

Coinshooting with the Shadow X5

A Field Report

By

Gordon S. Gibson

Well – it has finally happened! A detector that goes so deep you have to carry a tape measure in your pouch to convince others of its depth.



Several months ago, I heard or read a report on the Shadow X5 prototype that said it could pick up a nickel on the ground at 17 inches. Now...obviously, that was just a lot of hype. How could they expect anyone to believe that story? Later on I read about some folks who visited a

Treasure Show and witnessed a demonstration on the Shadow X5 prototype and they were throwing around some ridiculously deep numbers when talking about the depth ability of this detector. These guys must be blowing smoke; but, you have heard the saying, “When there is smoke, there is fire.” Well, I guess - when there is a lot of smoke, there is a lot of fire. So...after a while I began to wonder if there really was anything to the reports of the Shadow X5. One thing for sure, it made a lot of interesting debates with my buddies while we were having coffee.

Well... when I got the Shadow X5 with the 9-inch coil out of the box, I grabbed a nickel, a wooden yardstick and headed for the back yard. I was going to find out for myself just how truthful those reports have been. I found a clear spot with no metal and put the nickel down. Then I ground balanced the detector and put it on 3.5 in the Discriminating Mode, which will accept nickels and is the preset setting. I was shocked! I could not believe how high off the ground I could pick up that nickel. Using the Discrimination Mode with the Fixed Pre-Set ground balance, I could pick up that nickel 16 inches off the ground. I rechecked the ground to make sure there was no metal under the coin.

If you measured the ground mineralization on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most mineralized, then the ground I tested the nickel on would range from 5.5 to 6. Our soil is

moderately mineralized. Now I realize that air tests do not really measure the ability of the detector to go deep in soil – BUT – I could not name a detector that could perform that same feat in the Discriminate Mode using a nickel. I immediately got to the phone to call some of my hunting buddies to tell them what I had learned. Manufactures used to say that a detector would go as deep as the diameter of the coil. (An 8-inch coil would go 8 inches deep.) Those days are over!

This would be a good time to go over some of the features of this incredible metal detector. Actually, one of the first things that caught my attention was a statement on the Specifications Sheet that comes with the Shadow. It says:

Operating Modes

1. Normal Discrimination	<i>Fixed Pre-set or Manual Ground Balance</i>
2. Beach Discrimination	<i>Fixed Pre-set or Manual Ground Balance</i>
3. All-Metal Auto Tune (Motion)	<i>Fixed Pre-set or Manual Ground Balance</i>
4. Black Sand All-Metal Auto Tune (Motion)	<i>Manual Ground Balance</i>
5. Target Check	<i>Fixed Pre-set or Manual Ground Balance</i>
6. VCO Pinpoint (Non- Motion)	<i>Fixed Pre-set or Manual Ground Balance</i>

When I read that, my first thought was, “This detector really gives the operator complete control regardless of the mode he is operating in.” That is a tremendous feature.

People who have used Troy Galloway’s detectors recognize that he is fanatical about the



quality of his products. The Shadow X5 is no exception. This feature is not a big thing, but it certainly caught my eye as to the “attention to detail” he puts into his detectors. The ¼ inch stereo headphone jack, which is located on back of the control box, has a cover that is attached to the detector. There is no way to lose that jack

cover. I am sure that I’m like many of you – the jack cover is the first thing I lose. While we are talking about the stereo headphone jack, let’s not forget to mention that it is water-

resistant. You will notice that when you plug in your headphones, it is a tight fit. The reason? The nut the jack fits in has two o-ring washers inside to keep water out. Many a detector has been ruined as a result of hunting in moisture and then accidentally raising the coil up allowing the water to run down the coil cable into the control box. This is just another indicator that shows awareness to small details.

This excellence extends to all the knobs and toggle switches. They are of the best quality that money can buy. You will soon discover that when you turn one of the knobs - it is a little taut. The reason? Troy used O-rings on all controls, which make them weather proof. The control knobs are also tension adjustable. You will never accidentally move a knob setting while hunting. That could ruin a good day.

The power to run the Shadow X5 comes from a single, drop-in 9-volt battery that will give up to 25 hours of operation. When you consider how powerful this detector is and the many features it offers, it is amazing that it could be operating on a single 9-volt battery instead of eight AA batteries. There is also another very important feature on the battery and the circuitry. The X5 will never lose depth or produce weak signals until the battery reaches 6.5 volts. As you know, some detectors will lose depth and have a weakened sound as the battery voltage drops. As the manual says, "The Shadow X5 will not." More quality!

The battery test is located on the Discrimination knob. Be sure the detector is turned on (SENS Control) before checking, because it is testing the battery under a load. When turned on, it will generate a high-pitched tone to the speaker for a fully charged battery, half tone for half charged battery and low tone for a weak battery.

The battery door is even special. It is a new design that is weatherproof and has a positive lock fastener. That is just a fancy phrase that means, "That battery door ain't accidentally coming off and it shore ain't gonna leak."

If you have been operating a detector for any length of time you will know that most detectors will find silver and clad coins much deeper than they will find nickels. You will also realize that most detectors are not very good at finding small necklaces. Today, nearly all general-purpose detectors operate from 6 kHz to 12 kHz. The lower the frequency number, the deeper

the detector will find high conductive targets such as silver, U.S. coins, large gold rings, etc. High frequency numbers will be more sensitive to low conductive targets such as nickels, small wedding rings, necklaces and, of course, gold nuggets. The Shadow X5 has an operating frequency of 19 kHz, which means it will have superior sensitivity on the low conductive and smaller targets.

The frequency story does not end here for the Shadow X5. Troy has designed new electronics that will help amplify the higher conductive targets such as silver and clad coins. What does all this gibberish mean? *It simply means that the Shadow X5 will find nickels and small wedding rings as deep as it will find dimes and quarters.* Now that is really something!

Of course, the big thing for me is the weight and balance of the detector. Some detectors are lightweight – but are poorly balanced. Some feel like you have a sewer lid for a coil. Others are heavier – but well balanced. The X5 is both lightweight and very well balanced. It weighs in at a skimpy 2.5 lbs with the battery installed. It doesn't get much better than that. I'll guarantee you the first thing people will say when handed the X5 is, "Wow! This is sure light!" No more rest breaks after using the detector for an hour.

I like the handgrip! It is functional and feels wonderful during a long hunt. The padded arm grip just adds more comfort to your hunting and it is adjustable for those with long arms. As you set the detector on the ground you will immediately notice that it has a built in detector stand. It is not an extra accessory.

Right at the top of the list of "What's Important" is the Limited Lifetime Warranty that is from Fisher Research Laboratory. If I were to offer you a car with a warranty for 30,000 miles or another car with a lifetime warranty – which one would you buy? That should tell you how important this feature is. I hate it when someone tells me that their product, which I own, just went out of the warranty. It is comforting to know that someone will stand behind this detector without any time restrictions being applied. I'm sure you could call that a quality feature.

There is one thing for sure you can say about the control box – it is small and compact. There are 4 toggle switches, 3 knobs, a push button VCO control and a speaker on the face of this

small control box. On the bottom left side there is another knob, the Threshold control. Troy obviously gave a lot of thought into the design of the X5.

However, there is no volume control on the X5. The sound is turned up to full bore and you



need to use the volume control on the headphones to adjust the sound going into your ears. Now there is a good reason for this. You need the strongest and best audio signal for those deep, weak targets – and this baby will go deep. Actually, the audio sound of the X5 is one of the better features of the detector. This will be discussed in greater detail later.

The X5 has three operating modes – ALL-METAL, DISC and BEACH. You can run each of these modes in either Fixed Pre-Set or Manual Ground Balance.

ALL-METAL MODE

The ALL-METAL mode will sound off on ALL items made of metal. Actually there are several different types of ALL-METAL choices when using the X5.



1. There is the fast auto-tune all-metal motion search mode. This is the normal All Metal mode with which most of us are familiar. It will require a small amount of coil motion to detect a target.
2. The Pinpoint Mode, which is really a non-motion All Metal mode with a VCO. A VCO is the sound that changes to a higher pitch the closer the center of the coil is to the target. This is basically used for pinpointing.

3. The All-Metal Black Sand auto-tune search mode. This mode also requires coil motion. *This mode is to be used when the soil conditions are impossible.*
4. The All-Metal Discriminate Mode. When the Discriminate knob is set at the lowest possible setting or “No” discrimination, it is, in fact, operating in the All Metal Mode.

DISC MODE



As coinshooters, this is the mode we will use the most. This mode operates as a silent search mode (no background threshold sounds), and the coil must be in motion when using this mode. The Discrimination Knob is labeled 1 to 10. The setting of one will have the least amount of discrimination and ten the most. The preset setting is indicated at “3”. *However, new information from Troy indicates that the preset is actually at “3.5” on the DISC knob.* At this level (3.5) foil, nickels and above will be accepted. Bottle caps and nails will be rejected. You should test sample targets and note at what number they fall out. This DISC knob is a key control for coinshooters.

BEACH DISC MODE

This mode is to be used for searching salt-water beaches. However, it is a marvelous mode to use when the detector becomes unstable or you are receiving too many false signals. I have found that it works wonders when in a very trashy area or fighting the interference of high-powered lines. *This is the mode you fall back on when you have a noise problem.* It will certainly calm down the Shadow X5. The BEACH DISC MODE has less gain than the DISC MODE and for that reason, when you change to the BEACH DISC MODE; you need to reset the SENS setting. This is the preferred mode for extremely trashy sites.

INTERFERENCE

This is a good time to say something about electrical interference. Electrical interference can affect calibration of a metal detector, affect the results of air tests, and affect the actual operation while hunting. Interference can vary based on the time of day or change of location.

There are two kinds of interference:

1. Specific Frequency Interference

This interference occurs when you are working close to another detector and you pick up its RF frequency. It is commonly called “Cross Talk.” This will happen a lot at competition hunts. The **FREQ** toggle is designed to eliminate this problem

2. Broadband Interference

This is interference from power lines, remote controls, electric fences, wireless dog fences, an electrical storm, etc. This type of interference is best handled by switching to the **BEACH DISC MODE**. If that does not help, then adjust the **SENS** control.

Before you start the hunt, you can very easily check for interference. Turn the **X5** on, set the **SENS** to 8, and use **ALL METAL MODE** with **FIXED GB**. Then set the **THRESHOLD** to a slight hum. Now hold the coil in the air and if there is electrical interference – you will hear it.

THRESHOLD

This control works with the **ALL METAL MODE** and is the background “hum” that is heard when operating in this mode. The idea is to set it where you can barely hear the hum, which will allow you to notice any small change in the audio signal when searching. The control knob is located on the bottom of the control box.

GROUND BALANCE

This can be one of the most important controls on the detector, yet it is one of the most misunderstood controls. Right up front let’s say this – for the majority of the coinshooters in most of the U.S., the Fixed Pre-set Ground balance setting will be the best choice and give excellent results. The Fixed Pre-Set Ground Balance means that the Ground Balance was set at the factory and is designed to work in most soils you will encounter.

But there are those areas where the soil mineralization is very difficult or impossible to work in without changing the ground balance settings. The beauty of the **X5** is you can ground balance in any of the modes – Discriminate, Beach or All Metal.

First let's look at the SELECT toggle that allows you to choose the type of ground balance to use.



There are three settings, MANUAL GB, FIXED GB AND B. SAND MGB (Black Sand Manual Ground Balance).

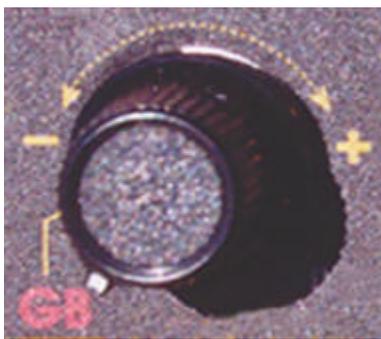
Remember, this SELECT control works with THRESHOLD Control when you select MANUAL GB or B.SAND MGB. .

If you want to hunt in the DISC Mode and use a FIXED GB – then set the MODE selector to DISC *and* set the SELECT

switch to FIXED GB. Isn't that easy?

If you want to hunt in the DISC mode with the X5 manually ground balanced, you will have to *first manually ground balance the detector* and then select the DISC mode.

To Ground Balance the X5 you first set the Mode switch to ALL METAL, the Select switch to MANUAL GB, hold the coil off the ground and set the THRESHOLD to a steady low hum.



Now lower the coil to one inch above the ground and as you are lowering it, listen to the threshold sound. Your objective is to keep the threshold hum the same all the way down to one inch from the ground. If the sound gets louder or quieter, then you must adjust it with the GB knob. This is the knob with the plus or minus on either side. Think of this knob as a radio volume control. Turn it to the right and the sound gets louder – to the

left and the sound get quieter. So ... if the sound gets louder as you lower the coil, you want it to be quieter and you turn the GB knob to the left. The same principle applies if the sound gets quieter – turn the knob to the right to make it louder. Continue this procedure until the sound is the same all the way to the ground. This sounds complicated, but actually it is a very fast process that you will learn quickly.

Reports are coming in that you can get a little more depth if you ground balance the X5 a "little hot". "A little hot" means that you want the sound of the threshold to increase a little in volume as you lower the coil to the ground. As you can see – this detector is very flexible.

One big bonus with the X5 is that the audio is very smooth in the ground balancing process. With many manual ground balanced detectors it is hard to determine exactly the point where

the sound has not changed because of the instability of the detector. With these other detectors it is a “guess and by golly” type of ground balance. Not with the X5. It is rock solid.

Once the Shadow has been manually ground balanced, you can then move the MODE switch to any of the three choices (DISC, ALL METAL, BEACH) and it will be ground balanced in that choice.

The FIXED GB is for searching in areas where the mineralization is not severe and areas of wet salt sand. This setting will normally give first-rate results and it is one that coinshooter will probably use the most. *Please note that the DISC MODE will not work with the BLACK SAND MGB. The BLACK SAND MGB must be used with the MANUAL GB. The BLACK SAND MGB is an ALL METAL MODE only.*

SENSITIVITY

The SENS knob actually has two functions – to turn the detector on and off, and to set the



level of sensitivity of the detector. The Sensitivity adjustment will have a huge affect on the performance of the X5. The general thinking of some coinshooters is to crank up the sensitivity to the max and start hunting. Well, that may not work with the X5. The X5 SENS control is designed so that a setting of “9” will be so sensitive that you will start experiencing a chirping sound. Remember, you are dealing

with an extremely powerful and sensitive piece of equipment. In fact, if you have metal toes in your shoes – the X5 will pick it up. So – on this detector, a “9” setting is pretty much the top of the scale. The “10” setting is the “over and above” setting. In most cases, it is so powerful it is not useable.

What we all should expect from the SENS knob is the best depth possible and a smooth performance. There are a lot of factors that can cause erratic performance; trash, electrical interference, highly mineralized soil, alkali, and salt. A sure sign that the sensitivity is set too high is the popping, cracking, scratchy static or motorboat sound that you hear in the

headphones when you come into contact with interference. If this occurs, you may be losing depth. The way to correct this problem is to turn the SENS knob back until the sounds smooth out. That is the smart play.

One misconception that some people have is – if you turn the SENS knob half way down, you will lose one half the depth. That is just not true. Throw a coin on the ground and check it out for yourself. Don't be afraid to turn the sensitivity down in order to operate more efficiently.

FREQUENCY

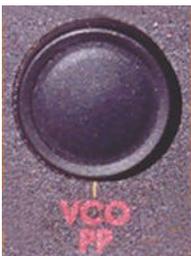
There is a three-position toggle switch labeled **FREQ**. Your choices are: Hi, Norm, Lo. These labels are referring to the operating frequencies of the X5. The normal frequency is 19 kHz, which is operating when you turn the detector on. Why have the choices of frequencies? All of us have been operating next to another detector and heard the buzzing in the headphones. This occurs a lot in competition hunts. What has happened is our detectors are interfering with each other. If this occurs, then just flip the **FREQ** switch to either HI (19.2 kHz) or LO (18.8 kHz). The interference should go away.



Reducing the sensitivity or changing to the **BEACH MODE** is the best way to deal with other types of interference.

PINPOINTING

There are three ways to pinpoint with the Shadow X5. You can use the **DISC** mode and “X” the target. You can switch to the **ALL METAL** mode and slowly move over the target. This mode and the **DISC** mode require the coil to be in motion.



There is another method. On the face of the control box there is a large push button with **VCO** written beneath it. This is the **VCO PP** or pinpointing button. The **VCO**, which means voltage controlled oscillator, is an audio sound that increases

in pitch and volume the closer the center of the coil gets to the target. It is an excellent method of locating a target – especially those hard to find targets in the loose dirt.

SIZING A TARGET

You can use the VCO PP button to tell you the size of a target. When you get a signal, locate the center of the target with the Pinpoint Button and mentally mark the spot on the ground. Now move the coil to the side of the target, push the Pinpoint Button down and hold it down while moving the coil slowly over the target. If the audio responds *before the edge of the coil* reaches the center mark on the ground then the target is bigger than a coin. If the coil moves *over the center mark* on the ground before sounding off – the target is coin sized.

TARGET CHECK



Here is a feature of the Shadow X5 that coinshooters will absolutely love. The TARGET CHECK is a three-position switch. When the switch is pushed up (ZINC) or down (NICKEL) it will always return to the center position (NORM) because it is spring loaded.

The TARGET CHECK is used to narrow down the discrimination choices. When the toggle switch is in the center position, the TARGET CHECK is inoperative and you are using the information on the DISC knob.

When the toggle is pushed up to the ZINC setting, all targets from zinc pennies down to nails are eliminated. If the NICKEL toggle is chosen, then all targets from the round pull-tab setting down to nail are eliminated. Before we go any further, it might be a good idea to review a list of metals ranked by their conductivity and demonstrate how the TARGET CHECK toggle fits in the scheme of things.

The table below list metals by how well the metal conducts electricity with the most conductive metal on top of the list. If you study this chart, you will begin to see all kinds of things you can do with the TARGET CHECK.

Table of Conductive Values and the Effect of the Target Check

Large Iron*** Dollar Half Dollar Quarter Dime \$20 Gold Copper Penny Barber Dime Large Class Ring (10K) Half Dime ➤ _____ Zinc Penny \$10 Gold Screwcap Indian Head Penny Small Class Ring (10K) \$5 Gold Square Pull Tab Thin Ring (Silver) Thick Wedding Band (10K) Pull Tab Ring \$2.5 Gold Round Pull Tab ➤ _____ Nickel \$1 Gold Medium Rings (14K) Tongue of Pull Tab Pull Tab Ring Very Thin Rings (14K) Foil Nails	U.S. Coin Area ZINC TOGGLE SWITCH ACTIVE Only those items above Zinc Penny will give an audio sound. Ring/Pull-Tab Area NICKEL TOGGLE SWITCH ACTIVE Only those targets above the Nickel will give an audio sound.
---	---

*** Large iron can be picked up all through the discrimination spectrum. Iron can sound off at any level on the above chart. This is true for ANY metal detector. Any detector will sound off on an iron bowling ball regardless of how you have the DISC control set.

It is pretty common knowledge that a notch system on any metal detector will do two things:

- 1) The detector will experience a loss in depth

- 2) The detector will have a smaller footprint (that area under the coil that the detector can see).

With the X5, that problem is eliminated. The notch (or TARGET CHECK) does not become active until AFTER the target has been found. You first locate the target and then activate the TARGET CHECK. If the target is too deep for the TARGET CHECK to pick up – then dig the target. With this method, you at least know there is something down there. However, I must quickly add that I have not noticed any loss of depth using the TARGET CHECK.

COILS

The Shadow X5 currently comes with the 9-inch Spider Concentric Coil. The lightweight 7-inch Accessory Round Concentric coil is also available. I used both coils and found that 95% of the time the coinshooter is going to be using the 7-inch coil. It is the perfect coil for going after those coins because it works wonderfully in trashy sites and has superb depth.

Strange as it may seem, I found that there is not that much difference between the 9-inch coil and the 7-inch coil as far as depth is concerned.

There are plans for future coils to supplement the X5. There will be a 5-inch solid concentric coil, a 9-inch wide scan “Double D” coil, and an 11-inch concentric “Spider” coil.

TYPES OF COINSHOOTERS

It is my view that there are several types of coinshooters. They are:

1. The “Cherry Pickers”
2. The “Oldies but Goodies” Hunters.
3. Rings Only Hunter
4. Coin and Jewelry

CHERRY PICKERS

There is huge group of dedicated detectorist that I call “Cherry Picking” coin shooters. They may even be the biggest group of detectorist. Now these folks are interested in finding volumes of coins. They are out to gather every coin in and on the ground. They see themselves as coin vacuum cleaners. If they happen to stumble on an old coin – that is okay too. These individuals work areas that the populace continually goes to for entertainment or relaxation – parks, play grounds, sporting event areas, fair grounds, schoolyards, beaches etc. Areas like these are continually replenishing themselves every year. These also happen to be the sites with the most current trash. They do not mind digging zinc pennies because they know that ten zinc pennies is 10% interest on a dollar for a year. These people put the coins they find in a jar and when that jar gets full – they head for the bank. Usually they do very well financially with this part of our hobby. A lot of these specialists take their finds, cash them in and buy “key” coins. This way their finds are turning into investments.

They set the detector up a little differently than most coin and jewelry hunters. They run the discrimination very high knowing they will accept zinc pennies while eliminating nickels. The general feeling is – there are a many more pennies than there are nickels in the ground – so why waste your time with the nickels? Their requirements for a metal detector are a medium to small coil, good target separation, excellent depth and a quiet running detector in trashy sites. They want a well-balanced detector that is comfortable for long periods of time in the field. You will see them in the parks zipping along with fast coil sweeps, which would indicate that they need a fast response detector. Now the question is – how does the X-5 meet those requirements for “Cherry Picking”?

I spent numerous days working parks, a fair ground, picnic grounds around a lake and some schools. I used the fixed DISC Mode and ran the discrimination at 8.5. I came up with the 8.5 setting by putting a new zinc penny on the ground and a square tab next to it. Then I turned the DISC knob until the penny would sound off but the square tab would remain silent. On *my* Shadow X-5 the setting was 8.5. The sensitivity was set to 9. All the other settings were at preset and I was using the 7” coil. If the trash was very bad, causing chirping and chattering, I

switched to the BEACH Mode and almost every time that would solve the problem. If that did not work, I started lowering the SENSITIVITY until it was quiet. This Shadow X-5 was really exceptional when “Cherry Picking”. It does not miss much. It was a joy to use.

Most people will tell you that the more you dial in discrimination, the more depth you will lose. I tested the X-5 in the above configuration (discrimination set at 8.5) and found that the loss in depth was less than one inch (if that much) when compared to a discriminate setting of 3.5. A good trade off for a dedicated “Cherry Picker.” Most of their coins are going to be in the first two or three inches of the soil anyway, but they always want the ability to go deeper.

The Shadow gives a very quick response, which means it will locate good targets close to bad targets. I put a dime 2- 1/2 inches from a square tab on the ground. I found that by using a seven-inch coil, DISC setting of 8.5 and a fast sweep over these two targets would give a good/clippie sound. What I mean is – it is a good sound with a sharp cut off. It is good enough to make you want to investigate it further. However, if I slowed down the sweep speed, I could get a very solid good sound. To me, a slow sweep speed is 2 feet per second. What is the X5 telling us? Slow down the sweep speed in trashy sites.

The ZINC Target Check really helped out with the “Cherry Picking” setting. (Remember, the discrimination is set at 8.5 to accept zinc pennies.) I checked every signal with the ZINC TOGGLE switch. If I continued to hear that target sound – then I knew it would either be a copper penny, clad or silver coin. If I did not hear the signal – I knew it would probably be a zinc penny. With this setting the X-5 sounded off on some trash (large flattened screw caps etc.) but not very often.

You can use this trick on any coin. For example, let’s say you are in an area that has an abundance of Indian Head pennies. Well, set the DISC control to just accept the Indian Head. Now when you flip the ZINC toggle and hear no sound, you will know it could be a Zinc Penny, Indian Head penny, screw cap or \$10 gold piece (according to the Conductive Values Chart). Most screw caps will be shallow so dig only the soft or deep sounds.

While relic hunters are plagued by iron, the coinshooter is plagued more by aluminum trash. Their problem is how to get around digging so much trash. This is a good place to make a statement about iron. There are some detectors that are always reporting iron as a good target. This can happen to all detectors especially if the target is large or round and rusty. With the iron rusted away and just the alloys left, most detectors will report it as a good find. It has been my experience that sometimes even the X5 sounds off on pieces of iron; but when the TARGET CHECK is brought into play, the detector will sometimes correct itself and report the target as bad. However, we should keep in mind that *large* iron is very difficult or even impossible to discriminate out and this is true for all detectors. In addition to this, I tested the X5 with round nails, square nails and rusted bent nails and found that if the nail has been discriminated out on the DISC control, you will not hear one “peep” from the X5. There is a difference between large and small iron when it comes to discrimination. Large iron in the ALL METAL MODE or the VCO PP MODE will give a larger or broader signal as compared to a narrow signal for a coin. Big iron is easy to spot. You can also perform the “Shadow Wiggle” and if the signal breaks up, the target is more than likely iron. The “Shadow Wiggle” is short fast coil sweeps over the target.

I was hunting with a friend who was using a high dollar detector when he got a signal that indicated a quarter. He asked me to check it out with the X5. I did and I told him it was not a good target. After digging the target we found a large round rusted washer. This occurred without using the TARGET CHECK. Is this a great detector – or what?

“OLDIES BUT GOODIES” HUNTERS.

These types of hunters are really into older coins. Clad coins are a scourge to these guys and they won't even look down at a zinc penny. They hunt old home places, brush arbors, ghost towns and any place people congregated a long time ago. Their needs are a little different than the “Cherry Pickers”, but their demands are very simple. They want depth - and a lot of it! They will set the DISC knob just below nickel and listen for the deep targets. This Shadow X5 should be “right down their alley”.

The Shadow X5 has a first-rate depth indicator – it's audio. You will learn very quickly how deep a target is by its audio modulation. In layman's terms, audio modulation means that if

the target is shallow, the sound will be loud. If the target is deep, the sound will be soft. I have a hearing problem and I learned the sounds of the X5 in a very short time of hunting. It is amazingly accurate. To demonstrate this, put a coin on the ground and in any mode swing the coil over the coin. As you swing, slowly raise the coil. You will notice the audio starting out loud and getting softer as you lift the coil. Remember these sounds because that is what you are listening for to determine depth.

So for those coin hunters who only dig deep targets, the X5 will really fill the bill as it will go very, very deep and report back to you with a whisper of an audio. This audio is exceptional!

It is hard when testing a metal detector to call up, on demand, a place where you can find deep coins. Fortunately, I happen to have just the place. I hunt an old youth camp and in one area the soil has washed down the hill and covered the flat land with at least 12 plus inches of red clay soil. This has been occurring over the past 10 – 15 years. So... I know that there is a layer of targets about 12 inches down in that soil and some of the coins could be only ten years old. I have hunted this area with my friends many times and we have never been able to reach down and tap those targets. But now, there is a new sheriff in town.

At the camp I put a nickel on the ground and adjusted the DISC knob until I could just hear the nickel. This will eliminate nails and foil. I cranked up the sensitivity to 9. I was in the DISC Mode and running in the FIXED GROUND BALANCE. I was using the 9-inch coil to insure maximum depth. After a short time of hunting the area, I got a soft sound in the headphones that said to me – deep! I flipped up the TARGET CHECK to ZINC and there was no sound. That meant the target was at or below the zinc penny. Then I flipped down the TARGET CHECK to NICKEL. There was a clear soft sound. This meant that the target was between the nickel and zinc penny on the conductive chart and the target was deep. I dug down very carefully and found a zinc penny. I cautiously measured the depth (I wasn't kidding about carrying a tape measure) and it was 11 inches deep. Okay – it wasn't an old coin, but the depth was certainly in the old coin range. That afternoon I dug several silver coins and current coins and the depths of these coins were in the 9 –12 inch range. I switched coils and put the 7-inch coil on the X5. Coil size did not seem to make any difference. I could still reach those deep coins.

By the way, the setting above (put a nickel on the ground and adjust the DISC knob until I could just hear the nickel) is a real nickel killer. If you get a target and the ZINC TARGET CHECK is silent AND the NICKEL TARGET CHECK is silent – then the odds are very good that the target is a nickel.

All through these tests I have marveled at the overall performance of the X5 audio, even in bad soil conditions and trashy sites. It is very stable and quiet. There doesn't seem to be as many scratchy sounds that I hear on other metal detectors.



During the testing process I went with three friends - Dan Pierce, Johnny Andrews and Scott Reams - to an old school site. I was using the 7-inch coil. Snow was on the ground and the temperature was just above freezing. The snow was hard and crusted, but I did find a 1912 Barber Dime at a measured 11 inches. Now, I don't know about you, but I have always found Barbers a little hard to pick up with a metal detector. The X5 nailed it! This site did not provide many targets in the cold weather, but Johnny, who was using the Shadow X5, found a Sunkist aluminum bottle cap at 12 inches in Discriminate Mode. Deep is deep – it does not matter if the coin sized target is good or not.

RINGS ONLY

There are some of our hobbyist who specialize in ring hunting. A lot of them live on the coast and hunt on salt-water beaches. Others look for rings in sandy playgrounds, sports fields, volleyball courts, beaches on fresh water lakes, etc. Some of them will even by-pass coin signals to just zero in on the rings. Probably, most coinshooters would qualify as “Rings Only” hunter some of the time. I know that if I discover I am in an area with high probability of finding rings, I change gears and become a “Rings Only” hunter.

I have some definite thoughts about hunting for rings. If you will look again at the Conductive Value Chart you will see that most rings are in the center and lower section of the table along with pull-tabs. Now there are some sites that may have an abundance of rings but it will be

very unproductive if you go looking for them. A good example would be a city park. I am sure there are rings in the ground but there is also a lot of aluminum trash. Time wise – it would be fruitless to search just for rings. If you are going to hunt just for rings, then to me there are two requirements. First, go where rings are easily lost. Second, go where it is easy to dig. Play the odds! I have never felt that grass, rings and pull-tabs go together.

With that said, the Shadow X5 should be excellent in finding rings, if you factor in the operating frequency and the TARGET CHECK. At 19 kHz the X5 will be very responsive to low conductive targets. This means that it will be able to locate very small rings that other detectors may pass by.

Setting up the X5 to trounce on the rings is very easy. First, I want to set the DISC knob to pick



up the lowest conductive ring, which is normally a small thin wedding ring. On *my* X5, the setting is 4. I was surprised at this high setting for such a low conductive target. Normally, I would have thought that this type of ring would be in the 1.5 to 3 settings or in the foil range on the DISC control. I checked another small platinum ring and even a thin necklace and found the same results. Folks, this is really good news!

What this means is there is a wider span of resolution at the bottom end of the discrimination scale, which will give you better separation of targets on the DISC control.

Once you have the DISC control set, you are ready to hunt. We are only interested in targets that DO NOT sound off when the TARGET CHECK is switched to ZINC. This means the target is below zinc on the conductive scale or in the pull-tab/ring range. Now if we flip the TARGET CHECK to NICKEL and we still hear an audio then we know the target is above a nickel and below zinc – or in the ring/pull-tab area. If there is no sound when the toggle is changed to NICKEL, then we know the target is below a nickel in conductivity – or it could be that thin wedding ring we were talking about. What we have done is eliminate all clad and silver coins and focused on the ring area. If you eliminate digging these coin targets – you are going to cover more ground and be more productive with your time.

To show the sensitivity of the X5, using a 7-inch coil, to gold, I put a 4 grain gold nugget on the ground and set the DISC control to just above the BATTERY CHECK (or the ALL

METAL DISC MODE). The SENS was set to 8 and I was operating in the FIXED GROUND BALANCE mode. I could pick up that nugget at a measured 6 inches. That is incredible!



When I changed to the ALL METAL ground balanced mode, I could not notice any measurable increase in depth. This detector will get those small thin rings and slender bracelets and find them deep.

Here is another surprise. I took that nugget and decided to move the DISC control up to see how far I could go before I eliminated the audio on that nugget. I could get the DISC control to middle of “3” before the nugget became silent. Do you realize what that means? That means you could hunt around an old mining camp for nuggets in the Discriminate Mode and tune out nails while finding nuggets. I know, I know, this report is about coinshooting, but that sure tells you something about the X5.

COIN AND JEWELRY

These types of hunters just like finding things. They are mainly looking for coins and maybe an occasional ring if they are lucky. Of course they like silver better than clad, but the magic is always in “The Hunt.” They like digging and being surprised by what they find. There is nothing sweeter than the “beep” sound of a metal detector beckoning them to dig. There goal in life? They will be in the big league when they find their first gold coin. Actually, this is probably the goal of all coinshooters.

These hunters may change the focus of their hunt from day to day, but mainly they are looking for all coins, new and old, and any other interesting things that might sound off as a good target.

There are many variations of settings of the X5 for the “Coin and Jewelry Hunter”, but basically the most common is to accept just nickels. Nickels are very good for setting up a detector and some detectorist will even put a nickel and a dime in their shoelaces for a quick reference when hunting. By setting the DISC control to accept just nickels you are eliminating most of the bad trash - foil and nails.

With this setup, once you get a signal and toggle the ZINC TARGET CHECK, this is what your choices will be.

✓ **ZINC TOGGLE ACTIVE – SOUND**

Always dig if a small target. There is a high probability of a coin.

✓ **ZINC TOGGLE ACTIVE – NO SOUND**

This could be anything from a zinc penny down the chart to a nail. You need to flip the NICKEL TOGGLE to narrow the target selection.

✓ **NICKEL TOGGLE ACTIVE –SOUND**

This indicates the area is above the nickel and goes up to a zinc penny. This is the ring /pull-tab area. If you are in a site that could produce rings – dig. This is also the area where most gold coins reside,

✓ **NICKEL TOGGLE ACTIVE – NO SOUND**

Always dig. A lot of your higher price diamond rings will be in this zone. It could also be a nickel.

The variant in using the X5 and the TARGET CHECK is in the way you set the DISC control. When we were really interested in finding rings, we set the DISC control to accept very thin rings. If you want to find mostly coins, then set the DISC to accept zinc pennies. As you can see the variations are limitless.

Well ...what is my overall impression of the X5? I have been an active detectorist since 1966 and have handled and owned all types and brands of metal detectors. I have seen all the advancements in metal detectors beginning with the old reliable BFO to the TR and then the VLF. But I have never seen a detector with the depth capability of the Shadow X5. Troy has made a quantum leap in metal detector engineering. It is actually startling! This is one fine machine and the quality just jumps out at you. When you pick it up and turn it on in the field, you know it does not get any better than this.

Gordon S. Gibson
1153 Moose
Yukon OK 73099
(405) 354-8330
gordon.gibson@att.net