Mid Central Region, NMRA, Inc.
Module Judges' Guidelines
Form #903-G – Revised 02/13/2019
All previous Module Guideline Sheets are obsolete.

General Overview for Judging Modules

The purpose of these Judging Guidelines is to assist in the evaluation of modules for the MCR Regional Contest. These guidelines attempt to provide instruction and a framework that will assist in the judging as it relates to modules. Besides discussing what should be considered for modules, these guidelines also include matrices or tables with suggested scoring ranges to assist the person judging to determine the point values of the category that the module earned. The idea behind the matrices is to answer the basic two questions in judging, whether models or modules, which are;

(1) What did the modeler try to do?

(2) How well did the modeler do it?

On the Judge's Score Sheet for NMRA MCR Module Contest there are four (4) categories for judging. These are:

- Terrain
- Structures
- Lighting and Sounds
- Realism/Conformity

Each category has its own number of points to be awarded (40, 40, 20, and 25 respectively) and the sum of the four categories is 125, the same total as the total for judging models.

Any module size and all scales are eligible for judging. The focus for judging a module, besides the basic construction, is what scene is the modeler trying to achieve and how successful was the modeler in achieving it. The categories which have been chosen for judging modules reflect aspects of the module which the modeler certainly should consider in building and finishing the module.

Although no additional points are given for a correctly wired electrically module, the module must have electrical connections which will allow an engine to run and will allow the module to be connected electrically to a module on either side.

Judging Guidelines for Terrain (40 points)

This category has a maximum of 40 points awarded and includes the ground and natural scenic features such as rocks, water, trees, bushes, hills and depressions in the ground as well as man-made features such as the railroad roadbed, ballast, cuts and fills, drainage ditches, streets, roads, and paths. Basically, this is scenicing the module which may involve the varying the levels and the addition of various scenic elements, whether it is natural or man-made. Terrain focuses on the land formations which have been made by nature and also any man-made changes to the environment. The terrain should be plausible in shape and color. If a backdrop is present and properly integrated into the scenery, more points can be awarded. Integrated means going beyond a blue paint job with a few white clouds to achieve additional points. The track is part of the scene and should be ballasted and weathered for completeness.

Points to Consider About Terrain

- Track should be separately ballasted and weathering of the rail and roadbed.
- Varying the height (however slightly) of the terrain is a desired.
- Streets or roads should be connected into the terrain, not just laid on top.
- A variety of colors is preferable.
- A variety of scenic materials is preferred.
- How well the scenic elements are done also counts more.
- Streets can be detailed.
- Smooth transition between different types of terrain.
- What is the scenic locale of the terrain and are the terrain elements consistent with it?
- Is a suitable backdrop present?

Terrain – Judging Matrix

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

Judging Guidelines for Structures (40 points)

This category has a maximum of 40 points awarded. Structures are defined here as man-made while terrain is generally a product of nature. Structures and all man-made features are considered from the standpoint of prototypical suitability, placement and appearance as scenic elements. The arrangement of these structures as a whole should make sense or look prototypical. They do not all have to be scratchbuilt. Structures are man-made and varied, including bridges, culverts, signals, buildings, power lines, signs, and turntables for example. This list is not meant to be limiting since many items can be considered to be structures. Structures are not required on the module since there can be some modules without any structures. Consider the placement of any structures and whether it fits with the whole scene. More points can be awarded if more structures are present but also consider whether they would be expected and not clutter. Consider whether the structures are RTR, kitbashed, or scratchbuilt. Finish and lettering, weathering, and decaling of the structures will be measured. The placement of people, animals, and vehicles is strongly encouraged. For example, a garage with a car coming out of it adds to the total scene. This is but one example of what could be done for a scene. Something which will express and enhance the scene will be rewarded.

Points to Consider About Structures

- Are the structures attached to the ground look to be prototypical? Do the structures blend into the ground?
- Do the structures have additional detail added to the building?
- Are the structures weathered?
- Would these structures be expected in the scene? Are they suitable?
- Structures are painted differently from kit colors.
- Do the details match the era and locale of the structures?
- If a structure receives cars or trucks, is a road present to the structure?

Structures – Judging Matrix

Quantity and Overall Detail	Simple			Some Detail							Very Detailed							Very Complex			
None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Few	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Several	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
Many	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

Judging Guidelines for Lighting & Sound (20 points)

This category has a maximum of 20 points awarded for adding lights or some type of illumination to the module that is appropriate for the module. Lights, for example, can be found in buildings, other structures, signals, along the roads or paths, and other railroad equipment. Lights do not have to be electrically illuminated but extra credit is given if it is lit. The presence of sound, or animation of any form which is integral or appropriate to the scene will can also be the basis for awarding more points. More points can be given if the lighting or sound is complex or animated.

Points to Consider About Lighting & Sound

- How many lights are present?
- Is the color of the lights varied?
- Credit is given if lights are present but not lit.
- Complex animation is worth more in points. Does the animation add to the scene?
- Is sound present in some form?

Lighting & Sound – Judging Matrix

Quantity and Overall Detail	Simple				Moderate				Complex		
None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Some	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Extensive	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Judging Guidelines for Realism/Conformity (25 points)

The maximum points awarded for this category is 25. Realism of the scene is a major consideration. The faithful representation of a prototype scene should be supported by documentation from a photo, official illustration, or painting. Comparison of this documentation with the module scene will allow a determination of the realism or conformity and the awarding of points. Even if documentation is not supplied, points can be awarded if the scene represented looks prototypical or as you expect from experience. Points may be awarded for a mythical scene if there is appropriate documentation.

Points to Consider About Realism/Conformity

- Is documentation provided?
- Does the scene look real and is it plausible?
- Look for realism in both man-made structures and nature.

Realism/Conformity – Judging Matrix

Quantity and Overall Realism	Little			Some				Better				Much		
None	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Moderate	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Very Clever	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25