

Appendix D: PCR Contest Practices

Appendix D describes PCR Contest Practices for the guidance of the Contest Committee, the Host Convention Committee, PCR members, and other interested parties. These practices are not PCR rules, and the descriptions are not binding on the conduct of PCR contests.

D-I Contest Scheduling

Contests are scheduled in conjunction with general PCR conventions. The schedule for contest room hours and judging is usually proposed by the Host Convention Committee and coordinated with the PCR Convention Chairman.

For a convention running Wednesday evening through Sunday morning, the contest room is usually open Thursday through Saturday. The Host Convention committee may or may not keep the contest room open during meal breaks and the evening. The contest room typically accepts entries during open hours up until the time set for judging.

Judging is typically scheduled for Friday evening or Saturday morning, and takes 3-4 hours in either case. Judging Friday evening allows more time for viewing on Saturday, but requires judges to work late and may make recruiting judges more difficult if other events are scheduled for Friday evening. Saturday judging allows judges to work when they are fresher and allows more time for entries, but reduces public viewing time on a popular day and allows less time for compilation of results before a Saturday night banquet.

D-II Contest Facilities

The Host Convention Committee makes all facility arrangements, contacting the PCR Contest Manager as needed.

The Contest Room is typically a section of a hotel ballroom about 20 x 40 feet. Standard tables of about 3 x 6 feet are arranged around the perimeter to display models and provide working space for clerical functions. About 12 tables are required, and about 6 chairs. The Contest Room should not be part of the room required for other purposes; experience has shown that this creates problems with results compilation and entry pick-up.

Good lighting for the contest room is very important, especially for judging. Hotel lighting is often marginal. PCR has clamp-on lights for use during judging, but

using clamp-on light is awkward, and an inferior alternative to a well-lit room. The contest room needs several electrical outlets and extension cords.

Prints for the photo-contest are displayed on racks provided by PCR, usually in the center of the Contest Room. Slides are usually displayed on a light table or slide sorter. A separate, darkened room with slide projector and screen is required for slide judging. A vacant clinic room usually works.

The Switching contest requires 2-4 tables and 6-8 chairs to set up either 1 or 2 Time Saver Layouts. The Switching Contest should be placed in a foyer, lobby, or other area with substantial foot traffic to encourage participation. The Host Committee Contest Chairman should contact the Switching Contest Event Chairman to discuss requirements, location, hours, and staffing.

The Locomotive Performance Contest (the Tug-of-War) requires 2-3 tables and 3-4 chairs. The equipment is supplied by PCR. The Tug of War contest should be located near the Switching Contest. The Host Committee Contest Chairman should contact the Event chairperson to discuss requirements, location, hours, and staffing.

The Portable Layout (Module) Contest needs no special facilities, as entries are normally judged in place in the layout or module room.

D-III Contest Staffing

The Host Convention Committee is responsible for staffing the Contest Room during all open hours. Convention Committee staff will accept and record entries for the model and photo contests, and provide additional clerical support as needed. The PCR Convention Chairman and the Photo and Slide Event Chairman will not remain in the contest room full time.

The hours of operation of the Switching and Locomotive Performance Contests depend on the staffing available, and can be extended by supplementing the PCR Event Chairman's staff with Convention Committee volunteers.

D-IV Judging

Judges are recruited by the PCR Contest Manager, the Host Committee Contest Chairman, and the Print and Slide Event Chairmen, preferably before the convention. The Model Contest requires a minimum of 10 judges (2 for each factor), and should really have 16 (3 for each factor, and a Head Judge to supervise and relieve judges who are also entrants when their entry is being judged). There should be at least one experienced judge assigned to each factor, with inexperienced judges

teamed with them. Judges are usually given their choice of factor to judge, with those who have no preference assigned as needed. Judging takes 3-4 hours.

The Portable Layout Contest requires a team of judges to go around to the entries in the module and display rooms.

The Print and Slide Event Chairmen set the judging procedures, recruit judges, and supervise the judging for those contests. Methods used have varied over the years, varying from judging by committee to individual votes and subsequent tallies. The judging procedure should be determined in advance and documented.

The Switching and Tug of War Contests are scored on time or elimination, and do not need judges.

The Host Convention Committee is expected to provide refreshments during judging (e.g. continental breakfast on Saturday morning or sandwiches and beverages Friday night).

D-V Awards

The PCR Contest Manager usually arranges for production or purchase of all awards, including plaques and ribbons.

Plaques currently consist of a 5" x 7" varnished hardwood base. The Best of Show plaque is larger. Special medallions are attached near the top of each plaque. It is the responsibility of the PCR Convention Chairman to obtain medallions for use with the plaques. Last year's winner (or the winner from the year previous, if none was presented the last year, etc.) provides the Levity Award.

A commercial award manufacturing company has made plaques in the past. The PCR Contest Manager will assist in having them made, but they can also be produced or purchased by the Host Convention Committee.

The PCR Contest Manager has a metal master for casting PCR plaque medallions if they are wanted. The medallions are normally painted a dull silver (simulated metal) for First Place awards, and bright gold for Best of Show and Ingenuity awards.

Plaques are usually awarded without the names of the winners engraved on plates. If the Host Convention Committee wishes to provide personalized plates they may do so, and it will be their responsibility to ensure their appropriate distribution to the winners.

The PCR Contest Manager usually orders award ribbons (blue for First, red for Second, white or gold for Third, and green for Honorable Mention). Separate ribbons are made up for the Model, Photo, and Switching Contests. The Locomotive Performance and Portable Layout winners receive model contest ribbons. As with plaques, the Host Convention Committee may have them produced.

For the PCR Contest in 2000, the number of awards were:

Plaques (Available/ Awarded)

Model Contest - 33/11

Photo Contest - 9/3

Ribbons (Available/ Awarded)

Model Contest - 103/18 (31 ea. 1st, 2nd, & 3rd. 10 Honorable Mention)

Photo Contest - 34/14 (10 ea. 1st, 2nd, & 3rd. 4 Honorable Mention)

Switching Contest - 12/6 (4 ea. 1st, 2nd, & 3rd.)

Other - 25/3 (25 Chairman's Award, Special Recognition)

The "Other" ribbons are not required, and were intended as special awards by the Host Convention Committee.

The cost of extra awards is small compared to the importance of having enough to hand out.

As of 2000, the award costs were:

- Plaques (including engraving): \$199.56

The cost for plaques represents the replacement cost of those used by the previous convention which took advantage of the PCR stockpile.

- Medallions: \$36.39

- Ribbons: \$71.29

The costs for ribbons will vary either up or down depending on a number of factors. The costs would tend to increase with fancier ribbons, with additional print, or with additional set-up charges (e.g. special ribbons for other events).

- Engraving: Cost included above

The engraved plate measures about 3-1/2 x 1-1/2 inches, and typically has three lines. An example follows:

1st Place
Freight Car
Open

D-VI Awards Presentation

Traditionally, contest results are announced and plaques presented at the banquet. Winners are announced in reverse order (Honorable Mention-3-2-1), and the First Place winner called to the front for their plaque. It is important to do this in an organized fashion, without hurrying, to give the winners adequate recognition without dragging out the presentation. The presentation lasts about 30 minutes.

It is also important to record which winners pick up their plaques at the banquet and which do not, so that the others can be mailed or delivered later.

Ribbons, Best of Show, Ingenuity, and Levity awards are placed with the winners in the contest room as results are tabulated. The Best of Show, Ingenuity, and Levity awards are then presented at the banquet after the First Place plaques.