

READY, SET, KNIT

Air Date: March 29, 2008

Colorwork Series, Workshop#1, Stranding and *Bird in Hand Mittens*

Last week, I answered some questions from a listener, so this week I'll start where we left off on March 8th with Round 21, and assume you have completed the Right Flower Chart.

On round 21, you will do a 2 stitch inc to 56 stitches by M1, k27 twice. Remember to do this round loosely because the second Estonian Braid comes next. Then do one round even in your MC.

This brings you to the Right Leaf Chart...remember to begin at the bottom and to work from right to left.

Round 32 is another inc round: M1, k28 twice for a total of 58 sts. Since the braid comes after this, remember to work loosely. Work the braid. Round 34, knit even in MC, then M1 to begin thumb gusset. Place markers before and after the M1. You now have 59 sts on your needles.

You will now start working from the Right Hand Chart. Start at the bottom right and knit across the 58 sts of the hand. (Remember to trap as necessary...on this round you'll have to trap when you get to the 7 sts in a row toward the end of the round.) At the end of the round, the 59th stitch will be left on the needle. M1Left, (insert the left needle from front to back under the horizontal thread, then knit in the front of the st), knit the 59th st and then M1Right (insert the left needle from back to front, then knit in the back of the st). These 3 sts belong to the thumb gusset chart. If you are using a magnetic board and ruler (which I hope you are!), place the ruler above row 2 of the chart.

Tip: As the number of gusset sts increased, I found it easier to put them on a 4" dpn and to knit them with another 4" one while keeping the rest of the stitches on three 6" dpns and knitting them with a fourth.

Tip: Dena, our Inventory Analyst, recently found a new knitting aid you could use for this project; it's called highlighter tape...great for use on charts because you can not only move it up as you go, but you can also see through it. Sometimes it's nice to know both where you are and where you're going when you work with charts.

Continue to work the hand chart and the gusset chart in rounds. Trap as needed. Be sure to give a good tug to the first 2 sts on each new needle as you knit around so you won't get ladders. When the gusset is complete, place the 21 sts on a piece of cotton scrap yarn (don't use a st holder – it'll just get in your way), pull snugly and tie the ends together. On the following rounds, you will be knitting on the hand sts only...just bypass the gusset sts.

At the top of the mitten you will begin your paired decreases to join the palm to the top of the hand. Just follow the chart and do your k2tog and ssk's as indicated. The last st on the palm side will be slipped. Put the remaining palm sts on one dpn and the remaining top of the hand sts on another in preparation for the Kitchener st. You can find a very clear simplified version of this on the RSK page on our website...just scroll down and you'll find it.

Transfer the thumb sts from the scrap yarn to dpns...4" ones are the best for this. Be sure to pick up 1 st where the thumb meets the hand – total of 22 sts. Mark this st as the last one of the round. Work the Right Thumb Chart until 6 sts remain. Break yarn and thread the tail on a tapestry needle, then run the needle through the 6 sts. Pull tightly, bring yarn through to the WS and weave in ends.

Now, make your second mitten!

The last thing you'll need to do is embroider the beak, legs, wing and eye of the bird, and sew the hems if you didn't knit them. Weave in your ends, block, lay flat to dry and then wear your mittens with pride!

Thank you, Kate, for a great knitting experience!

