



the  
Quilter  
Community.com

## Seminole Sampler

By Barbara Siedlecki

### A Strip of the Month Project

**Seminole patchwork** is the only patchwork created for the sewing machine. In the 1880's the hand-cranked sewing machine was introduced to the Seminole Indians of Florida and a new style of quilting was born. Today many of our so-called "new" shortcuts are based on this technique. If you have strip pieced any of your patterns such as the nine-patch or bargello, you have used a variation of Seminole patchwork.

**This sampler uses 3 colors.** It can be made with hand dyed gradations or variations in hue or a light, medium and dark variation of a single color. You could also use bright colors such as red, white and blue, or primary colors. It's your sampler and your choice.



### Some Basic Instructions:

**Cutting Tips:** Because these designs are all sewn from strips of fabric, it is very important that your strips be cut absolutely straight with no curve in the center.

**To do this** you will need to straighten your fabric. Fold your fabric with the selvages together and the raw edges fairly even. Hold it by the selvedge edges so that it is suspended in space. If you see a bulge or ripple along the fold, the threads are not straight. With your fingers, slide one of the selvages from side to side until the ripple or bubble along the fold is gone. The raw side edges will probably no longer be even. Lay the fabric on your cutting board, selvages away from you, and bring the folded edge up to the selvages, laying the fold even with the selvages and sliding the fold from side to side until the fabric is straight and flat.

**Lay your ruler** on the right edge of the fabric (the left edges if you are left-handed), with a ruler line along the bottom fold of the fabric. Cut the raw edge straight. Turn the straightened edges to the left side of the fabric (the right edges if you are left-handed) and begin to cut your strips. Every several strips it is a good idea to line the ruler with the bottom fold of the fabric to be sure that it remains straight. Now you will be able to cut strips with no bulge in the center. Sometimes it is easier to turn the mat rather than the fabric.

**Thread:** Since you will be working with several fabric colors the color of thread can be a consideration. Try a neutral such as light gray, beige, off white and so on. With one of the

neutrals, the stitches will not show and it will blend with most fabrics. A slightly darker thread, if it shows at all, will look like a shadow in the seam.

**Stitching:** You will want to use a shorter than normal stitch since you will be cutting and resewing the pieces. If you use a stitch that is too long, the stitches will start to pull out before you have crossed them with another line of stitching.

**Pressing:** As much as possible, press from the right sides of the fabric. This will help to eliminate any puckers along the seam lines. Most of the strips are easy to press and you will usually press all the seams in one direction. Sometimes the seams just want to go their own merry way. Let them. This is especially true on the slanted strips. If you are having a hard time pressing in one direction, just press the strip flat and let the seams fall where they may. Use a dry iron. You are pressing a lot of bias edges and you do not want to stretch them. For the final pressing of each strip with its bridging strips on them, you may want to use steam but be careful not to stretch the edges. Just follow the easy instructions in each lesson to learn how to complete your Seminole Sampler in twelve easy steps.

Now that you have the basics, let's get on with the interesting stuff - what you need and how to get ready.

#### **Supplies needed:**

**You will want to purchase** all your fabric at one time so that if your fabric is discontinued or out of stock, you will have the fabric in hand. If you want to do some experimenting with color and value, you will need to purchase extra fabric. I always suggest adding extra fabric so that you can change the placement of the colors if you do not like them the way they look.

**You may want to prewash** your fabrics. This is a personal choice but if you wash one, wash them all, otherwise they may shrink at different rates when washed or one may bleed.

#### **Fabrics:**

Light 2 Yards

Medium 1-1/2 Yards

Dark 1-1/2 Yards

Backing 1-1/4 Yards

Batting 1-1/4 Yards

#### **You will also need the following:**

A Rotary cutter, mat and ruler. (I use Quilting Creations Ruler 812)

A Sewing machine with a new needle. You only need a straight stitch machine.

Optional: 1/4" foot for your machine

Thread snips

Thread to coordinate with your fabric.

Pins, Safety for quilting and straight for lining up seams.

©1999-2003 Barbara M. Siedlecki

Presented by

Cabin Fever Crafts

272 Shelter Valley Dr., Kalispell, MT