

Spinning, Woolen Style

I probably have mentioned that I've only been spinning on a spindle about 8 months or so, having learned last summer at a class at Llama Llama Knit. All that I've done has been based on that class, and what I've read in *Respect the Spindle*, and tried to see on the DVD of the same name (not easy).

But there's been no feedback, everything has been trial and error, and some things went well, others not. I'm pretty good at getting a consistent single now, but my joins were awful and frustrating. Plying has been ok, but I need to learn a lot more. I've stuck to worsted spinning style, and couldn't figure out what the woolen thing was all about.

For the new spindler, the class opportunities are surprisingly sparse in the SF Bay Area - once you've done the intro class, everyone expects folks to get a wheel, I guess. Finally, I saw that Michael Wade was teaching at Article Pract (which I've still never been to - hmmm, East Bay trip might be needed!), but then I couldn't take the class, and then he was teaching at A Verb for Keeping Warm and I could take it - yes! Even though it was on a Sunday, it was in the afternoon, and did I mention that these classes are hard to find?

It was cloudy and rainy, and it was the end of winter break for schools (fondly known as "Ski Week" in our neck of the woods because so many families head to the Sierras), so the traffic was awful, but I allowed plenty of time to get there. So I was able to buy ~~anything I could think of~~ *totally essential items* for my fiber life.

And Michael, of Fiberbeat fame, couldn't have been sweeter or more helpful. Seriously, the guy is amazing - he podcasts, blogs, turns out amazing knitwear and spinning, and is a great teacher too. He helped me figure out new joining methods in a snap (SO helpful), and even made up some shoe-box plying boxes (how sweet is that!):

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But the best thing for me personally was figuring out the woolen, over the fold method of spinning. I had been doing a very short draw with the over the fold, which is kinda half-way there, but with Michael demonstrating I totally figured it out. I took home the lovely undyed BFL and spun up my singles in a snap. Last night, having got home before 10 pm for a change, I plied the rest of it and set the twist, and woke up to this loveliness:

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There are still some things to work on, but it's a very good start!

Isn't the shine just something to behold - all that lovely squishiness just is so lovely. The plan is to make some cat toys over the weekend for a kitty toy swap - so they'll hold catnip and have the handspun aroma. I can now dye bits of the yarn with my food coloring, so I feel all so crafty now!

Next-up - I'm taking Michael's navajo-plying on the spindle class on ~~March~~ **April** 17th - a whole new set of skills to perfect - yay!