

January Weaving Sample

Loom Controlled Brocade Hand Towel

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It all came together.

For the longest time there has been a natural white cotton boucle yarn on my studio shelf. I knew it will be a towel one day. Then I acquired couple of old Prairie Wool Companions and there in the premier issue of November 1981 was my towel. The blurb announced 'a handwoven bath set of elegance and simplicity' and went on to say: 'the weave structure is a double-faced brocade using a loom controlled system.' At this point I wasn't sure about 'simplicity' any more, and when the yarns were listed to be British imports I knew I will have to do a lot of redesigning.

First I transferred the draw down into PCW. As far as I know, the software does not allow for a brocade weft. The very long floats shown on the borders of the draw down are nonexistent. They actually turn on the ends threaded on shafts 5 and 6. These are the inner selvages. The plain weave borders are threaded on shafts 7 and 8 and the ends are doubled. That makes the borders, where they are crossed with a single weft, warp faced. This warp faced structure takes up the space left by the boucle weft turning on the inner selvages.

The 3/1, 1/3 twill structure of the boucle weft causes the two shots to slide together and make the mirror of the towel double faced as well.

For all the plain weave structures, I used 22/2 (60/40%) natural cottolin in warp and weft and for the textured twill weft an approximately 10/2 natural cotton boucle. The warp was sett at 24 epi.

I made the borders about an inch wide, 24 doubled ends (48 ends per side, 2 ends per heddle, 4 ends per dent) and used 98 re-

peats of the 4 end twill (392 ends, 1 end per heddle, 2 ends per dent). If a double beam is available, I would recommend using it for this project, beaming the two borders on the second beam. However, if a second beam is not available the two borders need to be separately weighted preferably with living weights to allow for a different take up. The borders need to be at a slightly higher tension than the mirror.

For the seam allowance I wove 22 shots plain weave *starting at the left*, followed by 16 shots of plain weave with doubled weft (go back and forth in the same shed going over or under the right most doubled end).

(continued on page 4)

