

2008 Oklahoma Championships Results



Jake Duncan, Monte Gaylord, Ellie Goodman, Emma Jane Pendleton

Five new fiddle champions were crowned at the Tulsa State Fair on Sept. 27.

Monte Gaylord of Oologah is the 2008 Oklahoma State Fiddle Champion. You might remember that Monte was disqualified last year when, after providing backup guitar for numerous contestants, his hand cramped during his own contest set, leading him to speak into the microphone inadvertently. This year Monte didn't have a cramp. He had a broken leg from being kicked by a horse; that's all. Monte proved that you can fiddle with just one good leg to stand on. In the two rounds of competition, Monte rendered sensational versions of all his tunes,

including *Kansas City Kitty*, *Oh Lady Be Good*, and the waltz *Streets of Laredo*. The audience and other fiddlers acclaimed Monte's clearly deserved victory.

The remainder of the top five in the State Championship division are all teenagers. They are, in order of finish, Jake Duncan (Jenks), Ellie Goodman (Edmond), Eric Dysart (Disney), and Emma Jane Pendleton (Tulsa). All of them have many championships to their names.

Jake Duncan's credits are numerous, most notably a 1st at Winfield a few years back. Recently Jake also won a new Oklahoma contest which proclaimed him to be the "Oklahoma Junior Champion". That gave Jake pause since he knows that the true title is awarded at the Tulsa State Fair. No doubt Oklahoma State Fiddlers northeast chapter president Bob Fjeldsted will educate those upstarts.

Based solely on her fiddling ability, Ellie Goodman, a high school senior, has won a four-year scholarship worth \$48,000 to attend the prestigious Berklee School of Music in Boston. She is a regular competitor at the nationals in Weiser, Idaho and has finished second at the famous Walnut Valley festival in Winfield, Kansas.

Eric Dysart is the undisputed holder of the Dangerous When Wet title. This summer Eric attended the Rockygrass festival in Colorado, which attracted bluegrassers from around the world. A fiddle contest was held, and when it was Eric's turn to compete, he happened to be tubing in a nearby creek. Eric grabbed his fiddle, dashed to the stage dripping wet, and won!

Emma Jane Pendleton, last year's Oklahoma Junior Champion, recently won the state championship in Kansas. She also won the Junior championship at the Grand Lake National Fiddle Fest in Grove.

Two former state champions many times over, Davey Gaylord and Greg Burgess, did not make the top five this year. That's a fiddle contest for you.

Prize money in the State Championship division was \$700, \$400, \$200, \$150, and \$100. In addition, the Tulsa State Fair did not award wall plaques to the first-place winners. Instead it bestowed gorgeous trophy belt buckles, which Bob Fjeldsted designed in collaboration with Teresa Courtney of the Tulsa State Fair.

The Open Division (sort of like "adult" and "senior" combined) winners, in order, were Laura Douglas, Karen Harmon, and Sydni Coleman. Laura now makes her home in Tulsa, having moved recently from Dallas where she sometimes played violin in the symphony. Laura really

"gets" old-time fiddling, and now has the trophy buckle to prove it. Just listen sometime to Laura playing the lovely waltz *Arms of My Love*.

Cash prizes in that division were \$100, \$75, and \$50. A trophy buckle was also awarded to the top "senior" contestant – Jody Naifeh of Sapulpa. Other contestants: Bob Fjeldsted, Siara Jacobs, and Virginia Pendleton.

Marina Pendleton inherited the title of Oklahoma Junior Fiddle Champion from her sister. Using the violin that she won the previous week by taking 2nd at Winfield, Marina bested Michael Thompson of Rose by a mere 4 points. Marina shined on her hoedown, *Dusty Miller*. Michael won huge applause for his tune of choice, *Sweet Georgia Brown*. Third place went to Bartlesville's Paige Park. Her *Yellow Rose Waltz* was especially delightful. Fourth was Evan Alexander with a smooth *Sally Goodin*. Glenn Sigler placed 5th.

Also competing in the Junior Division: Megan Boydston, Sandra Coleman, Sarah Coniglio, Hannah Due, Petey Foster, Jennifer Schwickerath, Taylor Shoemaker, Bailey Sullivan, and Kylie Valenzuela.

Cash prizes for the juniors were \$200, \$150, \$100, \$50, and \$25. Thanks to corporate donations, all of the remaining juniors received cash awards, as did all the Jr. Juniors.

First place in the Jr. Juniors went to Edith Sigler. She and brother Glenn are from Joplin, MO. Second was Regina Scott of Tulsa. Will Shelby took 3rd, and Ella Enzbrenner, 4th. Keaton

Cunningham tied Kate Coniglio for fifth place. Also competing: Janessa Andrews and Shelby Morton.

Flawless judging was courtesy of Shelby Eicher, Jana Jae, and Rick Morton. Those three plus Bob are board members of the National Fiddler Hall of Fame. A big thanks also to Susan Duncan and Geneva Cross for helping Vicki Fjeldsted operate the scoring table. Eldon Combs



2008 Oklahoma Junior Champion
Marina Pendleton



Paige Park, Michael Thompson, and Marina Pendleton

provided bass backup for whoever wanted it. Thanks everyone!

It's worth noting that the huge Budweiser Tent was packed throughout the event, which ran from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Getting the Tulsa State Fair to provide trophy buckles was a nice step

forward for our state contest. Next year's goal – MOVE INDOORS, where we used to be and where we belong. The Coke stage will do just fine.

The next day, Sunday the 28th, saw several more competitions. Mandolin was won by Isaac Eicher for the third time in a row. He was followed by Sterling Abernathy, Billy Kay, Monte Gaylord, and Dixie Michell. Prizes were \$500, \$350, \$200, \$150, and \$50.

Flatpicking went to Thomas Trapp, son of notable Oklahoma backup guitarist Louis Trapp. The remaining places went to Gary Tremel, Isaac Eicher, Ken Plummer, and Monte Gaylord. Prizes were \$500, \$350, \$200, \$150, and \$50. Also competing: Bill Crosser and Steve Luper.

Judging for mando and flatpick was provided by Mark Bruner, Bob Fjeldsted, and Rick Morton. Shelby Eicher emceed.

New at the Tulsa State Fair this year was a fingerstyle competition organized by the Tulsa Guitar Society. Lon DeAda was the hands-down winner, followed by Mark Bruner and Monte Gaylord. Prizes were \$500, \$300, and \$150. Also competing: Michael Carter, Bill Crosser, Scott Holland, and Dixie Michell.