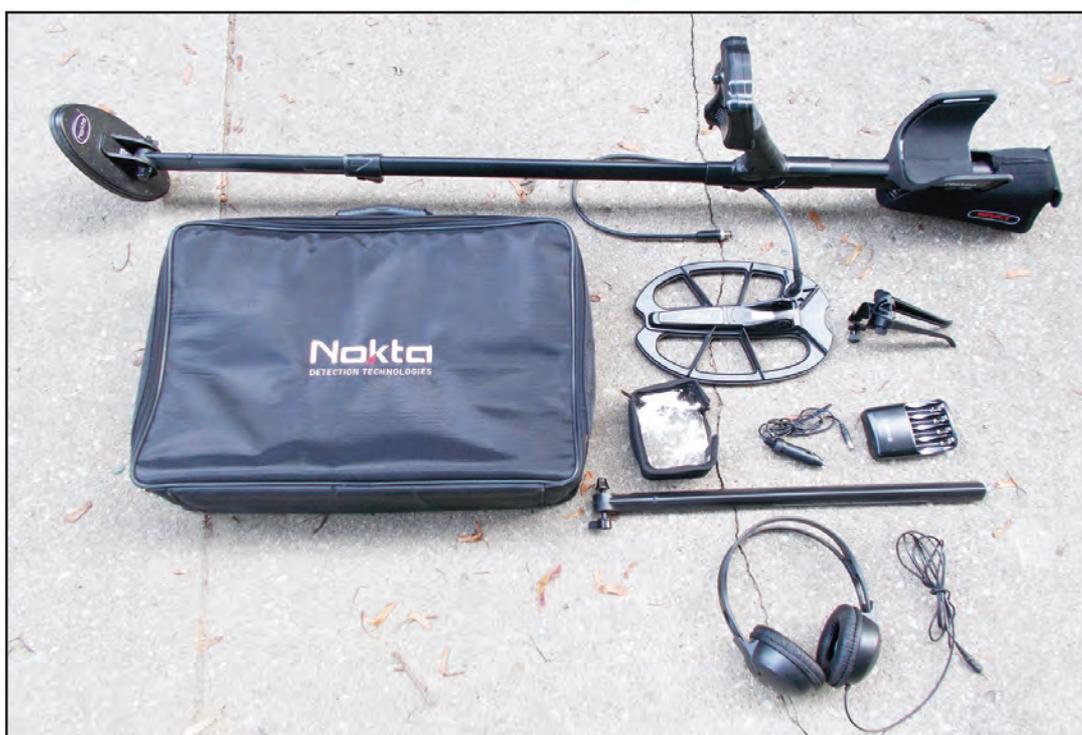




By Andy Sabisch

Nokta Metal Detectors' Impact



The Nokta Impact Pro Package comes with everything you need to search for and find treasure around the world, including a carrying case, small coil, headphones, rechargeable batteries, stand, and an extra lower shaft.

The companies that started building metal detectors for the hobby market more than 40 years ago were all based in the United States and their products could be found in use worldwide.

However, over the past few decades, international companies have entered the market bringing detectors featuring innovative designs with new technology that have reopened sites long since con-

sidered “worked-out.”

One of these is Nokta Metal Detectors, a Turkish company founded in 2001.

Born in a country steeped with history that dates back millennia, Nokta’s staff listened to both local and international end-users developing equipment that quickly earned a loyal following of detectorists who found what previous hunters had missed.

Nokta currently has a product line consisting of close to 20 different metal detectors for the hobby, security, construction, and law enforcement markets.

It is clear to see that Nokta’s engineering staff has not been willing to rest on their laurels, but rather continually seek to develop a “better mousetrap” when it comes to detectors.

This report will cover the latest

addition to their line, which is the Impact.

Features

The Impact assembles in minutes and features a well-designed, triangular-shaped shaft that provides rigidity even when fully extended.

The shaft features infinitely adjustable camlocks that provide 14" of travel, allowing it to fit hunters of all heights.

The coil cable runs inside the shaft to protect it when searching sites where branches or rocks might snag and damage it.

The common complaint many high-end detector users voice is that the menu systems are overly-complicated, making it difficult to find the right adjustments to optimize performance in the field.

Nokta's engineers started with a blank slate as they designed the Impact, and their primary goal was to ensure all adjustments could be made with minimal navigation through layered menus.

Their efforts paid off, as the Impact is controlled with just two buttons labeled SELECT and EXPERT, four navigational buttons, a 3-position trigger, a rear-mounted Power/Volume knob, and a simple one-layer on-screen menu.

So exactly what options did the engineering team include in the Impact to set it apart from other detectors?

Let's start by looking at the available search modes.

Unlike most detectors that have a few modes, which can be limiting based on the specific searching one might do, the Impact offers 12 modes to choose from.

Before you feel your head will explode with that many choices, remember the Impact has been designed to fit the needs of treasure hunters around the globe and, in most cases, you will find yourself using just a few for your hunting preferences and in your area.

Having the flexibility to pick the optimal mode from 12 possibilities

is unique and greatly expands the Impact's versatility.

They include two non-motion and eight motion discriminate modes, as well as two true All-Metal modes.

All of the search modes (including the all-metal modes) provide target ID in addition to offering various tone options to help identify targets once detected.

For example, four of the discriminate modes are identified by the number of tones that they produce; i.e., 2, 3, 4 and 99.

The ability to adjust where each of the tone breaks occur enhances the versatility of the Impact, as coin hunters may want different break points than, say, relic or beach hunters based on the type of targets they are looking for.

Another motion mode (Conductive Ground) was designed to handle wet salt beaches and highly alkaline soil such as found in desert areas frequented by prospectors.

The other modes offer features such as enhanced detection depth, silent search, and the ability to handle rapidly changing mineralization.

The instruction manual does an admirable job covering each mode and when each should be considered for use.

Some of the other functions/adjustments found on the Impact include the Gain (sensitivity), Threshold, Discrimination, Fe Volume (provides the ability to eliminate or reduce the audio response from iron), Track (activates the automatic ground tracking function), Bright(ness of the display), Vibrate and Light (see below), and Frequency Shift.

On the side of the screen labeled EXPERT adjustments that can be made include Notch Discrimination, Audio Tone (lets you set the actual tone produced in each of the defined "bins"), Tone Break (sets the width of each "bin"), iSAT (allows the Impact to handle even the most rapidly-changing levels of mineralization), and Frequency (select from one of the three operating frequencies).

Two unique features that can help those that hunt in evening hours to avoid crowds or the heat, as well as those that might have a hearing loss, were included in the design.

The Impact has an LED "head-light" that can be activated to see the coil and mark where a target is before recovery.

Another option activates a vibrate function that alerts the user to a detected target through vibration in the armgrip as well as the audio response.

Most detectors have their operating frequencies optimized for specific types of targets and / or specific types of ground conditions and, while they will work for other applications or in different areas, their performance is often less than it could be, which is why many serious detectorists own more than one detector, especially if they do several types of hunting.

The Impact addresses this by providing users with the choice of three different frequencies – 5kHz, 14kHz and 20kHz – allowing the right frequency to be selected based on the site and targets being sought.

For example, those searching for silver coins can opt for 5kHz, while gold prospectors would tend to opt for 20kHz due to the enhanced response to low conductive targets, such as nuggets.

Being able to switch frequencies in seconds is extremely useful in the field.

This allows you to easily re-hunt an area using a different frequency, which often uncovers even more treasure that might have otherwise remained for the next detectorist.

When combined with the 12 search modes, the Impact actually provides users with 36 different detectors in one!

The LCD screen provides a wealth of information, including all of the options / functions described above, without multiple layers of menus.

The top bar shows which of the 99 segments are being rejected and when a target is detected, and where

it falls on the scale.

The large center section displays a two-digit target ID number and switches to show depth in either cm or inches when the trigger is pulled and held.

To the lower right a Ground Balance value, mineralization strength and battery level is displayed. Along the bottom of the screen are messages that appear when operator action is required.

The Impact is powered by four AA batteries held in a compartment under the arm cuff.

Per Nokta, alkaline batteries will provide 9-17 hours of use depending on the frequency selected, use of headphones or the headlight / vibrate functions.

The Pro version includes a set of rechargeable batteries, but any high-quality rechargeable AA's can be used with no effect on performance.

Another feature that tips the scale in the Impact's favor when looking at a new detector is that its firmware can be updated via an Internet connection through its USB port.

This helps ensure that your investment is protected with an update capability and patches, if required, that can be done without sending the unit back to the factory at no cost.

Field Test

After assembling the Impact and reviewing the instruction manual, I took it out in the backyard to see if I could turn anything up.

Our house was built in 1843 and, despite the small backyard, we have recovered a considerable number of "keepers" including coins, relics and other items spanning 175+ years.

No place is ever totally hunted out, but with the carpet of iron nails and other ferrous junk that lay just under the grass, good finds had become a bit scarce of late.

Turning the Impact on, I pushed the trigger forward and pumped the coil up and down a few times, following the on-screen prompts to set the ground balance.

After hearing the tone indicating

the GB was set, I pulled and released the trigger to exit the GB setup.

Switching to the DI3 (3-Tone Discrimination) mode and making a few other adjustments, including bumping the DISC level up to "15", running the FE VOL down to "2" to minimize the response from the iron, and lowering the GAIN to "60," based on past experience of expected target depths, I started searching the yard.

As expected, the iron was clearly audible; however, it was easily distinguishable from a good target based on the audio tone and volume.

A few minutes into my search I received a clear, repeatable high-tone that was sandwiched between several low-tone iron signals.

Zeroing in on the good signal, I removed a 6" plug and put the pinpointer in the hole. Off to the side of the hole I pulled out an encrusted coin.

Taking it inside and rinsing it off, it turned out to be an 1860 Indian Head cent – only the second year they had been in production!

While not the oldest coin that had come from our yard, it was a great find and the fact that it was the Impact's first keeper was a positive omen.

My wife, Charlene, pulled into the driveway as I came back out and, after showing her the coin, she wanted to take the Impact for a spin.

The first place she headed for was a corner of the yard where she had recovered the clasp of an old change purse and, over the past three months, several silver coins.

The area was littered with coal cinders and iron as well as being overgrown with a large bush, but she felt there had to be one more coin waiting to be found.

Switching to the STATIC DELTA (STA(D)) non-motion mode so that she could get in amongst the branches and roots, she started pushing the coil into the underbrush.

The shallow iron produced low tones and the cinders came in as broken, non-repeatable signals, but

at one spot near the base of the bush a distinctly different tone accompanied by a TID in the high-80's was received.

Fighting the branches, she removed a pile of dirt and, running the pinpointer through it, recovered a 1920 Walking Liberty Half! The Impact was proving itself under some extremely challenging conditions.

The next few sites I visited were local parks and schools that have been searched for decades with a myriad of detectors.

Targets would either be extremely deep or co-mingled with trash, which I felt would provide a good test of the Impact's capabilities.

I opted to give the DI99 search mode a try, which produces a low tone for iron (below a TID of "15") and then assigns a slightly different tone to each TID between "16" and "99".

Ground balancing took seconds to complete and, with a few adjustments, including bumping up the Gain and running the Iron Volume to "1," since I wanted to just barely hear the response from iron when I came into an area that needed a slower sweep speed, I hit a pair of parks in my home town.

As expected, good signals were few and far between; however, when the Impact passed over a good non-ferrous target the response was sharp and the TID consistent.

A handful of clad coins and a set of car keys turned up before a softer signal came through under the canopy of an old oak tree.

Thanks to a mass of roots that complicated recovery, it took several minutes to free the target, which turned out to be a 1902 Barber dime.

Another notable find came from the edge of the park along the river bank.

The unmistakable sound of multiple iron targets could be heard, but in amongst them was a high tone accompanied by a TID that was bouncing in the high-70's / low-80's.

Removing a plug and checking

the hole with the pinpointer, I pulled out two nails and a piece of rusted junk and, finally, a 1917 Wheat cent.

The Impact had pulled the coin from several ferrous targets at close to 6," which is something most detectors would struggle being able to do.

The final park I went to had some out-of-the-way areas that had less trash than those areas still in active use so I switched over to the VLX2 mode to see if it would help me recover a keeper or two that might be lurking at deeper depths.

While it runs at "0" discrimination for maximum depth, the combination of 4-tones and Target ID being displayed for all but the deepest of targets allows one to identify and ignore targets that generally indicate trash and focus on good ones.

As I was losing the light with the sun setting, I focused on the deeper signals and that approach paid off.

By the time I packed it in for the night I had recovered four Wheat cents, a 1943P war nickel, and a well-worn Mercury dime along with a few non-ferrous pieces of trash that were at 7"+.

Shallow ferrous targets were readily identifiable and quickly ignored; however, some of the deeper pieces did produce a good signal and they wound up in my pouch.

In less-trashy areas this mode provides great detection depth and can reach targets others have missed.

In closing, the only two comments of note that I had on the Impact were its affinity for deep rusted iron and the size of the writing on the screen.

Making some adjustments to audio tones and tone breaks, along with switching search modes or frequencies, helped to some degree in identifying iron such as nails, bolts and similar-sized trash that produced signals that sounded like a "keeper."

These challenge most VLF detectors and the Impact was no exception.

The GEN and DI3 search modes seemed to work best when hunting in high iron areas, but the mode



The Impact's screen provides easy access to all of its features without complicated menus. Real-time information on ground condition, battery strength, and target composition are also shown on the screen. Backlighting allows it to be used in low and no-light conditions.

/ frequency selected will be site-dependent so some experimenting in your locations is recommended.

As far as the size of the words on the screen, well it might just be me fighting the need to wear glasses in the field, but Nokta's engineers had to make them small in order to fit all of the available information on the screen without adding bulk or complexity to an exceptionally well-designed detector.

Summary

Selecting a detector that is best suited for the ground conditions in your area, as well as the type of targets you are looking for, often comes down to a matter of compromises. Frequency, filtering, coil options and search modes to name but a few affect how well a detector works in a specific area and on specific targets.

The Nokta Impact provides a range of options that allow it to be customized in a way that optimizes performance under virtually any condition one might come across. And it does so through an easy-to-

use menu system.

Well-balanced, versatile, easily upgradeable and providing upper-end performance without a price tag that leaves one with sticker-shock, the Impact deserves a serious look if you are in the market for new detector.

The Nokta Impact comes in two versions – the Standard and the Pro package.

The Standard includes the detector with the 11"x7" DD coil, wired headphones, USB cable and batteries and lists for \$849.

The Pro package adds the smaller 7.5"x4" DD coil with a spare lower shaft, carrying case, rechargeable batteries, environmental covers and stand, and carries a \$999 price tag.

They are distributed in the U.S. and are available at select dealers.

For more information on the Impact or any of Nokta's products, visit their website at www.NoktaDetectors.com

Be sure to mention you read about the new Nokta Impact in *Lost Treasure Magazine!* 