Hello and welcome!

To answer some of your questions:

exonei:

Also, for tournaments, seems like there is an AWS option for uploading the model and getting predictions from it and also another one for simply uploading the predictions without the model. So how does the NMR system and the evaluation of predictions essentially differentiate or compare between the AWS model option and other one with just CSV uploads of predictions?

There is no difference in evaluation, the AMS option simply automates submission so you don't have to manually download and prepare your submissions each week.

exonei:

Like how do I start getting NMR as a beginner given that my current balance is shown as 0 NMR?

You need to buy NMR (for example, from a cryptocurrency exchange such as Coinbase) and transfer it to your NMR wallet.