PADDED PINCUSHION

A pincushion that is padded offers more stability than one that is not padded. This project uses designs dbj0610c and dbj0610d from the June 2010 Platinum Embroidery Collection.

You will also need four pieces of fabric large enough to be hooped and two pieces of cotton batting about 5 inches square; threads in colors of your choice; about 5/8 yard of rattail cording or other small sturdy trim (optional); scraps of cotton batting or polyester fiberfill and stabilizer. For this project I highly recommend AquaTear by OESD because it tears away so cleanly and easily. Other tear-away stabilizers or wash-away stabilizer are acceptable as well. I do not recommend any sticky-type stabilizer for this project.

NOTE: I chose pale green for the leaves and medium pink for the rose. Stippling in each design is a lighter shade of pink. Feel free to change colors to suit your décor and tastes.

Cut the fabric and batting to size, spray with spray starch and press dry. Transfer design dbj0610c to your machine.

Hoop one piece of fabric with wash-away stabilizer and stitch the first two colors of the design. After these two colors finish stitching, remove the hoop from the machine. Turn the hoop over and trim away (GENTLY) as much stabilizer as possible INSIDE the hoop area. (Here's where you'll find out why I like the AquaTear!) I have left a small area of stabilizer along the lower right corner, shown here, so you can see most of it was removed.)

While the hoop is upside down, center one piece of batting over the stitched area, then cover that with a piece of your chosen fabric. Hold the layers in place and turn the hoop right side up. Place on a firm surface.

Insert straight pins near each corner to keep the layers together. Alternately you may tape the batting and fabric to the hoop on the back or use temporary spray adhesive to keep the "sandwich" together.

Return the hoop to the machine and use your third thread color to stitch the stippling portion of the design. When the stitching is complete, remove the "sandwich" from the machine and set it aside. Picture shows the back of the design when stippling is complete.

Transfer design dbj0610d to your machine. Place your third piece of fabric on a flat surface and center the remaining piece of batting over the fabric. Top with the final piece of fabric. You may pin these layers together or just lift them all together and hoop. You will not need to use stabilizer for this design. Attach the hoop and stitch the design, a square of all-over stippling. When the stitching has finished, remove the hoop from the machine and the design from the hoop.

Press design areas if needed -- place design right-side down on a lofty towel (over an ironing board) and press.

Work on a hard surface; use a ruler and washout marker to mark a line about half an inch from each side of each design. Cut along each marked line. You should have two padded squares.

Place the rattail cord just to the outside of the stitched area on the rose design. Use a foot that rides over the cord, such as foot # 30 or #59C for Bernina machines. Position the cord so that several stitches fall to one side of it, and one stitch swings over and back to hold the cord in place. Start at one corner and stitch around the "box," pivoting at each corner. When you return to the first corner, form a loop as shown in the picture. Allow the tails to extend, and use tape to hold the loop part down, to the INSIDE. If you do not want a loop, allow one end of cord to cross over the other right at the corner and the ends to extend to the outside as shown.

After the cording is stitched in place, meet the second piece to the first, right sides together. Use a zipper foot and a triple-zigzag stitch to sew three sides and about a half inch on either end of the fourth side. This will leave an opening centered on the fourth side. Back stitch at either end of the seam.

Trim the corners off, being careful not to cut into the stitching. Carefully turn the "cushion" right side out. Use a blunt tool to work the corners out.

Stuff the cushion firmly with scraps of cotton batting or polyester fiberfill. Use a needle and thread to hand sew the opening closed. Remove the tape from the loop of cording.

Your new pincushion is finished and ready for use. Enjoy!