

I Hate Hats....Webinar

Your Questions with Answers from Bill Garvin

Bad Sew Out:

1. How much is too much "flagging" or bouncing of the area that is being sewn when sewing caps?
 - a. The main issue is the style of cap as well as the digitizing, what will happen is the needle breaking with too much flagging, Resolution is mostly in design, but also hoop as tight and constantly as possible.
2. My hats buckle with large ripples. Not sure if that's a hopping or stabilizer issue or both.
 - a. The buckling of the cap is mostly in the design, this is why the center out and bottom up is so important to lay the cap out flatter.
3. I had done 7-8 hats with one design no problem, then tried to do it again and lettering bunching up on the side. Can't see where I can add a photo to show an example.
 - a. My best guess would be the cap driver that attaches to the machine, if a screw or thumb screw has come loose, the best way to check the cap driver movement is with the power off and move by hand to feel for any binds or rubbing.

Bad Look - Rub Damage:

1. What's the best way to prevent the hat bill from getting rub damage?
 - a. Most machines have what is called a bill guard, that the cap bill slides on, make sure the one on your machine is not damaged, or screws loose, that would be rubbing the cap bill.

Side Of Hat:

1. I often have an issue with sewing a straight line, like a flag or text, on the side of the caps. I was wondering if you have any tips for keeping the sides straight.
 - a. There is no easy solution for this as all cap styles and brands are made differently. What I see many clients do is rotate the design slightly, before saving and loading in the machine to counter the effect, normally around 10 to 15 degrees.
2. About how many inches to the side on average is the side shot?
 - a. There is no exact number, hats are made different from one style to the next, if a paneled hat, the panels on most hats average 3.5 ", so most will center inside the panel, on the side, if you are speaking of all the way left and right to do both side panels, that number normally falls around 12.5"
3. I have a client that wants a small puffy stitched letter on the mesh on the side of a hat. I haven't tried it yet...because I'm scared. Haha. Will this even be successful?
 - a. I have seen embroidery on mesh as well as puff, If the mesh is white or light grey, white cap backing works fine, if any other color I would use black and two layers to handle the puff, as for Straight, it may be necessary to rotate the design around 10 degrees, for the slope of the side.
4. Regarding sewing the front and side of the cap in one hooping, do you adjust the angle of the side logo so it looks straight after sewing?

- a. Would be best to give the side logo a little angle before saving and loading on the machine. to counter the slope on the side of a cap, normally 10 to 15 degrees is enough, for it to look better.
5. Is there a hint on how I can get the logo straight on the side of a hat?
 - a. Would be best to give the side logo a little angle before saving and loading on the machine. to counter the slope on the side of a cap, normally 10 to 15 degrees is enough, for it to look better.

Backing:

1. So we shouldn't put the backing in the hat itself? Love the webinar I am learning sew much!!
 - a. Backing always goes on the hooping device, after the frame is attached and before the hat is placed, there are a few videos on Gunolds website for hooping hats.
2. What type of backing do you use on hats with a thick buckram such as the Flexfit brand?
 - a. My backing of choice is the heaving backing, 3 to 3.5 oz. I use one piece, unless unstructured, then I use two pieces.

Richardson Hats (Basics, Hooping, Needle):

1. Richardson Hats are a beast! How can I make them easier?
 - a. There is no easier way on Richardson hats, Hoop as tight as possible, Make sure digitizing is 10 x 10, Some hats (thick) you may need to go to 80/12 sharp needles. I have had clients use the cap heat presses to help soften the hat, as well.
2. Richardson 112's....suggestions please.
 - a. There is no easier way on Richardson hats, Hoop as tight as possible, Make sure digitizing is 10 x 10, Some hats (thick) you may need to go to 80/12 sharp needles. I have had clients use the cap heat presses to help soften the hat, as well.
3. I am trying to hoop a Richardson 112, mesh back. Embroidery on the side. I've tried a few different ways.
 - a. Make Sure the cap backing covers all the mesh you are hooping, in the sew area, If white or Light Grey Mess, use white cap backing, heavier the better, 3 to 3.5 oz. If other colors, I find black Tear away backing works better, less noticeable.
4. Which needles are better for Richardson 112 caps?
 - a. I usually only use 75/11 ball points, on almost everything I sew, However if you are having issues with a Richardson, You may want to try 80/12 sharps, just dont use them on shirts. 90% of how it will run is the digitizing, not the needle.

Boonie, Full Brim, Bucket Hats:

1. Boonie Hats best way to embroider?
2. Any tricks for a full brimmed hat?
3. Bucket Hats?
 - a. Boonie or bucket hats can be done in the 270 frames that came with your machine, If you have the old style frames (semi wide) or Hoop tech Frames, they do work much better, Most may be unstructured so use two layers of cap backing.

Machine Settings:

1. How do you change your satin setting on a Tajima SWF machine?
 - a. To change the satin Adjust on a Tajima, This is normally under the F settings, the function is called SATIN, this does X and Y
 - b. On an SWF, this is under setting, and is called X Satin and Y satin, you must increase both.
2. Is it recommended to change the pull comp in the software or on the machine?
 - a. The satin adjust can be changed on either, however if you only want to affect one part of the design then do the pull comp (Satin Adjust) on the software, as the function on the machine, will affect all satin stitches in the logo.
3. How do you move the start point on a cap design?
 - a. To move the start point of the design, this needs to be done in the software, SO will depend on the software you use, On wilcom it is under design and called start and end point, be careful this will normally default to all designs after that, so when done change it back to start center and return center.
4. My driver does not seem to be centered over the arm that comes out from my machine. I don't understand the adjustments that need to be made on it.
 - a. This adjustment is normally at the bottom center of the cap driver, the nut can be loosened, so the drum can turn and not the cable, then tight nut back on the cable when in proper position. This also depends on the machine you have.

Stitching / Sewing:

1. Any tips on sewing patches on hats?
 - a. The best way to sew the patch on a hat is to create the stitch file as an Applique, One outline slightly smaller than patch, so you can stop and place the patch, then next outline to sew it down, I also like adding a little underlay to the center, before the first outline to tack the hat down flat.

Needle:

1. Hi there, is there a fix for needles often coming unthreaded?
 - a. If a needle is coming unthreaded after the trim and before starting to sew, then the issue is the trim length after the trim is too short. So as it starts, the tail is not long enough to make contact with the bobbin. So the take up lever pulls it out of the needle. These are not thread breaks, they are pull outs.
 - b. Check the setting on your machine for trim, If you change the setting and nothing changes, then look at the picker and trimmers.
2. When do you suggest an 80 needle?
 - a. I only suggest 80/12 needles (sharps) for hats when all else has failed. Most issues with sewing are in the design, not the needle. I sew almost every hat with 75/11 needles. But if the design is too dense and the hat is too thick, then larger needles may be a good option. Do not use these on your polo's :-)

Hooping:

1. Hi Bill, To what point am I clipping the back of my hats too much and causing registration issues for taller designs? My intent is to avoid unstructured caps from pinching fabric. Enjoying this from NJ with Tajima Machine!

- a. The only hats I do not like using the clips on is any type of flex hat. Structured adjustable hats are normally never an issue, must be clipped on the round drum when hooping, it matches the circumference of the driver. On unstructured hats, be careful as you may pull one side harder than the other and be off center.
2. How do you adjust the frame for a smaller different shaped hat?
 - a. This depends on the machine you have, but all cap frames have an adjustment for thickness of hats, it is either on the strap or on the latch for the bucket, these may be 5.5 or 7 mm nuts or Phillip head screws. Good videos on Gunolds website.
3. Is the teeth bar beyond the seam and not in the seam?
 - a. This depends on the machine you have, but all cap frames have an adjustment for thickness of hats, it is either on the strap or on the latch for the bucket, these may be 5.5 or 7 mm nuts or Phillip head screws. Good videos on Gunolds website.
4. What are your tips for straight hooping for side hat embroidery?
 - a. There is no easy solution for this as all cap styles and brands are made different. What I see many clients do is rotate the design slightly, before saving and loading in the machine to counter the effect, normally around 10 to 15 degrees.
5. What type of hooping accessory or stand are used to hoop cap backs.
 - a. Corner of table and 12Cm round hoop, You can also use your hoopmaster, or durkee hooping boards.
6. What is the best way to keep the hat from rotating when you tighten the hat clamp?
 - a. The natural pull of the strap will be to the left, this is why the zigs have center marks. Most people will leave slightly left so as they pull it to center, I'm lucky as I have big hands and can hold the bill in place as I lock the buckle. Another trick is once on the machine, you can loosen the buckle... **DO Not** unlock and make slight adjustments on the machine, and then lock back.
7. Opinion on the Hooptech Gen 2 cap Frames?
 - a. Hoop tech Gen 2 are worth their weight in gold if you sew lots of hats, think of as an investment on equipment over the next 20 years, not a few jobs, the main thing they do is allow you to sew large logos, in height, as there is no straps on the seam.
8. Bill, do you have opinions on GenTech vs what comes with the Brother?
 - a. Hoop tech Gen 2 are worth their weight in gold if you sew lots of hats, think of as an investment on equipment over the next 20 years, not a few jobs, the main thing they do is allow you to sew large logos, in height, as there is no straps on the seam.
9. Is the cap frame for a Brother 1050 10 needle worth purchasing? Or, should I use a flat frame?
 - a. This depends on if you want to do a lot of hats (production) or a few (hobby) Production, you want the cap driver, as well as the Hoop tech Frames, as they have an override bracket, that makes your Brother thing]k the A frame is on the machine.
 - b. If Hobby, Then the Durkee flat cap frame, much cheaper, and just runs in the A frame.
10. Does the backing of the hat have to be as tight to the hat as it would it with something flat?
 - a. The backing is important, Just make sure it is tight in frame and covers where the logo will sew, but if not perfectly straight, no big deal.
11. Does the frame only work til some machines? I have a janome skyline s9
 - a. If this is a single needle machine, You may want to reach out to Durkee Hoops (www.dehoops.com) to see if they over a cap frame option in flat.

Speed:

1. Can the speed be too slow?
2. Is 400 too slow for hats?
3. How slow should the machine be set to get better results on caps?
4. I had a tech tell me to speed up my machine on hats to offset the deflection. I think that is what he said. Can you explain this?
 - a. As far as speed, there is no right or wrong answer, too many factors will determine, outcome, I find most clients run hats between 600 to 750 RPM. Thinner the hat, easier the logo, the faster you can run, if hooped properly, and vice versa. You will get less deflection at speed, this is why I tell people you do not want the first 5-10 stitches start in the seam directly, as the machine starts in a slower speed (inching) to connect with Bobbin thread and start sewing, so best to start just off the stitch line and once it is at speed then over the seam. Rule of thumb is if you have to sew slower than 500, Something is wrong.

Visors:

1. What is the best way to hoop visors?
2. How do you determine visor limits?
3. Can you embroidery visors on a cap frame?
4. How do you embroider a cap with a very stiff buckram?
 - a. Hooping and sewing any visor is the same as a hat, cap backing, two pieces if unstructured, one if structured, Hoop tight and keep teeth in seam from one side to the other, the crown determines height of logo. normally 1/2 inch from top and bottom, So if the crown is 2.5" tall, Minus 1" your design height will be around 1.5".

Digitizing:

1. Would you do any type of a Tack or Global Underlay to secure the Nike type caps?
 - a. Great question, Yes if at all possible with the logo, add the tack down underlay, over as much as you can, I would also double up the cap backing, These hats or not fun, and I find less is more, don't let your clients put 15,000 stitch Logos on these hats.
2. What's the smallest lettering you put on hats and do you use a certain font?
 - a. As you figured out already, Bolder and larger fonts, sew and look better. For best results, try and keep your clients at or above 1/4" tall letters, you can do smaller ones, but the font style becomes an issue. For example, a straight Arial Block will sew and look much better than a sheriff font like new times roman.

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