

From the Desk of Achievement Program Chairman, Bruce Brintnall

Over the years I have seen many models displayed in our monthly contest. Many of those entries have been of a quality, which would qualify them for a merit award toward an AP certificate. This past month for example there were at least 5 or 6 models that would have easily passed any contest requirements. There is only one thing missing...that dreaded paperwork. I have completed those forms numerous times and believe it's not that hard. The first contest form is the stumbling block because of the fear factor.

There are a couple of ways you can fill them in. One is hand write them and second is use that computer of yours sitting there ready to play the next game. Most machines come with MS Word already installed. This is good word processor program, which I find the easiest way to fill in the blanks on the contest forms.

Go to the NMRA web site (nmra.org/) and in the left column under Education click on Achievement Program. Now on the right side under Achievement Program click on Forms. Go to the bottom of this page and you will find the Contest Forms. Print out the "Contest Entry Form" and "The Judge's Score Sheet - Model Contest" in the format you can best handle. Fill in the blanks what the model is and who you are on the Contest Form. This is to identify you with the model when entered into a contest. Don't fill in the Entry number, which is for the judges or contest committee to do. On the bottom The Claim Check is for entry into Regional or National contest and your proof of ownership. Now print out the Judges form. These can be filled in on line (personal feeling, I don't care for this way because I want to see and review what I write in my hands). But this is your choice. Below is my suggestion.

On the Judges form on top is the Entry form number, which will be transferred from the entry page entered by the contest committee. Number one question is CONSTRUCTION. Check the appropriate boxes. Write on the description line "REFER

TO ATTACHED". On your computer paper type as a header the name or title of your model. (This is because if the papers get separated from your model they can be rejoined). Next type "1. CONSTRUCTION". Use a 12-point print or larger because some of the judges have hard enough times to see the model. (I'm not saying they are blind but....). This will make it much easier to read. Next, type how you built your model, the complexity and the methods used. Keep this typing simple with as few words as you can to describe what you want the judges to know.

Next, on judges form in DETAIL line write "REFER TO ATTACHED". On your computer page type "2. DETAIL". Here type telling the judges the complexity, difficulty refinements, and so on as the form lists it's questions. This may be a repeat of line 1 but there is a reason. During judging there will be judges assigned to judge only CONSTRUCTION or DETAIL and so on. If judge is judging DETAIL he will only be reading the data you entered in Detail and not on Construction. If that information is not present he won't know what you did. This is where the computer is handy with the cut and paste options. Cut and Paste the info on Construction line to Detail line. Make any changes and additions necessary to answer the question of line 2. Remember to keep it short with as few words as you can. This is because during a contest judges will be judging maybe 100 models and he won't read a book or thesis. Time is of essence. He wants to get out and participate in the convention also. Do this for all five questions on the Judges Form. Attach these together with a staple or paper clip. Remember the KISS principle keep it simple.

If you are entering for the first time I will help you with your forms and judge your models for you. You may sit with me and I will try to answer your questions as to what the judges are looking for. We are not judging you or the quality of penmanship, just you model. When I judge I look at the model as a 125-point winner and reduce that number by the faults or errors I fined. I look at the construction as to how good of a job you did, how much detail is on the model, how close it conforms to the prototype, how

well it is finished and if there is any scratch building on it. Scratch building is something you made. This is not an absolute necessity but the more you can make the better the score will be.

Try doing the papers one time and find out it is not that hard or trouble. Bring those forms with your model and I will judge. The first time the forms don't need to be totally complete. I will show you what needs to be done. All I ask is let me know you will be bring a model for judging so I am sure to be at the meeting and allow time to Judge and talk to you about your model. If you are bashful we will do it in privacy if you wish. As you build contest models you will find your modeling craftsmanship vastly will improve. And with this you will enjoy your modeling experience more.

It's time to model and have fun!

Bruce