FISHER M-SCOPE®

that allow various types of hunting from all metal to full discrimination...a silencer for those times when a detector can get noisy... the ability to "see through" many masking trash items and pick up those good targets missed by others... and very importantly, a mode that allows you to decide how much iron is rejected. Place all these features in a moderately priced detector with a limited lifetime warranty, and you will see why it just might pay you to check out a Fisher 1270 before buying your next metal detector. Fisher Research Lab can be contacted at 200 W. Willmott Rd., Los Banos, CA 93635-5501. Phone (209) 826-3292. Visit them on the Internet at www.fisherlab.com and don't forget to mention that you read about it in Western & Eastern Treasures.

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Field Testing the 1270

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The year 2001 represents the 70th Anniversary of Fisher Research Laboratory. You just don't stay in business that long unless you are doing the right things and making the right products. There are new people getting into this hobby/sport everyday, and it doesn't take them long to learn that the Fisher name is synonymous with dependable metal detector performance. But you turned to this page to learn about Fisher's 70th Anniversary Edition Relic & Coin detector, the 1270. So, let's get right to the machine. At first glance the 1270 will put you in mind of Fisher's 1266 model. However, a closer look at the controls will dispel that notion. In a nutshell, the 1270 has excellent sensitivity to relics, improved iron discrimination, and very good depth. It is also backed by a lifetime limited warranty. On the 1270's faceplate are five rotary knobs, two toggle switches, and a headphone jack. With one's hand gripping the padded handle, the control box sits just above, while a trigger switch protrudes from the bot- tom of the box within easy finger reach. The rotary controls are VOLUME ON/OFF, NORMAL DISC, ALL METAL GROUND ADJ/DISC, IRON DISC, and SENSITIVITY. The two toggles are for SILENCER (clicks, pops & chatter control) and IRON (Iron Discrimination Mode). Again, in addition to the external speaker there is a headphone jack. The trigger switch (MODE TOGGLE) permits pinpointing and momentary changing of modes (Normal Disc, Iron Disc and All Metal). At the other end is Fisher's 8" concentric, planar "Spider" coil (other sizes are available as accessories). For added depth and ground coverage the 10.5" coil is outstanding, and the 5" is great for getting around those tight and extra-trashy areas.

THE CONTROLS

•VOLUME (ON/OFF POWER) - A rotary knob to adjust the level of volume of target response. Set it to a level that is comfortable to your hearing. This control allows you to use favorite headphones that may not have a volume control on them. Additionally, there are hunters who search areas where headphones cannot be used due to outside dangers such as snakes, alligators, or muggers. They depend upon the external speaker and the ability to control the volume coming from it. •NORMAL DISC - Well named, this is the standard rotary control one would normally find on a VLF discriminating detector. Conductivity of metal targets determines their detection or rejection ability. Thus, with settings from "0" to "10," the lower conductive ferrous objects (.e.g., iron nails) begins to be eliminated at lower numbers, while more conductive targets such as pulltabs require a higher number to reject their response. As with all metal detectors, eliminating pulltabs can also knock out nickels and some gold rings, so keep the discrimination level as low as possible. The 1270 has a nice safeguard for new detectorists in that a full, maximum setting of "10" will still allow responses from copper and silver so as not to miss those Wheat cents and higher conductivity U.S. coins. When using this mode, the All Metal Ground Adjust and Iron Toggle controls both need to be in the OFF position, as you will discover in a moment. •ALL METAL GROUND ADJUST - When this rotary knob is moved out of "0" you will feel a slight release from its OFF position to put the detector in the All Metal Mode. Understand that this is an All Metal "Motion" mode and different from Pinpoint All Metal "Non-Motion." For new detectorists, motion means ' that the coil must have at least a slight movement in order to detect metal objects. This applies to the Normal and Iron Discrimination modes as well. One will also notice that this control has settings from "0" to "10," to allow the user to manually set ground balance. The importance of a properly set ground balance for peak detector performance cannot be overstated. Setting

one's own ground balance is not very difficult and is preferred by many seasoned hunters. It is accomplished via the regular bobbing (coil up and down) method while adjusting the All Metal Ground Adjust knob. However, if that operation concerns you and All Metal hunting is still desired, hunt in Normal Disc with its setting at Zero. Turning on the All Metal mode disengages the discrimination controls so that one need not worry about a conflict. •IRON DISC ADJUST - Most of us are used to hunting in motion discriminate and motion all metal modes, but this control adds a new dimension. It permits the user to adjust the amount of iron to be rejected or accepted. It enhances the ability to "see through" ferrous material to find more nonferrous targets. It's easy to access, too. Just make sure that the All Metal Ground Adjust is OFF, and the Iron Toggle to ON. Adjust the Sensitivity up to hear threshold tone, or down adjust it for no threshold. Depending upon how large the pieces of iron are, the Iron Disc can be adjusted from "0" through "l0 to reject them. •SENSITIVITY - Most people know that higher sensitivity means more depth of detection. However, as with all metal detectors, less sensitivity is often more productive. We are fond of using the "low headlight beams in fog" illustration to explain to new detectorists. Having the high beams on in fog only causes the light to be reflected back in our eyes, and thus we learn we can actual see better using low beams in that situation. The same go with high sensitivity in highly mineralized ground. In combination with a properly set ground balance, a lowered sensitivity setting will allow the detector to perform better in areas of high ground mineralization. Quality metal detectors allow the user to adjust that setting. The 1270's Sensitivity control also permits a low threshold (background hum) settings of "8" or higher to monitor those weak signals. One should picture the coil of the 1270 with a narrower scan width when the sensitivity is lowered. This allows the coil to get closer to larger metal objects like fences and work around heavier trash areas • IRON DISC TOGGLE -as mentioned earlier, after turning off the All Metal knob, this toggle is flipped to the ON position to hunt in the Iron Disc Mode. This action deactivates the Normal Disc Mode automatically. Leaving this toggle ON or OFF is important when switching modes, as you will read below under Mode Toggle Switch. •SILENCER TOGGLE - When hunting in the Normal Disc mode you will encounter trashy areas with a higher number of clicks, pops, and partial responses that come in through the circuitry. Many folks cannot tolerate these sounds, so Fisher developed the "3rd derivative

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SILENCER mode." Flipping this toggle will reduce or eliminate these excessive audio sounds. •HEADPHONE JACK - A jack is provided to accept most stereo headphones. Using it will disconnect the speaker. Headphones are always recommended in helping the user to hear weaker or deeper signals and reduce battery usage. •MODE TOGGLE SWITCH - Better known as the Pinpoint Trigger, this switch also helps make the 1270 a more versatile machine. Located right at the index finger, when the trigger is squeezed and held, the detector goes into All Metal Non-Motion to pinpoint the target and "see' the shape and size of the target Bring the coil closer to the target, releasing and then resqueezing the trigger, the target signal will detune and become smaller. Doing this once or twice will allow for a nice, neat retrieval to reduce damage to the turf. By the way, it is best to leave one side of the plug attached to the lawn to help the grass recover. When pushed forward the trigger becomes a mode-changing switch. If you are hunting in Normal Disc, pushing the trigger forward changes the primary operating mode to Iron Disc. When hunting in Iron Disc, pushing it forward changes the circuit to Normal Disc. All Metal Ground Balance mode changes according to how the Iron Disc is set. If it is set to OFF, the forward push changes the mode to Normal Disc; but it it is set to ON, the forward trigger movement changes the mode to Iron Disc. It sounds a little confusing at first, but when given more thought, it makes sense. This versatility allows the detectorist to momentarily change modes without making changes to other controls. Foi instance, if you were hunting in Iron Disc but had preset the Normal Disc to reject targets just below the "nickel" level, use of the mode changing trigger would provide more information about the target. In this example, Iron Disc gives a good sounding beep. Then by pushing the trigger forward into Normal Disc, we find that the sound disappears, and that means the target is made of a low conductive metal such as tinfoil. However, if the beep remains in Normal Disc, the target is of "nickel" conductivity or higher. The same could be done at "pulltab" or any level you choose. •BATTERY LED - There is a tiny low battery alert light on the face of the control box. When it starts to blink, it is time to replace the batteries. The 1270 operates on two, drop-in, 9-volt standard transistor radio batteries. The two compartments are on the underside of the housing. Under normal use one can expect 15-25 hours with carbon zinc and 30-40 hours with alkaline batteries.

MORE ABOUT THE 1270

The detector is of the S-handle design that efficiently spreads the weight for low fatigue. In fact, I felt no arm weariness at all. The detector's 3-1/2 Ibs. are well balanced over the three-piece frame with a double locking lower stem. A padded elbow rest and grip make long hours in the field comfortable. It operates on a frequency of 8.2 kHz (quartz crystal controlled) and an audio frequency of 512 Hz unipolar. It measures 42" at its shortest and 52" extended.

IN THE FIELD

There is no doubt in my mind that the 1270 is mostly a relic machine. However, having said that, I can also say thatit certainly found some keeper coins for me, and at good depths. I was also happy to see that coins could be detected near small iron nails and other junk. It's not perfect, but it certainly has a trash "see through" ability that is impressive. In fact, here's what happened when I did a little testing in the backyard. On the ground I placed a small rusty nail and then discriminated it out. I placed a silver dime about an inch away from it and ran the coil over them at various heights... good hits! Next I placed the dime directly under the nail and still got good hits on the dime while discriminating the nail. I tried a round pulltab with the tail still on, and ran up the discriminator until the beep went away. I then placed the dime under the pulltab so that it could be seen through the middle of the ring, and—bang! This worked in both Normal and Iron Disc modes. Now I said it wasn't perfect. When the dime couldn't be "seen," I didn't get a hit, and I also had trouble with more than one rusty nail. But that is leaps and bounds better than many machines I have tried, so I don't think you will blame me for not complaining. I then went into the field, confident that trash would not be a maior problem. I did what most people do on the first trip: I went to a schoolyard on a weekend when I would not be disturbing classes. Since this was a coin hunting excursion, I hunted in Normal Disc set to accept nickels and higher targets. Clad coins began popping up right away. There wasn't too much trash, so I was able to keep the Silencer off. I hadn't expected to find anything valuable at this site, and I wasn't disappointed. Still, a nice pocketful of pennies, dimes, nickels, and quarters proved that the detector is a capable coin finder. The next trip was to the salt water of the seashore. I hunted in all three modes and got some outstanding depth on the dry sand. It was chattery in the wet saltwater areas, but I was able to work the line between dry and wet sand by being careful. I was searching the sand at low tide, where the sea had recently receded, when a nice solid tone came through the headphones. I had been using Iron Disc and pushed the trigger forward to move into Normal Disc. The beep was still there! Even with Sensitivity lowered, I would estimate that the 14K gold band was about 5" down in the sand. Unfortunately, I didn't have much time to admire it, as I heard thunder in the distance. It

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looked like a storm was brewing, so I started sweeping the coil in the direction of the boardwalk. After a few more coins a streak of lightning crossed from sky to earth, then another and getting closer. It was time to head for the car, as you don't want to be out on the beach, near the water, with metal in your hand during a lightning storm! That was the only chance I had to visit the saltwater beach, so I wasn't able to perform all the tests I would have liked. Just the same, the 1270 had brought in deep coins and a small gold band in a short amount of time. I did get to a nearby fresh water beach on another day where, in addition to coins, I found a large bracelet in the dry sand. It was a pretty prize to view; however, the gold color turned out to be just that, color and not real gold. A trip to an old abandoned house site didn't turn up many coin finds, but those that I did find were good ones, including an Indian Head cent and a Barber quarter. I don't think there has been much activity at this house over the years, but it also gave up what I thought at first to be a piece of a pocket watch. (I have yet to figure out what it is.) The quarter was a good 9" deep in dark, moist soil in the backyard. The dime, about 4" down was dug near the front walk. When even iron signals became scarce, I knew it was time to leave. To save space I'll condense several trips to my favorite old parks. These brought in a few more keepers, such as a silver Washington quarter, three Mercury dimes, and two silver Roosevelt dimes. One park held an old rifle cartridge at about 6". From the history of the park and previous cartridges found here, I believe it probably dates from just before WWI. I also found an old bullet much like others I have dug, which showed me that the 1270 would do well in a relic situation looking for lead bullets, balls, and buttons in Revolutionary and Civil War areas. On one of these trips another Indian Head popped up from around 6". From some 8", a metal whistle came to light near the bottom of a grassy slope where kids have sledded for years. Some locations produced a good amount of audio chatter, and I did have to use the Silencer toggle switch, glad to have it while I learned to listen for the good tones.

SUMMARY

The 1270 is very sensitive to relics, although during this test I wasn't able to get to areas where those relics were the exciting type. Hopefully, next trip. The detector did prove that its extra sensitivity, coupled with the improved iron discrimination, is able to bring home the bacon for the relic hunter. Gold nugget hunters should also benefit from its capabilities. During my trips to the field I found that it is a deep-seeking detector that can find the coins as well. The 1270 has a good number of usable features that show some deep thinking at the Fisher camp. For example, the addition of a threshold at higher sensitivities to hear those targets at the edge of the matrix... three modes in one package