

## South Carolina Scale Model Mega Show Rules and Categories

*Please read these rules carefully.*

### **THE SHOW**

This event is moving away from being a competition and becoming an exhibition and social event where modelers of all types, skills, and abilities can gather and discuss the hobby. It is supposed to be about the **models**, not the **medals**.

Our show's contest will be a hybrid of an Open Judging/Scoring system and the Military Miniatures Society of Illinois (MMSI) exhibition format. You are paying for exhibit space, an area of approximately 36 inches by 36 inches. In this space, you may display as many models that will fit in that space. You will select ONE of your models for evaluation, and you will declare a Skill Level. That one model will be evaluated and scored, and it will be a representation of your body of work. When filling out your Master Entry Form and Model Entry Form, *you will only need to enter the information for that one model being evaluated/scored.*

As you complete your entry forms, please only fill out the form to reflect the one model you want the judges to evaluate—you do not need to list all the models on your display on the entry forms.

All models entered for evaluation will be evaluated using basic modeling skills as to how well the modeler paid attention to the basics of model building. Each model will be scored and receive comments from the judges to aid the modeler in improving their craft.

### **THE CONTEST**

#### **Philosophy:**

Scale models are a combination of two theories—technical fidelity to detail and scale, and artistic depictions of subjects, whether they be historic or hypothetical.

Each modeler has their own style to building models, and this style is defined by how the modeler employs the various construction and finishing techniques used in the hobby. That being said, models should be evaluated in the context of the builder's style, not in accordance to a set of hard and fast rules denoting what methods are "correct".

Each model is evaluated individually and scored. The four judges (two teams of two judges) will evaluate the model as discussed below, and will assign a score to the model. The four score sheets, once complete, are gathered. The lowest score is discarded, and the remaining three scores are added together to arrive at the model's aggregate score. The aggregate score determines what medal, if any, that the model earns.

Due to the nature of the exhibition, the category structure that you may be familiar with is not needed.

Once all the models are evaluated individually, the best models are then comparatively judged to determine the Class awards; the Class award winners are comparatively judged to determine Best of Show. Comparative judging is also used to determine the Skill Level, Special, and Theme Awards.

Our process is a form of education. Rather than merely judging a model, we see it as the process of compiling a three-dimensional research paper and submitting it for a grade. Our judges are modelers. They have many and varied interests, and their models are as individual as they are. While some may profess specialized knowledge of a few subjects, none is a Subject Matter Expert (SME) on everything. Therefore, we encourage modelers to document their projects in such a way to assist the judges. In other words, the judges don't know everything—if there is something about your model that you feel needs to be explained, it is up to YOU, the modeler, to educate the judges when needed.

Also, we encourage modelers to volunteer as judges. If you build models, you can judge models—like the two-way education street mentioned above, judging makes you a better modeler, which, in turn, makes you a better judge.

### **Class Awards**

We will offer the following Class Awards:

1. Best Armor
2. Best Figure
3. Best Diorama
4. Best Vignette
5. Best Aircraft
6. Best Automotive
7. Best Real Space
8. Best Sci-Fi (Includes Robots / Fighting Suits / Gundam)
9. Best Naval / Nautical / Ship
10. Best Miscellaneous

We also offer the following Skill Level Awards:

1. Best Junior Modeler
2. Best Basic Modeler
3. Best Intermediate Modeler (The Scott T. Amey Best Intermediate Modeler Award)

And we offer the following Show Awards:

1. Theme Award(s)
2. Special Award(s)
3. Best of Show

### **Competition Skill Levels:**

Our system uses four levels which groups modelers with similar skills. The criteria for these skill levels are:

*JUNIOR* - modelers age 17 or younger who do not wish to compete in one of the other skill levels. Modelers who are 17 or younger are permitted to compete in other skill levels but are not compelled to do so.

*BASIC* – modelers new to the hobby or with basic modeling skills. The BASIC level is the introductory level to the system. Modelers at this level generally build their models with minimal tweaks, and often have often never competed before or are new to the hobby. It allows members who are developing their modeling skills to be evaluated and encouraged through the

feedback provided by the judging system. As with all other entrants, BASIC Level entrants are encouraged to volunteer for judging.

*INTERMEDIATE* – modelers with average to above average skill. Modelers at this level generally make some modifications or conversion to their work or use commercial upgrades. INTERMEDIATE modelers may have been promoted from BASIC, won awards at other shows, or chose to enter at this level from the start. An INTERMEDIATE modeler is versed the basic skills and someone to whom some or all of the following apply:

- Adds photo-etched and/or resin details
- Uses aftermarket conversion kits
- Scratchbuilds details and makes modifications to actualizing kits
- Uses reference material for actualizing ideas
- Improves models by cross-kitting
- Builds full resin kits
- Displays models on complementary bases or with figures

*ADVANCED* – modelers with more highly-developed skills, whose entries are heavily reworked, actualized, or include non-commercial parts or modifications. The evaluations of this class are more stringent. An ADVANCED modeler does most of the things expected of INTERMEDIATE level modelers plus some or all of the following:

- Scratchbuilds, using references
- Casts own replacement parts
- Builds and paints at a high skill level
- Presents models on elaborate bases, sometimes with accompanying information
- Uses materials and space artistically

Modelers are free to select their Skill Level. Historically, in other systems that use these skill levels it has been shown it is better to underestimate your Skill Level than overestimate it.

#### **Method:**

***Note: AMPS Masters will be registered as such, and their work will be judged, scored and awarded in accordance with AMPS Master Model criteria. Unless you have been officially been recognized by AMPS as an AMPS Master, you may not self-declare yourself to be a Master Modeler.***

Judging will be conducted with an "open" room (show in progress). Judges will attempt to be as inconspicuous as possible but will take all necessary steps to ensure complete and fair judging of entries. Judging will be done by two, two-person teams for a total of four written scores per model. Judging will commence with the beginning of model registration. The models will be judged in situ on the display tables.

Judges will read all accompanying materials to ensure the entrant receives due consideration as to his desired effect, achievement, level of skill displayed and any unique characteristics of the entry. Due to time constraints, the modeler will want to include the most important information on the entry sheet. Research information is best placed with the model separately—and if done correctly, it can count towards an extra half-point. (See Research Bonus)

Each judge will award points to an entry according to how well the modeler has followed the standards of craftsmanship. After judging an entry, the judge will mark his score on the judging sheet, along with his initials. Judges are expected to make constructive notes on the back side of the score sheet of each model he or she evaluates, suggesting areas for improvement or acknowledging particularly well-done aspects of the model, and should not write anything they would not be prepared to discuss face-to-face with the entrant after the competition is over. These comments need not be long-winded; a simple "There are unfilled areas of the wing seam" or "Good job on the high gloss finish" will suffice. These notes will be handed to the scorer for later return to the entrants. These comments should give the modeler an idea as to why the model earned the score it did.

Once scoring is complete, the Scorer will enter the results on a tally sheet or in the computer for each entry by number. Once all scores are received, the scorer will print out the preliminary awards list for the use of the Chief Judge in assessing possible "Best of" and "Best Theme" awards.

The "Best of Class" awards are open to all skill levels. However, preliminary screening for the pool of models to be judged for each "Best of Class" award will prioritize the highest scoring models available for the highest skill level(s) represented. Once the pool of models for each class award has been selected, though, the judges will then ignore all previous scores of those models (to include any written comments by the field judges) and employ a comparative judging method to select that "Best of Class" award winner.

It is therefore possible that the highest scoring, highest skill level model eligible for any particular "Best of Class" award may not be the actual winner of that class award. Winning a "Best of Class" award is based on the collective assessments of all of the judges involved and the comparative strength of the other eligible models in the pool.

The "Best Junior," "Best Basic" and "Best Intermediate" eligibility will be restricted to only those models entered under one of those skill levels. A "Best Skill Level" winner MAY also be added to the judging pool for one of the "Best of Class" awards depending on the scored strength of the competition of the other eligible entries. In this way, a "Best Skill Level" entry may be included in any "Best of Class" judging pools to be assessed without regard to skill level, previous score or written comments in the same manner as the other models in that pool.

The Judges' Best in Show winner will be selected from the entry winners of the "Best of" Class Awards.

Scores to be used are as follows:

For the **JUNIOR** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 26.0 to 30.0

Silver Medal -- a score of 21.0 to 25.5

Bronze Medal -- a score of 16.0 to 20.5

For the **BASIC** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 26.0 to 30.0

Silver Medal -- a score of 21.0 to 25.5

Bronze Medal -- a score of 16.0 to 20.5

For the **INTERMEDIATE** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 27.0 to 30.0  
Silver Medal -- a score of 23.0 to 26.5  
Bronze Medal -- a score of 19.0 to 22.5.

For the **ADVANCED** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 28.0 to 30.0  
Silver Medal -- a score of 25.0 to 27.5  
Bronze Medal -- a score of 22.0 to 24.5.

### **Model Judging Criteria:**

**Note:** Bases are not judged except in the Diorama or Vignette classes. Modelers seeking judges' scoring and feedback on the base and landscaping elements of their work should enter their work into one of those two Classes.

#### *Construction Group (5.0 Points)*

Basic Construction (2.0 points): The judges will assess the basic model construction and determine how the modeler has addressed the basics of scale modeling:

1. Molding flaws—Parting lines, ejector pin marks, sink marks, sprue attachment burrs, etc. have been addressed. Severe draft angles and mold shift has been corrected.
2. Construction flaws—Seams and gaps have been addressed.

Alignment (2.0 Points): The model is straight, square, and plumb. All wheels touch the ground. Track runs are correct and not skewed. The wingtips are equidistant from the ground.

Details (1.0 point): The judges will look at how the modeler has corrected, modified, or enhanced the model, using detailing parts regardless of the source. (Note: Detailing parts can be provided from the kit or from aftermarket or alternate sources). These detailing parts must be properly cleaned, aligned and installed without glue marks. Clear parts, if present, must be cleanly installed with no visible fingerprints or glue marks present. "Chromed" parts must be uniform in appearance, and any repairs to the plating (due to parting line removal, etc.) should blend with the original plating. It is incumbent upon the modeler to provide the judges with a description of their extra work. The format or style of this information is not to be judged. Only the information is important and only as far as it presents the detail work done by the modeler.

***Judges are not expected to know things the modeler does not tell them.***

#### *Finish Group (4.0 points)*

Basic Finish and Decals (1.5 points): The judges will look at how the modeler has applied paint and/or markings. There should be no finish flaws: paint that is either too thick or thin, paint that is rough or contaminated with debris or paint that is splotchy, patchy, or exhibits drips and runs. Markings and decals, if applied, should be viewed for edges lifting, silvering etc. Hand-applied painted markings should be viewed "in scale," i.e., the marking must not be too heavy-handed or thickly applied.

*Judges Note:* The absence of markings shall not result in a penalty or "point shifting" in the Finish/Weathering Group. Markings are simply part of the model's finish. Issues regarding the

accuracy of markings are properly considered as part of the Research and Reference Bonus evaluation.

Finish Enhancement/Detail Painting (1.5 points): The judges will assess the detail painting on the model for smoothness and neatness. They will look at how the model is distressed or weathered.

“Finish Enhancement” covers traditional “weathering”, use of pigments, forced panel lines, black basing, pre-shading, post-shading, color modulation/fading, or other artistic techniques used to impart realism or artistic impressionism to the model. Cutting, buffing or polishing glossy paint are other examples of techniques that the modeler might use to enhance the finish of the model or its parts.

Judges cannot hold it against a modeler if he chooses not to show any degree of enhancement. The judges should score the model as the modeler presents it. A model shown as new should be viewed and scored as such.

*Judges Note*: What is important in this group is how the modeler has improved the finish of the model. **No technique is mandatory**; it is the final effect that counts. The use of these techniques might be perfect for any given vehicle, but if these techniques do not improve (or possibly even detract from) the finish of the model, points should not be awarded. A model with no enhancement could still obtain points depending on possible subtleties in the applied paint.

Finish continuity (1.0 point): The judges will look at how the modeler has tied the basic finish/markings and enhancement/detail painting together. In other words, the model will be assessed as to how well the finish is “homogenized”. Continuity is evaluated over the entire model—a spotlessly clean finish on the body coupled with mud-caked wheels is an example of lack of continuity.

#### *Intangibles Group (1.0 point)*

Degree of Difficulty (1.0 point): Degree of Difficulty is a combination of complexity, extent of the work, and the amount of labor required of the modeler to create a realistic scale model of the original. These three elements are not required to be equal for a technique or task to be difficult. This allows room for such things as extensive parts counts to be assessed as difficult as well as tasks such as building working PE hinges and tool clasps. This also allows for finishing tasks such as multi-color camouflage paint jobs and using stencils to paint markings. Some work might not be very complex, but the extent and amount of labor involved makes them difficult. On the other hand, some tasks might not involve very much labor but are very complex and are also difficult. Judges should evaluate the **difficulty** of all the techniques used by the modeler. **How well** these techniques are applied is not evaluated here, since this is covered under the Construction and Finish/Weathering Groups.

Judges should also consider the skill level of the modeler in assigning a Degree of Difficulty score. For example, some tasks are more difficult for a lower skill level modeler to perform.

It is the responsibility of the modeler to provide the judges with a description of the kit(s) and various techniques they used to create a realistic scale model of the original. This is where photos of the work "in progress" would help the modeler document the degree of difficulty involved in building the model. **Judges are not obligated to provide a score for this element**

**if the modeler does not provide a description of their work or only indicates the model is built out of the box.**

Judges should look at what the modeler started with, what he finished with and what he did to get there, as well as the skill level of the modeler, when determining this score.

Optional Research Bonus (0.5 point): There is an additional bonus of 0.5 points for Research, which may be awarded by the judging **team**. To obtain this 0.5 point bonus, the modeler must document to the judging team the **link** between the research they performed and the finished model. This documentation need not be extensive (**two pages or less**), but must address, at a minimum, the following areas:

- I. **Description of Research (The Link)**: The modeler should provide a short description of the research they performed to build the model. The modeler must describe in his presentation how or why his model looks, either directly or indirectly, like the vehicles mentioned in the research. The model could look like the research by applying some of the following: similar paint schemes, markings, weathering, stowage, field modifications, or by using technical drawings to create the model displayed. The modeler can use pictures as part of this description.
  
- II. **Research References (The Format)**: The modeler should list the research references they used while building the model.

**It is the modeler's responsibility to show the Link and meet the Format requirements for the Research Bonus. This is one area where the modeler is not given benefit of the doubt!**

The references need not be exclusively limited to Technical Manuals, historical, or even factual information (in the case of hypothetical subjects). A reference can be any information source that was used to improve the basic model. Note that all models entered, regardless of category or subject, have the potential to earn the Research Bonus if the entrant satisfies this section of the rules.

If the modeler provides a brag book or other description of how they constructed the model, without providing a description of their research in the format above, they will not be awarded the 0.5 point bonus. The link between the research and the model is established by replication and presentation of one, all or some of the following on the model being judged: paint schemes, markings, stowage, weathering, historical context, descriptions of similar vehicles or the use of technical drawings to create the model – based upon the research documentation provided.

Judges Note: Based on the information provided by the modeler, the judging team should ask the following questions:

1. Does the model, either directly or indirectly, match or look like the description(s), text explanations and/or pictures provided in the research? (paint schemes, weathering, historical context, descriptions of similar vehicles or the use of technical drawings). **{THE LINK}**
  
2. Is the research documentation format requirements met? **{THE FORMAT}**

If the answer to both questions is YES, the judges will indicate that the material is present and meets the criteria. The Scorer will add the 0.5 point research bonus after the total score has been determined.

## **Diorama Judging Criteria**

### **Introduction**

A diorama is a story based display on a landscaped base. It is a type of landscaped display that is built specifically to "tell a story" or convey a message by the builder to the viewer. The strength of the story or message along with how well it is communicated are critical considerations for the diorama. Dioramas that tell their story extremely well are the most difficult and artistic modeling products incorporating the widest and most complex skills. **By saying a diorama "tells a story", a written account of what the model represents or the title of the diorama alone do not satisfy this requirement—the models themselves MUST tell the story. If you are in doubt that your diorama lacks a strong storyline, you may consider entering it as a vignette, where the storyline requirement isn't as heavily weighted.**

The purpose and intent of a diorama is for the builder to communicate a narrative with the viewer. The models used on the diorama are the medium that the builder uses to communicate that story or message in much the same way that an author uses written words. **The diorama is story-centric**, and the story is the most important part of the work. Therefore, those elements of the diorama that contribute to the telling of the story – the models, their composition, and the landscape – are judged, assessed, and scored according to how well the builder has used them to communicate their message. A viewer should be able to understand the story from what they see, not by it being explained in a written description. At the most, reading the title of the diorama should ONLY be an additional clue to the story other than the actual scene.

Craftsmanship in construction and finishing determine how convincing and realistic the diorama and its message can be perceived and understood. However, the intangible aspects of composition and story carry great weight in judging, assessing and scoring.

The following is a presentation of the 10-point breakdown as it applies to diorama judging.

### **System for Diorama Judging**

Proper diorama construction requires a mastery of related but diverse modeling skills and the artistic talent needed to compose scenes and tell stories. Because of this, the diorama is one of the most difficult forms of modeling to execute successfully. Judging dioramas in competition is also difficult. Judges must have a keen appreciation of all of the facets required of diorama construction from the obvious, tangible modeling skills, such as construction and finishing, to the more abstract categories, such as composition. In addition, the same research bonus criteria used for models applies to dioramas. If awarded, the head diorama judge will add the 0.5 points to the total score of the judging team. This score then becomes the official score for the diorama entered into the scoring system.

Above all, the diorama judge should be fair and objective. Judges will use the following process to judge dioramas:

### **Construction Group - (3 points total)**



Main subject models: 1.0 point

Figures: 1.0 point

Groundwork: 1.0 point

*Judge's Note:* If the diorama has no vehicles or ordnance, the 3 points are split as follows: Figures – 1.5 points, Groundwork 1.5 points. If the diorama has no figures (rare but possible) the points are split as follows: Vehicles/ordnance – 1.5 points, Groundwork 1.5 points. If, in the case of some models such as aircraft or spacecraft in flight, there are figures, a vehicle of some sort, and no groundwork, the points would be split 1.5-subject and 1.5-figures.

### **Finishing Group - (3 points total)**

Overall finish: 1.0 point

Overall enhancement: 1.0 point

Consistency of finish throughout the diorama: 1.0 point

### **Story and Composition Group (4 points total)**

Storyline: 1.0 point

Composition: 1.0 point

Attention to detail: 1.0 point

### **Degree of difficulty/overall feel: 1.0 point**

*Judge's Note:* The same criteria which make up the bulk of the individual model judging have been reduced to 6 points total when applied to judging dioramas. The third Group, "Story and Composition", is worth one more point (4 total) than either of the other two groups. The reason for this is simple: without a story or good composition, the diorama is not successful. Perfectly built vehicles, perfectly painted figures and beautiful groundwork will only yield a maximum of 6 points. If the diorama elements are not well composed to properly tell a story, the diorama will not score well. Likewise, if the construction and finish of a diorama are not skillfully done, the entry will not do well no matter how well a "story" it presents. Achieving a consistency and balance of all the skills needed to plan and build dioramas is the cornerstone for successful diorama construction.

### **Considerations for Dioramas**

The third group, "Story and Composition" requires a good understanding of the intangibles, or "abstracts", of diorama construction. Below are some of suggestions on this subject. These comments are meant to help both diorama builders and judges.

### **Story and Composition Group (4.0 points)**

Storyline (1.0 point) - Regardless of whether the storyline is simple or complicated, can it be easily understood without any accompanying text other than a simple title? If the viewer can't understand what is happening without having to read a lengthy treatise on the subject, the diorama has failed to tell its story successfully. All of the components of a well-executed diorama should contribute to the telling of the story, even if in a small degree.

Composition (1.0 point) - Composition refers to the arrangement of all diorama components in relation to each other -- everything placed on the diorama base from the largest building to the smallest piece of ground work either adds to or subtracts from the story. Composition is the single most important part of diorama building. A story cannot be told properly without good composition. Composition includes the following considerations:

- Balance - Are the diorama elements distributed around the base in a way that supports the story? Are they too close, too far apart, or bunched at one part of the base? Is the main idea supported by other, smaller components? Do supporting elements direct your eye around the diorama?
- The size of the diorama base - Is it too small or too large for the story being told?
- Tension - Is it obvious whether men or vehicles are moving or stationary? Do supporting elements help to understand this? Does the groundwork support or detract from the level of tension in the story?
- Clarity - Does the composition help or hinder the clear understanding of the story? Is it immediately clear what the story is? Is there too much going on, with no single focus? Or is there nothing at all going on?
- Time - Can you tell what just happened, what is happening or what is about to happen?
- The use of empty space - Does the space between components help or hinder your ability to understand the story and/or emotion of the diorama?

How do the diorama components interact with each other? Do they help to clarify the story or emotion of the diorama or do they distract from it by leading the viewer down too many unrelated side stories and dead ends? Is the path of travel realistic and logical?

• Attention to detail (1.0 point) - The modeler needs equally good research about uniforms, small arms, buildings, combat conditions, weather effects on men and machines etc. as on the vehicle or ordnance. In addition to the obvious, physical details, the intangible details such as facial expressions, body positioning, or the sizes and arrangement of cargo loads in vehicles also are important. Following are some detailing highlights:

- Figures: Weapon slings, web gear, buckles, small arms, small arms ammo, personal gear, poses, facial expressions, emotion, condition of uniforms and weapons.
- Groundwork: Realistic building construction, realistic rubble and landscaping, attention to weather, season, natural-looking texture and color of ground, plants, and other objects. Each component of the groundwork should be as detailed and as well-painted as the vehicles and figures.
- Vehicles/ordnance: How do they sit in or on the groundwork? Like figures, vehicles leave a trail during movement. Tracks or tires leave marks in soft ground or mud on clean pavements. Like figures, the path of travel for the vehicle/ordnance should be logical and realistic and the level of vehicle/ordnance detail should be consistent with that of the figures, e.g., straps, tie downs, realistic stowage. The groundwork, figures and vehicle/ordnance should exhibit a uniform level of detailing, finish and weathering. This attention to detail helps support the overall composition of the diorama.

Degree of difficulty/overall feel (1.0 point) - Criteria for this point category include:

- Does the diorama successfully tell a story that is difficult to tell because of its subtlety and/or complexity?
- Has the modeler constructed an elaborately-detailed base that supports the story?
- Is the action or arena of action portrayed in the diorama difficult to express successfully?
- Is the climate or time of day being represented unusually difficult to portray successfully, e.g. night time, water, rain, snow, ice etc.?
- Is the level of detail required for the story being told difficult to compose successfully?
- Are there multiple levels to the story? (e.g., subtle details that add to the obvious details the more a viewer looks)

This list is by no means inclusive. It is meant to convey the level of planning and detail that one expects to see in a well-constructed diorama.

A unique consideration for Degree of Difficulty assessment of the groundwork depicted in Dioramas and Vignettes is how much or how little of the base and groundwork has been created from scratch by the builder and how much has been created from a commercial base or other products (building or street castings, etc.)? Overall finish on the supporting structures, such as plaques, frames, bases should also be a consideration for the judges and included in their overall scoring. In the end, the Degree of Difficulty applies to the totality of the work displayed.

## **Vignette Judging Criteria**

### **Introduction**

A vignette is a model-subject based display on a landscaped base. It is a type of landscaped display that is built specifically to show off its subject model(s) in their historical and/or environmental context and which makes that context part of the modeled subject(s).

The purpose and intent of a vignette is for the model-builder to show off the aesthetic and / or technical characteristics of its subject model(s), either vehicles, figures or both. **The vignette is model-centric** and not story-centric. The models themselves are the most important part of the vignette. Any story that can be divined by the viewer in the vignette is irrelevant to the vignette's purpose and is not judged, assessed or scored.

The following is a presentation of the 10-point breakdown as it applies to vignette judging.

### **System for Vignette Judging**

Vignettes are similar to dioramas and are scored in the same manner. The key difference is that vignettes do NOT have to tell a story. This category is designed and intended for modelers that have expanded out from stand-alone modeling to include figures, groundwork and/or scenery, or for figure modelers who wish to set their figure(s) into a landscaped scene. It allows the modeler in this category to have his entire work judged without being put in the diorama category where storyline plays a key role. For example, a tank crew sitting on a tank or a soldier nearby a vehicle adds interest but does not necessarily tell a story.

**It is up to the modeler to decide** if they think their work is a diorama or a vignette. If there is any doubt as to exactly what the story is, then it would be better to enter as a Vignette. It is also up to the modeler to determine if they want to enter a regular model category or the Vignette category. Like dioramas, vignettes require diverse modeling skills and the artistic talent needed to compose scenes. Judges must have a keen appreciation of all of the facets required of vignette construction from the obvious, tangible modeling skills, such as construction and finishing, to the more abstract categories, such as composition. In addition, the same research bonus criteria used for models applies to vignettes. If awarded, the head vignette judge will add the 0.5 points to the total score of the judging team. This score then becomes the official score for the vignette entered into the scoring system.

Judges will use the following process to judge vignettes:

### **Construction Group - (4 points total)**

Subject model: 1.5 points

Figures: 1.5 points

Groundwork: 1.0 point

*Judge's Note:* If the vignette has no vehicles or ordnance, the 4 points are split as follows: Figures – 2.0 points, Groundwork 2.0 points. If the vignette has no figures (rare but possible) the points are split as follows: Vehicles/ordnance – 2.0 points, Groundwork 2.0 points. If, in the case of some models such as aircraft or spacecraft in flight, there are figures, a vehicle of some sort, and no groundwork, the points would be split 1.5-subject and 1.5-figures.

Finishing and Enhancement Group - (3 points total)

**Overall finish: 1.0 point**

Overall weathering: 1.0 point

Consistency of finish throughout the vignette: 1.0 point

**Composition and Difficulty Group (3 points total)**

Composition and attention to detail: 2.0 point

Degree of difficulty/Overall feel: 1.0 point

*Judge's Note:*

The emphasis of the judging is on the craftsmanship exhibited in the construction and finish of the model-subjects and groundwork. Composition is assessed in the context of how well the builder has arranged the elements to show off the technical, historical, or environmental context of the model-subjects. Attention to detail contributes to the effectiveness of the overall work in creating this context. Degree of Difficulty is assessed in the same manner as the regular single subject categories.

**Considerations for Vignettes**

The first two scoring groups, "Construction" and "Finish and Weathering," are assessed and scored using the same basic criteria as are used in the regular single-subject vehicle and figure categories. The addition is Groundwork, which is assessed and scored on how realistic it appears which includes considerations of construction, landscaping, attention to the weather, season, natural-looking textures and colors of the ground, plants, and other objects. Each component of the groundwork should be as detailed and as well painted as the vehicles and figures. Does the groundwork depict aspects that are more or less difficult to model, such as, water, snow, changes in elevation, etc? How well are these aspects constructed and finished? How much or how little of the groundwork has been created from scratch by the modeler? Has the majority or entirety of the base been created from a commercial casting or ready-made base?

The Composition and Difficulty group is where the judges assess and score how well the model-builder has depicted their model-subjects in some particular historical, technical or environmental context. The depiction of the model-subjects in some particular context is the purpose of building a vignette instead of simply displaying the model-subject alone. The measure of how effective the model-builder was in creating a realistic, interesting and aesthetically pleasing context is found within this scoring group. Judges should remember that the purpose of the vignette is to show off, to best effect, its model-subjects in their historical, technical or environmental context.

**Composition and Difficulty Group – (3 points)**

Composition and Attention to Detail (2 points) addresses those aspects of how the model-builder physically arranged all of the elements they used on the vignette in order to show the model-subjects in some particular and specific context.

Everything placed on the vignette, from the smallest bit of ground work to the largest building, either adds to or detracts from the viewer's appreciation of the model-subject(s). The principles of artistic composition apply here. Composition determines if the model-builder has created a realist, interesting and aesthetically pleasing work that shows off the model-subjects to their best advantage.

Attention to Detail specifically addresses the compositional principles of unity and harmony. Details should help tie the elements of the scene together. They should convince the viewer that what they are looking at is a small part of the real world.

Details should appear in scale and contribute to the historical, technical, or environmental context of the model-subjects. They should help the viewer to understand and appreciate the context that the model-builder is attempting to portray.

Degree of Difficulty (1 point) should be assessed from both the point of view of how hard the particular model-subjects were to build and finish (normal single-subject considerations) and the point of view of how difficult it was for the model-builder to create the historical, technical or environmental scene that he or she has chosen to show off those model-subjects, i.e. how hard was it to build the vignette itself?

Thus, the judges should include into their assessment and scoring aspects of the groundwork, the posing of the figures, the interaction between the various model elements (figures and vehicles/ordnance) and what aspects of those model-subjects the builder has selected to highlight, emphasize or show off. Examples of these other aspects could include such things as hard to model environments (snow, water, elevations, etc), dynamic physical features of the vehicles/ordnance (suspension deflection, steering articulation, interiors, recoil, crew duties and actions, etc), major figure conversions, hard to depict camouflage or other finishes (on both the figures and vehicles), etc.

A unique consideration for Degree of Difficulty assessment of the groundwork depicted in vignettes and dioramas is how much or how little of the base and groundwork has been created from scratch by the builder and how much has been created from a commercial base or other products (building or street castings, etc.)? Overall finish on the supporting structures, such as plaques, frames, bases should also be a consideration for the judges and included in their overall scoring. In the end, the Degree of Difficulty applies to the totality of the work displayed.

## **Figure Judging Criteria**

### **Judging Philosophy**

Because we are asking our judges to evaluate a wide range of subjects, it is important to remember the strength of the system is not a competitive one, where no piece wins an award at the expense of another. Each work is evaluated and receives the level of award which the judges feel is appropriate based on its own merit. Remember, finding flaws is only half the job – the other half is finding the good things and the score and comments reflect a combination of both.

### **Figure Definitions**

Stock: Commercially-cast figures, including resin, plastic or metal, all scales. The judging will be based on simple construction and painting quality.

Conversions: Minor conversions of commercially available stock figures which consist of small changes in poses or uniforms. More elaborate conversions which consist of extensive rework of poses or uniforms will be evaluated on degree of difficulty and anatomical scale likeness. Conversions may also leave practically nothing of the original design except face and hands, which may also be altered.

Scratch builds: The sculpting of complete figure by the modeler with components they've created from non-kit sources. Generally, scratch built figures are the most challenging and highest degree of difficult. Judges should look at the anatomy of change, skeletal and muscle structure (e.g. is one arm longer than the other), scale and draping of clothing and equipment. Photo documentation is most helpful for the judges

Busts: Commercially available cast, resin, plastic, metal, all scales. The judging will be only based on painting quality

Note: A scratchbuilt bust can be entered as either "Scratchbuilt" or "Busts", depending on whether the modeler wishes the evaluation to lean more towards the sculpting (Scratchbuilt) or the painting of the final piece (Busts).

## **Judging Criteria**

Each judge, upon assessing the figure, can award up to a total of three points. These points are awarded in 0.5 point increments in accordance with the figure judging criteria. Each figure may be awarded a maximum of 9.0 points by the judging team. In addition, the same research bonus criteria used for models applies to figures. If awarded, the head figure judge will add the 0.5 points to the total score of the three judges. This score then becomes the official score for the figure entered into the scoring system.

Assembly: Judges will look for correctly-treated mold seams, sprue and casting vents, components properly assembled, absence of glue marks, assembly areas properly filled and finished. Additionally, on conversion and scratch built figures the judges should look for mismatched or out of scale components (anatomy), unfinished areas between components, putty or sculpted areas, rough sanding or smoothing, fingerprints in the putty. The judges should also look at how the figure is attached to the base. The figure should be posed appropriately on the base with an appearance of correct scale weight, neither floating above the ground work nor sunk into it (exceptions would be mud, snow or other soft ground).

Painting: This is the most important element of figure judging, as the judges will look for application of paint for shading and highlighting, with no brush strokes and no areas of primer showing. Some figure modelers allow for artistic impression in color choices, but unless they are trying to duplicate specific lighting situations (nighttime or firelight) the uniforms' colors should be reasonably accurate. However, judges should remember that due to differences in material (e.g., sun bleaching, wear, and age) no two uniforms or pieces of equipment may look exactly alike. The painting of faces is the most difficult and most challenging for most modelers, especially in the bust category but it is of utmost importance, as it brings the figure to life from the viewer's point of view. For example, eyes should be accurately located level with each other, and lacking the suggestion of the "pop-eyed" look.

The judges will evaluate how the modeler has rendered shadows and highlights both technically and compositionally. Technically, shadows and highlights should be painted with proper shades and blending. Compositionally, shadows and highlights should be where they belong on the figure. The judging team should carefully look for innovative or adventurous painting. This will include reflected lighting and color, creating the effect of moonlight or artificial lighting sources.

Groundwork: Judges will evaluate how the groundwork enhances the overall figure composition of the piece. The modeler should use the ground work to stage the figure. Groundwork can be simple or elaborate; the groundwork and vegetation should be realistic in effect, appropriate to the geographic setting, and painted in a style commensurate with the figure(s). The figure should be tied to the base artistically, for example, a dusty figure should be posed on a dusty base; a muddy figure on a muddy base.

Degree of difficulty and scope of effort: The more detailed and difficult work the modeler executes, i.e. heavy conversion/scratch built or elaborate integrated base and/or groundwork. the more credit they will receive. Judges need to always keep in mind the basics of assembly and painting.

### Figure Scoring Breakdown

#### Stock Category

Assembly – 20 %  
Painting – 60%  
Groundwork – 20%

#### Conversion/Scratchbuilt Category

Degree of difficulty and overall scope of effort – 50%  
Painting – 30%  
Groundwork – 20%

#### Bust Category

Painting – 80%  
Base – 20%

Scores to be used for figures are as follows:

For the **JUNIOR** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 7.5 to 9.0	26.0 to 30.0
Silver Medal -- a score of 5.0 to 7.0	21.0 to 25.5
Bronze Medal -- a score of 2.5 to 4.5	16.0 to 20.5

Scoring System Conversion:

For the **BASIC** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 7.5 to 9.0	26.0 to 30.0
Silver Medal -- a score of 5.0 to 7.0	21.0 to 25.5
Bronze Medal -- a score of 2.5 to 4.5	16.0 to 20.5

For the **INTERMEDIATE** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 8.0 to 9.0	27.0 to 30.0
Silver Medal -- a score of 5.5 to 7.5	23.0 to 26.5
Bronze Medal -- a score of 3.5 to 5.0	19.0 to 22.5.

For the **ADVANCED** Skill Level:

Gold Medal -- a score of 8.5 to 9.0	28.0 to 30.0
Silver Medal -- a score of 6.5 to 8.0	25.0 to 27.5
Bronze Medal -- a score of 4.5 to 6.0	22.0 to 24.5.