Our lesson this month is for the 970 machine owners. I wrote an article for News and Views a year or so ago about this and the following is pretty much the same as the article but I've changed some of the wording.

PROGRAMMING LACE ON THE BROTHER 970 (KNITKING'S COMPUKNIT 5 STAR) MACHINE

Programming your own lace pattern on the 970 machine is easy but can be frustrating. You might get all finished and go to the Lace Carriage Icon only to be told by the machine that this pattern isn't a lace pattern. Boy, can that be frustrating. Still, once you have the pattern programmed in, the machine's lace function is great! here's why:

You might be knitting along, first you operate the L Carriage and then you go back and forth with the K Carriage and pretty soon you get in a rhythm but suddenly, your machine may again tell you "You are operating the wrong carriage, use the L carriage." or "You are operating the wrong carriage, use the K carriage." If this happens, take the improper carriage off the machine, replace it in it's proper position on the extension rails (right or left side depending on the carriage you are using) and push the STEP Key. You will be returned to the proper place in your pattern.This machine not only tells you that you are using the wrong carriage, if you accidentally run a wrong carriage, it freezes the pattern so that your pattern row will not advance.

This is a wonderful feature, all the other electronic machines will continue to advance the pattern rows and you may never know you've made a mistake

Let's try this:

Program in pattern # 160 and select the Lace carriage.Start with the Lace carriage and make a couple passes. See the number to the right of the clover? It's telling you how many passes you've made with the L Carriage. When you have made 4 passes, a number 2 comes up to the right of the clover. This number is telling you that you now need to knit 2 rows with the K Carriage but.....instead, go ahead and run the L carriage back to the right. See your error message? "You are operating the wrong carriage, use the K carriage." Push the STEP key your screen will go back to the proper row, push STEP again and your machine will wait while you unravel (just in case you need to unravel a row). In this case, we don't need to unravel a row, we need to knit 2 rows so push STEP again and knit. except.... This time, rather than make 2 passes with the K carriage, make 3. See? Another error message "You are operating the wrong carriage, use the L carriage." This time, push Step 2 times again. If you were actually knitting, now would be the time you could freeze the screen, unravel that wrong row and push STEP, start back with your lace carriage.

Isn't that a super function of this smart machine? I mean, you can do this with the other Brother electronic machines but they just don't come up and tell you when you've made a mistake.

So, how do you program lace? Let's practice with a built-in pattern, we'll pretend it's a pattern we found in a magazine. Go to page 77 in your 970 Stitch World book. We will use Pattern # 165.

PROGRAMMING A LACE PATTERN

At the Main Menu Select DESIGNING PROGRAM. (Icon shows a clover a garment and a pencil).
Select PATTERN CREATION: (Icon shows a clover and a pencil)
Select 2--for 2 color patterning using the black/white rule on page 33 of your manual. The rule is, use the #` key for white (the needles that stay in B position) and the #2 key for black (the needles that come out to D position)
1.Tell the machine how many sts and rows you wish to create. Our pattern has 8 stitches and 20 rows.
2.Input your second color at the proper location in the grid. Remember, with this machine, you can go backward, sideways, up or down as you create so if you make a mistake, it's very easy to see the mistake and correct it.
3.When you are finished pushing in your pattern, push STEP. Arrow to END CREATION "OK" and push STEP.

If this were a Fairisle pattern, you would be finished but if you take this particular pattern to CARRIAGE SELECT, you will get an error message if you pick the Lace Carriage. Why? Because we have to tell the machine this is a lace pattern. Here's how:

1.At the Main Menu, go to the MEMO Icon (the third group of Icons showing a picture of a book). Push STEP
2.Select MEMO INFORMATION INPUT
Select your lace pattern number
Begin inputting your memo information keeping the following points in mind:
You can tell the machine if you want to knit Fine Lace or Normal Lace but this is not necessary. if you wish, you can enter F for fine lace or N for normal lace on the odd rows only. You MUST enter the number of rows the K carriage has to knit and they must be on an EVEN row number. You cannot enter more than the number 8 for the K carriage to knit (obviously, you need to put them on even rows and there is no number 10)
When finished, push STEP to exit Memo Information Input.
Push STEP again
Arrow to END MEMO INPUT "OK" and push STEP.
Now you should be finished inputting your lace pattern. Go to READY TO KNIT and see if you can select the lace carriage and knit.

Do you get the error message "This is not a lace pattern?" If so, you have put the memo information in wrong. Try again. If necessary, go to the machine and try running your carriages as if knitting pattern # 165 and analyze what happens when the lace carriage goes across. As you do this, turn to the back of the Stitch World book and watch the rows as your needles select. How many passes does it make before the memo tells you to knit? How many rows does the memo tell you to knit? Do you understand why? If not, study the pattern until you do understand it.

The most common mistake that people make when inputting a lace pattern on the 970 is to assume that the machine wants you to input the N or F for Fine or Normal lace. This is not

necessary (unless you want it) What the manual is telling you is that you have to input the memo information telling the K carriage when to knit. It clearly states on page 44, "Always enter the number of rows for stocking stitch." That the only rule.

Now that you understand a little about how to input a lace pattern, get out a magazine that has a lace pattern in it and try inputting.

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