

Appendix C: Model Contest Judging Guidelines

The Model Contest Judging Guidelines are presented here for Guidance of the Contest Committee, Model Contest judges, and Model (and Portable Layout) Contest entrants. The Judging Guidelines are an official PCR document. Changes are proposed by the PCR Contest Manager and require the approval of the Board of Directors.



Pacific Coast Region MODEL CONTEST JUDGING GUIDELINES

Version of July 15, 2001

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The purpose of the model contest is to recognize and reward good model building. The purpose of judging is to choose the winning models in each contest class. The primary purpose of these guidelines is to help the judges choose the winners. Their secondary purpose is to encourage consistency in scoring.

The key questions to be answered in judging are:

- **What did the modeler try to do?**
- **How well did the modeler do it?**

Most judging categories have aspects of both difficulty and quality. Scores go up as the modeler attempts more difficult modeling projects and methods. Scores also go up as the modeler is more successful with the chosen project and methods. The highest scores go to the most successful results with the most difficult modeling projects and methods. Guidelines for the categories give tables with suggested scoring ranges to help in weighing the two aspects and achieving consistency. Judging the model contest is basically *positive* in that points are awarded for what has been done, rather than subtracting for shortcomings compared to a theoretical perfect model. But, in practice, judging requires striking a balance between the model's good points and the model's flaws, or between what has been done and what was left undone.

Your main sources of information are the entry form and the model itself. Read the write-up for the category you are judging, but remember that there may be helpful information on other parts of the form. Examine each model thoroughly to see what the modeler has done and how well. Judge what you see as well as what you read, since many entrants are better modelers than writers. Handle the models carefully, and only as much as is necessary for judging. If the entrant has provided photos, plans, or other documentation, look it over for prototype or model information that will help you judge. Judges are not obligated to read through massive documentation.

Judge the model, not the modeler. You may know or guess who built the model and think the modeler was capable of better, but you must judge only what is before you. Whether it is the best or worst that modeler has ever done is irrelevant.

Judges are divided into teams of two or three, with each team assigned to judge one category (Construction, Detail, Conformity, Finish, or Scratch Building) across all contest classes (Steam Locomotives, Freight Cars, Structures, etc.). Judge one class at a time (all the steam locomotives, for example, before moving to diesels). Write preliminary scores on scratch paper for the whole class. If there are differences of opinion, discuss why each judge thinks the way they do before averaging or otherwise settling on a score. If there is a wide range of opinion, one judge may be seeing things the others do not. Make sure that the best model has the highest score, and that the others are properly ranked and their scores reasonably spaced. Move models closer together if needed for comparisons. Although the most important thing is for the best model in each class to win, leave some room in the scores for better models in other classes and strive for consistency across all the entries. When you are satisfied with the scores for the class, transfer them to the entry forms.

Judges may add comments to forms to explain unusual scores or special situations. Use pencil, a removable note, or a separate comment sheet so the entrant can use the form again.

Judge the scales alike. Modeling difficulty generally comes from the actual size of parts and materials, not scale size, so judge accordingly. Do not permit a larger scale to have larger flaws because they are less obvious, or assume modeling in smaller scales is always more difficult.

Judge Open, Kit, Novice, Teen and Youth entries alike

If you have questions on a specific prototype or modeling technique, ask other judges. If you have questions on rules, interpretation, or scoring, ask the Head Judge or the Contest Committee Chairman.

CONSTRUCTION

“The apparent quality of workmanship. Proper handling of materials, applied labor, skill and craftsmanship as demonstrated by the construction.” (PCR Contest Directory)

This category has two dimensions: the difficulty or complexity of what the modeler has attempted, and how well the model was constructed

The Construction category focuses on modeling skill, proper handling of materials, and craftsmanship as demonstrated by the finished model. The entry form should show the starting point for the model, the materials and techniques used, and perhaps the major steps in construction. There are many ways to build a good model, and the score should reflect how well the modeler succeeded with the chosen method without favoring one method over another. Examine the model thoroughly, and think through the construction process. Consider the steps required to fabricate, kit-bash, alter, or otherwise prepare individual pieces of the model. Consider the accuracy of their alignment and attachment, and the neatness and quality of joints. Consider the work required to prepare masters or patterns for casting, photo-etching, or similar techniques, and the quality of the duplicates. You are not judging the *quantity* of detail or scratch building, but you do judge the *quality* of the construction involved. Conformity to prototype and finish quality are judged elsewhere. Judge all scales the same. Consider the difficulty of making individual small parts, regardless of whether they are minor details on a large model or major details on a smaller one. Conversely, while construction flaws are more obvious on smaller models, treat similar flaws the same in all scales.

Quality & Workmanship	Simple Model	Somewhat Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex or Difficult												
Poor to Mediocre	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Ordinary	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Good	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Very Good	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Outstanding	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Exceptional	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
Exceptional	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

DETAIL

“The refinement of the model, the amount of subordinate parts added, and the complexity of the model is considered. Quality of detail is not considered--only quantity.” (PCR Contest Directory)

How much detail has the modeler added or incorporated? How complex was the detailing job?

This category includes the refinement of the model and the addition of subordinate parts. Details that are integral parts of the prototype (parts that are necessary for the prototype to hold together and function) should receive more weight than details that are added for appearance (such as tools on a locomotive or clutter around a structure). Working details (sliding doors, functional brake gear) should receive more points than non-working details of the same type. Ordinarily details are separate parts, but also consider the detail the modeler added to masters or patterns for castings or photo-etchings. It makes no difference if the details were scratch built, included loose in a kit, or purchased separately, but focus on what the modeler has put on the model rather than on what the manufacturer may have incorporated in major kit castings. Do consider details that have been added to replace cast-on versions.

Although the entry form *should* tell you what details were added, examine the model closely to see the significance of the details and to note any added details that the modeler neglected to list.

Judge all scales alike. Do not add points to an entry in a smaller scale just because it is harder to detail (that is considered in Construction). The *quality* and *conformity* of detail is being considered by others.

Complexity of Detail	0	Little Added				A few Details				Moderate Detail				More Extensive				Extensive & Complete			
Simple	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Easy-to-add	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Hard-to-add	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	25
Complex	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

CONFORMITY

“Deals with what is commonly called prototype practice. Logical construction and application of parts is considered to be conformity.”(PCR Contest Directory)

How well has the modeler reproduced the appearance of the prototype?

Conformity deals with achieving prototypical appearance or following prototype practice in construction and application of parts. Look for the efforts made to replicate prototype features, including adherence to dimensions, simulation of actual construction materials and practices, choice of components, and arrangement of details. Conformity can be achieved through scratch building, through kit bashing, or through adding and replacing details. The amount of detail is secondary, but a model with very little detail is unlikely to score highly. Consider how well what has been included conforms to the prototype. If the model has been selectively compressed from a large prototype, consider how well the compression has captured the features of the original. Consider the trouble the modeler took to determine, achieve, and demonstrate conformity.

High scores ordinarily require the support of references or photos. Prototypical models lettered for fictitious railroads (“proto-freelanced”) should be supported with references to the prototype. Free-lanced models of imaginary prototypes, including structures, should be supported with evidence of conformity to prototype practices (such as photos or drawings of prototypes with similar features) to be awarded more than a few points.

Judge what the *modeler* has done, the effort the *modeler* has made, and the steps the *modeler* took beyond what may have been done by a manufacturer or provided in a kit. You should not need to guess about conformity. While you can and should ask other judges who may have the needed knowledge, it is up to the entrant to explain and demonstrate conformity.

Kit Conformity Scoring Guide

Modeler's Effort	Slightly Prototypical					Partly Prototypical					Largely Prototypical					Highly Prototypical					Completely Prototypical				
Minimal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	19	19	20	21				
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22				
Moderate	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23				
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	25				
Extensive	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25				

Open Conformity Scoring Guide

Slightly Prototypical		Partly Prototypical			Largely Prototypical		Highly Prototypical		Completely Prototypical	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

FINISH

“This factor deals with the general appearance and proper application of finish and lettering (when lettering is a necessary part of the model) as reflected by surface treatment to achieve a specific effect thru the proper use of materials.” (PCR Contest Directory)

There are two dimensions to Finish and Lettering: the complexity, accuracy, or completeness of finish and lettering; and the quality and skill of its application.

This factor deals with the general appearance and proper application of finish and lettering to achieve a specific effect. Consider what was required to reproduce multicolored paint schemes, stripes over irregular surfaces, or other complex finishes. Consider the finish quality. Are the coats smooth and even, the stripes straight, and the color separations sharp? Consider the difficulty of applying the lettering. Was the lettering pieced together, awkward to apply, or particularly elaborate and complex? Consider lettering quality. Are decals neatly applied and straight, without trapped air or apparent film? Do not deduct for flaws in commercial decals or pre-lettered parts, but give credit for correcting flaws or improving commercial finishes and lettering.

Realistic weathering may add points, and or unrealistic weathering may lose points, but the mere presence or absence of weathering is not a factor. Unusual weathering may require explanation or the support of prototype photos to receive a high score.

The *accuracy* of the paint scheme and lettering is considered under Conformity; the Finish category concentrates on *quality*.

Judge all scales alike. Do not allow a larger-scale entry to have larger finish flaws for the same score. Judge the difficulty of finish and lettering by actual size rather than scale size: consider the difficulty of applying a 1/32” stripe or letter, whether it is 1.5 scale inches or 5 scale inches.

Finish Scoring Guide

Complexity	Poor					Good					Better					Outstanding					Exceptional				
Simple	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
Moderate	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22				
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23				
Complex	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	25				
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25				

SCRATCH BUILDING

“This deals with all parts of the model which have been FABRICATED BY THE BUILDER.” (PCR Contest Directory)

How much did the modeler build from scratch, and how difficult was the scratch building?

This category deals with all parts of the model which have been fabricated by the modeler from basic wood, metal, plastic, or other shapes and materials. Are major portions of the model built from scratch, or just some parts and details? Consider the amount of effort required to convert basic materials into finished parts. Bending grabirons from wire, for example, is less difficult than soldering together piping or railings. Consider any planning or design work that was necessary. Drawing your own plans is considered part of scratch building, if the plans are submitted with the model. Scratch building from prototype plans, photos, or measurements is usually more difficult than scratch building from kit plans or a magazine article.

Casting or photo-etching is considered scratch building, although less difficult than making several identical parts from scratch. Did the modeler carry out all the steps from a scratch-built master to finished duplicates, or were either the masters or the duplicates created by others?

You are primarily concerned with the *quantity* of scratch building. The *quality* is judged under Construction.

Open Scratchbuilding Scoring Guide

Model Complexity	Little Scratch					Some/Partly Scratch					More/Largely Scratch					Much/Mostly Scratch					Extensive/Completely Scratchbuilt				
Simple	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	19	19	20	21				
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22				
Moderate	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23				
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	25				
Complex	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25				

Kit Scratchbuilding Scoring Guide

Little Scratch		Some Scratch			More Scratch			Much Scratch		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10