



5 FROM THE GRINDER

"5 from the Grinder" with Dee Kistner

I was chatting with [Kim Breed](#) at the BLADE Show and I inquired if he knew of any up and coming makers who would be a good fit for our 5 from the Grinder series. Without hesitating Kim asked if I knew Dee Kistner. I didn't, but quickly made my way to his table to introduce myself and strike up a conversation.



Kim has taken Dee under his wing to an extent, and Dee's smooth edges and clean lines show this influence. Dee is a friendly, high-energy guy whom I look forward to getting to know better. I hope to visit him in Crossville sometime if I can swing a "knife maker tour" of middle Tennessee.

So without further ado, I bring you Dee Kistner, our latest installment of 5ftG.



First, in a few sentences, please introduce yourself and let us know what led you to making/designing knives.

My name is Dee Kistner. I am the owner of Kistner Knives. I have been building knives for 10 years total but seriously building for about four years. I have recently decided to follow my passion and go full time.

I was exposed to hunting, fishing, and the outdoors at a very young age. Watching my grandfather use his pocket knife to do everything that required a sharp edge lead me to my love of designing and building working class knives.



Question 1: What knifemaker(s) or designer(s) have had the biggest influence on you? Do you have any mentors?

My mentors include Brian Goode, Kim Breed, Lin Rhea, Scott McGhee and Burt Foster. They have all been huge influences in my knives. Each of them have added different pieces of the puzzle that have lead me to the designs that I use.



those scales...

Question 2: What is your favorite knife pattern or style from history?

I am completely taken by Scagle's style of knives. I believe they have a hard use design with a flare of beauty in the handle of the knives he builds.



Question 3: What is the next big thing in knifemaking? / What direction do you see the industry going?

I remember sharing with my wife that Lin Rhea's x-Rhea knife would be a design and style that would be a marker in the knife community. I think the industry is trending more towards using knives that are able to be carried and used in a lot of every day situations.



Question 4: Is there a knife from your lineup that you feel best exhibits who you are as a knifemaker/designer in terms of design elements, aesthetic or techniques used?

The Tragen Elite is my go to knife. I have carried four or five of these myself. I designed and built this blade to be the 'Jack of all trades". It has a full flat grind with a convex edge and with a blade length of 4 inches, it can be every where I am.



Question 5: What is your EDC and why?

I rotate through my line up of knives for EDC. In the winter I always have my Kingfisher tucked under my vest. It is my largest knife with a cutting edge of 6 1/4" and an overall length of about 11 inches. In warmer months I will have at least a pocket drop in my front pocket. It is my smallest of knives at the moment. With a cutting edge of 2 1/2" and an overall length of 5 inches.



You can check out more of Dee's blademaking at his website KistnerKnives.com, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Twitter](#). I am quite certain that you will be seeing more of his knives as his reputation catches up to the quality of his work.

If you are a knifemaker or know a knifemaker that would like to be featured in a future [5 from the Grinder](#) post, please send an email to thetruthaboutknives@gmail.com