NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF S GAUGERS
MODEL CONTEST JUDGING INSTRUCTIONS
EFFECTIVE: MAY, 2019

Judging Instructions:

Judges must read all the paperwork (except the folded-under personal identification) accompanying each model, including entry form Parts A and B and whatever additional writings, photos, etc. the modeler may have provided. The judges' time taken reading the forms as they grade the models is well spent. As an example, a judge once downgraded a model for using preprinted wood sides. In fact, the modeler actually used decals. The decaling job was so good that the judge couldn't see the film or tell the difference. Although the judge's conclusion was actually a great compliment, it would have been much better if the work and effort were recognized (Of course the model is to be judged, not the paperwork).

Each judge is given a space to record the number of points he/she wishes to award for each aspect of the entry. The total is entered for each judge, then finally summed up and the total points awarded are recorded. The awards, if any, are determined after the judging and then listed. Breaking down the judging into specific aspects with set value ranges provides a mechanism for consistent judging. It also provides the modeler with helpful skill-improvement hints.

There are six judging factors: Construction, Detail, Finish, Scratch Material, Conformity, and Computer Modeling. The last category, Computer Modeling, is applicable only if some or all of the model consists of components that have been so-called "3-D printed" based on three-dimensional designs encoded ***by the modeler*** as computer instructions.

> **Note:** The total maximum score for Construction and Scratch Material is 35 for conventional (non-"3-D printed") models. However, if Computer Modeling is a factor in the model, the Construction and Scratch Material scores must be proportionally reduced according to the percentage of the model that is 3-D printed. Thus, the total maximum score for the three categories of Construction, Scratch Material and Computer Modeling must not exceed 45.

CONSTRUCTION (20 points maximum)

"Construction" refers to how well the model is put together. Examples:

- Are the corners square?
- Are there gaps?
- Are glue spots visible?
- Are the wood surfaces fuzzy?
- Are handrails and grabirons crooked?
- Are window panes smeared with glue?

All these are the types of questions each judge should consider to determine how many of this aspect's 20 points to award.

In addition, special consideration is required for models that are partly or wholly computer-generated, a technique commonly known as "3-D Printing."

DETAIL (25 points maximum):

"Detail" is just that. The more details, i.e., door knobs, guy wires, turnbuckles, uncoupling levers, headlight lenses, etc., the more of the 25 points the model should get.

FINISH (20 points maximum):

"Finish" is especially important. A sloppy paint job or crooked lettering can spoil the look of any model. Things to look for are:

- Missed spots where spray paint doesn't quite reach
- Runs where trim color bleeds onto another color
- Weathering applied in unexpected areas
- Noticeable decal film, brush marks, etc.

All these can subtract from the 20 possible points.

SCRATCH MATERIAL (15 points maximum):

"Scratch Material" refers to the items that the modeler fabricates as opposed to commercial parts. Examples:

- Built-up window frames
- Turned diesel horns
- Handmade boxcar doors
- Brass tubing engine stack

Such items certainly entitle a model to earn more points than a completely identical one using Grandt Line windows, Southwind horns, Stewart doors, or an SSL&S stack.

CONFORMITY (10 points maximum):

"Conformity" measures how accurately the model reproduces the prototype. Examples:

- Is the angle of the roof correct?
- Is the lettering (size and content) correct?
- Are the proportions correct?
- Do the details match up?
- Is the paint color correct?

For a free-lance model, the judges will have to draw on their own knowledge and experience to choose how many of the 10 points are deserved. They should be asking such questions as:

- Are the trucks correct (roller bearing trucks are not likely to be found on a 1900 era truss rod flat car)?
- Would an engine with a Wooten firebox have an oil tender?
- …and so on.

The question should always be "If the prototype did exist, would it look like this model?"

COMPUTER MODELING (35 points maximum):

For a model that incorporates 3-D printed parts created ***via the modeler's mental skills*** (not simply purchased by the modeler) and computer coding, such parts should be graded in an absolute sense on their accuracy. The judge should:

- Estimate the proportion of the model that is represented by such 3-D printed parts
- Score them according to his/her estimated percentage of the model's components created by 3-D printing.

For example, if one-half of the model is created by personal 3-D design and coding, Computer Modeling's top score should be about 22 points, with Construction and Scratch Material making up maximum of 10 and 13 points respectively. It should be left to each judge as to what percentage of the model is represented by Computer Modeling.

The total number of points for Construction, Scratch Material, and Computer Modeling must not be more than 45. Computer Modeling itself can equal 45 points maximum, meaning that Construction and Scratch Material will have garnered zero points. This would be true for a model that is comprised of a single printed component, something actually possible for, say, a structure.

NOTE: ***In the case of purchased 3-D components created by third-party programmers, such components fall under the category of "commercial parts,"*** to be adjudged traditionally; that is, in context with the construction/detailing and/or kitbashing of the overall model.

In all of this, a sense of balance and proportion must be maintained. Judges frequently have to weigh the value of a large model, say a 3-unit Alco RS-3 MU lashup, against a small model like an industrial switcher. If both are scratchbuilt, contain the same level of fabricated detail, and are otherwise of equal workmanship and finish, then it's easy to say that the MU lash-up wins on quantity. However, if the MU lash-up is not constructed well and the details are crude in comparison to those of the industrial switcher, then it's more difficult. After all, a large quantity of average work shouldn't necessarily win over a small amount of superior work. On the other hand, an exquisitely-made outhouse, even one that contains a scale-sized Sears catalog inside and is made of individual boards, shouldn't necessarily win over an average job on a factory complex made of cardstock, with a lesser level of detail. This is what turns judges' hair grey as they try to decide which wins.