



BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD NEWSLETTER
Number 115 -- December 1988/January 1989

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UPCOMING MEETINGS *****

December 10, NOON...at the Firehouse/Community Building on Rte 366 in Varna. Holiday Party! Seems like this is one of the most fatiguing times of year - Thanksgiving/Channukah/Christmas/New Years rush rush rush. We like to think that the Guild meeting will be a rest in the middle of all the hub-bub. Bring your wheels, your projects, show-and-tells, problems, solutions, some munchies to share and relax. Nancy Morey, Kay Stickane, Marie Bryhan, and Amy Cook will be sharing "toys," news, and views from their experiences at SOAR and the New York Handspinners Seminar. Nancy promises a bag of goodies to fill the floor! We'll be discussing plans for the guild for next year...what would you like to see the guild tackle next year? Any particular interests we might pursue as a group? — BRING A SMALL, ITTY-BITTY GIFT FOR A HOLIDAY SWAP!

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You'll find the membership form for 1989 in this newsletter.

PLEASE FILL IT OUT AND SEND WITH 1989 DUES BEFORE THE HOLIDAYS

And welcome and thankyou to all the new and continuing officers!!

It's been a great year, thanks to the planning and hard work of the 1988 officers....thank you thank you !!!!

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January 14, NOON in Varna. ROCK DAY - ST DISTAFF DAY CELEBRATION !!!!

Originating in Brittain, Rock Day is probably the biggest celebration of Handspinners. It marks the end of the holidays, originally celebrated on Jan 7, Twelfth Night, and the starting up of work again. While the spinners began their work again, the ploughmen still were on vacation, teasing the spinners and raising havoc.

There will be a DISH-TO-PASS LUNCH. Vendors who wish to bring goods to sell are welcome. Rain or Shine --- Rock Day is on!!!!

NOVEMBER MEETING ***** Erica Lynn, old-time member of BSHG, came down from Syracuse to critique our work and share tips on what judges look for. It was impressive to see how much she could unravel about the fiber and fiber blends, plies, dying techniques, etc, from a first glance at any given article. As usual, the array of beautiful garments was lovely. Particularly exciting were some delightful first projects by new members! Erica also brought some of her own gorgeous angora projects -- a sweater in the works and a fancy, one-strap mini skirt with "diamond" border that was knit so finely you couldn't see stitches beneath that fluff of white angora except on close inspection! If you want to win a competition, she told us, catch the judges eye! But if you want a beautiful garment that you love--forget about judges and appropriateness and create from your own biases, from the heart. A fine message.

Here's some of the things a judge might look for (perhaps there were others that I didn't jot down, or that others might suggest--send it in to me for the next newsletter.)

- ** First thing is the judges like to eliminate as many items as possible as quickly as possible. They flip through stuff quickly.
- ** Finishing techniques are crucial in any competition such as the State Fair. Often a judge will flip a garment inside out, looking at seams, ribbing edges, buttons, button holes, selvages, two-color knitting tension on the carrying across the back, etc.
- ** They will probably hold your garment up to the light to look for thick and thin places.
- ** Appropriateness obviously is subjective, and depends on the judges' individual tastes, but some things to be aware of are: soft, fine yarn for baby items; white or light colored yarns for cables or lace; regular, even yarn for any kind of pattern; hand - softness in a blanket/elasticity in a sweater...
- ** Ribbing should be tight and elastic. K2 P2 is better for handspun than K1 P1.
- ** A yarn which goes thick and thin may be okay as long as the gauge stays the same throughout the whole item.
- ** If you are going for any kind of variation, say so!! If the judges can't tell if you meant it, they will assume it was an unplanned accident.
- ** If you dyed your garment, say how and with what.
- ** Be careful of using a singles yarn which may knit with a bias
- ** Judges look for planned things. Tell them why and how you did what you did.

** 3-ply yarns, though more time, are wonderful for elasticity, loft, warmth and no sagging.

** Unusualness -- handmade buttons, flashy colors, etc to catch the eye.

** Above all, take every judge's opinions with a grain of salt. Each has her own preferences; each has her own specialties of knowledge - a knitter, a spinner, a weaver - each will look for different things.

** What the judges look for may have nothing to do with what you think is beautiful...for instance, the gorgeous dark blue cable sweater which Erica thought would probably be eliminated for inappropriate color for a cable pattern. Unless Milan changes all the rules next year!

** Mittens- perfect joins, especially by the thumb gore and no holes at the top of the thumb and fingers.

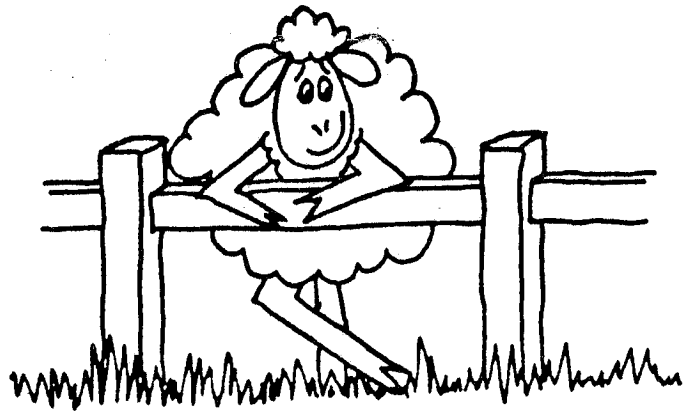
** Mittens and Socks should be perfectly matched.

** No machine sewing or elastic thread added.

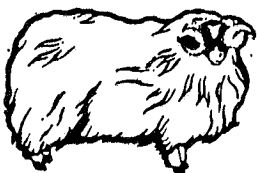
** Buttons- sew on with yarn. Don't cut next to knot. Instead, leave a long enough tail after the knot to weave both ends in to the knitting.

Niddy noddy, niddy noddy

Two heads, one body,
Here's one, 'tain't one,
'Twill be one, bye and bye.
Here's two, 'tain't two,
'Twill be two, bye and bye. (etc)



Debbie Miller brought in a "scarf/hat" made from an Elizabeth Zimmerman Moebius Strip Pattern. It drapes around the head beautifully and is warm. For those who asked, knit a rectangle 15-16 inches wide by 25 inches long. Twist the strip once and sew ends together in that position to form a moebius strip. Wear over your head, letting the extra folds drape around your neck. This is the kind of pattern that can be very sophisticated or very casual depending on the yarn, but will always be flattering and practical. Great combination!



HERE THEY ARE!!! All the patterns from our "extremities" program.

WOOL-LINED SLIPPERS

Materials: Bulky yarn & washed, uncarded wool

Knit a rectangle 6-7 " wide for child's medium (8-9 " for adult) and the length of the foot. Knit in a lock of fleece every 3rd or 4th stitch every 3rd or 4th row depending on your wool or inclination. I like to use fleece about 3" long for a soft, squishy lining. Draw up the loops at one end of the rectangle for the toe end. Fold the cast -on end in half and seam for the heel. Seam the top of the foot, leaving about 1/3 - 1/2 open for the ankle & crochet around the edge to finish. You could add ribbing instead, if you like. These are great for barn boot linings and for skating on uncarpeted surfaces.

Marie Bryhan

EASY HAT

Materials: Use soft, light wool (I don't like heavy hats) and if in doubt about the number of stitches or needle size, knit a gauge swatch. I usually first just guess based on previous hats!

Cast on 76 st (loosely) (must be multiple of 4) on round or straight needles. K2 P2 for the length needed for the wearer's head including a turn up of 2-3". It sometimes helps to do the turn up part on needles a size or two larger.

To make a flatter crown rather than a pizie top, decrease as follows:

P2 together for one ribbing row ie, K2, P2 tog, K2 P2 tog, etc

Work the remaining stitches K2 P1 K2 P1 for about 1-1½".

Then K2 together the remaining p st with the k st next to it: K2 tog K1 K2 tog K1

All the stitches left are thus K stitches. Decrease evenly every 2-3 rows by K2 tog until 6-10 sts are left. Thread yarn through remaining stitches and pull tightly. Tie off neatly. This decreasing gives a smooth top with no awkward looking decreases on the outside of the hat.

Sew up neatly with a flat seam. Wash & dry over a bunched up towel. Wear and enjoy.

Jean Currie

Adult Hat. (bulky ^{knitting} machine)

Cast on 80 stitches.

Tension 1 to 2. knit 30-40 rows (depending on how wide you want brim).

Hem hem. (T=3).

Tension = 3. knit 75 rows. Dec. 2 on each side 2x. Dec. stitches by 2.

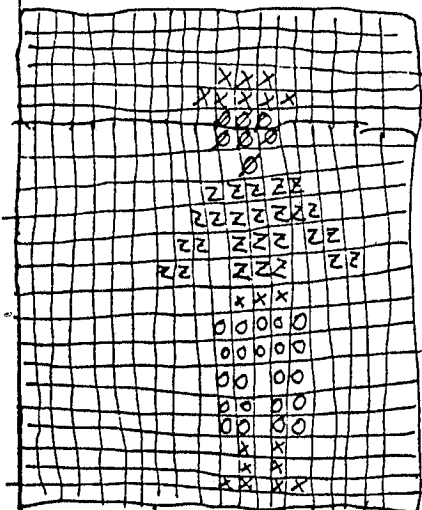
Thread stitches through needle + sew up (down).

Kids Hat.

CO 70-75 stitches. All else same.

[For different kind of brim - use garter stitch for 1st 8 rows.]

Put a pattern in hat (see below) ^{and} or use variegated yarn ^{and} or use up little ends of various colors (see my hat!).



x = color 1
 o = c 2
 z = c 3
 ø = c 4

SOCKS This pattern was sent to me from a friend living in Maine. They have kept our feet warm all winter! The pattern is actually easy and turns out beautifully turned heels.

Use a set of 4 double-pointed needles, to give a gauge of 4 st= 1 in. I like to use two yarns of different colors and thickness held together and knitted as one yarn. This gives an interesting pattern to the socks.

Child Adult Medium Adult Large

Cast on ___ sts &
K2P1 rib ___ inches.

K1 round while dec to ___ st.

Knit ___ inches.

Turn Heel (see picture)

K ___ st.

sl ___ sts to holder.

Turn, P ___ st onto 1 needle.

K1, sl 1, K1, sl 1 across the row. P back.

Continue for ___ inches.

End with K row.

P ___ sts, P2tog, P1, Turn.

S11, K ___ K2tog, K1, Turn.

S11, P ___, P2tog, P1, Turn.

S11, K ___, K2tog, K1, Turn.

Continue to decrease first stitch each row, with one more st. between dec's each row, til ___ st on one needle, ending with K row.

Pick up & knit ___ sts along side of heel piece with needle #1.

K ___ sts from holder onto needle #2.

Pick up & knit ___ sts with needle #3 along other side of heel piece.

With needle #3. K ___ sts from heel needle.

Sl ___ sts from heel needle onto needle #1.

Shapre Heel Gusset

Round 1: Needle #1 - K to last 3 sts, K2tog, K1

Needle #2 - Knit

Needle #3 - K1, K2tog, K

Round 2: Knit.

Alternate these rounds until ___ sts left on each of needles #1 and #3.

Knit on ___ sts for ___ inches.

Shape Toe

Round 1: Needle #1 - K to last 3 st, K2tog, K1

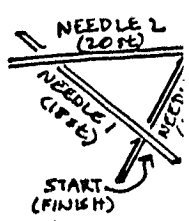
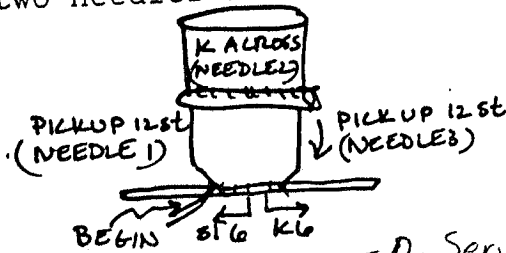
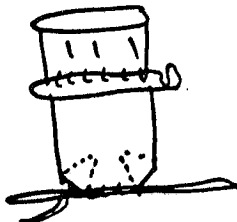
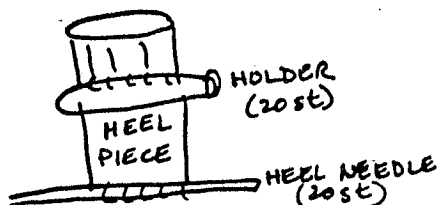
Needle #2 - K1, K2tog, K to last 3 sts, K2tog, K1

Needle #3 - K1, K2tog, Knit

Round 2: Knit.

Alternate these 2 rounds until ___ sts left. 16 20 20
Put equal number of sts on each of two needles and weave together using the Kitchener St. Voilá!

| | | |
|----|----|----|
| 36 | 45 | 45 |
| 4 | 5½ | 6 |
| 32 | 40 | 40 |
| 1 | 1½ | 1½ |
| 8 | 10 | 10 |
| 16 | 20 | 20 |
| 16 | 20 | 20 |
| 1½ | 2 | 2 |
| 9 | 12 | 12 |
| 4 | 5 | 5 |
| 5 | 6 | 6 |
| 6 | 7 | 7 |
| 10 | 12 | 12 |
| 9 | 12 | 12 |
| 16 | 20 | 20 |
| 9 | 12 | 12 |
| 5 | 6 | 6 |
| 5 | 6 | 6 |
| 8 | 10 | 10 |
| 32 | 40 | 40 |
| 2 | 3½ | 4½ |



-D. Serviento

Watchcap in Brioche Stitch from Elizabeth Zimmerman's Knitting Without Tears

Use 4 oz. very thick wool

Needles size 10½ to 15 for a stockinette gauge of 2½st per inch

Cast on 36 sts.

Work row 1 only one time. Repeat row 2 for pattern.

Row 1: *K1, bring wool forward to front of work, slip next st as if to P, bring wool back over R needle, forming a sloppy diagonal loop. Repeat from *, ending yarn forward, slip one st as if to P.

Row 2: K1, *yarn forward to front of work, sl next st as if to P, bring wool back over R needle, forming sloppy diagonal loop, K2 together (the st and the sloppy diagonal loop from the previous row). Repeat from *, ending yarn forward, slip 1 st as if to P.

Continue row 2 for from 7 to 11 inches.

Decrease by changing to K1, P1 for 4 rows.

On next row, SSK across (which eliminates P sts).

P1 row, K1 row, P1 row.

K2 tog across, break wool, thread through the 9 sts, pull tight and secure. Weave sides together and you're done.

Simple Crocheted Cap

This hat is made as a rectangle, with the rows running from the top of the hat to the bottom of the cuff, rather than around the hat. Thus it lends itself well to vertical stripes.

Use 4 oz. thick wool and a huge crochet hook

Decide on depth of hat from top to bottom, including cuff. This is row length. Work rows of treble crochet, working into the back loop of previous row. Continue until it fits around your head.

Sew a seam connecting the first and last rows. You now have a tube. Gather one side of the tube together. Fold the other side to make a cuff.

- Shelly Reif

"PATTY PAN TAM"

Follow general directions from Oct/Nov 1987 Threads magazine, "A Cone of Aran Hats"-- only backwards!!!

General instructions:

- 1- Hat has 4 row garter stitch headband that will stretch to fit around head (20-22" adult; 17-19" child)
- 2- Underside increases evenly every other row until it reaches and rolls over its rim. Tam measures 2½" for underside, while beret is about 1" and has less increases.
- 3- Rim, where hat turns, has several rows or ridges with no increases (about 4 rows garter stitch.) Good point to adjust number of stitches so whatever pattern is used can be done evenly. This is also the largest circumference of the hat (about 30" for a tam.)
- 4- The crown is formed by decreasing evenly every other round, continuing in pattern of choice. When down to 6 or 8 stitches, draw yarn through to close circle. A tam should measure 5" from rim to center (10" diameter,) a beret about 5".

Keeping general instructions in mind, I started with a sample swatch of 25 stitches x 25 rows. The swatch was a practice piece on the knitting machine. Pick up stitches along all 4 sides on either round or 4 straight knitting needles (I used 8's; machine setting was 8½.)

I started a checkerboard 'pattern' of 4 or 5 knit, 4-5 purl around 4 times. I continued 'pattern': Rows 5-8 stitches are reversed (purl a block, knit the previously purled block) and increased on the first row of each new checkerboard set. Continue to "rim" (#3 above) with largest number of stitches in hat (I had @180)

Make rim (3#) and begin underside. I knitted entire underside and decreased until 80 stitches remained (for child's hat: I had 5 st/inch or 16".)

Finish off with headband rows (#1 above) and bind off. Could use elastic thread for firmer fit.

Kay Stickane

You can find the issue of Threads referred to in the guild library. The article, written by Helen Oakley, gives the patterns for eight hats, all using Aran motifs worked in 6, 8, or 9 wedge-shaped sections. "These are not patterns for a beginner, but anyone with imagination and a little experience knitting with a round needle will find them much easier than they first seem."