

Ridler Guidelines and Rules

Don Ridler was the first professional promoter hired by the MHRA to assist them with their fledgling Autorama in the Fifties. With Don's creativity and professional approach in promoting, Autorama was able to grow tremendously and eventually move to its present home at Cobo Center in 1961. In 1963, Promotions, Inc. (now Championship Auto Shows, Inc.) and the MHRA decided to honor Don Ridler, who had prematurely passed away, with an award given in his name.

Originally, the award was given to the Best Vehicle first-time shown. Over the last fifty years, the award has evolved to better conform to new ideas, changing designs and concepts. Today it emphasizes creativity, engineering and quality workmanship. Anyone building a vehicle for Ridler competition should post these words on their garage wall. The vehicle that best represents those three areas will win the Ridler Award.

In addition to those judging guidelines, there are a few hard and fast rules, with no exceptions:

The vehicle must make its first public showing at the Detroit Autorama. Showing the vehicle (or any unique part of the entry, i.e. frame, engine or body) at any indoor or outdoor show will make it ineligible for contention. Please feel free to contact us with questions about eligibility.

Realizing that car owners and builders may need some form of exposure to develop interest or to obtain sponsorships, vehicles contending for the Ridler Award may have **limited media exposure** prior to competing for the award at the Detroit Autorama. This limited exposure is defined as: magazine photos or video depicting the building process, but only revealing individual components such as engine, chassis, body panels or interior. *Photos, artist renderings or videos showing the vehicle in a completed state or in finish color are not allowed, and will result in disqualification.* All decisions concerning prior exposure and eligibility for the Ridler Award will be determined by the Michigan Hot Rod Association and Championship Auto Shows, Inc.

The vehicle must prove to be minimally operable. It must start, stop, move forward and backward under its own power, turn left and right and stop using the brake pedal, before it can be placed on the floor for display. Keep in mind that these guidelines are minimum qualifiers. Operational functionality is something the judges will look at.

Once the final Ridler Contenders have been determined, the field will be narrowed to eight finalists, which will be referred to as the Pirelli Tire Great 8. Because of the number of entries contending, the process of elimination will begin on Thursday evening after move-in has been completed. Entries do not need to be 100% set-up, but should be at a state that they can be evaluated fairly. The Pirelli Tire Great 8 Finalists are announced Friday morning and introduced at the Ridler's Ball on Friday evening.

If an entry is selected as a Pirelli Tire Great 8 Ridler Finalist, the car will not be eligible for any Autorama awards involving class judging and special awards. Each of the Pirelli Tire Great 8 will, however, receive a cash award of \$1,000 paid on Friday evening at the Ridler's Ball. Owners and builders should also keep

in mind that they will be asked during the weekend to open and close their vehicle to be checked for fit and finish, and to make sure everything is operational.

There will be a Great 8 Ridler Contenders' meeting for the builders and owners. This meeting is an opportunity to meet the other finalists, the judging staff and ask questions on how your car will be judged.

Chevrolet Performance sponsors the Ridler Award, the most prestigious award in the indoor custom car show industry, and presents the Ridler Award winner with a cash prize of \$10,000 at each year's Detroit Autorama.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call 586-771-7110 between the hours of 9am-5pm EST or email michhotrod@aol.com.