

Brae Cardigan



Pattern Name: Brae by Ann Feitelson

Source: *Art of Fair Isle Knitting*

Yarn: Knit Picks Palette

Regal: 2.3 skeins, 113 g

Lingonberry Heather: 1.5 skeins, 72 g

Pimento: 1.4 skeins 67 g

Oyster Heather: 1 skein, 48 g

Kumquat Heather: 0.7 skein, 32 g

Blosson heather: 0.6 skein, 27 g

Fuschia: 0.6 skein, 27 g

Lantana: 0.6 skein, 26 g

Indigo Heather: 0.4 skein, 16 g

Gauge: 27 sts and 28 rows = 4 in in colorwork (I used 2.5 mm for the body and 2.00 mm for the ribbing)

Size Made: XS (custom, by reducing size S by 32 sts)

Blocked Size: chest to 40 in, could be made larger

Tags: seamless, in-the-round, bottom-up, grafting, steek, corrugated-ribbing, adapted, circular-yoke

Possible Pattern Errata

Because my gauge isn't as tight as the designed gauge, I'm making a custom XS by reducing the size small stitch count by 32. That means that I need to figure out where to start some of the patterns, the ones that contain the yellow and green vertical lines. Once I finally figured out what to do for my size, and comparing the same colored vertical lines in the other patterns, I think the chart legend is wrong.

I think the yellow vertical lines indicate where to start those rounds for the size S and the green indicate where to start the size M. All the other rounds for those two sizes, and all rounds for size L, start at the right edge of the chart.

I think.

THINGS I MIGHT DO DIFFERENTLY

Instead of doing the yoke decreases in the plain round between motifs, I should probably have done them in the round after it. That's because the previous round's colorwork got kind of smooshed by the decreases. So on a round that was "K1A, K3B around," I would have worked the decreases into the color pattern, doing a K2tog in the appropriate color at each spot to keep the 1A, 3B pattern going.

On the last round of the sleeves, I should have either stopped early or worked past the UA point, so that there was a complete round all the way across for grafting the UA. Since the gauge was so fine, it didn't really matter, but it's a small point to keep in mind even for one-color knitting in any gauge.

Background

I want something to wear under a new coat, as my old coat was a two-layer deal: a removable velour-ish jacket with a nylon outer shell. I love the combo, but the outer shell is covered with Velcro to make it fit-adjustable. I hesitated to buy it, because I knew it would not be friendly to hand-knits.

So I bought a new coat (bonus: longer!), but it's not as thick, so I thought I'd make my own liner.

I've long wanted to make myself a stranded knitting project, so I'm taking the plunge. I may make it as a vest, as I'm not a big fan of drop-shoulder construction. I may be a complete Fair Isle heretic and do it as a raglan as well.

Palette yarn has been ordered from Knit Picks. We'll see how closely the yarn matches their catalog. (See Yarn Substitutions update below.)

December 7, 2018

Happened to wear said new coat, and the cuffs are enormous with no way to snug them up. That means I need to make sleeves for the inner coat. Now to decide...raglan and therefore heretical, or drop shoulder and traditional???

So just searched for “raglan fair isle” and was reminded of yoke shaping. Since the color patterns in this sweater are all fairly narrow (24 sts max) and pretty short, that may be a much better way to do, as there are quite a few solid rounds where I could do all the yoke decreases.

Still waiting on the yarn, so after swatching will work through all the arithmetic.

I’m expecting to make the full chart row-wise regardless of what size I make stitches-wise, as I want it as long as possible. Ditto on sleeve length, as too long would be better than too short.

December 15, 2018

Ordered best-guess colors of Palette from Knit Picks on the 2nd. Tracking says “Arrived shipping partner facility” on the 5th. On the 12th, that was the full extent of the tracking history. Contacted Knit Picks to see if they could do anything. They’re sending me a duplicate shipment for FREE.

On the 13th, the tracking history finally added “Departed shipping partner facility,” but the entry was dated the 6th. What???

Stranding Practice

I’m a thrower, and regarding handling the yarns, the book says,

There is only one way *not* to do it: dropping one color while knitting with the other. If you do that, you will always be struggling to find the dropped strand and you will lose all rhythm and hope of consistency.

The ironic part is, those sentences immediately follow

Whatever way you find most comfortable to hold two yarns is the best way to do it, and experimenting is worthwhile. (p. 56)

Made a concerted effort to strand with both yarns in the left hand. I simply cannot keep them far enough apart to make it easy to pick one or the other. The strands either slip off my fingertips or slide back to the bases of my fingers. I couldn’t make knitting thimbles work either, whether I put one on each of my index and middle fingers or both on my index finger. Nor could I figure out a way to wrap the strands around my pinkie, or my wrist, or anything else, to keep any tension on them.

I previously made a sweater and a vest holding one yarn in each hand. Uh, no. Not again. I did my MAGA hats and my deplorable scarf dropping and picking up the two yarns in sequence, and the tension came out just fine (aside from the whole vertical-color-change issue detailed in a different project).

So, that’s what I’m going to do!!!

Oh, and I bought a zip-up jacket to wear under my coat when a second layer is needed.

December 17, 2018

My replacement shipment of Palette arrived today! The colors I picked look like they'll work well together, so time to start swatching!!!

Yarn Substitutions

I tried to match the color descriptions in the chart legend along with the chart's ink colors to the two-page spread of all the Palette colors in the September 2018 catalog. Clicking the swatch online brings up the written description, which was exceedingly helpful in trying to distinguish "warm red" and "cool red."

- Deep Pink Heather: Fuschia (also ordered Rouge as a backup)
- Magenta Red (a cold red): Lingonberry Heather
- Light Red-Violet Heather: Lantana
- Burgundy Heather: Regal
- Light Pink Heather: Blossom Heather
- Warm Red: Pimento
- Fawn: Oyster Heather
- Blue Violet: Indigo Heather
- Salmon: Kumquat Heather (also ordered Sweet Potato as a backup)

The yarn color matched the catalog color very well for the Lingonberry Heather, Lantana, Regal, Blossom Heather, Pimento, and Oyster Heather.

The Kumquat Heather and Fuschia were a bit darker IRL, and the Indigo Heather was a bit lighter. In all three cases, though, the differences were really small.

(Of the backup colors, the Rouge is a tiny bit darker IRL, and the Sweet Potato is a tiny bit lighter and browner.)

December 18, 2018

As I've done on more than one occasion, I usually turn after the CO and work the first row, then join to the beginning so I have a tiny bit more fabric hanging down to make sure I don't twist the edge.

But just to prove I could do it ITR from the beginning, I did so on my swatch. I crochet CO 96 stitches (four repeats of the widest pattern, though I don't expect to swatch that far) using an E hook (the non-business end goes through the 3.25 mm hole in my needle gauge) onto...gulp...a 2.50 mm circ (which is the larger of the two size 1s at Knit Picks).

I now had to contend with not only two trying-to-curl-up circs on the tiniest-size needle I've used in a long time with the lightest-weight yarn I've used in a long time, I also had to work corrugated rib for the very first time, which meant adding in a second color. Yes, the first round was a bit tedious, especially when I realized one ball's working end was through the WIP. But it got sorted, minus any naughty language, I'm glad to say, and the second and third rounds got easier.

It honestly is not that much slower for me to drop one color and pick up the other. I'm in no danger of setting any speed records, of course, and virtually all other stranding knitters would probably not do stranded knitting at all if they had to work the way I am, but that's OK. I like the sweater, and as long as I get the desired result, the how of getting there doesn't matter a bit to me. (I'm already thinking that if I can do this sweater at all well, I'm going to do the Hillhead Slipover too.)

To deal with yarn dominance, or rather to avoid the issue, I put the background yarn closer to me and the pattern yarn farther, so that the BG always strands above and the pattern always strands below.

And yes, I CO and am working the ribbing with what I hope will be the body needle, then I'll simply go down to the smallest needle I have when I start the WIP's rib.

Swatch Progress

Got through chart row fourteen after doing just ten rounds of corrugated rib.

Since it was all very fumbly at the beginning, the rib is looser than it would probably be if I started again still on the 2.50 mm. It seems clear that I'll need to work it on size 0/2.00 mm.

But other than that, I'm pretty darn pleased all the way around. I think the colors are working well together, and my tension seems really even, all things considered. I look forward to seeing what the yarn will do when blocked. I think the 2.50 mm will be fine for the colorwork.

I recharted the pattern using the technique from *Sweaters from Camp* as there was not the slightest chance I'd be able to distinguish the colors as printed in the book. It's working very well also.

I'll work through row thirty-two, then block. The swatch is 96 stitches, and I spent maybe five hours working the 24 rounds. But the beginning was super-slow, and I noticed as I was wrapping up for the night that the needles and yarn no longer felt like phone wire and cobweb, so my hands are adjusting well. I'm hoping to speed up a bit in the actual WIP.

December 19, 2018

Preblocked gauges:

- 29 sts = 4 inches
- 22 rnds = 3 inches

Postblocked gauges:

27 sts = 4 inches

14 rnds = 2 inches

Designed gauges: 32 sts and rnds = 4 inches

Some arithmetic will be necessary.

Style

Still pondering

- sweater vs. cardigan
- raglan vs. yoke

Would I really wear a cardigan around the house, the way I wear flannel shirts??? Hard to say, as I don't own any cardigans, but I still have the flannel shirts I went to college with a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.

December 20, 2018

Having pondered the sweater vs. cardigan issue, I think I'll make it as a cardigan, because I don't know if I'd wear a hand-knit cardigan around the house *unless I have one!*

I think I'll go ahead and slog through the corrugated ribbing, as again, I've never done it before, so I may as well have it on one project. In the future I can always do hems or regular ribbing.

Still haven't decided on yoke vs. raglan, but it doesn't matter until I have the body and both sleeves worked to the UA.

The three designed sizes go up by 32 stitches each time, so I'm going to make an "extra small" by removing 32 stitches from the smallest size, because of my stitch gauge difference (one stitch less per inch). Mine should therefore be 42.8 inches around.

Casting On

Since smallest size is 330 stitches, I'll CO 298 onto my size 0. Gulp!

It's going pretty well. Then the tip came off the cord. Argh.

December 21, 2018

So I timed myself this morning. It takes me about 20-25 minutes to do one round of ribbing, depending on how much I glance up at the TV.

Finished the ribbing and did the increase round (three whole sts inc'd!). Then I spent over an hour driving myself crazy trying to figure out where to start some of the patterns, because they aren't all symmetrical.

For whoever else wants to make an "extra-small" by eliminating 32 sts from the smallest size, then on the patterns where there are yellow and green vertical lines somewhere in the chart rows, then skip the first four stitches on those rows and start with stitch five.

That's it for me for tonight!!!

December 22, 2018

This morning, well, last night while reading in bed, I realized that, duh, I could use my chapter on [Motif Starting Points](#) to figure out where to start each pattern that's not inherently and totally

symmetrical. If the symmetrical point that does exist in the stitch pattern is placed in the exact center back stitch, then the pattern will be mirror-image at the center front.

Again, duh!!!

December 23, 2018

I have 301 stitches on a 24" circ, and I'm finding it a bit crowded. I had them split across two 24" circs but found that they were so full it was hard to keep the tips out of my way.

Ordered 32" and 40" circs, and maybe they'll get here this year!

December 24, 2018

As I worked the first round this morning, I added a second 24" circ back in, just to give me a bit more room. But because the needles are so full, the WIP is not playing nicely, and the tips are sticking out and getting in the way. Sigh.

But worse, it appears I've fallen victim to lying-swatches syndrome, as my WIP is only 34" wide, when by the swatch it should be 42". ARGH!

December 26, 2018

I have long used--and advocated--two circs for small-diameter things like sleeves, socks, and hats. For DH's sweaters, I use a longish IC, maybe 32"? Or 40"?

I don't have ICs in 2.50 mm, so I was using one 24" circ, which was a pretty tight fit for so many stitches. So halfway through a round, I added in a second 24". Well. It was tough to handle two circs, and I couldn't figure out why, when it's worked so well for me in the past.

Then yesterday, I figured what the difference must be: all previous projects on two circs had few enough stitches that the circs were at most about half full, possibly as much as 60 percent. That allowed the tips of the circ not in use to hang down out of the way.

But for this project, even having half the stitches on a 24" circ meant that the stitches were over the ferrules and onto the tips themselves.

There wasn't an easy way to get the not-in-use tip out of the way as I started on each circ. So I had to work around that tip for about the first 8-10 stitches, then I could sort of fold the other circ under.

I wouldn't bother with the second circ, except that I'm stranding, and it's hard to pull the just-made stitches down their needle so I get a decent float length. I ordered longer fixed circs, and they're supposed to be delivered today--yay!!!

They were indeed delivered, and I switched to the 40" circ on round 27. If I were not doing stranded colorwork, I would probably use a 32" instead, but the extra length allows me to make proper floats without quite so much struggle.

One other thing. My early stranded gauge was 8 spi, not the 7 spi I got on the swatch. I assume that's because I had all the stitches crowded onto one 24" circ, while my swatch's 96 stitches were split across two 24" circs and could spread out nice and relaxed. It will be interesting to see if my gauge relaxes a bit now that I'm on a 40" circ.

If it does, that's ok, as a slightly tighter gauge around the bottom is probably a good thing in a cardigan.

According to the pattern, I'm supposed to reach the UA on chart round 78. I've finished round 35, so almost halfway done with the body!

December 27, 2018

Got through round 46. I put half the stitches on a 32" circ to let the stitches really spread out. I'm very pleased with the fabric.

Though I've read and even recommended working the WIP inside out to help keep the floats from being too short and thus puckering the fabric uncorrectably, apparently I don't need to do that, as the few rounds I did that way seem to have floats a tiny bit longer than the others.

Just one more way we each need to know our own peculiarities and must work with them, not against them.

December 28, 2018

Finished round 60 today.

I have markers between each pattern repeat, because I am notoriously bad at counting. I have to move them occasionally, but they've already saved my bacon half a dozen times. Once I dropped a stitch and realized it when I was a stitch short when I got to the next marker. Yay!

I color-code my markers too. I have yellow on each side of the steek stitches, just as a caution to slow down and pay attention. For the ones between the repeats, I don't have enough of any one color, so to help me gauge progress during each round, the first third has white markers, the second third has green, and the final third has blue. So I get to do an "Aah" when I get to the first blue marker, because I know I'm two-thirds of the way through the round.

December 30, 2018

I measured my [Quiet Reflections](#) to check body and sleeve UA lengths: 14" and 18". The design body UA point is round 78, 80, or 84. Through round 74 plus 14 rounds of ribbing, the WIP is 11.5". The 74 rounds of colorwork are 9-7/8 inches. If I want to block it a bit wider, it will of course shrink vertically, so I need to go longer rather than shorter on the body.

At 7.5 rpi, I need to go to about round 90. But I'll go further than that, to allow for shortening in blocking.

But! Since I want to do raglan shaping, I need to make sure that I work to the same round on both the body and sleeve rounds before I join for the seamless yoke. I will need to start the sleeves with a late-ish pattern round, so that I have some four inches' worth of fabric before I work chart round 1.

Gauge Check

I put all the stitches on 1/16-inch satin ribbon (my favorite stitch holders, as it moves easily even through grabby yarn) after completing round 78, to get a better idea of my gauge.

I'm getting 7.25 spi and 7.67 rpi, so I'm well within an acceptable variation from my swatch. Plus, it's regular wool, so I can tweak the final dimensions when I wet-block. I really just wanted to make sure I'd loosened up a bit from my early-rounds 8 spi when I was cramming all the stitches on a 24" circ.

December 31, 2018

I'm getting close to finishing the body, so I'm trying to plan the UA point. I want a finished length of 14" minimum, so I'm going to 15" to give me some fudging room in the blocking, since my early gauge was a bit tight.

But I also want to make it easier to work that first round with the sleeves and body onto one needle, so I'm going to finish the body (and the two sleeves) on round 101. Round 102 is a single-color round, so I won't have to deal with floats on the first all-in-one round.

That means I'll have 115 rounds total on the body to the UA.

I used my generous, 96-stitch swatch to help me size both ends of the sleeves. I want 60 sts at the cuff, and I need about two more inches at the upper arm, so say 110.

Then it occurred to me to check all these numbers against EPS, which I've used before quite successfully. They all check nicely. I'll do three to four inches' worth at the underarms, so 21 to 28 sts, give or take. Those will be grafted for a seamless FO.

Structural Alterations

The pattern is worked bottom-up with a center steek, then additional steeks are added at the armholes. Stitches are knitted up around the opened armhole steeks and the sleeves worked downward, with a fairly severe decrease round before the cuff ribbing.

I am doing bottom-up, but I'm going to do raglan sleeves, so I'll work them bottom-up as well but without a corresponding severe increase. At the underarms, I'll put stitches on holders for future grafting, then work the yoke seamlessly, including the designed V-neck.

I'll do ribbing along the front edges, but I'll not do buttonholes. Instead I'll do clasps or possibly just a single (removable) cardigan clip.

January 1, 2019

Finished the body through the underarms, on round 101.

It's 15" tall and right at 40" around at the underarms. The bottom edge is pulling in a little, as my gauge was apparently a little tighter working on a single 24" circ, but that's probably a good thing in a cardigan. At least, that's what I keep telling myself!

Off to block, then CO the first sleeve!!!!

January 2, 2019

Slight setbacks on the first sleeve. Started with 60, but seemed a bit narrow. Started over with 72, seemed a bit large, but persevered. Got ten rounds into the colorwork and discovered I forgot to change a color back on round two, even though I highlighted on the chart when I change each BG and pattern color!

Will frog instead of doing duplicate stitch then removing the wrong color, because my gauge was a bit tighter too.

Sleeve Take 2

So I've worked the extra rounds needed for the sleeve length I want, using the last large motif and the following small one at the top of the chart.

For those playing along at home, my increase round (just one st inc'd) was chart round 144, then I worked to round 165 (the final chart round), then worked 164, 163, and 162 to complete the upper half of the orange pattern.

The entire chart goes through a 28-round color cycle, so I just had to match up the rounds downward from round 1.

If it's a little long, that's OK, as I can pull the sleeves wider in blocking to make them a bit shorter.

January 3, 2019

My technique to use the top of the colorwork chart to add extra length to the sleeves is working great! Yay!

What doesn't work so great??? Using the wrong red for six of the central rounds in one of the large motifs. Argh! At least the sleeve rounds are short.



Did last bit of chart before starting round 1 on the sleeve, to get extra length

January 4, 2019

Last night over dinner, I explained to DH how raglans work and showed some photos so he could see the difference between “turning the corner” at the sleeves compared to a yoke with all the decreases hidden in one-color rounds.

I used two photos, explaining how the yoke style keeps the pattern continuity.

I think I’m going to do a yoke instead of raglans, and I think I’m going to do a crew neck instead of a V-neck. The yoke will require a bit of arithmetic, planning how many decreases I need to do in each plain round. But I don’t need to worry about any of that until I’ve done both sleeves, put all three pieces on one needle, and worked about an inch evenly. Hmm. I may need to revisit the round I’m joining on so that the patterns play nicely.

Oh, that’s right. I planned the UA stopping point so that I have just finished a large motif. My first round on all three pieces will be a plain round, then I do a plus sign and another plain round. That gives me five rounds on all stitches, and since the plus sign is only a four-stitch repeat, I can easily fudge the stitches to have it work evenly around.

January 12, 2019

Progress on the second sleeve has been slow, but not because of second sleeve syndrome. Chalk it up to a combination of playoff football and a computer that spent four days dying. When it takes 30-40 minutes to boot into safe mode and another 10 minutes to register a single mouse click in the file manager, I spent way too much time staring at a screen for no reason.

New computer is in the house, and DH is getting me set up, so I've been knitting. Finished through round 50 on my way to 101, then time to work out the details after joining them on a single needle. Got through round 74, so should finish the second sleeve tomorrow.

January 14, 2019

Finished the second sleeve last night.

I would have to say that the size of one's WIP can affect the gauge, and I'm not referring to making a small, medium, or large. The gauges of the sleeves seem pretty different, especially the round gauge, compared to the body.

The first umpteen body rows had 300 sts jammed on a single 24" needle, then I switched to a 40". Both sleeves were made on two 24" circs. It sure looks like the, er, drag or pull of the physically larger WIP affected, for example, how I had to hold the needles, which in turn altered my gauge.

I don't think in this project it will be a problem, but I could see how one's gauge from the beginning of a largish blanket to the end of it might change, perhaps somewhat drastically.

January 15, 2019

Yoke Shaping

So last night I worked through all the arithmetic for the yoke decreases. My [Crystal Yarns Yoke Sweater](#) is 10 inches from UA to the top of the back neck ribbing, but I want a bit more space in a cardigan, so I'll go with an 11-inch yoke depth. The charted front ribbing is 11 rows, including the knit-up and BO, which will be about 1-1/8 inches.

On the body, rounds 5-85 (81 rnds) are 10-7/8 inches, and rounds 8-91 (84 rnds) are 11-1/8, which gives me roughly 7.5 rpi. Since I need 11 inches, I need to work ~83 rounds to get to the back neck, 11 of which will be the ribbing, so I need to work 72 rounds in the color pattern.

Since I finished all three pieces with round 101, I need to work through round 173, but the color chart only goes to round 165. But just as I did at the cuffs, I need to work rounds 164, 163, and 162 to complete the orange peerie. Then if I work rounds 1-4, that gets me to the equivalent of round "172." Close enough.

What will my stitch counts be once all three pieces are on one needle? How many stitches do I need at the UA for future weaving? Using the EPS yoke sweater in *The Opinionated Knitter*, I worked through all three variations: the original EZ percentages, the adjusted ones that alter the first and last decrease rings, and Meg's that adds a fourth increase ring. The final numbers are

- 28 stitches will be set aside on each sleeve and both sides of the body for the UA, leaving
- 117 on the back
- 58 on each front
- 82 on each sleeve

On the first round with all stitches, I'll have 397, which I'll decrease to 396, so my 12-st color pattern fits it perfectly. Since I can only do the decrease rounds when the color pattern has a single-color round, I'll do the decs on rounds 134, 158, and my fake "172," as those are the closest to the percentages of yoke depth required for each decrease round.

Crew Neck

I want at least a 3-inch crew neck, which means I need to start the neck shaping at least 3 inches before the last color round, my round "172." At 7.5 rpi, I need to put the center front neck stitches on holders and CO a new steek no later than round 150. Since that round is about a third of the way through the final large motif, I think I'll start the neck shaping on round 144, so that the motif will at least not be cut in half horizontally.

I'll figure out the central stitch counts and the decrease rates later!!! I want to go get knitting!

January 16, 2019

Worked the three pieces onto, well, not a single needle as that would have been crowded, but onto several needles.

It's been awhile since I did a sweater, and I forgot how tight it is to turn around the sleeves. That is, after all, why I use two circs (and others use a 16" or DPNs) to do sleeves in the first place. My plan was to use a 32" from the center of one sleeve to the center of the other across the front, and the 40" between the same points across the back. But since this is a steeked cardigan, that puts the BOR in the center of a needle. When I stop to change yarns, it's awkward.

So I left the back and half of each sleeve on one long circ, and I put each front and adjoining sleeve half on a 24".

After I worked the joining round, I put markers between all the repeats. I was a stitch short on the right front and a stitch over on the left front. As I worked the next round, I added a stitch at the right sleeve/front joining and did a K2tog at the left sleeve/front joining. But when I got to the end of the left front, I realized I had forgotten to allow for the extra stitch I need to have the fronts be mirror-image. So tinked back to the K2tog and ended the colorwork as it began, with 397 sts total.

I need to do another round or two on three needles, then the sleeves should have enough slack to allow me to switch to the 40". I may keep two needles, though, stopping in the middle of the steek and at the center back. We'll see.

January 17, 2019

It's taking me right at 30 minutes to do one round on 397 stitches between the underarm and the first dec round. Definitely not going to win any speed awards, but it's working for me. I spend a lot of time inching the stitches around a very full 40" circ, so it's not entirely due to the fact that I'm a brute-force thrower!

Fourteen more rounds before I do a 25 percent decrease. I'll post a pic then, as I can't really spread the stitches out at all at the moment.

January 24, 2019

Per EPS, you don't do the first of three decrease rounds until halfway through the yoke depth. I used the modified percentages from Opinionated Knitter instead of the original.

About 3 inches from the end, I put 36 stitches (18 each side of the steek) on a ribbon for the bottom of the crew neck, then decreased another st on each side on the next 13 rounds, so that I was done with the crew neck shaping before the next yoke decrease.

Then I worked the neck straight to the end.



Colorwork done!

Securing the Steeks

Even though I planned to do steeks, when the moment came, I freaked a little bit. Looking through my notes on the [Mimbres Vest](#), I saw that I didn't like the bulk of a crocheted steek, so I thought about alternatives. I searched around, then decided to go ahead with simple whipstitching. I did just the neck steek first as being more recoverable, but the whipstitching seems to hold up. I'm going to get the needle felting tools, though, as suggested in the thread, and touch up the edges.



Overkill? Maybe—four columns of whipstitching on each side of the steek

Then I whipstitched the main steek and cut it open in the presence of one of my knitting buds, who freaks out a bit at the mere thought of a steek, let alone the cutting open of one. Then we celebrated with shots of creme de menthe (“It’s...green,” for the Trekkies out there.)



I had spent the morning before she came over weaving in the ends of the sleeve. Well, most of the ends. Of one sleeve. Note to self: next time, spit-splice!!! It’s one thing to give the ends at the steek a haircut when the steek is secured, but along the sleeve UA (and the body of a pullover), spit-splicing is the only way to go.

I finished the last quarter of the first sleeve’s ends, then I thought about knitting up and working the front band as a break before tackling the second sleeve’s ends.

Then I realized my error: I did a neck shaping technique meant for sweaters with sewn shoulder seams on a sweater with a circular yoke. That’s because I was trying to raise the back neck without having to

work in the flat. Oops. That means I have two pairs of crew-neck corners, not just one. A sort of sweetheart neckline.

I think I'll follow the diagonal line of decreases up to the very top of the neck when I knit up band stitches, then if that looks OK, I'll needle felt and trim off the upper corners. Otherwise, worst case is I pick up the stitches right before the round where I put the neck stitches on holders and simply cut off the upper yoke to rework it.

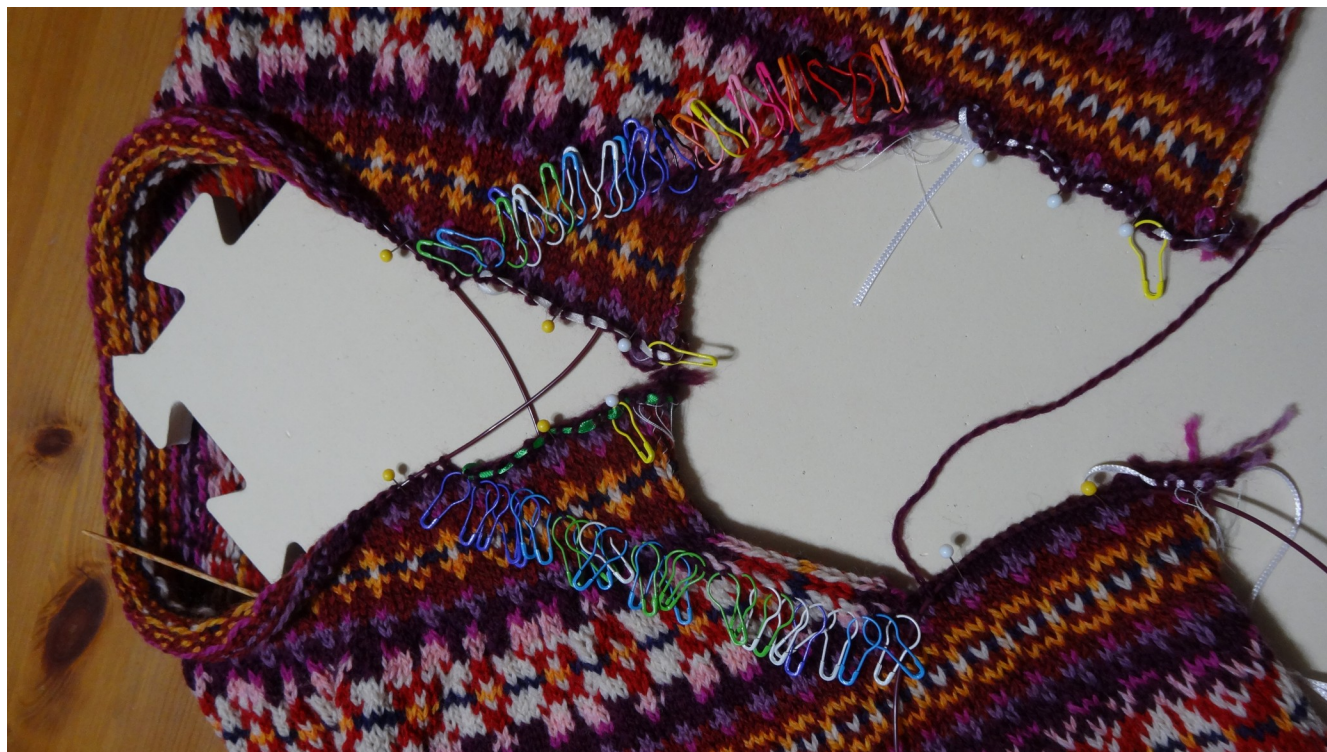
February 5, 2019

Lots of project notes to catch up on...

Neck Band

Since I screwed up the neck shaping, I thought that when I knitted up stitches for the band, I would continue on the diagonal line formed by the decreases on either side of the neck shaping steek. I started at the right front corner (because I'm right-handed), knitted up through each decrease, then continued on that diagonal line by going up one round and over one stitch, until I got to the live stitches.

I knit across those, then when I wanted to come down the diagonal on the left neck, I was having a very hard time moving down one round and over one stitch. So I decided to put a light-bulb pin on the right leg of each stitch where I would knit up. Since I was moving in the diagonal line that continued the neck decreases, I was able to make the knit-up points be absolutely symmetrical on both sides of the neck. Yay!



When I went to knit up through the marked stitches and the decreases, I realized I had used the wrong color yarn. Sigh. Two steps forward, three steps back.

After I tinked the live stitches, I wanted to be sure I knit up with the correct color in the proper places, so I put pins on the left legs of all the stitches I needed to knit up in. See photo where both sides of the neck have the pins in them.

I did the actual knitting-up with a crochet hook, as I didn't fancy the idea of trying to use the knitting needle tip and dodge through the stranded colors. It worked like a charm, super easy and accurate.

I even remembered to use the size 0/2.00 mm needle! Yay!

Neck Band Shaping

EZ/Meg recommend doing a 25% decrease across the back neck, and Meg did a couple decreases across the top of the armhole ribbing on her Fair Isle Vest DVD, both to keep the ribbing from flaring. I always plan to do 2x2 ribbing with P3 ribs in key places, which I decrease with P2togs about halfway through the ribbing. Decreasing in 2x2 ribbing leaves the K2 ribs obviously closer together at the BO edge, but making the switch from P3 to P2 partway through hides the decreases pretty effectively.

I had 168 stitches on the needle, and since it was corrugated ribbing, it wouldn't pull itself in. So I scribbled out on some paper where I wanted to set up the first row of ribbing with P3s instead of P2s, where the flat front curved into the decreases, and then where the side neck curves around to the back neck. It only took a few minutes, but since the neck hole was so big due to my shaping screw-up, it was well worth it. I used markers on the needle to separate each K2P3 rib from its neighbors, whether those neighbors were other K2P3 ribs or sections of 2x2 ribbing. See photo, which has center back neck at yellow marker and blocking pin and shows the right edge of the entire neckline.



I needed to work 11 rows of corrugated ribbing, so I did P1, P2tog in all the P3 spots on row 6.

In my neck ribbing planning, I managed to remember to allow for a K3 at each end, so that I could knit up between the first and second stitches for the front bands on both sides. Yay!

After the decreases, I had 148 stitches, which is 51 percent of the body's 289 stitches. EZ/Meg recommend 40 percent or thereabouts, but it's a cardigan, so a slightly wider neck opening isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Did the 11 rows of corrugated and tried it on. One word: WOW! I was very pleased when I looked at it in the mirror. BO in the purl color.

Small note: The front bands are supposed to be 11 rows total, including the knitting-up and BO. I did 11 rows of corrugated, so 13 rows total. But, the neck opening was a little large, so no big deal. I would need to work the front bands the same way.

Front Bands

I thought I was clever in working the last stitch on the neck band in the row below during the BO, to help have a neat corner. Uh, yeah, no. That messed up my ability to knit up properly, so I had to fake it a little bit, and there's a bit of a dip there. Too bad.

I knitted up a stitch in every row, so I had 171 on the needle. Since I wanted to begin and end K2, I needed a multiple of $4 + 2$, so I did a P2tog where the bottom ribbing transitioned to the colorwork. Did 11 matching rows of corrugated and BO in the purl color.

I think it would have looked better to have started and ended P2, or even just P1, so that the top and bottom of the front band matched the bottom rib CO and the neck band BO. Again, not going to worry about it, but will keep it in mind for future projects.

Managed to knit up 171 on the left front as well. I again used a crochet hook to knit up the stitches, and I went between the steek stitch and the body stitch. It was easy to knit up the right front, working from bottom to top because I'm right-handed, but it was a bit more awkward knitting up on the left front, working top to bottom. Don't know why there was such a difference working upward on the right and downward on the left.

Photos

Took lots of pics of different points, including the botched neck shaping, the tops of the front bands where they met the neck band, etc.

May needle felt the extra corner out of the top of the diagonal neck shaping, depending on how nicely it behaves after blocking. (ETA: It's not been needed at all.)

I'm also hoping the blocking will smooth out the yoke and sleeves as much as it did the body section before the underarms. If it does so at all, I will be absolutely thrilled with the entire FO. ETA: IT DID!!!

February 6, 2019

Did not try to alter the size much in blocking, just stretched the fabric in both directions to settle the stitches, then patted it smooth. The back yoke went from bubbly to pancake flat (well, close enough).

With the front bands just touching, the chest is 40". I never intended to close it (and indeed it doesn't even have buttonholes), and with the hip length, I could easily block it at least several inches bigger (which would of course make it shorter).

I used Soak (unscented) for the first time, and I wore a tank top for the modeling photos. Palette is not the smoothest yarn in the world, and I tend to get contact dermatitis from things, but I think I could wear this all day over short or no sleeves without any problems.

I simply cannot believe how it turned out, considering how many changes I made, the neck shaping fiasco, and so on.

I really did have tears in my eyes while waiting for DH to get to his lunch break to take the pics.

March 1, 2019

I had previously estimated that I spent about 97 hours of actual knitting time making this cardigan.

So I'm getting ready to cast on Hillhead vest and was reading some of the technique material since this garment went have a steek. I found this nugget on p. 54:

Today's finest Shetland knitters say it takes them one hundred hours to hand knit a jumper.

Now I'm trying to figure out how a knitting belt is so much faster.

April 8, 2019

Well, I finally remembered to call Knit Picks to see about returning the original shipment--**after** I had sold three of the balls to a fellow Raveler desperate for that exact dye lot.

KP told me to just keep it and do with it as I chose. So if anybody wants to make this sweater in these colors, I'll be glad to send you the remaining balls, and you'd only have to order three balls of Pimento!