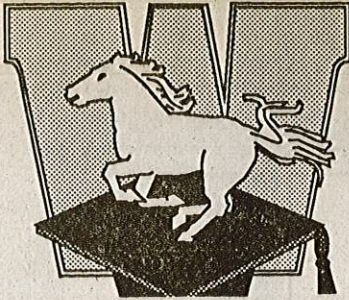


WESTERN



CONVOCATION

Old-time fiddler can now play classical violin

Michelle Lubiniecki was already an accomplished fiddler when she started studying violin at UWO's music faculty.

By Mark Skeffington
The London Free Press

When Michelle Lubiniecki started studying violin at the University of Western Ontario, she kept her background as an old-time fiddler a secret.

"Basically, all my peers had been classically trained," she said. "That's why I was kind of skeptical at first to mention the fiddling. Sometimes people have their own idea what fiddlers are and that they sort of hold their fiddle, or violin, the wrong way."

Although word leaked out eventually, no harm came of it.

Lubiniecki, 25, graduated Wednesday during Western's 254th convocation with a music degree and her old-time fiddler credentials still intact.

The Scarborough woman said no one tried to convert her at school and she actually found support for her playing.

CHAMPIONSHIPS: The fiddle has played a big part in Lubiniecki's life. She started playing at the age of nine, picking it up from

her father. In 1988 she was second in the open class of the Canadian Old-Time Fiddle Championships at Shelburne, a ranking only one other woman had reached in 38 years.

In September, she will compete in the Canadian Grand Masters championship in Nepean, where the top five fiddlers from each province will bow off.

She also hopes to attend teacher's college in the fall with the aim of teaching music. She already has some experience. While studying at Western she volunteered to teach music at Sir Wilfred Laurier Secondary School, and that included fiddling demonstrations.

"I think this type of music is fun and I would like to influence that type of fun."



UNCLE'S MONKEY

Aspiring UWO graduate, eight-month-old Mario DeVito of Mississauga, showed great agility, daring and balance when he was "on hand" for the graduation of his uncle, Stephan Seeger of London. Seeger received a BA from West-