

Tour of British Fleece: Spinners' comments

After spinning all seven sample fleeces, we asked for comments from the spinners - here they are and what a varied lot we got!

"I found it surprisingly difficult to spin each day, but loved the differences in all the fleece types. It was really interesting to compare all the different samples and styles from the spinners, showing what a diverse community we are with lots of different skills." (C)

"I did not enjoy spinning any of the fleeces! I normally spin tops which have been **degreased** and **cleaned**. I actually had to remove splinters from my thumb and fingers, ugh!"

"None of these fleeces suited my style of spinning which is lace weight or close to. The Dartmoor was like spinning something out of my husband's toolbox (i.e. hemp) but not as soft. All the fleeces apart from the Welsh Mountain came out a dirty grey. I think the only thing I could make out of them is some sort of floor covering; I certainly couldn't wear any of them. Had they had been my first taste in spinning I would have given up. All in all I will not be repeating the experience!!!! Sorry to be so negative." (S)

"Well, I have to say that as a novice spinner, I found it a huge amount of work to do - but loved giving each fleece sample a go. It was a real learning curve for me, as the fleece samples turned out quite differently when spun to what I had expected from the initial feel... So I learnt a lot about the problems with my spinning technique, as a result!

"Thoroughly enjoyable, and like getting a present to play with every day! Looking forward to next year - and hoping that my spinning will have improved enough that I can make better use of the different fleeces by then!"(R)

"It was interesting to have the opportunity to spin fleeces that I wouldn't have otherwise tried, some lovely, some not so nice!" (L)

"The first one nearly put me off doing any more! It was horrible, greasy and like spinning candyfloss. I persevered and really enjoyed nearly all of the rest. I was surprised to find how much difference there was in the length of yarn spun from each 25g - the Welsh Black gave 70 yards and the Greyfaced Dartmoor only 25 yards". (L)

"I had great fun spinning the different fleeces and did it in front of the TV watching the stages each day. I noted down the winners on the labels that I attached. On the day that we had no fleece to spin there was a time trial so I asked my comrade if she wanted to do a time trial spin. She agreed and as we both had some Zwartblee fleece we chose to use that!! I did mine at the same time as the time trial and finished before the winner of the trial on the bikes. She however was watching the Last Leg and got somewhat distracted!!!!!! If we do it next year perhaps we could incorporate a time trial? (C)

The fleeces were: Scottish Halfbred, Soft Fell, Derbyshire Gritstone, Speckled Face Beulah, Black Welsh Mountain, Grey Faced Dartmoor, Romney.

