



Ketty PHDee

PART 2: Know your kettie terms and love the slang!

Welcome back, Forkers! In part 1 of the Ketty PHDee series, I introduced the chronicle for the series and highlighted several important captions and headlines we will cover, such as *kettie* (slingshot) terminology and equipment, while debunking various mysteries and myths. In this part, we discuss the *kettie* lingo – terms, and expressions as part of the fundamentals of our objective – to help you to the SASF standard discipline 10 M line! We learn about hysteresis, starships, cocktails, and the African Wrap!

Did you know? A traditional South African *rekker* (*kettie*) frame (tree fork/*boomtakmik*) was made preferably from assegai wood (*assegaaihout*/*Curtisia Dentata*) because it is exceptionally strong, with elastics (*lopers*) crafted from rabbit intestines (*haas-ingewande*) and the pouch (*velletjie*) made of leather (*beesleer*). The rabbit connection is the origin of the expression *haasrek* – a traditional term for a square (cube) industrial elastic tube or technically quadrangular-square rubber, commonly used yesteryear. The myth of *haasrek* is finally debunked!

I believe it is essential to appreciate and understand the basic terminology and slang references of *kettie* (slingshot) language so that we are aligned when referring to *kettie* components and activities.

The definition: Slingshot – according to the Cambridge Dictionary: Y-shaped stick or piece of metal with a piece of elastic (material that stretches) attached to the top parts, used especially by children for shooting small stones. (I think an update is required!).

The name: In South Africa, we all know a slingshot by the common name “*kettie*” (though the correct Afrikaans term is “*rekker*”, as opposed to slingshot (of which the direct translation is confused with “*slingerveel*” (in the Bible – David and Goliath)). Yet, it is known by many names around the globe, such as “catapult” (Europe), “*catty*” (Ireland), “*cutty*”, “*gutty*”, “*flip*”, “*beanflip*”, “*shanghai*”, “*resorta*”, “*ging*”, “*tirachina*”, “*schlueder*”, “*fionda*”, “*gomero-a*”, etc. Take your pic!



Short draw, anchor point, Gansta Style.



The operator: “Forker” – a traditional universal collective term (nickname) referring to the *kettie* shooters clan, which stems from the slingshot frame’s physical form of the classic v-fork shape of the traditional *kettie* tree fork (boomtakmik in Afrikaans).

- Slingshooter: A person who shoots a slingshot (in sport shooting, for the purpose of this series, referred to as a slingshot athlete/(kettieskiet-atleet)).
- Slingshooting (*kettieskiet*): The act of shooting a slingshot/ *kettie*.

Let us explore some quick kettie lingo references:

The kettie (slingshot)

- A (*kettie*) build: The creating of a new slingshot.
- Frame: The body of the slingshot.
- Prongs, forks, branches: The two structures that form the “V” – or, as of late, also referred to as the “bow” (fork = bow), especially in the eastern countries.
- Post: The top end of the prongs/forks where the elastic bands or tubes are tied and leveraged.
- Clips: The modern mechanical mechanism to clasp the flat bands in place at the ends of the post.
- Rotating prongs: A movable or rotating attachment at the posts, especially helpful with tubes. It helps them last longer and increase speed.
- Throat, crotch, yoke: The opening size between the “V” and the inside measured at the top. A utility *kettie* measured from the outside prong corners is usually 80 to 85 mm (90 mm is my preference), and those that can be adjusted are usually between 75 and 120 mm.
- PF/PFS (pickle fork or pickle fork shooter): A very shallow-throated, small, thin slingshot.
- Traditional fork: Any slingshot without a brace.
- Tree Fork: A slingshot made from a “V” formed tree branch – also called a natural fork.
- Palm knob, heel knob, palm swell: A swell at the bottom of the handle of some slingshots (can also be a swell in the middle too). Aids in gripping and in security.
- Ergo: A board-cut slingshot shaped to fit the hand.
- Orthopaedic: Any extemporised slingshot (usually the handle) made to compensate for physical impairment.
- Starship: Slang term for a wrist-braced extended fork slingshot.
- Shuttlecraft: Any smaller standard wrist-braced slingshot.
- Battlestar: Any slingshot with multiple adjustment features and moving components.
- Whisker biscuit: A small round brush-like device to centre/hold an arrow in the throat of a sling bow. It also helps keep the feathers or fins of the arrow from getting damaged.
- Slingbow: A standard slingshot modified to shoot arrows.
- Lam, frame or laminate frame: Slingshot carved from a multi-layered board.
- Board cut: A slingshot cut from a board. **Note:** it can also refer to a slingshot cut from various materials, not just wood, such as plastic, slab metal, slab-fibreglass, etc.
- FlatNat: A natural tree fork planed down to a uniform thickness like a board-cut slingshot.
- Beavertail: A flattened protrusion extending from the handle that covers the web of your hand (the space between the thumb and index finger), primarily used in hammer (pistol grip) designs. It reduces wrist strain and provides protection from stray shots.
- Lanyard: A safety cord or rope attached to the *kettie* frame, which is placed around the wrist to secure the *kettie* from flying off or dropping.
- Bareback: Not using a slingshot frame to shoot at all. Instead, holding the bands and pouch, drawing back, and releasing, using only the hand as the fork.

Elastic straps

- Amber belt: Elastic stretch band-tying tape – or co-called Elastic Rope Strap.
- Chinese handcuff: A method for placing tubes onto the forks (round metal) by moistening the tips and slipping the tubes on. When dry, the action of pulling back the sling tightens the tube-prong connection and prevents it from coming off.
- Pre-stressing: This involves stretching the rubber before tying it onto a pouch or a post. This practice reduces pouch-curl on a pouch connection and creates a more secure attachment at the posts for a non-Chinese attachment.
- African Wrap: A method of attaching rubber to the posts, running the rubber down the front of the posts to the base of the prongs. Leather strips or strong cords are wrapped all the way around the posts until reaching the tops. This provides a very secure connection but requires a long band.
- Mummy wrap: Another name for an African wrap or a wrap where a lot of material is used to secure the bands.
- Spanish or Spain attachment: This is a method of attaching rubbers to the forks. Holes are drilled down into the posts, and small leather strips or strong nylon cords (both ends) are pressed down into the hole, forming a small loop. Toothpicks or other wedging material are forced into the hole with the addition of strong wood glue. The rubbers are attached to the loop when the glue is dry. Make sure the loop is securely anchored before shooting.
- Tubes: Tubular rubber, hollow or solid.
- Chinese tubes: Thin hollow tubes.
- Looped Chinese tubes: This setup does not use prongs. The tubes are one piece looped through a fork hole, and the ends are connected normally to the pouch. Tubes can be added for more power and speed; just make bigger or more pouch holes for the ends.
- Flats, flatbands, straps: Flat-cut rubber (natural latex for competition and precision shooting purposes).
- Cubes: Quadrangular square rubber.
- Chains, ganged bands: School or office-type bands, chained or looped all together and attached to the pouch. It's a very powerful set-up.
- Gauge: The thickness of flat rubber, the thickness of tube walls.
- Straight set: A straight-cut band assembly where the band (strap) is the same width for the entire length.
- Taper: Flatbands (or tapered tubes) – the latex is cut with one wide end for the post and another narrow end for the pouch. This design provides more speed than a straight cut.
- Gauge Taper: On sheet rubber, sometimes the sheet is thicker on one end than the other.
- Double Taper: On some flat rubber, the rubber sheet itself is tapered (gauge taper). One end is thicker than the other. If bands are cut properly from this type of sheet, you can get a double taper-thickness of the rubber plus the width. Thin and narrow end at pouch, thick and wide end at forks. A very fast high, performing set of bands is possible with this cut
- Psuedo Taper: A tapering method used with tubes and flatbands, where two different sizes of tubes or flatbands are tied (i.e., soft cotton string – elasticised cotton-covered braiding) together, keeping the larger band or tube up at the prong and the smaller tube or flat at the back (pouch connection). This offers an alternative way of creating a tapered setup without cutting.
- Cocktails: Like Psuedo tapers but with flat bands.
- Cuffing: A tying method – where small tubing, rather than string or wound rubber, attaches the pouch to the rubber.



Kettie shooting is enjoyed by all!

The small tubing is stretched open and placed over the band-to-pouch connection, then unstretched, resulting in a clean attachment. Note: Always test attachments to the pouch and prongs before shooting.

- **Tabs:** Leather or another suitable material attached to the prongs to which bands are secured. This enhances their durability, is popular in some European countries, and is particularly effective for an OTT attachment.
- **Wings:** The ends of a flat strap assembly go through the pouch hole after being tied. This also applies to a tube set tied in the same way.
- **Trough:** The resulting valley created by the fold in the band when folding the band over itself and running it through the pouch hole.
- **Hole in tube, hole in strap:** The pouch connection on a tube assembly where a small hole is made close to the end of the tube. The tube is then fed through the pouch hole and into the tube hole, making the attachment. It is probably the most popular method of tube-to-pouch connection. This also was done in the past on flat strap assemblies (not as good on flats).
- **A slotted attachment or Matchstick method:** A thin cut is made in the top of the post. The end of the rubber is folded over about one inch and stretched to fit in the slot. The addition of a matchstick in the loop or a rubber piece aids in securing it
- **Double-slotted attachment:** Two thin cuts are made at the top of the post. Rubber is stretched to fit into the slot nearest the throat first, then stretched around to fit in the outer slot. The rubber is then pulled tight to seat up against the fork. A popular method used on older wooden slingshots (Wham-o, Lohman, Bullseye Etc.).
- **Ketty cut & Ketty tie:** A method to cut and or seat the flat-band's to offset a square seating position to equalise inner and outer band draw tension, associated with OTT.

Pouches (velletjie)

- **Leather pouch:** Made from leather.
- **Natural pouch:** Made from natural fibres other than leather.
- **Cupped pouch or dimpled pouch:** A pouch that has a cup in the centre for ammo placement.
- **Double-cupped pouch:** A pouch that has a cup on each side of the pouch for ammo placement (also good for loads). **Note:** Cupped/Dimpled or so-called moulded (recessed/sculpted) pouches are prohibited in SAFS Standard Discipline competitions.
- **Centre punched:** A hole right in the middle of the pouch for ammo placement.
- **3-hole pouch:** Like a centre-punched pouch, but the centre hole is the same size as the band holes. It is a self-centering type pouch.
- **Ventilated:** A series of holes (5-10) punched in a pouch to reduce air drag and lessen weight



Kettie Shooting

- **Dry shot:** Shooting a pouch empty (DO NOT DO IT!)
- **Flier:** A wild shot that is not going where intended, suggesting a technical or technique failure.
- **RTS:** Return to sender shot. Sometimes, on high-speed set-ups, after the shot is released, it may not release clean and come back at you. NOT FUNNY!
- **Finger braced:** A gripping method where you brace the index finger and/or the thumb up against the forks for more support.
- **Pinch grip:** A grip where the index finger and the thumb wrap over the forks and clamp down, in a vice grip.
- **Pistol:** A grip where you don't brace the fingers up against the forks.
- **Hammer grip:** Same as pistol grip (like holding a bicycle or broom handle).
- **Gangsta style:** Horizontal frame hold, horizontally parallel 180 degrees to the ground. This is the most popular shooting style in the world.
- **OTT (Over the top):** A band setup that allows the bands to fly over the top of the forks
- **TTF (Through the fork):** A band setup is tied on the outside of the fork and allows the bands to go through the "V" opening while wrapping around the prongs.
- **TTT (Through the throat):** A band set-up is tied on the inside of the fork and – allows the bands to go through the "V" opening without wrapping around the prongs.
- **Cant:** The angle at which the slingshot is held, such as 45 degrees, 90 degrees, or 180 degrees.
- **Anchor point:** The spot usually around the cheek or corner of the mouth where the pouch anchors when it's pulled back.
- **Draw:** The distance bands are pulled back to the anchor point.
- **Butterfly draw, albatross style, or flippers draw:** A drawing style. It is popular in the Czech Republic and used by old-timers in the southern U.S.A. The pouch is drawn up from the waist, and at the same time, the frame holding the hand is pushed out as far as possible; the pouch is drawn back well behind the normal anchor point. Aim is by feel and a lot of practice. A very difficult style, but great speeds are possible because of the extra-long draw.

- **Superfly:** Shooting a starship in combination with a full butterfly draw. Very high speeds can be achieved with this method. Be careful!
- **A load:** Shooting more than one pellet in a pouch.
- **Speed shooting:** Loading and shooting as fast as you can put ammo on target. The term is also used for shooting at high speeds over a Chrony.
- **Snap shooting:** A super-fast draw and release, popular with hunters (for obvious reasons) and also shooting for high speeds over a Chrony.
- **Hysteresis:** A condition that happens with rubber (latex) when it's stretched and held for too long, causing a loss in velocity.
- **F.P.S.:** A velocity designation, feet per second.
- **Plinking:** Shooting a slingshot at cans, bottle caps, acorns, leaves, etc. Shooting at random targets.
- **Can chasing:** A game for slingshooters, where an empty can is thrown on the ground, and each shooter takes a shot at it. As the can is hit, it moves further and further away. The winner is the one who hits it last at the furthest distance.
- **Group or grouping:** A defined number of shots at a specific distance (the impacts of the shots are measured to determine their proximity – to calculate extreme spread and mean radius).
- **Gap Shooting:** Using the tip of the upper fork frame (in "Gangsta style") as a starting (aim reference) point and for longer shots – aiming down the forks, thereby increasing the distance of the shot.) You can also just increase the draw length or use stronger bands to achieve greater distance.
- **Knuckle knock:** Sometimes, the pouch on an over-the-top (OTT) set-up comes back and slaps you in the knuckles.
- **Speed bump (effect):** When the pouch is jerked by too hard of a grip or too much pressure on the pouch on one side upon release, causing the ammo to jump like a car going over a speed bump. Many a fork hit is caused by this action. Also, when holding the pouch horizontally with the thumb held pushing up rather than straight, it creates a bump for the ball to go over (thumb being the bump).

It is known that twisting the pouch this way reduces fork hits, especially shooting PFS style.

- **Pouch slap, band:** The assembly slaps or hits the post when going through the throat. It also rubs slightly on an over-the-top set-up, but not as much.
- **Catch box:** A trap to catch the ammo, cardboard box or other material with an opening in the front and rags, old t-shirts, or towels hanging behind the opening to catch ammo shot at a hanging target in the front of the box.

Ammo/Pellets

- **SB's (Steel ball):** Slingshot ammo of choice, 8 mm for SASF standard disciplines in South Africa, usually 9 mm light hunter (feathered game) and 9.5 to 10 mm for varmint (small mammals).
- **BB's:** Small round ammo – specifically in 4.5 mm, used for BB guns and also as a load in a pouch. **Note:** Forkers do not reference the term "ball bearings". Steel balls, BB's or steel pellets.
- **Clay Balls:** Safety pellets/so-called field target ammo: By design, it has a much lower terminal ballistic co-efficient, with the intent to shatter on a hard surface impact. These are clay balls of various designs, the original / genuine type has a magnetic element (for easy recovery), eco-friendly and water-soluble.
- **Flechette :** A small dart-type projectile used with a slings bow.

General terms

- **"Missed by that much...":** An exclamation used by all slingshooters!
- **Chrony:** An actual device and brand name (using light and shadow reflection) used to measure speed (usually in feet per second), but modern solutions are radar-based.
- **A Shoot:** A slingshot tournament (competition) or a gathering of slingshot shooters (Forkers) to compare skills and performance based on score results.

In our next edition of the "Ketty PhDee" series journey, we will discuss and demonstrate the relevance of these terms and actions (metrics) as part of the PAM (precision and accuracy matrix). Until then, remember to use your shooting safety glasses! Have fun ...



Butterfly draw or albatross style with PF (pickle fork)