

Spinster



My Convoluted Project Notes (AKA not quite a pattern, sorry!!)

I used Lindenhof Farm's Three Fibre Blend yarn for this. The yarn is an Aran weight. For Spinster, I achieved a gauge of 4 sts/ 5 rows per inch in stockinette on size US10 needles. The chest measurement ended up around 32 inches, however it does not close at the front at all. I used almost 7 skeins, which totals 1155 yards used in total.

Using size US9 circular needles, I cast on 190 stitches. I then worked in 2x2 rib for 2 1/2inches and placed my stitch markers to mark the back from the side in the following way:

I worked in 2x2 rib for 55 stitches, placed the first marker to indicate where the first front ends and the back begins. Worked another 80 stitches for the back, placed second marker to indicate where the left side begins, and worked the last 55 stitches in 2x2 rib.

After having working in 2x2 rib for 2 ½ inches, I switched to my larger, size US10 circular needle and began working the body. The back is worked in stockinette, and the last 40 stitches of the fronts are knit in a reversible (ribbed) cable. I made this chart to help me keep track:

Row 1: RS facing: Work right side panel cable chart for the first 40 stitches (2x2 rib). Knit the next 15 stitches to first marker. Knit the next 80 stitches to second marker. Knit the next 15 stitches, then work the last 40 stitches in left-panel cable according to chart (2x2 rib).

Row 2: WS facing: Work left side panel cable chart for the first 40 stitches (2x2 rib). Purl the next 15 stitches to first marker. Purl the next 80 stitches to second marker. Purl the next 15 stitches, then work the last 40 stitches in right panel cable according to chart (2x2 rib).

I worked the lower body back and forth like this **for rows 3, 4, 5, and 6.**

Row 7: As per right-panel cable chart, I worked the first 20 stitches (2x2 rib), then crossed my cable. RC: Place 10 stitches on cable needle, and hold in back of work. Work following 10 stitches in 2x2 rib. Work stitches from cable needle in 2x2 rib. 40 stitches in total have been worked. Knit the next 15 stitches to first marker. Knit the next 80 stitches to second marker. Knit 15 stitches, then work the last 40 stitches **as per left-panel cable chart:** LC: Place 10 stitches on cable needle, and hold in front of work. Work following 10 stitches in 2x2 rib. Work stitches from cable needle in 2x2 rib. Work the last 20 stitches according to cable chart (2x2 rib).

I'm sure I wrote the above in the most convoluted way imaginable, I'm sorry!

I continued working the body for rows 8 to 18, continuing to work the 40-stitch cable panels in 2x2 rib, and the remainder (inner sides and back) in stockinette.

Row 19: As per right-panel cable chart: Cross cable. (LC: Place 10 stitches on cable needle, and hold in front of work. Work following 10 stitches in 2x2 rib. Work stitches from cable needle in 2x2 rib). Work the next 20 stitches according to cable chart (2x2 rib). 40 stitches in total have been worked. Knit the next 15 stitches to first marker. Knit the next 80 stitches to second marker. Knit 15 stitches, then work the last 40 stitches **as per left-panel cable chart:** RC: Work the first 20 stitches (2x2 rib). Place the next 10 stitches on cable needle, and hold in back of work. Work following 10 stitches in 2x2 rib. Work stitches from cable needle in 2x2 rib.

I continued working the back and fronts in this manner, crossing cables on rows 7 and 19 of the cable chart. I used an extra-long circular needle that allowed me to "try on" the sweater by wrapping it around my waist. I continued knitting until I held the knitted piece, when wrapped around my torso and under my armpits, hit mid-hip. I then separated the body to make the armholes:

I cut the yarn, slipped the first 55 stitches (up to the marker) onto a stitch holder and broke the yarn.

I reattached the yarn and started to work the back exclusively in the following manner:

I bound off next 6 stitches. Continued to work in stockinette until the next marker, and slipped the remaining 55 stitches onto another stitch holder.

I turned the work, and again bound off the first 6 stitches. Worked to end of row.

To shape the armholes, I decreased one stitch at each side **every other row**, at the edge of the work. I continued until I had decreased 5 times (10 stitches decreased). At this point I had 58 stitches on the needles. I then continued working the remaining back piece stitches until the armhole was deep enough for my liking. It measured 7".

I then bound off 4 stitches at the beginning of the next 2 rows, two times (total of 16 stitches bound off). I put the remaining neck stitches on a stitch holder to be worked later.

Then I shaped the **armholes of the two front pieces** to mirror the shaping of the armholes for the back piece as much as I could: I slipped the 55 stitches off from one of the stitch holders and placed them back onto my needles. At the edge where it meets the back, I bound off 5 stitches and worked to the end of the row, continuing in cable pattern from chart when I got to the cabled portion of the chart. I turned my work, and worked one row. Then to shape the armhole, I decreased one stitch every other row three times (3 stitches decreased over 6 rows). I now had 48 stitches on my needles. I worked the piece (still respecting the cable chart) until the armhole mirrored the one on the back (again, for me, this was an armhole depth of 7"). Once this length was reached began to shape the shoulder. I did this in the following way:

I bound off 4 stitches at the shoulder edge every second row, twice (8 stitches decreased). I placed the remaining 40 stitches on a stitch holder.

I slid the stitches from the other unworked front piece off of the stitch holder and onto my needles, and repeated the same armhole and shoulder shaping. Once the shoulder edge had been shaped and the last 40 stitches placed on the cable holder, I seamed the front pieces to the back at the shoulders.

I used this terrific Youtube video for instruction: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkThlgDTdOE>

Once I had seamed both shoulders together, I picked up the remaining stitches from their respective stitch holders to create the collar. I continued to work the cable chart with the stitches that came from the front pieces, I decided that for stitches that were originally from the back piece, I would just improvise a 2x2 rib cable that blended in with the existing cables of the front pieces. I worked this until my cabled collar measured 8 inches and bound off.

I then picked up 56 stitches around each armhole to begin working the top-down sleeves in the round (I used short 8" circular needles as I can't stand DPNs!). For the sleeve cap, I worked short rows as directed by this incredible video. <http://www.youtube.com/user/paulajward#p/u/5/hPKzkuD4oLU>

I'm so happy that following Paula Ward's instructions resulted in the sleeve cap molding to my shoulder perfectly!

Once the sleeve cap was finished, I just continued knitting down without any additional shaping (probably a mistake, but oh well) until the sleeve hit mid-forearm. I then improvised a reversible cable pattern that I would not recommend and can't make any sense of even now. In hindsight I should have done a cute cabled ribbing or something of the sort... I bound off once the sleeve hit my wrist bone, anticipating that it would grow in blocking. I made a second sleeve, with an even more confusing cabled cuff that in no way matches the first! But once I'd bound off, gave it a good wet blocking, and made sure to **stretch and pin the cabled bits to better define them** (they are, after all, made of 2x2 ribbing), I was mighty pleased with myself.

I have to stress that I'm putting out a huge "attempt at your own risk" disclaimer on here... Much of this was made up as I went along, my memory is shoddy, and I would really hate to frustrate and disappoint a new knitter :(

Things I'd do differently were I to knit this again:

- I tried to play with waist shaping, but my alpaca blend yarn drapes so much that no shaping was visible in the end. It's the same as if I'd just knit the body straight, which is what I'd recommend.
- I would make the collar wider. Much wider. In my head, extending the front side cable panels and linking them to the back of neck stitches would a collar make. But even after stretching the cabled collar as wide as I could during blocking, it's still too narrow for my liking.
- I would have narrowed the sleeve gradually from upper arm to wrist.
- The cables at the sleeve cuffs are just ridiculous. I was making them up as I went along and this was a mistake. Next time I'll plan something in advance and write it down!

