

AMA Scale Helicopter Rules

I had a nice visit with Darrell Sprayberry a few days ago and we discussed the upcoming 2024 AMA Scale Helicopter Nationals. For those of you who do not know Darrell, he has been the Contest Director for the Nationals for several years. He explained the procedure for competing and we will start with the necessary documentation. The AMA has approved a new Special Interest Group “ ARCCHS” (American Radio Control Competition Helicopter Society) which will oversee all radio control helicopter competition activities including Scale. Three classes have been approved this year including the 518 (Expert) class, Sport Scale and Team Scale. All three classes should be available on the AMA website for pre-registration. PLEASE make it a point to pre-register so the AMA will know how many awards to have available for each class.

Ill do a quick recap of the AMA Scale Guidelines:

Model Requirements

No limits to the types of equipment that can be fitted to the helicopter. Metal main rotor and tail rotor blades are allowed when following the AMA Safety Document 555

Each contestant is permitted one model entry per class.

Builder of the Model

The builder and flyer of the model helicopter shall be one and the same person.

The Contest Director shall make every reasonable effort to assure that each constant IS the builder of the model.

Helicopters kits containing a large amount of prefabrication are permissible as long as the contestant completes the final assembly.

The contestant MUST be the original owner and the one who prepared the helicopter for flight, regardless of the amount of the work required to finish the helicopter.

Each contestant WILL include a “declaration statement” that he/she completed the final assembly of the helicopter, including and not limited to: preparing the fuselage for the mechanics, building of the mechanics, installing the radio equipment, and test flying the helicopter. The contestant shall also list which items or construction steps that he/she did not complete or fabricate.

Proof of Scale

Each contestant will provide each of the three judges with a copy of their documentation.

Each contestant will have five minutes to explain the building process and highlight any areas that they want to explain in detail. Once that five minutes has expired you will no longer be able to talk with the judges unless you ask a question.

Putting together your Documentation: (I am using Darrell's personal documentation as an example)

You will start with the “ builder of the model ” declaration “. Which states YOU are the builder and OWNER of the model.



A PUBLISHED 3-view drawing



Pictures, published or otherwise, pertaining to color, markings, and details.



Static Scoring

Fuselage outline and surface detail (50 points maximum)

Cockpit (50 points maximum)

Landing gear (50 points maximum)

Finish and Markings (50 points maximum)

Craftsmanship (50 points maximum)

Tail Rotor (10 points maximum)

Main Rotor (40 points maximum) Helicopters using a main rotor system that features a “fly-bar” to enhance stability will receive a maximum of 15 points unless the system replicates that of the full size helicopter.

Static Judging

Static judging will be done at the flying site when possible.

The model will be placed on an elevated table which may be rotational by design but not required.

The judges are allowed to approach the model but not allowed to touch the model.

Judging will be done at close proximity.

The contestant will be the only person to move or touch the model.

The contestant will have up to 5 minutes to introduce and demonstrate to the judges any special features of the model such as working lights, sound system, or other special static or working detail of the model. NOTE: Any operational features requiring the model to be “powered up” must be done without power being able to be applied to the motor/controller.

Contestants shall fly the same equipment that which was static judged. Should part of the aircraft be damaged so as to be replaced, that portion of the helicopter shall be re-judged.

Static Judging Guidelines

Entries will be judged regarding the following criteria:

Fuselage outline and surface detail: Fuselage outline, panel lines and rivets shall be judged against the three-view outline and documentation.

Cockpit: Seats, seat belts, controls, instruments, console, map pockets, flooring, interior paint, etc. will be judged against the documentation.

Landing gear: Scale like landing gear (skids or retractable landing gear) will be judged against the documentation.

Finish and Markings: Paint scheme should reflect actual paint used. Nomenclature could include registration numbers or maintenance and armament markings shall be judged against the documentation.

Craftsmanship: Items added or modifications made to enhance the scale appearance of the helicopter. These items may be handmade, or obtained separately and could include: lighting systems, sound systems, airdials and antennas, non-skid surfaces, latches, handles, opening doors and hatches, interior detail, tie downs, etc. Will be judged against the documentation.

Tail Rotor: The tail rotor will be judged against the documentation.

Main Rotor: The main rotor will be judged against the documentation.

See you at the Nats