

# Achievement Program - Construction

by Bill Jacobs



I hope that you were able to gain a little knowledge into the judging approach to box 1-Construction on the Judging Form from last issue's column. This time we are going to consider box 2 on the Judging Form-Detail. Right off the bat you will notice that detail is only worth 20 points or 16% of the total number of points (125) available. Why is this?

To answer that question let's take a look, once again, at our judging guidelines, page 4 this time. You will notice that box 2 only considers the amount of detail added to the model. Construction of details are considered in box one, scratch building in the second box 4, and paint and color detail in the first box 4. The box 2 instructions say "Describe complexity, difficulty, refinement & quantity of detail parts added. Identify all commercial parts." So let's consider each one of these words in some detail (pun really not intended).

First is complexity. The judging guidelines seem to favor detail that works, like moveable parts (for example, doors). Other forms of complex detail might be nut-bolt-washer castings, simulated nail heads, and door knobs. For cars, brake rigging is a red letter item and it would be even better if it works in some fashion (although this is pretty tough in the smaller scales), also coupler cut levers that look like they work. For structures, fascia, eaves, downspouts, and gutters are hot items (Hint-small sizes of solder make good downspouts). Surprisingly, accuracy, completeness, and placement of color and lettering is considered added detail although its quality is not judged here. One other thing that you might not think of is that board-by-board construction is considered more complex than scribed siding.

Second is difficulty. Let's take the example of a turn of the century (I mean 1900) gingerbread structure with ornate gables and eaves. If you built these or made molds and your own castings in lieu of commercial parts, that would be considered difficult. Commercial parts are fine to use and will be considered as added detail, just not as difficult.

Third is refinement. This is pretty simple, everything that should be on the real thing should be represented on the model. How do the judges know this? First, you are going to tell them and second, the pictures or drawings (we will talk about conformity next time) you will attach for box 3. Remember our mantra: do not let the judges guess what you are trying to do.

Fourth is quantity. This is the crux of the Detail box. Judges are looking for detail that the prototype needs to function in its intended purpose. If all those are there, then you are done. However, added things such as water bags, shovels, and oil cans can't hurt and neither will junk around an old out building.

Fifth and last is to identify all commercial detail parts added. This is pretty self-explanatory, with an important caveat: if you have a really wazoo kit that comes with every detail necessary, list all those parts, those are added detail. If you replace some of those parts with some you have made yourself, be sure to note that. Although scratch building is considered later I would get a little jump on it by adding at the end of the commercial parts listed something like "all other detail parts scratch built" if that is indeed the case.

That wraps up Detail. The next issue we will consider box 3-Conformity. Since that may take a little more space, let's have a preview. Good example, let's say you are building a water tower (you diesel guys have to imagine something else on stilts) and you build the supporting structure with 2 x 4s. In real life it would collapse under its own weight plus a few thousand gallons of water and that's why the prototype used 12 x12s and plenty of them. That represents bad conformity.

Until next time.....