



Vol. XIV

Place Mats That Stay Placed

by Toni Ford

All kinds of letters come to the desk of the weaving consultant. Sometimes we might be inclined to smile at some naive inquiry if it were not that we'd be brought up short by our remembrance of the first warp we made. Well, we always say, no one is born with the knowledge of the loom, somewhere, somehow we have to acquire the skill of weaving if we are to join "the honorable company of the clothmakers." So, when Tilly the tyro comes up with a question that may seem elementary to us, we just sit right down and answer to the best of our ability. When quite a number of people ask the same or similar questions we sit down and compose one of these Practical Weaving Suggestion bulletins on the subject. Recently we have had quite a few inquiries on what materials, what weaves, and what sizes are appropriate for heavier weight table mats—the kind that fit in best in many of our modern homes, the kind also that lie flat and stay put.

First about appropriate sizes. This question is often asked. Personally we favor fairly large mats, but the size of the table upon which they will be used naturally should in-

fluence the proportions. We note that in Volume 1, No. 8, (March, 1951) of *Siminoff Textures* a 15 x 20 size is recommended for a fairly large table and 14 x 18 for a smaller one. Hems about 2½ inches would be appropriate on the larger, about 2 inches on the latter. That exactly fits our idea of size and is what we have been recommending. The particular bulletin we referred to above contains a number of good suggestions on the subject we're discussing here and you'll find by reference to them that other weaver's bulletins have treated the subject in various forms.

We have chosen four styles in mats to serve as suggestions. Mats can of course be woven crosswise or lengthwise on the loom, and the first sample we present was woven cross-wise, set 19 inches in the warp. A 20/2 natural cotton is used for warp, Lily Art. 314; set 30 ends to the inch, drawn double in a 15 reed. The finished mat will be about 18 inches long then and we weave it about 12 inches wide. Of course it can be set about 21 inches in the loom and woven wider for the larger size mat.



Illustration: Mat No. 1

The ribbed appearance of mat number one is the result of weaving alternate shots of a heavy and a light weight material. The smaller weft is 20/2 natural cotton, the larger is Lily Art. 914, Six Strand Filler. We used natural for the 20/2, linen color for the Six Strand Filler. Weave first about a half inch header of 20/2 cotton. Now lay in one shot of the heavier yarn, follow by two of the light; then alternate, one heavy, two light for two and one half inches. Now we are ready for the border. Here we use Lily Art. 1014, Four Strand Filler in color. You will note in the illustration that we get an interesting effect by leaving about three quarters of an inch of this weft material free beyond the selvage. This, we later clip to a length of about one half inch. Every shot of the material in the border is alternated with a shot of the 20/2 cotton. We used two shots of blue, Y 26, two green, Y 58, two orchid, Y 79, two light rose, 43 and two yellow, Y 10. The body of the mat is then

woven with the alternate shots of the Six Strand Filler and the 20/2 cotton. The colors of the border are woven in reverse sequence for the other side of the mat, then the two and one half inches is repeated to finish. You will note that our color arrangement as described above is a rather mild one. Stronger contrasts would be good too and brighter colors appropriate for many situations.

The second mat like the preceding one can be woven on a two harness loom as well as on a four frame set up. In this model the warp is made up with two different sizes of yarn, in alternate groupings. The yarns we used were

20/2 cotton and Art. 1014, Four Strand Filler. We used natural color for both, but it is very effective to use two colors, harmonizing rather closely or even with considerable contrast. A light and a dark green, or a light and dark blue or yellow works out well. The warp is drawn singly in a fifteen dent reed. This is the warping plan:

- 24 ends soft twist
 - 4 ends 20/2
 - 4 ends soft twist
 - 4 ends 20/2
 - 4 ends soft twist
 - 4 ends 20/2
 - 12 ends soft twist
- then alternate 4 ends 20/2 and 4 ends soft twist sixteen times and reverse for the border.

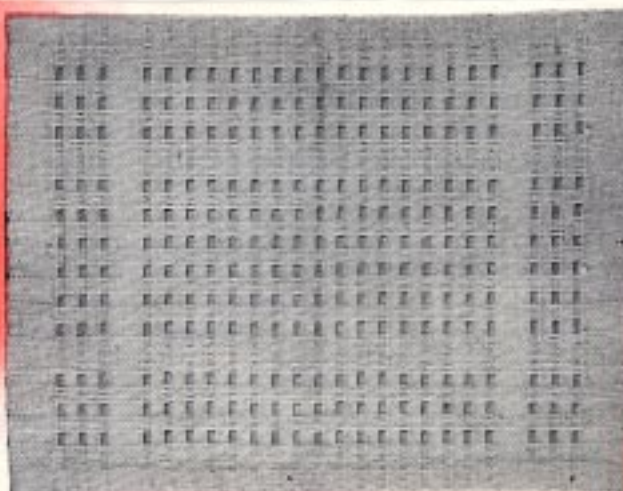
In weaving one builds up squares by using the materials in the same order as in the



ART. 914
Lily 6 Strand Filler

ART. 1014
Lily 4 Strand Filler

ART. 314
Lily
Cotton
Warp
Yarn



warping sequence. You should have a squared texture. . . .that is there should be the same number of weft shots in each square as there are warp ends. If it doesn't come out that way, change the tension on the warp—if you are weaving too closely and it takes more weft shots to square up the units, loosen your warp some, if the texture is too loose, tighten the warp a little. Don't slap that beater in hard, use a good steady rhythm and pull the beater in **one** time to place the weft shot.

Since you are using two materials for warp that are quite different in size we'd advise that you do not put up a long warp unless you have a loom equipped with two warp beams. The two materials will accumulate or pile up at different rates on a single beam and make trouble with tension if the warp is long. In such instances it is best probably to make a warp sufficient for one or maybe two table sets.

The third mat was woven for illustration of this article by Eulalie Burns, a practical weaver like yourself. You'll recognize the small diamond unit of the simple Rosepath threading. This lit-

can see. The weft is Lily Art. 105, Novelty Cotton in size 1. Mrs. Burns used green for the body of the piece and white for the border but you can use any colors that suit your purpose. The rough texture that results from the use of this special cotton is very interesting. Here you'll have a mat that looks different from the general run of them. You could use metallic yarns in the border and it's pretty, too, used with the novelty cotton throughout the body of the mat. Old gold, blue and raspberry in the novelty cot-



ART. 105
Lily Novelty Yarn

ART. 114
Lily Pearl Cotton

tle threading is pretty universal among hand weavers, and the Swedish weavers, as Mrs. Tidball mentions in her interesting article in the spring number of *Handweaver and Craftsman*, have made many uses of it. Do you know Berta Frey's little brochure, **Seven Projects in Rosepath**? Nice to have.

But to go back to the subject of the third mat. The warp is Lily Art. 114, Lily Pearl 20 in natural color and is set at 30 ends to the inch. This one was woven lengthwise as you



Illustration: Mat No. 3

ton make up into very attractive pieces, and that scarlet really brightens things up.

The fourth and last mat we will mention is an arrangement of a six harness draft made especially for heavy mats by Harry Burkett of Easton, Maryland. That Harry! He's full of practical weaving suggestions, and they're pretty good, too. Remember in this type of draft we do not indicate the threads that are drawn in on harnesses one and two since all threading is done in units of four threads, one and two alternating with whatever pattern thread is indicated. Take that first number on the draft, on harness 3. This would be threaded, 1-3, 2-3, and this unit of four threads according to the draft would be repeated four times. Then comes harness 4, so we'd thread 1-4, 2-4—and through the draft in that manner. See

