

SER MODEL CONTEST GUIDELINES

The Southeastern Region, NMRA

Revision #6

GENERAL RULES FOR ALL ENTRIES:

1. Entrant must be an NMRA member in good standing with a current and valid NMRA membership number.
2. All work must have been done by the entrant.
3. No limitations are placed on the number of entries.
4. Awards are given to models earning the highest number of points.
5. Kit, kit-bashed and scratch built models are eligible.

SPECIFIC RULES FOR ALL ENTRIES:

1. All models must be brought to the contest room. Each must be properly entered, displayed and removed by the entrant as supervised by the Contest Chairman and/or his/her committee.
2. No entry will be accepted after the registration period has closed. This time may vary slightly depending on the contest room schedule. The entrants are to be familiar with the contest room schedule to avoid missing the entry deadline. Models not making the deadline will be allowed to be displayed only.
3. Suitable space will be provided for each model to maximize viewing and minimize handling by the judges. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect the models. Special placement and/or handling instructions will need to be discussed with the Contest Chairman prior to entering the model. Only the Contest Chairman, a designated assistant and the designated judges will be allowed to handle the models in the contest room.
4. All entries will be registered on and accompanied by the latest Official Entry Form which must be properly filled out and have the entrant's signature along with the latest Contest Judging Form. The Contest Chairman will have the latest blank forms available or they may be downloaded and printed from the www.nmra.org website. It is advised that all paperwork be completed prior to entering the contest. Contestants will be given a receipt which must be presented to claim the entry at the close of the contest. Proxy entries must be authenticated by the builder/owner with the owner's valid signature and current NMRA membership number.

5. All models will remain in the contest room for the duration of the contest. Pickup times will be posted or indicated in the contest room schedule and entrants are to be familiar with the contest room schedule to know when to pick up their models at the close of the contest.
6. There is no limit to the number of entries per contestant, nor a limit on how many entries per category.
7. The model must be entirely the entrants own work. Commercially built models and professional modelers are ineligible to participate.
8. Unmodified, ready-to-run models are ineligible to participate.
9. First, Second, and Third place ribbons will be awarded in each category on the basis of points earned.
10. Best in Show Award will consist of a ribbon, plaque and rotating trophy.
11. Past First Place and Best in Show models from previous Regional or National contests are eligible for contest re-entry providing verifiable changes have been made to the model (i.e. “before” and “after” photographs).
12. Entries requiring an excessive amount of display space or which are unable to be displayed on normal convention/hotel-provided surfaces are ineligible to participate. Entries which have excessive weight will require prior notice to the Contest Chairman and be allowed by the hosting venue. Movement of the entry into or out of the contest room will be the responsibility of the entrant.
13. Models meeting Achievement Program criteria will receive merit awards. Models may be entered to be judged only for AP points and not be entered into the general contest. Entrants are advised that once the model is entered to be AP judged only, it will not be allowed into the general contest under any circumstances. The Contest Chairman will identify and inform the judges as to which models are AP entries. Appropriate AP forms will be used.
14. Entrants will conduct themselves with professional behavior when in or around the contest room. Any disagreement with the Contest Chairman or designated judges about any contest matter will be handled in a courteous manner. Entrants are not allowed to discuss aspects of their entries with the Contest Chairman or judges during the contest judging phase unless the entrant is approached by the Contest Chairman. Any discussion about point scores or awards will be discussed in a neutral group and will not include any entrant having an interest in the outcome of such a discussion. The Contest Chairman will adjudicate all disputes and have the final word.

CATEGORIES:

The following contest categories will be judged:

Steam locomotives.

___ Models of motive power propelled by steam.

Diesel and other locomotives.

___ Models of motive power propelled by a prime mover using fuel, such as gas, diesel, or natural gas.

Passenger cars.

___ Rolling stock designed for the transport of passengers. Also may apply to cars which may be found in a passenger train, such as baggage, mail, or express cars.

Freight cars.

___ Rolling stock designed for the transport of goods.

Caboose.

___ Non-revenue rolling stock used by train crews for the business of getting a train over the road.

Non-revenue or maintenance of way.

___ Rolling stock and equipment used to maintain, test., or clear track and/or right of way, special railroad-owned cars for the use only by the railroad for such uses as described or cars for carrying materials and/or personnel involved in the maintenance testing, or clearing track and/or right of way.

Structures.

___ Structures. These include bridges, stations, maintenance buildings, industries with spurs, car ferries, retail, residential, etc.

Traction.

___ Motive power and rolling stock propelled by the collection of electricity from overhead wire or third rail. This includes heavy electric locomotives, trolleys and associated equipment.

Display

___ A model or models combined into a setting through the use of scenery materials.

SILVER LEVEL ENTRANTS - DEFINED:

The SER contest awards are based on two levels of participation for all entrants. Silver Level contestants are novice/first time SER contest entrants, that is modelers who have *not* previously entered an SER contest.

SER SPECIAL AWARD CATEGORIES:

JOHN DAKIN AWARD:

This award is given in recognition of a model judged to be the best example of a kit-bash. It is based on the total number of points scored for a model that uses 2 or more kits combined to produce a single finished model. The award recognizes the unique ability of the entrant to combine model kits into a better representation of a prototype, and the use of the kits to produce a finished entry which represents neither starting kit. The award is an individualized plaque.

SILVER SPIKE AWARD:

This award is given in recognition of the model receiving the highest score by a first time entrant to an SER Contest. Categories of motive power, rolling stock, structures and displays are all eligible. The model may be a kit, kit-bashed, scratch built or a combination of all three. The award recognizes a modeler's beginning efforts in the hobby and should not be judged less stringent than others in its category, but should have more constructive comments provided that will encourage the modeler and provide advice to improve his/her modeling skills. The award is an individualized plaque and is independent of any other contest placement.

GOLD SPIKE AWARD:

This award is given in recognition of the best Narrow Gauge model by an entrant. Motive power, rolling stock, displays and gauge-specific structures are eligible. The model may be scratch built, kit-bashed or a combination of the two. The award is an individualized plaque.

WILL MILLER AWARD:

This award is for a model entered as a Prototype Model earning the highest point total in motive power, rolling stock, structure and display categories. The award is an individualized plaque.

DUDLEY ROSS AWARD:

This award is given in recognition of the highest score for an N scale model. Categories of motive power, rolling stock, structures and displays are eligible. The award is an individualized plaque.

MACK CRAIG AWARD:

This award is the “Best in Show” for a model entered by a contestant. It is the model with the highest point total, usually the highest scoring model in the contest. All model categories are eligible. This award may be given to an entrant at the Silver Level if the model is determined to be exemplary in points, construction and detail. This is a determination to be made by the Contest Chairman and the judges at the end of judging. The award is an individualized plaque and a revolving trophy.

MIKE CALLAHAN 101 AWARD:

This award is given to a model which best exemplifies the skills and craftsmanship of the late Mike Callahan. The criteria are as follows:

1. Any category of model is eligible for the award.
2. The model must not have been a previous winner of SER Regional Awards.
3. The model must receive 101 points or greater in the SER/NMRA Judged Contest.
4. In addition, the model must capture the attention to detail, difficulty in construction, and quality of modeling typical of Mike Callahan Contest Entries of the past. It will be the responsibility of the Contest Chairman and his/her contest judges to identify these qualities in the qualifying models. The award will consist of an individualized engraved plaque.
5. In the event there are multiple models that qualify for the award, the Contest Chairman and the attending judges will decide which model best captures the spirit of the award.
6. This award may not be given each year depending on qualifying entries.

RULES TO BE AWARE OF THAT JUDGES MUST FOLLOW:

1. The SER model contests will be judged using current NMRA standard criteria for judging and point scoring.
2. All judging will take place in accordance with Achievement Program judging guidelines.
3. All entrants should receive comment sheets regarding the scoring of their model. Judges comments should be concise yet descriptive enough for the entrant to fully understand what the judge is communicating.
4. Judges will handle models carefully and only as much as necessary for judging.
5. Judging should be done in minimum teams of two for each category. Whenever possible, less experienced judges will be paired with those more experienced.
6. Judging is to be generally positive, highlighting what the modeler has done well rather than point out what he has not, but striking a balance between the model’s good points and flaws. Comments should suggest how improvements can be made to the model and to encourage the entrant to re-enter his model in a future contest if he so desires.
7. Questions regarding prototype or modeling techniques should be discussed with the Contest Chairman and other judges.

8. Questions regarding rules interpretation or point scoring should be directed to the Contest Chairman.
9. Judges will judge the model, not the modeler. The judges may know the modeler, but are instructed to judge only the entry(s) presented, not what the modeler may be capable of producing. What the entrant has entered in the past is irrelevant.
10. Judges will excuse themselves from judging models in any category(motive power, rolling stock, structures and displays) they've entered providing there are a sufficient number of experienced judges. Any additional decisions will be made by the Contest Chairman.
11. Judges should meet with the Contest Chair prior to the start of judging for instructions and answers to any questions pertaining to the contest.

These rules and guidelines are intended for the smooth operation of the SER contest, usually held during the annual convention, but are also in effect for any SER or NMRA sponsored contest at the region or division level. The contest is intended to provide a venue for models to be evaluated based on standard current criteria for the advancement and improvement of modeling skills throughout the Southeastern Region and the NMRA.

Failure to follow or understand these rules and guidelines undermines the purpose and the effectiveness of the contest and takes away from the enjoyment of the hobby for both entrants and judges.

LIST OF CONTEST AWARDS:

SILVER SPIKE AWARD.....Best First Time entry.

JOHN DAKIN AWARD Best Kit-bash.

GOLD SPIKE AWARD..... Best Narrow Gauge.

WILL MILLER AWARD..... Best Prototype Model.

DUDLEY ROSS AWARD..... Best N Scale.

MACK CRAIG AWARD..... Best in Show.

MIKE CALLAHAN 101 AWARD..... Best Model scoring 101 points or better exemplifying Mike Callahan's craftsmanship.

APPENDIX:**BASIC JUDGING INFORMATION FOR CONTESTANTS:**

SER and NMRA contests are judged using specific criteria as set by the NMRA Contest Chairman, Achievement Program Chairman, Contest and AP Committees. Contests use the AP judging guidelines. The key purpose of those guidelines is to answer the following 2 questions: 1) What is the modeler trying to do? And 2) How well did he do it? Another way of saying this is we're not trying to say how good the model builder is, we're trying to judge how good the model is. A fine, but important distinction. These criteria include point distribution, judging guidelines, scoring matrix charts and general operation of the contest. It is highly recommended that any person currently entering contests or considering entering contests, go to the NMRA website (www.nmra.org) regarding how they are judged and to review the steps required for scoring models. The more information you can gather on how your model will be evaluated will help make the contest experience more understandable and enjoyable. Look at how you think the your model might score using the matrix charts for each category of judging. Doing this in stages as your model construction progresses, will not only improve your finished model , but help you to understand the point totals when the model is judged. Paperwork is also a concern for many entrants as it relates to entering contests. The NMRA and SER guidelines state that entrants should provide the contest judges with sufficient information in each category in order that a fair assessment of the model and the modeler's skills can be determined. A lack of information will be considered relevant to the evaluation of the entry. Irrelevant or superfluous information will not be considered when judging the entry. Provide as much information regarding the model as possible, especially as it relates to conformity. This is where judges will look to see what your model is supposed to represent. Photos, plans and accompanying documentation help to speed the judging process. Remember, a lack of information will yield lower scores. Contest judges are not required to look at ancillary documentation. Most will, but it is not required.