

Northeastern Region Model Contest

Contest Rules

Revised 10/27/01
Supercedes all previous forms



1.0 GENERAL

1.1 All entrants must be members of the NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION and the NORTHEASTERN REGION OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION, except in special contests that may be established by the board of directors of the Northeastern Region.

1.2 Although every reasonable precaution is taken for the security and safety of the models entered in the contest, the Northeastern Region accepts no responsibility or liability for the safety and security of the models entered in the model contest.

1.3 Each entry must be accompanied by two forms. Form one is the registration and judging form and identifies the builder, his/her membership number, the Class and Category of the model. It also shall provide a claim slip. to be presented to the Model Contest Chairman upon pick-up of the model.

The entrant must indicate if the model has ever won an award in an NER or NMRA model contest and if so what award. Models will not be considered for an award equal to or lessor than that won at a previous event.

So as to facilitate the "New Modeler Award", given for the highest score received by a model submitted by a first time entrant, the entrant must indicate if he/she has ever entered an NER model contest before.

In addition to the above, form one provides 3 judges slips. The entry forms shall be completed by the entrant, but not necessarily in the presence of the Contest Chairman. Form 2 is the informational form which describes the models features, scratch built and purchased parts, methods of construction and finish, etc. This form asks the questions that are designed to produce the information that the judges need to adequately award points. Supplemental information such as type written detailed descriptions, photos, prototype data, etc., may be attached to form two, however, the judges are not obligated to read unreasonable volumes of material.

1.4 All of the above forms as well as the contest rules shall be made available to all who shall seek them.

2.0 SITE

2.1 The sponsoring convention committee shall be responsible for providing a well lit space, of adequate size for the expected number of entries. Tables with suitable covering shall be arranged to allow sufficient access to the models for viewing and judging. The contest room must be located in an area with good access to the entrants and viewers.

3.0 STAFF

3.1 The contest shall be administered by the Permanent Model Contest Chairman, optionally assisted by a chief judge and clerks. Clerks shall be provided by the local convention committee.

There shall be a minimum of three judges present excluding judges abstaining from any category due to a conflict of interest.

When possible, judges will be refunded their convention registration fee, but shall not be reimbursed for other expenses such as hotel, travel, events, etc.

3.2 Judges will be selected by the NER Permanent Model Contest Chairman or the Chief Judge, for each contest. The Chairman and Chief Judge may both be a judge, but are not required to judge if sufficient staff is present. Judges shall be trained in the judging criteria by the Chairman or the Chief Judge. Judges are not required to have a working knowledge of numerous prototypes.

Entrants are expected to provide prototype material for the judges to use in comparing the model for conformity in determining construction errors.

4.0 JUDGING PROCEDURES

Judging is a process by which the models are awarded all the points they have earned on a uniform scale. Judges shall bear this in mind, and are to approach judging from the positive point of view.

4.1 Training of judges shall be done under the guidance of Permanent Model Contest Chairman, and or the Chief Judge. Subject to availability judges in training shall view the "General Regional Organization Committee Tape/Slide Clinic of Judging" and receive such additional training as they may need to become competent judges.

4.2 The Permanent Contest Chairman or Chief Judge shall make every effort to select judges who have experience in the model contest as past entrants and winners, or judges who hold achievement certificates in the area of consideration. The Contest Chairman may, if necessary, eject a judge from the contest room if he/she fails to conform to these rules and procedures or exhibits a biased approach to specific models, or types of models.

4.3 Open session judging is the standard format. However the model contest may be closed from noon on the day of the event until judging is complete, normally about 4:30pm. A break for lunch by the judges is allowed.

No entrants may be present, except judges or staff who have entered the contest. Staff are allowed to enter the contest provided that they refrain from judging in the category in which they are entered or in discussing models entered in that category with others present.

If there are too few judges present to have adequate judging in a category entered by a judge or staff, i.e. the entrant being excepted from judging in the category in which he/she is entered, then the judge shall be prohibited from entering the model contest at that event

The minimum number of judges required in any category is three.

Judges are free to share knowledge and observations about the models among themselves and to debate scores should a tie breaking be necessary, or should the chairman feel that a model has been given inappropriate consideration.

When sufficient judges are present, judging shall be divided by factor with a minimum of two judges per factor.

Any dispute unresolved by the judges mutual agreement shall be resolved by the Permanent Contest Chairman.

4.4 Open Session Judging is the same as closed, except that observers and entrants are allowed to be present.

Complete silence on the part of the observers is to be strictly enforced.

A "sergeant at arms" shall be appointed. If any observer, be it entrant or casual observer should begin talking, he/she shall be ejected from the contest room until the conclusion of judging.

Should an entrant speak to a judge during judging regarding the model, the entrant and the model shall be ejected from the contest. An exception shall be made if the contest chairman or a judge or judges seeks further information about the model or a clarification of a technical point. Such dialog, however, is not normally necessary, as all information about the model is to be presented in the customary information sheets and attachments.

4.5 Judges shall be provided copies of the contest rules and sheets containing definitions of the factors and ranges of points applicable to the various levels of skill, completeness, etc.

4.6 Judges shall be encouraged to remain present in the model contest room after judging is complete and the public is allowed contact with the judges. This is done so as to provide entrants the opportunity for dialog as to judging criteria and opportunities to improve technique, choice of materials, etc. It is not a time for the entrants to attempt to influence the score. All scores are final as soon as the Permanent Model Contest Chairman declares judging to be complete.

5.0 CLERICAL PROCEDURES

The contest chairman, optionally assisted by clerks shall keep the records of the entrants and models. Entrant names are to be withheld from the judges during judging.

A tally sheet shall be prepared giving the entry number, description, classification and category as well as the average points given and any awards won.

These tally sheets shall be made into a permanent record and archived for future reference. The contest chairman is encouraged to keep a computer database on entrants, models, awards won, and points given.

The model contest chairman shall collect claim slips from those picking up their models at the end of the contest to insure return of the model to the proper individual.

The model contest chairman shall make winners lists available to the Coupler editor for publication and recognition of the efforts of the entrants.

The model contest chairman shall keep a log of judges names and the events at which they judged for reference and to assist in AP award determination.

6.0 FORMAT

6.1 There shall be 2 classifications or levels of participation. Classifications are necessary to keep entrants of similar skill level in competition with each other. NER classifications are Master and Craftsman.

6.1.1 Master Classification shall govern models built by modelers who have won a first place in the Craftsman Classification in the specific category of consideration.

6.1.2 Craftsman Classification shall govern models built by modelers who have not won a first place in the specific category of consideration.

6.2 CATEGORY

Model categories are designed to keep related models in competition with each other. In the NER, we have too few models entered in some categories used by the national organization to make these categories practical. Combining categories, therefore, makes sense. We combine all forms of motive power other than steam in the category "Loco-Other" and we combine maintenance of way and cabooses in the category "Non-revenue".

6.2.1 Motive Power - Steam

The obvious is true. If the model represents a steam powered form of motive power, it belongs in this category. A steam crane capable of being self propelled, is in non-revenue category. A steam powered inspection locomotive is in non-revenue. Neither of these two examples normally pulls a train in revenue service. All entries must be capable of locomotion. No "dummies".

6.2.2 Motive Power - Other

This category contains traction engines, (electric's) and trolley cars of train hauling or revenue service. It also contains diesel locomotives, gas-electric passenger cars, mine engines or battery locomotives etc. All entries must be capable of motion. No "dummies".

6.2.3 Passenger Cars

This category also includes passenger revenue RDC cars or rail buses as well as "head end equipment" such as express refrigerators, milk cars, railway post office cars, baggage cars, and HEP cars associated with passenger equipment.

6.2.4 Freight Cars

This category includes all forms of freight cars used in revenue service, including non-interchangeable revenue cars such as log cars and mine cars.

6.2.5 Non-Revenue Cars

This combined category includes maintenance of way cars as well as cabooses, cranes, pile drivers, track maintenance machines etc.

6.2.6 Structures

Structures, if mounted on a base shall not have any disconnected scenery considered. A water tower, with adjacent water column is an example of a structure which does logically have an apparently disconnected item which is considered part of the structure.

6.2.7 Dioramas

This category may include all of the above items with scenery. All items present will be judged as part of whole scene.

6.3 FACTORS

6.3.1 Construction

Use of materials, craftsmanship, difficulty, complexity.

6.3.2 Detail

This factor is quantitative, not qualitative, being a matter of how much of detail is present on the model.

6.3.3 Conformity

This factor deals only with accuracy. Entrants are warned to produce evidence to support items abnormal to standard industry practice.

6.3.4 Finish and Lettering

This factor is both qualitative and quantitative and includes complexity and craftsmanship.

6.3.5 Scratch Built

This factor determines how much of the model was made by the entrant as opposed to being purchased and assembled by the entrant.

a. All scratch except lamps - 0-25 points

b. Mostly scratch except motors gears, wheels, couplers, frame, trucks, brake equipment, and ladders - 0-20 points

c. Partly scratch - all except a. and b. above and listed commercial parts and fittings - 0-15 points

Please note that use of extruded or pre-shaped strip wood and sheet stock is allowed in scratch building - 0-25 points

Maximum Total Score - 125 points

7.0 AWARDS

7.1 In each of the above Categories within each of the above classifications, there shall be available, first, second, third, and honorable mention awards.

In the event of abnormal score totals, the judges may elect to give only those awards appropriate to the totals. Furthermore the judges are not required to give any awards should no significant competition exist within a category as in the case of a single entrant.

The contest chairman and judges are encouraged to give awards of consistent relativity to models of appropriate quality from one event to another. Entrants should neither be penalized nor artificially rewarded for fluctuations in the number and overall quality of the models entered at a given event.

7.2 All models judged under the NMRA scale as shown above shall receive a separate Merit Award if they achieve 87.5 or more points, having been judged by the accepted standard NMRA judging criteria.

Models in special contests wishing to be judged for Merit Award must be re-judged under NMRA rules if these rules and factors were not the method used in the special contest.