

BMSS Competition Rules

Formulated 1978, Incorporating Amendments up to 1985, Revised 2025

The BMSS Competition Rules presented here are an expanded and revised version of those previously used in National Annual and Interbranch competitions. Their content is grounded in decades of experience at the highest levels of the hobby. These rules serve as a comprehensive framework, allowing for the creation of specific regulations tailored to individual competitions. Organizers may use these rules in part or in full and can specify exceptions or additional requirements as necessary. The general nature of these guidelines is intentional; they do not attempt to define specific competition classes, as such definitions are best determined by local circumstances.

Modelling, a hobby characterized by individualism, often inspires debate regarding precise definitions. Nevertheless, it is believed that providing organizers with a standard set of nationally recognized rules—usable as written for local, inter-area, and national events—offers a practical advantage that outweighs personal preferences. Should the hobby evolve and require further amendments, this edition should be cited as "BMSS rules /2025."

A. General Provisions

1. Unless otherwise specified in the rules of a particular competition, all the following rules apply to any event advertised as being conducted under BMSS Rules.
2. Entries are generally limited to models of a military nature, however fantasy and civilian subjects are permitted in some classes.
3. Models may be constructed from any material, of any size, or mounted on any type of base, except where individual class rules impose limits.
4. All models are expected to be fully completed and painted, unless specific class rules permit unpainted builds and sculpts.
5. Competition entries may include any number or arrangement of figures, vehicles, and model accessories, unless otherwise restricted by class rules.
6. Models that have previously won a competition at the national level may be entered in other national-level competitions but are ineligible for local-level events.
7. Models that have won at any level may be entered in further competitions at the same or higher level but cannot be entered again in a competition where they have already achieved a win, even if entered in a different class.
8. Any model placed in the wrong class due to the competitor's error, or in violation of competition rules, is subject to disqualification.
9. An adjudicator, appointed by the organizers, will determine the admissibility and classification of questionable entries and interpret the rules. All suspected irregularities or errors must be reported to the adjudicator before judging concludes; complaints raised after judging will not be considered. The adjudicator's decisions are final.
10. The organizers reserve the right to withdraw any entry deemed liable to cause offence
11. All entries must reflect work relevant to the competition performed by the competitor. Joint entries are permitted in certain competitions and must be declared.
12. In the Scratchbuilt/Converted Class it is mandatory that the entry is accompanied by a short description of materials and techniques [manual or digital] used. This is so that the judges can ascertain the extent of the work that has been carried out.
13. All entries are at the competitor's own risk. While every care is taken to avoid mishaps, the organizers cannot accept liability for any loss or damage incurred. Please indicate if your entry is not affixed to its base. Models may have to be moved for judging and stewarding purposes. This is not negotiable.

B. Definitions

1. Military: Refers to the armed forces and their auxiliaries of any known nation or era.
2. Figure: Any replica of a living human or animal.
3. Single Figure: One complete human figure.

4. Mounted Figure: One complete human figure, with associated animal commonly considered rideable. The figure may be mounted, mounting or dismounting, standing beside or taking cover behind mount.
5. Vignette: Small scenes with up to three figures, with or without associated vehicles and equipment.
6. Bust: The head and shoulders of a figure, which may also include upper body and arms.
7. Diorama: Larger scenes with any number of figures, with or without associated vehicles and equipment. Groundwork is expected. The scene may be presented as open, or fully encased [boxed].
8. Military Vehicle: A vehicle designed or utilized for military purposes.
9. AFV (Armored Fighting Vehicle): Any armed, land based military vehicle equipped with armored plating to protect its crew.
10. Artillery: Pieces of artillery ordnance or related equipment, excluding hand-held weapons, infantry-type machine guns, prime movers, or gun teams presented alone. The artillery piece should be fully visible. A fully enclosed self-propelled gun should be entered in the AFV category.
11. Basic Model: A model entered as purchased from the manufacturer, except for painting or mounting on a base by the competitor.
12. Kit Built Model: A model constructed as intended by the manufacturer, using a kit of parts.
13. Conversion: A model based on one kit or basic model, but with some parts altered or used in ways not intended by the manufacturer or incorporating parts scratch built or from other kits. Recast figures are classed as conversions. May also include superdetailing parts from other manufacturers.
14. Composite Model: A model made from parts of multiple kits or basic models, which may also include scratch-built components.
15. Scratchbuilt Model: A model created primarily without using any parts from kits or basic models. Commercially available parts such as heads, hands and equipment are permissible, and should be identified on the accompanying entry form
16. Competitor: The individual under whose name a model is entered in competition.
17. Junior: A participant who has not reached their 16th birthday.
18. Novice: A person who has never won a BMSS competition.
19. National Level Competition: An event organized as a major regular activity by national or international associations or societies, or by commercial concerns with direct ties to military modeling, conducted on a national or international basis.
20. Local Level Competition: An event not organized on a national or international basis.
21. Plain Base: A base with only figures, vehicles, or weapons as permitted by class rules, and no terrain effects except for flat ground representations.
22. Scenic Base: A base featuring additional objects beyond figures, vehicles, or weapons, or complex terrain effects such as uneven ground, trenches, or shell holes.

Notes on Definitions: Competition class definitions may be grouped if desired, such as "Conversion, composite or scratchbuilt" or "Military vehicles and artillery." Some models defy strict categorization as either single figures or groups (e.g., a tank with only the commander visible, or a gun team with a single driver and multiple horses). Organizers should avoid unnecessarily limiting classes to these categories unless essential; grouping by period, nationality, or branch of service can often be applied without further specification.

C. Judging

1. Judging will be conducted by teams appointed by the competition organizers. There will be a minimum of two judges per category, and they will be completely neutral. Competition entrants may also act as judges but must declare an interest and withdraw from judging any classes they may have entered.
2. The primary purpose of judging is to assess and compare the modeling skill and expertise demonstrated by competitors, independent of the quality of any basic figures or kits used. Modelling skill and expertise should be taken to include any or all of the following points, determined by the nature of the competition:
 - a] Originality and imagination in subject matter and treatment
 - b] Historical accuracy of detail and overall model
 - c] Neatness of assembly and quality of finish (e.g., removal of flash)
 - d] Realism in animation of figures, anatomical accuracy, and clothing drape

- e] Vehicle stance, ground contact, and weight distribution effects
 - f] Painting quality, including weathering and markings where applicable
 - g] Balance, composition and narrative in groups or dioramas
 - h] Degree of difficulty and level of skill required
 - i] Presentation, including base and scenic effects
 - j] Overall impression and realism
3. The judging process is not governed by a rigid system. However, when a class is designated for a specific model type, judges must base their decisions accordingly, regardless of additional embellishments (e.g., in "single figure" or "AFV" classes). In figure and AFV classes the emphasis will be on painting, construction and finishing. For group or diorama categories, judges should prioritize overall impact and narrative over technical details.
 4. The emphasis placed on each aspect of skill and expertise may vary depending on the judges' knowledge and preferences. Judges often have specialist expertise, so teams are reminded not to penalize models for minor inaccuracies since other entries may have unseen issues outside their sphere of knowledge. The exception would be a major fault of which the average modeller should be aware. Ultimately, the winning model will be the one the judges prefer among those entered. Their decision is final and should not be interpreted as having greater significance.

D. The Open System

1. At the National Competition we use the so called "Open system" for all classes. This means that your entries are not judged against entries from other participants, but on their own merits and the BMSS judging criteria mentioned above.
2. All your entries in a class will be judged as a "display", which means that you can win one medal per class in which you have entered. Per class, you are required to group your entries together on the competition table. Your entries will be judged as follows: the jury team first selects your best entry from the display. This entry will determine if you are entitled to a medal and to which colour medal. The number of entries in your display is unlimited, and your display may also consist out of only 1 figure.
3. Multiple Highly Commended, Bronze, Silver and Gold medals may be awarded per class.

