

very active group has documentation objectives very similar to ours. Check at your local hobby shop for the nearest branch of the I.P.M.S., or write directly to: P.O. Box 2555, Long Beach, CA 90801. Membership brings a fine quarterly magazine, full of documentation hints.

A full-size aviation special interest group which you may wish to pursue is the American Aviation Historical Society. Membership brings a quarterly *Newsletter*, as well as four professionally prepared *Journals* each year. More information is available from: P.O. Box 99, Garden Grove, CA 92642.

A fascinating specialized service organization for those who design or build all types of replicas of famous historical aircraft is Air Replicas International. Members build man-carrying replicas, and they must do at least as much research on their projects as we do on a Precision Scale model. Their official publication *Replicair*, is full of photos and facts on airframes and construction. Write to: P.O. Box 2218, Durango, CO 81301.

PREPARING THAT DOCUMENTATION PORTFOLIO

The contest-oriented scale modeler must use every device he can to gain points in today's highly competitive contest environment. It's not entirely wrong to say that many contests are won at home, before the meet. Not only is a prime-quality building and finishing job on the model important, but so is the documentation you present. The portfolio substantiates and verifies the aircraft, and it's the only material the judges are supposed to consider when they decide how well you have duplicated the prototype subject.

The presentation should guide the judges easily through their evaluation of Scale Outline, and Color & Markings. The portfolio should be neatly and logically laid out, easy to follow, uncluttered, and it should achieve a balance of having sufficient data without actually showing "too much." Think of the portfolio as comparable to the program of a stage play. It tells you what you are about to see, why you'll see it in a certain way, and it subtly suggests that you'll enjoy the show and respond favorably.

In a typical contest, you can expect a well-prepared documentation portfolio to give you a scoring edge of 1-5 points. If that doesn't sound like much, bear in mind that such a point spread can mean the difference between a trophy, or simply placing in the top ten!

The first step in preparing your portfolio is to honestly evaluate the available materials. Spread out all of the photos and drawings, color views, etc. Have the model sitting across the room, about 15 feet away. Examine each item with a view as to how well the model duplicates what is seen. Be very skeptical of photos which show the prototype in different colors or markings—even though you may attach a note saying that the photo is to only show specific detail (such as the undercarriage), the hurried and rushed judge may not catch the notation.

Arrange the materials in order of descending importance, and don't hesitate to eliminate vague or misleading items. This is also the perfect time to critically examine the model. You'll probably catch a few areas which could use some improvements, such as engine detail, landing gear, etc. Is the weathering effect properly documented in the photos? We like to get a friend involved, so that he can look at the whole project from an outsider's vantage point.

A critical decision to be made at this time is how the color will be documented. Watch out for color photos.

The photo process tends to cause a slight shift in the color values, especially the reds and blues. If the red in the photo looks a little "orange-ish," yet you know that the color on the model is exactly what the prototype had, then you'd better avoid using the photo, since it's not a good representation of the actual color . . . such things tend to confuse judges, and that's what we definitely want to avoid.

Color chips are irrefutable proof of military paint schemes, but remember that a chip represents a factory-fresh paint job, and it does not show what weathering would have done to the same color. A trained judge will allow for such conditions, of course. Remember to note directly under the chip exactly where it came from.

Profiles, or magazine color pages, tend to be "off-color." Color printing is a complex process, which has innumerable variables . . . any one of these can deteriorate the reproduction of exact colors. Most publishers, even those who print the lavish aviation books we rely on for accurate data, admit that there can be 10 percent error in the color you see on the page (we think that's conservative).

Don't forget to show some detail photos (if available) of items like the aircraft's landing gear. This impresses the judges with your thoroughness, and can earn you extra points—if you have done a good job on the model's landing gear.

