

# SWATCH PAGE

By Susan Obrestad

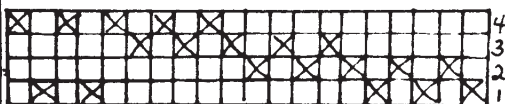
In early September some of us think fall when the weather still insists summer. Remember starting school in new clothes that were too warm for comfort? I may be rushing the season with an article about a thick and woolly "cut weft pile technique." Please think ahead, if necessary, to when a shuttle full of wool wefts will be pleasant to handle.

Double corduroy is a relatively fast way to create pile--thick, luscious, warm, sound-absorbing and colorful. It looks like rya but is much faster to weave since the pile is created by throwing weft from selvedge to selvedge and there are no knots to tie. Peter Collingwood says, "It is important to consider this as a technique in its own right, not as a ... "mock" rya....It has its own restricted but interesting design possibilities." For example, you can achieve vertical stripes while throwing weft horizontally.

The complete resource on double corduroy pile is Peter Collingwood's The Techniques of Rug Weaving. (For anyone interested in rug techniques, this book is the B-I-B-L-E.) Hilary Chetwynd (July guest artist and lecturer) joked about being known as "Miss Leno" and Peter Collingwood as "Mr. Corduroy." He credits someone else with the original idea, but he has explored its possibilities in depth.

If you haven't ever woven double corduroy, you can start the adventure by reading chapter 10. If you are a whiz at grasping method off the printed page, I salute you. If you haven't quite got it, but are tantalized enough to continue, set up a sample warp in a multiple of 20 with 4-6 epi, using cotton or linen rug warp. (See fig. 1)

Fig. 1



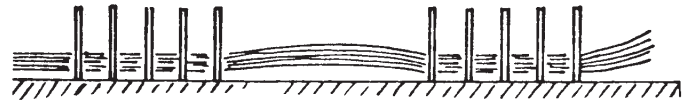
Threading



Tie-up

The warp will be raised in groups of 5, with gaps between warp groups. (See fig. 2) Where the weft crosses these gaps, you will use your fingers to pull up a loop of weft in the space between raised warp groups. Every few inches the loops will be cut, thus the term "cut weft pile."

Fig. 2



On page 400 in chapter 10, Collingwood gives you a diagram of what takes place in each of 4 pile weft shots. There is also a tabby weft between every 2 pile wefts which forms the background and holds the piece together. On page 401, Collingwood takes you by the hand and leads you through the entire sequence, i.e., raise shaft 1 (the British call harnesses "shahfts") and throw pile weft from right to left.

This may be slow going: read a line, throw a shuttle, find your place in the book, stop to think which side left is on, etc. But after a few sequences, you'll probably have it. If not, let Collingwood hold your hand a little longer. He gives instructions for cutting the pile too, but the wire loop isn't necessary at first. Scissors alone will do fine.

When you've got hold of the method, try out color sequences (p. 408). In addition to the color changes which take place by changing pile wefts A and B, the pile weft consists of multiple strands of wool wound together on the shuttle, so the possibilities for combining colors, textures, types and weights of yarns are rich and varied.

Double corduroy is a great way to use some harsh wools (mill ends) you wouldn't care to wear. Cost is a factor since this technique gobbles up huge amounts of weft. A 4' x 5' piece I wove weighs 11 lbs. There may be some yarn preparation involved. If you use yarns that have been wound on cones, they need to be wound into skeins and washed to restore fluff and resiliency. This is time consuming but well worthwhile for beautiful results. When the piece comes off the loom, it's ready for use with only

(continued on p. 18)