

## Model References... How To and Why ?

Many entrants at Model Expo struggle with the concept of Modelling References. In fact it is one of the bug bears for many competitors, but in reality it is a simple exercise. Hopefully the article below will help dispel some of myths, preconceptions and mystery surrounding "model references" when entering your model at competitions. It will also give you an outline as to what the judges expect to see at Model Expo.

Model competitions give us modellers a forum to present our art work to the wider public and our peers. In many cases our hobby is a solitary one. A model competition allows us to display our latest creations in a controlled environment. It must be remembered though that Model Competitions are exactly what they say they are competitions. There will be winners and losers as in any competition. Model Expo is no exception. What you need to do as a competitor is maximise your chances of winning a prize. Model Expo has five standard criteria in which your modelling work is judged. These are Construction, Attention to Detail/ Effort, Finish, Accuracy to References and Realism. Points are awarded to each of these areas as to the quality of what you present at the show. Accuracy to References should provide easy points for all entrants, but in many cases they don't. This section also influences many of the other areas, because if done right it helps the judges by informing them as to what to look for on your model.

As Modellers we spend countless hours of our own time on the researching and building of our creations. In many cases this process will have involved many hours of digging through dusty tomes and surfing the net researching a subject. Most modellers are aiming to capture a certain subject be it a vehicle, aircraft, figure or scene which has caught their imagination or interest. This can all be before we even cut parts from the sprue. By the same token sometimes we build or paint something for the sheer pleasure, using only the information provided by the kit manufacturer for our references. Both of these levels of research are provided for in the Model Expo judging system.

So how do we go about maximising our chances of scoring well in the reference section?

References break down into three main areas:

1. Instructions or box top from the Kit.
2. What extra work you have done if any.

And finally

3. Why you have finished the model the way you have.

These may seem a little daunting at first but it is all quite easy, and if you keep your reference simple and relevant will take you very little time. This article will look at each area in turn. And then try to explain the best way to present them.

1. Instructions – box art.

Most model kits and even aftermarket sets (decals or detailing), have instructions included in them. Your best bet for easy points in the reference section of scoring is to provide these. By the same token many figure kits and some garage kits have none. Usually though these kits will have box art or a picture to aid in painting and assembly. These can be included in your references either as the originals or even better as a photocopy or scan of these onto normal A4 paper. If you provide nothing you can not score anything.

## 2. Work Done.

If you have done extra work, added extra detailing or corrected details on a kit it is a good idea to tell the judges about it. Even if you have built the model out of the box it is still a good idea to tell the judges about this. A concise list of the work you have done works best. This maybe something as simple as a statement that the model was built from the kit with out changes or additions. It could be full page list of all the modifications and changes you have made to the model. By doing this you are telling the judges what to look for in your model. Anything that helps the judges to determine what you have done quickly helps you. In this section of the references you can also provide pictures of the model during construction. The key if you do this is to be relevant and make sure the pictures are clear. Short explanations pointing out what you have done also help.

3. Finally the judges will be looking at your model and how you have finished it. They will be looking at not only your application of the finish but why you have finished something the way you have. Your guide to them maybe something as simple as the box art or the instructions, or it maybe pictures of the real vehicle you have collected. Once again the key here is to keep it relevant to the model. 22 pictures of FW190's or Panzer 4's will not help if none of them are representative of the model you present. Point out salient or special features you may have found and included in your model. This maybe nothing more than a note on the finishing diagram in the instructions or on the picture explaining why you have done something.

As a note to this it is always better to provide copies of relevant pictures or references. We ask that competitors not include actual reference books in there submissions. Why? The first and foremost reason is for your sake. In most cases these books may have cost you a tidy sum of money, or they could be irreplaceable out of print editions. In the mad scramble of Model Expo, especially during the picking up of models, people forget to pic up their references. Sometimes people pick up the wrong references as well. We would not like to see you lose or have damaged your precious books. The second reason is that if the information is presented clearly and easily to the judges it makes their job easier. Having to leaf thru pages of books to find a reference on page 115 to a colour scheme makes their job harder.

How do we present our references?

There are many ways to do this. The best and easiest way is to use a small folder with the plastic pockets inside. This way you can place what ever sheets you wish inside this folder and these can be easily accessed by the judges and staff at model expo.

In terms of format the most common and preferred method is to do the following:

A cover sheet with name of the model and any explanations or history you wish to portray.

A list of work you have done (including any photos)

Any pictures or references for the colour scheme.

Instructions – box art.

By providing the above information with your model to the Judges at Model Expo you will easily score well in the Accuracy to Reference section of the score sheet. Remember to always keep things simple and relevant. This will ensure that you provide the judges with a guide to your model.