



# International Plastic Modelers' Society

## 2024 National Contest Rules

*Changes from 2023 Contest Rules shown in Red*

January 31, 2024

## I. ELGIBILITY

1. The IPMS/USA National Contest is open only to members of IPMS/USA or other **International** IPMS branches. Any current member of IPMS/USA or any other **International** branch of IPMS is eligible to enter any number of models in the National Contest.

2. To enter the model contest a IPMS member in good standing must be registered for the IPMS National Convention.

3. **An IPMS member in good standing, with a Family Membership, who registers for the convention entitles every member listed under that Family Membership to enter the model contest. Each family member has their own IPMS number which will be used for model registration. Therefore, the family member registration form will be identical to every other model registration form but delineated with their own IPMS number.**

4. An IPMS member may also serve as a 'proxy' to enter models for an absent member who is not attending the convention. **Both proxy and non-attending modelers must be current IPMS members in good standing.** Entry fees for absentee/proxy entrants are set by the Host Chapter.

5. Juniors. Junior Division categories are limited to members 17 years and younger. Those categories **may** be split into two age groupings:

A. Pre-teen for ages through 12 years; and,

B. Teen for ages 13 through 17 years. Junior members may, at their own discretion, enter any or all of their models in Senior Division categories; however, models entered in Senior categories will not be eligible for any special Junior-Division awards.

6. Prior Winners. Models that have won First-, Second-, Third-place, **or separate Out-of-Box awards issued through 2007** in any category of any previous IPMS/USA National Model Contest may not be entered in any subsequent IPMS/USA National Model Contest for awards, except as follows:

A. Previous award winners can be used as noted in Dioramas, Collections, Triathlon and Group entries. Models that have won an award as part of a Collection, Triathlon or Group entry may also be entered individually in subsequent National Contests.

B. However, models that have won individually, and **subsequently** as part of a Collection, Triathlon or Group entry, are not eligible for **any future** National Contests.

**C. If major modifications are made to a prior winner, such as additional details added in addition to repainting, the model may be entered. However, a model strictly undergoing major repairs following significant damage for various reasons is not eligible.**

7. Pre-Production/Home-Production Models. Pre-production kits (whether from major or limited-run manufacturers) may be entered in the contest. A preproduction kit is one which is not yet generally available for retail purchase.

8. Home-production models (specifically, home-produced 3D-printed models) may also be entered in the contest. Both of these examples will be entered **in regular class categories** but not as 'scratch-built' models. (see also Rule IV-1B. below)

9. No distinction is made between a model designed and

printed at home, versus a model designed by the modeler but sent out to a third party to print the model/parts.

10. Commercially built and/or finished models that do not require significant additional work by the modeler will be ineligible. **No Die Cast Models Allowed.**

11. All entries except Chapter/Group entries must be the sole work of the individual whose name is on the model-entry form.

12. Inappropriate Entries. The Chief Judge will exclude/remove from competition any entry considered by Contest officials to be inappropriate or offensive to generally acknowledged standards of taste and acceptability.

The following are prohibited in competition and may not be placed on display at any IPMS event:

A. There shall be no depiction of excretory functions depicting any human being or animal.

B. There shall be no depiction of sadomasochistic activity, equipment, settings or situations, to any degree, regardless of whether there are figures in the model and regardless of whether any figures present in the model are clothed.

C. There shall be no depictions of explicit sexual conduct, bilateral or autoerotic, regardless of degree and regardless of the clothing-status of the participants that involves the touching of the breasts or genitals or other erogenous zones of any depicted figure.

D. There shall be no depiction of any nude human male or female figures where the genitalia of the figure are exposed where the clear intent of the same is to portray a sexual scene.

The following may be entered in the competition or put on display but can be presented only behind opaque screens or similar visual barriers. **Anyone planning on entering models as described below must notify the designated local contest coordinator to request that screens or barriers are set up.**

Visitors **must be** provided with a fair description, in written format, of the contents of the models behind the screen **that must be written by the modeler and approved by the local contest coordinator.** This screened presentation covers competitors and the general public, but no person younger than 18 will be admitted except in the presence of an adult responsible for the young person, subject to the provisions of governing local law:

A. Depictions of any nude human male or female figure, subject to the provisions of I- 5A, above.

B. Models or dioramas of historic events (e.g. general dioramas or specific depictions of the result of the activities of the communist Cambodian Pol Pot regime, a Soviet Gulag, or a Nazi death camp) where the suffering of human beings, or the result of a pogrom **(an organized massacre of a particular ethnic group)**, is depicted.

Where the theme, content or subject matter of presentations is graphic or violates the provisions cited above, **the presentation is prohibited in any setting.**

**13. Oversized or Special Display Requirements.** Modelers entering pieces that exceed three feet in either width or length, or that require special power support or special placement, must notify the Convention Contest Coordinator at least one month in advance of the Convention. The limited space for the Contest requires pre-planning for such entries. Failure to provide advanced notification for such models could result in them being unable to be completely displayed, compete, or have adequate special support (e.g., power hook-up). You must contact the Contest Coordinator via e-mail to make the required arrangements.

**A. Display Only.** Where space and finances permit, convention hosts are encouraged to provide space for "Display Only" models. This should be open to any model by any registered entrant, regardless of its having won or not at a previous convention. No awards will be given in this class, nor will it be judged. It will serve to exhibit the full range of work accomplished by IPMS modelers. Space restraints could limit or eliminate this option, which should not impinge on the space required for a full and safe contest.

**B. Contest Duration.** Exhibitors are encouraged to leave their models in the display room until the awards banquet is over and attendees have had the maximum opportunity to view them. Entrants who remove their models and leave before the show's end will need to contact the hosting chapter's contest committee and pay to have any awards they leave behind shipped to them at a fee to be determined by the Host Contest Coordinator.

## II. JUDGING

**A. Judging.** Models will be judged for skill in construction, finish, realism, and scope of effort; accuracy may be used as criteria for determining final ranking for similar model subjects. Additional criteria are considered for special categories such as Dioramas, Collections, Conversions, and Triathlon. Models are judged as three-dimensional objects and are examined in all aspects.

**B. Entries** will be carefully handled by judges, both for proper category placement and for judging, as required. In some cases, modelers will be asked to move models, both for proper category placement or in instances where categories are split. Model entry forms should have a place for cell numbers and judges will attempt to call the modeler prior to moving a model.

**C. Judges.** Any IPMS-USA national member in good standing can sign-up to work as a national-contest judge. Only members fully registered at the current-year's Convention are eligible to join judging teams; single-day-pass attendees, 'guests' of registered convention attendees, non-member vendors, and any other non-member show attendees are not eligible to judge.

**D.** The Chief Judge will brief all judges before contest judging begins. The Host Chapter is responsible for providing a room large enough to brief 250 people. The judges briefing is a mandatory event prior to the beginning of any judging. Any potential judge who fails to attend the mandatory judges' brief will be disqualified. Potential judges who miss the mandatory brief can be certified with a tabletop brief signed off by the Chief Judge and 2VP.

**E.** During the briefing Judges will be issued a ribbon to place on their nametag identifying them as a judge. The ribbon will confirm they attended the brief and allow them access to the contest room for judging. During Judging each judge will receive a special Judges' pin recognizing their service.

**F. Junior** members may not serve as voting judges but may be assigned to judging teams as participating observers.

**G. Judges may not judge a category in which they are entered. THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE!**

**H. Contest entrants** may not attempt to solicit judges to select their entries to receive any awards, at any time during the annual convention, nor may any contest entrants attempt to solicit the public-at-large to select their entries to receive votes for Most Popular Model, at any time during the annual convention (in this case, the public-at-large function as de-facto judges).

**I. Judging teams** will be composed of multiple judges, preferably representing different regions. Strict impartiality will be observed, and violators will be removed from judges' lists for future National Conventions. Any judges disqualified for cause may not assume any role related to the contest judging at future IPMS/USA National Conventions and may not be present in the room during the judging for any reason. This will include, but not be limited to, administrative, scoring, photographic and other support judging responsibilities.

**J. The Chief Judge and Class Head Judges** will survey the contest room prior to judging to ensure all model entries are in the proper categories for judging. They will also see that models are moved to appropriate categories or moved to accomplish the "splits" required in the larger categories.

**K. No Sweeps.** First-, Second-, and Third-place awards will be given in each category. Individual contestants are eligible for only one award per category entered, that is, no category "sweeps" are allowed, even if a category has only three entries, but only one or two entrants.

**L. All Judges' Decisions Are Final.** Contest registrars will help determine proper entry categories for models during registration, but final category placement is at the discretion of contest judges. Judges may also split categories. Every effort should be made to contact an entrant to move their models prior to judging on Friday night. Cell phone for contact should be provided.

**M. Determination of awards** is at the discretion of the judges in accordance with these Rules and the Categories approved by the NCC and Eboard. Once judges' worksheets (judging results) have been checked by Class head judges (and their assistants), and those worksheets have been submitted to the Contest Recorder's team for data entry, those judges' decisions and results are final. No judging results can or will be redone after that point.

### III. General Contest-wide Definitions

**A. Composition.** The use of plastic is encouraged; however, the use of other modeling materials is allowed as the builder sees fit. 3D-printed models may be entered in the appropriate standard-subject Class. An entirely 3D-printed model may not be considered to be 'scratch-built' (per Rule IV-1B), even if the modeler is the designer of the model; such 3D-printed models are not the single, original 'master' model, but are copies generated from 'master' 3D drawing files. 3D kits, conversion sets, and detail parts are considered the same as other aftermarket products - be they plastic, resin, or metal. Judging standards of finish, attention to detail, and authenticity will be the same, regardless of the materials used.

**B. Scratch-Built Models** determined to be scratch-built must be entered in the proper scratch-built category. Scratch-built models may incorporate parts from other kits, but these should be generally unrelated to their original identity, except for minor parts such as wheels, guns, etc. Computer-design/programming and 3D-machine printing are not considered as "scratch- building" for defining Scratch-Built entries in the national contest. Replacement of kit parts with same-looking scratch-built parts does not make the entry scratch-built, where the majority of the entry is still kit-based.

**C. Conversion category** entries must represent a version different from that provided by the basic kit. The conversion must contain significant structural modifications to the basic kit involving extensive changes in contour or configuration. In addition to the normal judging criteria common to the entire contest, judges of the Conversion Category will give special consideration to the complexity of the conversion. A conversion accomplished with primarily commercial aftermarket parts will be at a disadvantage, therefore, against a conversion accomplished primarily by the builder's craftsmanship - assuming both are finished to similar standards. Simple conversions may be entered in regular categories. More extensive conversions, however, must be entered in the appropriate conversion category. The builder must describe in detail the conversion changes made to the base kit on the entry sheet or accompanying documentation. Class head judges have the ultimate authority to determine a model's category placement, and such decisions by judges will be final.

**D. Bases - In General.** Bases will be allowed in all categories and will not be considered in the judging, except in Small/Large Composition (vignette/diorama) categories. A base may be a piece of undecorated wood, plastic or glass or it may simulate the natural surface on which the prototype would be found. **However, nothing other than that basic surface may be used.** Aircraft and military vehicles may rest on simulated ground or paving, and aircraft that need beaching gear or dollies may be so equipped. Ships may be displayed in water (no dry docks). The base must not be the predominant feature of the entry and must be of a size proportionate to the model. The Contest Chairman and Judges reserve the right to exclude oversize bases. The model may include primary crew figures. (See Rule IV-3B for limits for Military Vehicles.) **The addition of any other figures or equipment outside or not attached to the model (e.g., support equipment, shell splashes, or buildings) will make the model a vignette or diorama, which must then be entered in the proper diorama category.** Therefore, if an entrant wants to compete in a single-subject category, they should not try to make a Vignette to see how far they can push the boundary!

**E. Display Cases.** Models in the Contest Room may be

covered by cases while on general-public display, but such cases must be removed from models for judging. Judges will not remove cases from models unless the modeler has given explicit, written approval in advance. Models in cases will not be judged, except in instances where removal of a case could cause damage, and in the judgment of the respective Head Class Judge, the case will not impede effective judging; in such instances, a display case may be left on during judging. Such an arrangement must be made prior to judging and noted in writing on the entry form by the Head Judge. The Head Judge will have the final and exclusive authority to allow or deny this exception.

**F. Markings.** Markings will help determine the category in which a model is entered, e.g., civil vs. military, historical era, or other defining markings.

**G . Basic Kit Build (BKB) - Single Media Only, General Guidelines:** (in effect for 2022, 2023, and 2024 contests).

1. The IPMS/USA National Contest will include separate categories in selected Classes for **Basic Kit Build (BKB) entries**. An exception to this is the Junior Class; since the number of Junior entries are relatively low, most Junior entries are regularly built as basic kit builds.
2. The spirit of building BKB is two-fold:
  - A. First, to limit yourself to using only those components supplied by the kit makers of older/simpler/less-expensive kits, and your work to get the best result regardless of any shortcomings in the base kit, such as may exist with its detailing or accuracy.
  - B. Second, to compete at a more basic level, knowing that basic modeling skills are the only difference-maker - not what variety of detailing materials is supplied by the kit manufacturer, nor by after-market detailing sets, nor by using more advanced re- building or scratch-building skills.
3. The general BKB approach is to build what came in the kit box. In some cases, this may result in a perceived incomplete or inaccurate model. While prior guidelines for out-of-the-box were modified for exceptions/inclusions, the BKB approach will return to "what came in the kit box". You are not required to make-up for any perceived kit deficiencies or inaccuracies based on detailing accessories. **Specific examples will be found under the SPECIFIC CLASS RULES.**
4. Models that meet the Basic Kit Build criteria (outlined below) may be entered in the BKB categories, but they are not required to be entered there. Modelers may, therefore, choose to place their model in a standard category, where it will be judged against the other entries with no reference to it being a BKB kit.
5. **Basic Kit Build (BKB), Specific Guidelines:** The BKB entries will be governed by the following rules:

**A. Kits.** Any commercially available kit may be used as long as the kit is constructed as a predominantly single-medium product. It can consist of an all-polystyrene kit, all-resin kit, all- photoetch kit, or any other 'single' material. **Kits with various other materials** included (e.g. cast-resin or 3D-resin detailing accessories,

etched-metal detailing frets, turned-metal detailing parts, or other similar detailing parts) **will not be permitted.** Examples of other material parts that **will be allowed** are **kit-supplied** vacuum-formed windscreens, canopies and windows for Aircraft/Automotive models; **kit-supplied** rubber/vinyl tires and poly-caps to retain wheels and/or parts attached to pylons; metal gearboxes and/or metal-rod axles for Armor and Automotive models.

1. As a **general guideline**, kit parts that are necessary to complete and support the overall structure of the completed model are allowed. However, other kit parts that provide enhanced surface-detailing to a completed model **will not be allowed for a BKB entry.**
2. **Construction.** The modeler may fill seams and gaps; sand off rivets; drill out gun ports, exhaust pipes, or other appropriate openings; thin to-scale such parts as trailing edges, flaps, and doors; re-scribe panel lines lost in construction, and add rigging and antennas, **if shown on the kit's instructions.** However, rigging or antennas, etc. on the box art or photo do not allow these to be added unless specified in the instructions. No major reconstruction or modifications will be allowed for BKB entries.
3. **Decals.** Decals other than those included with the kit may be used. They may be used to replace old/damaged/missing kit decals. They may also be used to provide alternative insignia and markings to those originally provided with a kit. However, their use for BKB entries is restricted to 2-dimensional waterslide or dry-transfer products. 3-dimensional products such as 3D-printed or resin-dot printed instrument panels, access panels, fasteners, bolts, rivets, stitching, etc., are commercially offered as after-market improved-detailing products, and so fall outside of the intended/accepted usage as decals for BKB entries.

**B. Finish.** All painting/finishing techniques are allowed. Insignia, markings, and instrument panels may be hand-painted instead of using decals. Weathering is permitted.

**C. Exclusions.** It is not permitted to vacuum-form, manufacture, or replace any part, or substitute parts from another kit; cut or separate canopies, surfaces, hatches, doors, etc. (no major surgery+); combine a standard kit with a conversion kit; add anything other than specified on the instruction sheet.

**I. Instruction Sheets.** Modelers must attach at least the first page of the kit instruction sheet to the entry form and have the rest of the instruction sheet accessible to the judges for review during judging (preferably, directly under the table from the model). Models entered **without an attached kit instruction sheet** cannot be considered for a BKB award, since judges then cannot verify if the builder used only kit-supplied parts.

**J.** The model builder should note that entering a model in any Basic Kit Build category is their choice. Models in these categories have limitations applied to them that are not applied to entries in the rest of the categories.

## IV. AWARDS

1. **No monetary value.** No awards associated with placement in the contest will have any intrinsic monetary value beyond the cost of their materials and production. Monetary awards, certificates and scholarships tied to placement in the contest are **expressly prohibited.**

### 2. IPMS Required/financed Awards

- A. **Regular Category Awards.** The Host Chapter will provide a sufficient number of trophy packages to account for all categories and preplanned splits, plus up to (but no more than) 5 trophy packages for additional, unplanned splits at the Contest. The NCC will confirm the total number of award packages required and the approved list of Categories **by February 15th the year of the convention.**
- B. **Theme Awards.** Additional theme awards may be presented at the discretion of the host chapter. The host chapter may add up to five theme awards for its convention only. **Additional theme awards may be approved by the NCC.** These additional theme awards must be identified to and approved by the E Board at the initial bid presentation for that Convention. Theme awards do NOT constitute new categories but are assessed across all contest entries. **Theme awards will be judged by the host chapter.**
- C. **Junior Awards.** Junior categories receive the same awards as every other category. The host chapter is encouraged to make use of additional incentive awards or non-trophy items as it sees fit to develop and encourage participation in the Junior categories.
- D. **Class Awards.** Besides the **Judges Grand Award and Most Popular Model Award**, 'Best' awards will also be presented for each class in the contest and are listed below. The 'Best' entries in each class will be determined by a vote of the judges assigned to that class, led by the Class Head Judge. The Judges Grand Award will be chosen from among the Class Best award recipients by vote of the Class Head Judges, led by the Chief Judge. Models entered in Senior categories by Junior members are not eligible for special Junior awards. The Judges Grand Award must be the final award presented at the Awards Ceremony
- E. **Show and Class Award Names.** The following 'Best' Awards will be presented at the National Convention:
  1. George Lee Judges' Grand Award (**Paid for by IPMS-Created by Host Chapter**)
  2. Jim Sage Most Popular Model Award
  3. Tom Kolk Best Junior Model Award
  4. Ken Robert Best Aircraft Award
  5. Art Gerber Best Military Vehicle Award
  6. Best Figure Award
  7. Best Ship Award
  8. Best Automotive Award
  9. Best Space or Science Fiction Vehicle Award
  10. Best Miscellaneous Award
  11. Best Diorama Award

12. Best Use of IPMS Convention-Special Decals  
(Paid/created/judged by former IPMS Officers)

**F. Honorariums.** Special awards may be named in honor of individuals, with the approval of the National Contest Committee **or nomination or recommendation by the E-Board.** Such awards will remain named for a period of three years, after which they will either be renewed for another three-year period, be renamed in honor of another individual, or revert to their standard-class name. Selection criteria will be very high and named awards will remain the exception. **Members who sponsor Honorariums are encouraged to also sponsor a regular trophy package.**

**3. Non IPMS Sponsored or financed Awards**

**Special Interest Awards** Various manufacturers or organizations and interest groups can present other awards each year. These awards must conform to Rule III- 1, above. Any such awards expected to be announced by IPMS at the Convention or in its Journal Magazine, **must be accompanied by sponsorship of at least one regular category awards package.** The screening and selection for these awards is done by the **sponsor's selected teams and is not accomplished by IPMS/USA judging teams.** The special awards will be chosen while the contest room is open to normal viewing, and the awards placed/presented prior to the awards banquet at the convenience of the sponsor.

Additional sign-up **or designation may be** required for entrants who want their entries considered for various Theme or Special Interest awards. This may take the form of a separate sign-up list at contest registration or checkboxes contained on the individual entry form. **Alternatively, digital-based systems may be used at the time of model registration to facilitate identity of entries considered for these awards.** Those items help the judging teams locate entries to be judged within the contest's many categories.

**V. Document Control and Currency**

**A.** The IPMS/USA National Contest Committee (NCC) is responsible for the drafting of these rules. The rules are published with the concurrence of the Eboard. The Contest Rules and Categories are updated annually. Any suggested changes to the rules or categories should be submitted to the Second Vice President by October 30 for consideration by the NCC and the Eboard. Rules and categories for the current year should be published on the host chapter convention website no later than February 15th.

**B.** No liability or entitlement. No liability for loss or damage to contest entries is implied or assumed by IPMS/USA, the Host Chapter, the convention hotel, or the contest judges. No entrants are "entitled" to receive awards or to an increased level of received awards. No entrants are "entitled" to compensation for costs incurred (whether actual or perceived) to attend the National Convention and Contest. **No entrants are "entitled" to compensation as noted above, should their entries receive no awards, or are damaged in any way.**

**C.** Waivers. Although unlikely, the Chief Judge may waive any rule if circumstances warrant.