

Prize-winner Eugene Fodor in Moscow

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“Nobody beat me,” said violinist **Eugene Fodor**, 24, in an exultant phone call from Moscow to his home in Evergreen, Colo., a Denver suburb. Young Fodor was the first Western contestant ever to win a prize in the fiddlers’ Olympics—the quadrennial Tchaikovsky Violin Competition—but there were some strings attached. The judges mysteriously withheld first prize; instead, Fodor and Russian entrants Ruben Agaronyan and Rusudan Cvasaliya were awarded

silver medals in a triple dead heat for second place. Of the three, however, only Fodor received the traditional rhythmic applause from a knowledgeable audience of Moscow Conservatory teachers and students. In fact, after his rendition of a brief Paganini caprice, Fodor recalled, “the clapping lasted longer than the caprice.”

Newsweek, July 15, 1974

