

# Did you hear the applause?

## *Over 400 enjoy Fiddle Fest*

by Jean Tykoski

Did you hear the applause Saturday? Well, if you did, you also heard some of the best fiddling North Texas has ever had to offer. The TOTFA (Texas Old Time Fiddler Association) sanctioned this

contest for all their players and Whitewright had over 30 fiddlers from Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri and Alabama competing for prize money.

The competition in this, Whitewright's first ever Fiddle

Fest, was stiff and the crowd was great. There had been about 400 people who attended the Fiddle Fest during the day, which started at 11 AM and didn't end until almost 6 PM with only one 30-minute break

in the playing.

The three judges were Larry Franklin, professional musician and Academy of Country Music winner of Fiddler of the Year twice; Monte Gaylord, who has most recently toured with Clint Black, and also for Asleep at the Wheel (a few years after Larry Franklin stopped touring); and Gordon Townsend, who has the title of the youngest world champion fiddler.

Even these great fiddle-playing judges needed some of the contestants to play extra tunes in three of the five divisions before they could make their final placements.

The attitude of the crowd was, "Let's hear some more!" A lot of people said, "wouldn't want to be a judge and have to choose who's best."

The Whitewright Historical Museum had to change the venue (because the air conditioning was out at Whitewright's Civic Center) to the Middle School Auditorium, and things went smoothly, even with the change.

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3rd place winner at the Fiddle Fest was 15 year old Bubba Hopkins from Oklahoma