrim's ampulla.

to 12 o'clock gave me a deep buzz on all of these targets thereby dictating my sweep speed.

Using the default setting of triple tones, it was noticeable that the clarity between them had also been improved making the differences more easily discernable.

On certain parts of the field I found that I could increase the sensitivity slightly and also "grab" a little more with the ground reject turned a tad to the left. When searching other parts I had to go back to my original stable settings. I would advocate using the Goldmaxx Power hip-mounted. This allows you to get the best out of it with the ever-changing ground conditions, rather than the fiddly and time-consuming job of making adjustments when the control box is situated under the arm-cup.

Although finds were just the run of the mill buttons, broken buckles, cartridges and the odd Georgian coppers, over time it became patently obvious that the capabilities of the new machine surpassed that of the previous model. Anyone moving from the old version to the new machine is going to be delighted.

The next time I went out was in the wild and woolly lands of a Newcastle club site. Members were coming up and asking "Is that the new Goldmaxx? What's it like,

how is it different from mine?"

I replied "I'm not saying a word, just judge for yourself. It's all set up, so have a go for a quarter of an hour or so and tell me what you think".

The unanimous reply was "When is it coming into the country? I want one." The detector certainly created a very favourable impression without me having to say a word; I only wished that I'd had the foresight to own shares in the company!!

I next took it on to one of my more mineralised and ferrous-ridden sites in Norfolk. Not only would it show me how it performed under these conditions, but also there was always the chance of finding something out of the ordinary.

Working with it out of Auto, it behaves very similar to the older model in that virtually everything is heard (including coke). The Iron Threshold is graduated from 0 to 20; however, I find it far easier to use the clock system (2 o'clock etc).

Although people at the rally were jumping for joy and proclaiming they were finding items at greater depth than before, this increase in power is without doubt a two-edged sword for the unwary. On mineralised and nail-infested ground, working with the Sensitivity too high will result in the loss of good items; this is especially the case in Auto Iron Threshold. Let's face it, it is only another word for discrimina-

tion and with the sensitivity set too high for the ground conditions the first thing to suffer is discrimination and quality of signals. Therefore the correct settings for normal conditions will be too high, resulting in what would have been a fine sweet tone for a hammered becoming a broken signal that is left in the ground. The new model also provides the same benefits as the older version in regards to additional information relating to the Iron Volume. On more mineralised soil when the coil is passing over a good target this could result in a slight buzz then a good signal or - when swept over in the opposite direction - a slight buzz then a good signal. If it was a nail and a coin you would get the buzz first only in one direction; in the other direction the coin would sound first followed by the buzz from the nail.

I found that in normal Iron Threshold with a setting between 11 o'clock and 1 o'clock the detector was handling the amount of iron quite comfortably. As with the previous model, the less discrimination used the faster the recovery speed; having the silencer on "0" also increased the effect. The odd big piece of iron would come through, but the Iron Volume took care of this in the majority of cases.

It was necessary at times to drop the Sensitivity right the way back to as low as 9 o'clock, but I was safe in the knowledge



Worn Edward groat.



Part of an unusual buckle.



Petronel (cannon).

Selection of items found with the XP Goldmaxx Power.



A cut half of Stephen.



George III shilling.



Charles II shilling.



Henry penny.



Worn Roman denarii.

that by doing so I wasn't sacrificing any loss of depth which the prevailing conditions would allow. The ability to cruise slowly amongst the nails and pulling the odd find out from here and there would only have been bettered if I was using the smaller elliptical coil in the very worst places.

The Goldmaxx Power continued to live up to the manufacturer's claim of increased recovery speed. Using the barest minimum of Disc settings and working slowly, the results were very gratifying as more and more finds were teased out from between the iron and nails.

Another advantage gained by the increase in recovery speed, is that away from the nails and iron area, it is now possible to employ a slightly faster sweep rate without any loss of targets. That's not to say that you have licence to charge across the field and still expect to find the same amount. You won't get the same results and the amount of signals received will negate such impulses!

Throughout my testing of this machine I was fortunate enough to have received invites to detect in different parts of the country. This has enabled me to observe the performance of the detector when it was used over far differing ground conditions to those I am accustomed to in my home county. For example, the detecting

that I did around Arundel and Yapton saw a transformation in the performance of the concentric coil. I have never been able to get the results I require from it on my own ground, but on this type of soil its capabilities were a different kettle of fish altogether. Where I would normally get the signal beginning to break up at near ultimate detection depth on the 9in coil, on the larger 11in widescan, the response was "cleaned up" into a definite "dig me" signal. There was also the added bonus of the slight increase in ground coverage.

Beaches

Unless you just intend to work the dry sand only, forget about using this detector on beaches. There are far superior detectors out there to do the job. This is a land machine pure and simple, so do not waste your time and effort. Take the dog for a walk instead!

Conclusions

I really enjoyed the time I spent testing the new Goldmaxx Power, and not only because of my affinity with the previous French model. If it happened to be the case that the new detector turned out a "poodle" I would say so.

The XP machines have been on the British scene for only a short while, but in that time they have attracted quite a zeal-

ous following. Rather than resting on his laurels, the manufacturer has listened intently to what the detecting fraternity has had to say about improving the Goldmaxx. These improvements and more have all been incorporated into the new Power model. This is even to the extent that the British version has a special ability to discriminate out "coke".

I can honestly say that the new Goldmaxx Power is a more sensitive, therefore a "deeper" machine. It also has a faster recovery speed that is definitely more "user friendly". However, throughout my evaluation I have been aware that this significant increase in power could be its undoing in less experienced hands.

The outstanding feature of the previous model was its recovery speed resulting in an unsurpassed finds rate. This will drop alarmingly if people do not resist the urge to wind up sensitivity in the hope of gaining depth where this just isn't possible. The detector has evolved from being a thoroughbred to an absolute race-winner, but only so long as the right jockey is riding it.

I see that others have used my wording on the previous Goldmaxx as regards to it being a benchmark and the raising of the bar. Well folks, I've got to say Monsieur Loubet has only gone and done it again. TH