

## HOGGIN' DOZEN

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er instead utilizes a working steel (D2) that in practice will slowly dull from a razor's edge but then hold a strong working edge for a remarkably long time. The coarse boar hair and hide just couldn't manage to dull

the edge beyond the point where sharpening was anything but elective.

### The Butchers

With the hide and guts removed, the heavy cutting begins. Many hunters routinely stop at either of the above points and may be

smart for doing so. Often, professional meat cutters resort to a "Sawzall"-type power tool at this stage. However, we continued the process with our larger field knives. Gone is the edge-dulling hair and hide, only to be replaced by dense bone and tough sinew. The quartering process begins by removing the hams (lower legs and thighs), back straps (tenderloins along the spine), spare ribs, and ultimately the shoulders. Some of Zuhlke's friends watching us work requested the heads for reasons that I presume were either culinary or ceremonial. I passed them along (the heads) without further questions.

The DiamondBlade PD-1 was a late entrant to the test and designed as a combat knife. However, its friction-forged edge was so sharp, we threw it in the mix. In the slaughter phase of the butchering process, the PD-1 opened up such large and lethal cuts that we had to be careful around our own fingers. Though a straight-bladed combat knife, the extraordinarily sharp edge and strong spine found a way through most of the cutting challenges.

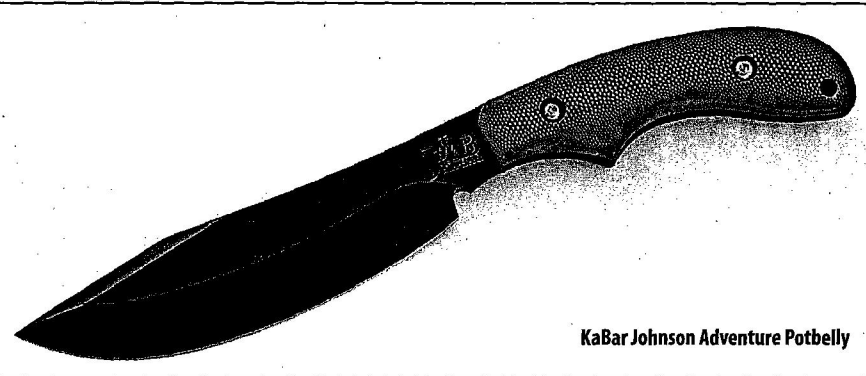
KaBar's Becker BK-2 Companion is a knife that commands authority as soon as it is taken to hand. Heavy and strong, Becker designed this knife as a sharp field tool that can hold up to extended use and a variety of non-traditional cutting tasks. The deep belly and curve of the K-2 lent itself well to the probing and cutting required to separate hip joints and ribs from spine. With the BK-2, you can confidently press and twist the edge around the hog's anatomy. Due to a hog's dense physiology, some of the butchering cuts require stable but unrefined power. Never lacking in the strength to make the tough cuts, the BK-2 might make you feel like you should do more pushups.

KaBar's Johnson Adventure Potbelly was the largest knife of the test. Steve Johnson designed the blade as "the illegitimate offspring of a sledgehammer and a scalpel, a hammer with an edge." The working knife brought power to the hand and its blade length and angle give the user the confidence to chop through bone and sinew or probe, lever and twist. One interesting Potbelly design note is that despite its primary purpose being for

## THE BUTCHERS



KaBar Becker BK-2 Companion

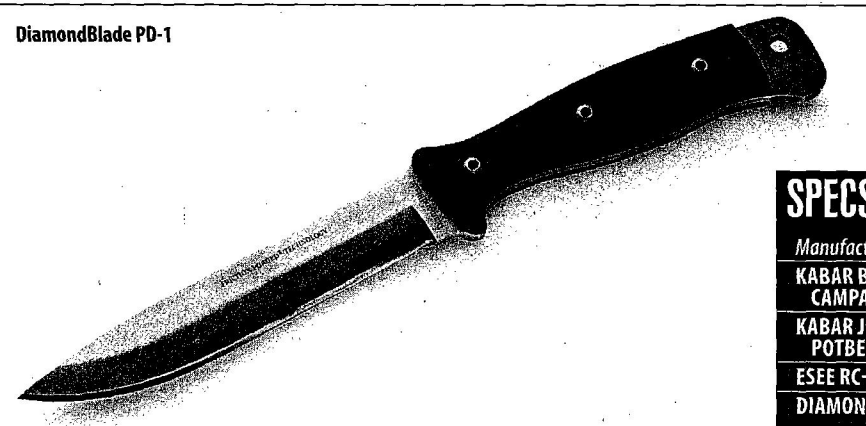


KaBar Johnson Adventure Potbelly



ESEE RC-6

DiamondBlade PD-1



### SPECS: THE BUTCHERS

Manufacturer/Model	Blade/Overall Length	MSRP
KABAR BECKER BK-2 CAMPAION	5-1/2-inch / 10-1/2-inch	\$102
KABAR JOHNSON ADVENTURE POTBELLY	7-1/8-inch / 12-5/8-inch	\$128
ESEE RC-6	5-3/4-inch / 11-3/4-inch	\$159
DIAMONDBLADE PD-1	5-1/2-inch / 11-1/2-inch	\$395