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Field Test **Update**

Minelab **CTX 3030**

My CTX 3030 fitted with 17 x 13 inch coil.

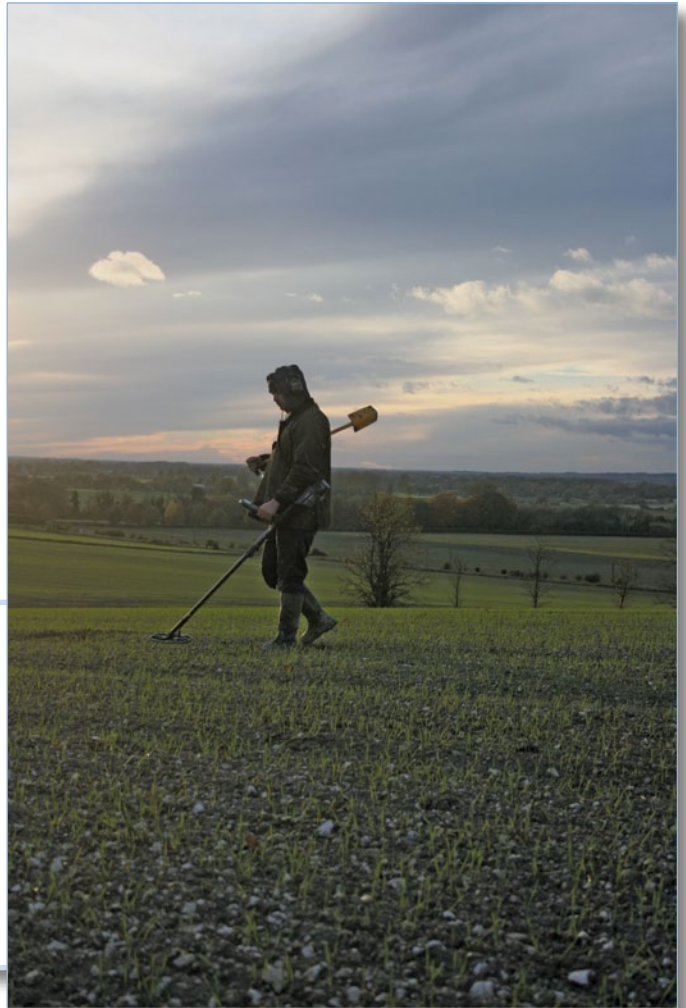**Luke detecting with a CTX 3030 on some high Cambridgeshire ground.**

A few months ago I field tested the CTX 3030 and I would like to share with readers an update of its overall performance. Although I have used Internet data and forums to gather opinions and statistics this "continued appraisal" (for want of a better description) is purely based on my own experiences. However, I must add – and am pleased to say – that the Internet sources referenced do largely back up my own findings.

I believe it to be the *world's foremost metal detector in its class*. That's quite a statement to make and in my book to award a metal detector such a title it must have two primary factors: outstanding performance; and a rugged, top-level build quality.

Until I have mastered a new machine to the best of my ability, I do not get involved in passing on new programs to people. This is because until full mastery is achieved such settings are very personal and may not be suitable for everyone.

When I first unpacked the CTX 3030 a few months back my first impression was of the old aircraft-related adage, "If it looks right it is right". To be fair the CTX 3030 did look right, but as any detectorist knows there is a whole host of more factors to a new detector than its outward appearance. For example this detector is a sophisticated piece of equipment that offers either "turn on and go"

or advanced adjustment potential for the more seasoned detectorist.

With any piece of advanced development you need good manufacturer-based customer and product development support. Too many detectors that were perhaps superb in their time rested for ages on their laurels and introduced no technical upgrades or developments.

With the CTX 3030 I sat back, watched and waited. Just four months away from the launch Minelab have already produced software upgrades, thus facilitating even finer tuned performance and ability. This is clearly a product that was never intended to simply be launched and then left to its own devices. Such upgrades offer the user continued access and choice in performance and that's really what the

CTX 3030 is all about. Gone are the old days of buying upgraded new model detectors; the body of the CTX 3030 can be as upgraded to peak performance or versatility time and time again.

Latest Software Upgrades
Seawater Mode Setting

This additional setting will increase the performance of the CTX 3030 in salt water environments. It facilitates a higher level of sensitivity than it was possible to maintain previously. The added advantage of reducing false signals allows the user to locate targets at maximum depths.

Pinpoint Lock Option

The days of aching fingers are gone. This new feature offers the user the option

to pinpoint targets without keeping the Pinpoint Trigger depressed. All the user has to do now is press it just once to turn Pinpoint on and then again to turn Pinpoint off. The user can, of course, if they prefer, still press and hold the trigger to activate.

Extra System Updates

There have been minor system improvements, which include updates to Low Battery alerts, Target Trails operation and the CTX 3030 detector Reset functions.

Future Proof Detecting

The fact that the CTX 3030 has the ability to upgrade software online means that these new enhancements are just at your fingertips.

CTX 3030 Discoveries & Experiences

Over the last few months I have been fortunate enough to have made some

Fig.1. A superb 13th-14th century seal matrix showing a squirrel.

Fig.2. Various hammered coins.

excellent finds with the CTX 3030. These include: a 13th-14th century seal matrix (Fig.1.), several hammered coins (Fig.2.), and hundreds of Roman period coins (Fig.3.), which included a few presentable *antoninianii* (Fig.4.).

Old Sites Renewed

"Old sites renewed" is a product description that we have all seen and heard before; but, of course, is based on many variables. I have used this phrase several times in field tests and other articles when I have found this to be just the case.

Most of my good sites have been thrashed for over three decades. So when I'm finding new coins and artefacts in good numbers on such sites, I reckon only a moderately small amount of finds consists of stuff I've simply missed before. The extra finds must therefore be attributable to the greater depth seeking and sensitivity abilities of the detector I'm using.

With the CTX 3030 I have experienced this factor on quite a few old sites now; this has not been once or twice, but frequently. Detecting colleagues have repeatedly not found as much as I have been lucky enough to manage to do. Now I know that in order to make a find the coil must, of course, go over it. So have my experiences just been due to luck? Well, of course, some of my finds must be down to luck or fate. But to

state that I'm always lucky or fate always smiles on me is statistically extremely unlikely.

Quantity Of Finds

Over the last few months not only have I experienced the "old sites refreshed" factor, but also an increase in the sheer quantity of finds.

Quantity of finds may not seem important if one has found 150 shotgun tips, but if your friend has only found 78 then statistically – if there was something good buried in the area – you stand a better chance of recovering it, simply based on the abilities of this machine. If one is finding a continual good quantity of say Roman coins this means that you stand a higher chance of finding those better condition examples or even sought-after rare issues.

Balance

With the CTX I have found that even for a sturdy, aggressive-looking machine the balance is perfect – even when fitted with the high performing 17 inch x 13 inch coil. On occasions, when I am out for very lengthy sessions of say 8-10 hours, I have found that the use of a bungee harness helps my ancient fatigued arms. I personally didn't find the CTX 3030 "heavy" and I like a machine to have a certain substance anyway, as this aids my sweep and avoids coil drift.

Fig.3. Various Roman coins.

Recent CTX 3030 Finds

Included are some more of my own and my associates' CTX 3030-based good finds made over the last few months. It simply cannot be that I'm always lucky and fate chooses me; it can only be a combination of factors of which a vitally important part is the detector's capability.

If there's nothing to find in a field, then whatever detector you use finds will not be made. But if finds are there to be made then the CTX 3030 will sooner or later recover the goodies for you. How sooner or how later that happens is just one of those variables that are totally up to you.

Besides the finds already described, using the CTX 3030 I also found a superb Norman period heraldic pendant (Fig.5.).

Steve found the Saxon artefact shown in Fig.6. while borrowing my CTX 3030. The two parts were some distance apart – how lucky is that? He also found a lovely gold Celtic quarter stater (Fig.7.).

In late November 2012 I went out with fellow detecting colleagues and managed to pull up the Saxon artefact (Fig.8) from 13 inches down using the CTX 3030 with the 17 inch coil. It gave a good, clear signal and make no mistake I was going to dig and retrieve this object, finally rescuing and saving it after it had been lost for 1500 years or so.

Another more complete artefact is the Saxon strap end (Fig.9.) found by Dave on the same day with his CTX 3030. I would rate it "find of the day".

Accessory Coils

The CTX 3030 comes with an 11 inch Smart coil fitted as standard; however there is also an accessory 6 inch Smart coil ideal for winkling targets from difficult terrains. For me that would mean aircraft

wreckage in bramble-infested crash sites or Roman coins in deep-ploughed terrain. There is also the 17 inch x 13 inch smart coil available for extra coverage and depth. For me that means ancient meadowland or recovering the extra deep coins on Roman sites you have already been over countless times before. TH

The end of yet another productive search with the CTX 3030.

Fig.9. Saxon strap end with curious swirl design niello inlay.

Fig.8. Saxon artefact found at 13 inches down with CTX 3030 fitted with 17 inch coil.

Fig.7. Celtic quarter stater of Tasciovanus.

Fig.4. Presentable Roman *antoninianii*.

Fig.5. Heraldic pendant.

Fig.6. Saxon artefact found in two parts.