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Sweater Studies

by Margaret Schaeffer

"LET COOL weather come," says Vicky about the fast approaching fall and winter season. Sweaters are my standby and I'm all for them." She thinks that you will be too, when you see that sweaters are as much in the fashion limelight this year as ever, only more so because of the wonderful new fiber innovations which are constantly being introduced.

Vicky feels that cashmeres are the biggest sweater attraction. This year, since the fibers are chiefly imported, cashmeres are becoming scarcer, but they are still available and there are several brands of domestic sweaters which are somewhat less expensive than the imports. The predominance of colors in cashmeres seems to be a toss-up between the basic gray, natural and darker green shades, but the newer colors are primarily apricot and lime.

Vicky also ran into a few limited novelty cashmeres for those few who can afford such luxuries. For evening wear, tiny crystal and pearl beads weave themselves in and out for neckline relief. Sweaters of this type, Vicky learned at a fashion show at one large department store, are draped over one style with a collar cahmieres which are somewhat less expensive than the imports.

For the wardrobe of the college girl, who would rather have a larger number of sweaters at a more reasonable price, there is good news. Vicky believes that the new fiber called Kharafleece will be an overwhelming success. It is a combination of 60 percent wool and 40 percent vicara. It is a new synthetic fiber-like nylon, but even more wondrous. It's nub-proof, a boon for doing away with that "all over soft look" which so many light sweaters get after even one wearing. It's moth-proof and it is also definitely shrink and stretch-proof.

Other new fibers are "featherfleece" (Australian zephyr wool) and Nylofleece, that very popular combination of wool and nylon which is big news this fall. These sweaters have all the advantages of nylon, such as no shrinkage, quick-drying properties and lush colors, yet they look and feel just like 100 percent wool. Ever popular and practical is the wide selection of all-nylon sweaters in convenient price ranges. Orlon, the new fiber being used in coats and suits, and which is stronger, more durable and more practical than any fiber yet produced, is being used in experimentation with knitted sweaters. However, as yet only a limited selection is available.

One of the novelty yarns introduced this season will be a tweed, 100 percent nylon. This is also a new yarn being shown for the first time this year, and it is being shown in slippers, cardigans and in sleeveless cardigans.

For strict novelty, Vicky thinks that the little sleeveless cardigans like three-buttoned weskits are big news, and also an added warmth for those zero days. You'll be wearing them over sweaters of contrasting colors with little rolled turtle necks and slightly pushed up sleeves. The comfortable and smart-looking "bat wing sleeve" sweaters are what you'll see in the way of novelty-sleeved sweaters.

Suds Your Sweater

"It's really a RED year," says Vicky, exclaiming over the gloriously warm shades that will be keeping you bright all winter. The colors vary from apricot and pinkish tangerine to scarlet and deep cherry. Other popular shades will be royal, rust, navy and dark green, all of which are ever so practical. Speaking of colors reminds Vicky of the wonderful skirts and weskits she saw which will be prized at school. The plaided, tweed and bold checks so much in demand this season come in colors which harmonize or contrast well with this fall's sweaters. In addition to this, one company is showing a series of gabardine skirts "dyed-to-match" a series of quite inexpensive sweaters.

Vicky has one bit of advice about caring for your sweaters, too, which ought to be a help to the flattening billfold. DON'T dryclean those sweaters, she advises. The cashmeres especially should always be washed by hand. Just-warm water, some very mild flakes and a little careful shaping after pressing excess water out in a towel should do the deed. And when they're dry, just give them a little steaming instead of a pressing. In between sudings, a "brush-off" for sweaters after each wearing will keep them bright and prevents that "nubby" look.

Vicky thinks that after taking careful inventory of your winter skirts and suits and noting mix and match color schemes, you'll "do yourself proud" by choosing sweaters.

October, 1950