

The Concise 6FM&ATS Glossary

agave – a man-high cactus with broad, spiked swords that would make an Uruk-hai proud.

Amsterdammertje – groin-high, phallic poles, designed to prevent cars from running over pedestrians who have tripped over said poles.

bakkie – pickup truck (unsuitable for hot dates).

bliksem ball – *bliksem* = lightning; also, to give someone a beating (as in: “I’ll bliksem you, you moegoe.”). The basics of bliksem ball are explained in Chapter 12 of 6FM&ATS.

bobotie – baked minced-meat casserole, with an egg-based topping to conceal the other ingredients.

boers – farmers; Afrikaners; descendants of the first Dutch colonists, some of whom settled in places that make you wonder how unpleasant Cape Town must have been back then.

boet – brother, but also invariably used by elderly strangers hoping to win your trust.

braai – barbecue (with three times more meat and alcohol).

chorbs – like pimples or acne, but more bubonic.

Durban Beach – DB = Detention Barracks. Military punishment wrapped as pleasure.

doos – box; pejorative for female genitalia. Middleweight invective, like asshole or prick.

dumpie – the Mike Tyson of beer bottles.

Farmer Browns – dungarees; jeans for people who have gone beyond the belt and suspender phase.

footsack (voetsek) – Afrikaans for “piss off” or “go away”. May also be used by (but not for) little, old ladies.

jenever – Dutch gin. A beverage that briefly fuelled an empire.

Joburg – Johannesburg. Possibly the best-loved ugly city in the world. A malignant tumour growing on a rich reef of greed.

jongens – boys; sons.

kaaskop/kaasie – cheese head, Dutch immigrant.

kleinkaasies – little cheese heads.

Klipdrift – once the cheapest South African brandy.

“Kom ons waai, Lourens, voor ek die doos doodskiet.” – “Let’s go, Lourens, before I shoot this asshole.”

koppie – hill

kotch – vomit (verb and noun), usually emitted with great force.

“kott orrintch” – “got orange”.

Kowie – popular name for Port Alfred, on the Kowie River in the Eastern Cape.

kudu – large antelope with spiralled horns; usually sighted at inconvenient times, in inconvenient places (e.g. in the middle of the night, in the middle of the road).

Lauda – Formula 1 racing champion (opened many bottles of champagne, hence the popping)

mampoer – a potent peach brandy. Another beverage that briefly fuelled an empire.

mawashi-geri – a low karate kick.

mooti/muti – magic potion.

oke/okes – guys; chaps; people; beings in general.

plimsolls – the kind of tennis shoes Ken Rosewall would have worn.

polony – cheap lunch meat (like bologna), usually coloured a shade of pink that defies anatomic classification.

rondavels – round bungalows, unsuitable for standard furniture, usually with thatched roofs.

rooinekke – rednecks; pejorative term for Englishmen, dating from the Boer War. The fair-skinned English soldiers often suffered sunburnt necks due to a design error in their uniforms.

Sam Nujoma – Former leader of the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO), later president of Namibia.

saté sauce – Indonesian peanut butter sauce, which sometimes looks as though it has been produced by child labour (involving the digestive tract).

Selous Scouts – An elite commando unit of the former Rhodesian armed forces. Many ex-Rhodesians had the habit of briefly joining this regiment when attempting to prevent a bar brawl (as in: “He’ll kill you. He was in the Scouts.” Which, oddly, never sounded very convincing.)

Sepuku – ritual Japanese suicide. An orderly way of diving onto your sword.

slasto – a multipurpose type of slate paving.

staaldak – steel helmet.

tackie – tennis shoe, sneaker, plimsoll.

Zim – Zimbabwe.