

Michigan Socks



When the sock is folded, the entire logo remains visible (that was serendipity--I did not plan it that way)

Pattern Name: Upstream Master Sock by Cat Bordhi

Source: *New Pathways for Sock Knitters, Book One*

Yarn: Knit Picks Stroll in Navy, 3.2 skeins, 161 g

Yarn: Knit Picks Stroll in Dandelion, 0.1 skein, 3 g

Gauge: 5.7 sts and 7 rows = 1 in with yarn held triple (I used 3.25 mm)

Tags: toe-up, duplicate-stitch, Turkish-CO

Started: November 7, 2015

Finished: November 16, 2015

Notes

My friend will have surgery in December, so I thought some hand-knit socks would help make his hospital stay a bit better.

I hold three strands of Stroll together (the balls just sit there, I don't try to spin them). After the socks were knit, I used duplicate stitch to add the Michigan logo.

I had read (and it makes sense) that large areas of DS make the fabric stiff and non-stretchy, so I decided to just do an outline of the M instead of filling it in. Resources abound for working DS itself, though I will say that since I was working around the edges of the logo, I got to work vertical DS both upwards and downwards, and downwards was a bit easier.

Since **how** I added the logo might help others, here are my steps.

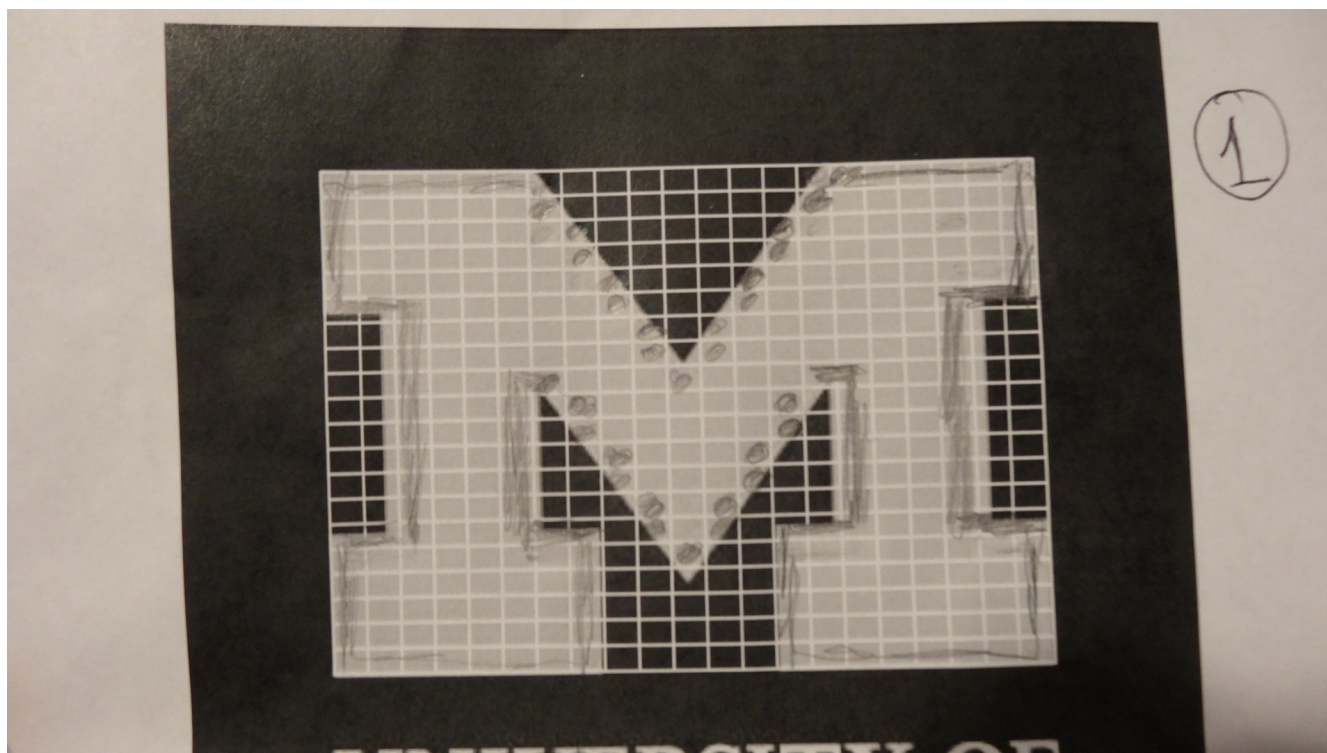
Get Your Design

I downloaded the logo from the university's website. I knew I wanted the logo to be basically the full width of the instep and as tall as necessary to keep the proportions. The space I used wound up being twenty-one stitches wide (with the instep being twenty-five stitches total) and therefore twenty rows tall. I got 21 st per 3.7 inches and 20 rows in 2.7 inches.

Create a Table

I made a table in my word processor with 21 columns (for the stitches) and 20 rows (for the rows). I made each column 0.18 inches wide (3.7 inches divided by 21 sts), and I made each row 0.13 inches tall (2.7 inches divided by 20 rows). I had to shrink the font pretty small so that the lone character in each cell (the paragraph symbol) would be short enough to not override my needed row height. I also made the cells' interior margins zero. The cell borders are one point wide and in white, so that they would be easy to see on the printout.

Then I put the logo behind the table and resized it so that the logo was the same size as the table. I printed it out and started looking at which table cells would need DS.



Positioning the Logo on the Instep

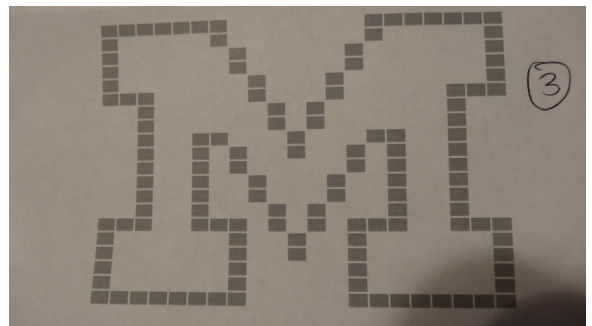
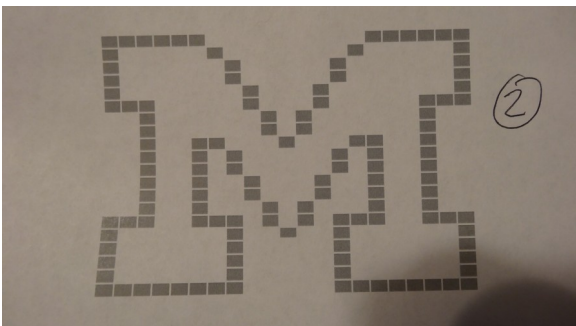
I spent quite a bit of time counting stitches and rows on both insteps to show exactly where the DS would go. That's what the rectangle of large coil-less pins is showing in the pictures of the DS in work. Yep, I'm a perfectionist, so I wanted them to match exactly.



Note to perfectionist self: Next time, make sure that the top corners aren't bumping into the toe increases. (Mommy's little helper supurrvises.)

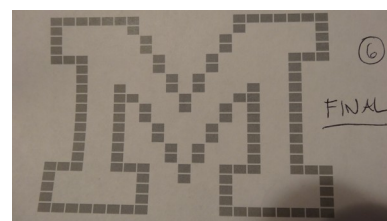
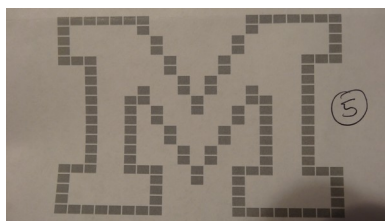
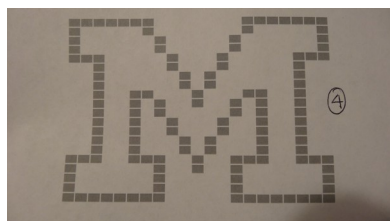
Determining Where DS Are Needed

I had thought that if a table cell was at least half full, it would be DS. You can see in test one that I scribbled some pencil lines and dots on the cells where I thought I would need DS. But just to double-check, I pulled the logo out from underneath the chart, then shaded in the cells to make the outline. With help from DH (who has a good eye for these kinds of things), tests 2 and 3 seemed to have the vertical lines of the M too thin compared to the height of the serifs at top and bottom. (If you measure the actual logo, the top and bottom serifs are the same height as the vertical lines are wide.)



Also, there are some subtle changes around the diagonal lines from test two to three: the bottom point of the M went from one stitch tall to two stitches tall, and a stitch got added where the diagonal lines meet the tops of the vertical lines. (So the topmost lines went from six sts wide to seven sts wide.) Those slight changes make the two diagonal lines look as straight as possible, since almost every stitch combo that makes the diagonal lines is two stitches tall.

In test four, we shrunk the top and bottom serifs by one row. That immediately put the serifs in balance with all four lines of the M. The only differences in tests four, five, and six are how the bottoms of the diagonal lines meet the insides of the vertical lines. It goes from two flat stitches in test four, to an inside stitch in test five, to an outside stitch in test six, which wound up the winner.



We decided on test six because when considered on its own, as opposed to being on top of the actual M logo, it had the best balance and simply most looked like the M. Let's face it, a more exact logo would have need a much finer gauge, but I prefer both the speed of completion and cushiness underfoot of three strands of Stroll held together.

Doing the DS

Once the chart was finalized, the DS itself went pretty quickly. I started with just one strand of yellow to see if it would cover the navy adequately (*note to self: no more DS on dark socks*). As I worked around the M, I thought the single strand looked fine. Since I kept a nice Goldilocks tension on the DS (not too tight, not too loose), the single strand worked. (If I thought it was too skimpy, I was prepared to go over the existing stitches with a second strand.)



the thread at lower right is the tail (on the outside so I can keep it out of my way while DSing)



close up of vertical DS; when I push the fabric flat (below), the little blips below the top stitch and just below the working yarn disappear (yay!)



blips are gone



finished the first length of yarn

Because I'm such a klutz, I needed something that would go inside the sock to stop me from DSing the instep to the sole (!). A quick idea flashed into my head: use my personal footprint from Cat's sock book of the same name. It worked like a charm. I just moved it side to side since my friend's foot is so much wider.

I was going to use Tulip fabric paint to write “Michigan” and “Football” on the bottom of the socks to help them be non-slip, but DH thought it would look too messy. So I need to go buy navy paint so it will blend better.

Final Thoughts

I’m glad I didn’t try to knit the logo in as I worked. Since this was the first pair of socks for this person, I didn’t want to add any complications to the knitting itself. If I ever want to do something like this on future socks for a person I’ve already knit socks for, then I could knit the design in, except that I would have to be careful about floats so they don’t get stuck on toes. Hmm. Maybe in general it would be better to do DS instead of stranding?

One thing DH noticed. When I explained how doing the logo after the fact meant that the little Vs were right-side up when worn (compared to how they’d look upside-down if it had been knitted in), he said that was good because Michigan’s fight song is called “The Victors,” so it wouldn’t have been good for all the knit stitches to be standing on their heads. :-)

The Response

After I finished the heel of the first sock and while the circs were still in the ankle, I had my friend try it on. When I had originally told him I’d like to knit him socks, he clearly didn’t think much of the offer. When he first stuck his toes in the almost-finished sock, he clearly didn’t think much of it. But as soon as he pulled a perfectly fitting heel in place, he looked up at me with an expression I will **never** forget. Clearly he had a revelation about what custom-fit hand-knit socks could be! He later said that he wanted an entire bodysuit! (TMI! Visuals!)

And if you’ve never worn custom socks, you don’t know what you’re missing either!