

# RULES FOR THE 2024 ALPHA SERIES SEASON

## PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY

Open to all individuals, male or female. Those under 18 years of age, not fishing with a parent, must have written permission from a parent or guardian. VA Elite 70 Tournament Series (VA Elite60, LLC) reserves the right to reject any entries, which we feel are not in the best interest of the tournament.

All participants must sign the release of liability and acknowledgement of rules to be eligible to compete.

## ENTRY FEES

Entry fees for the VA Elite 70 Alpha Series Solo Tournament Trail will be \$500 per individual per tournament. Individuals must register/pay for 3 tournaments for the season (\$1500 total + Membership). Once the field is set (~70), interested individuals will be added to a list and that list will be reviewed by a membership committee. The membership committee will be responsible for filling any vacant spots. All registered anglers for 2024 season will have first right of refusal for the 2025 season. There will be a \$100 membership fee for each member.

## PAYMENT

\$500 is due at the time of registration. The remaining balance will be due by the **2<sup>nd</sup> Friday in February** of the following year. There will be a \$50 fee charged on all checks returned for insufficient funds.

## OFF LIMITS

The tournament waters will remain off limits from 12:01AM the Monday preceding the tournament until 5:30AM Friday morning. Friday is an official practice day. The tournament waters will again go off limits from 8:00PM or until blast off. **Alpha Series Competitors may not solicit information from anyone who has been on the tournament waters during the off limit period.** Competitors may not have the assistance of any non-competitor for the purpose of location or catching fish during the official practice day. Any competitor found guilty of violating the off-limits period, will have their catch disqualified.

## OFFICIAL PRACTICE DAY (FRIDAY)

During the official Practice Day, Alpha Series Anglers must practice solo or can practice with another Alpha Series angler. If you are planning to use Media/Social Media representatives to film during the official practice day, the Tournament Director needs to be made aware and approve the request by the weekend preceding the tournament. The Media Person can not fish or lend any knowledge of the body of water, assist the angler in locating, patterning or aiding of the angler in way other than filming the day. Media representatives are not permitted to fish or assist in locating fish. Flights over tournament waters, including drones, are not permitted beginning with the start of the off-limits period, extending through practice and competition days. Drones are permitted by approved media representatives working on a pro's behalf.

## PAYOUT

Prize money will be awarded following the weigh in at each tournament. One place will be paid out per six participants entered. Winners are responsible for all taxes on any moneys or prizes won. 70 Boat Payout- 1st Place \$10,000 2nd Place \$5000 and Big Fish \$700 (see payout section for full payouts)

## LAUNCH SEQUENCE

Starting positions will be randomly assigned the Monday night preceding each tournament (Facebook live). Those boat numbers will be posted to vaelite70.com and Facebook/Instagram.

## SAFETY

Safe boating conduct must always be observed. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved personal flotation device, securely fastened, **at all times** while the boat is being propelled by the combustion engine. Furthermore, a kill switch must be fastened to the driver any time the combustion engine is propelling the boat. Failure to do so is grounds for disqualification of the day's catch. Running lights must be operational and turned on at the blast-off of each tournament. Each competitor's boat must be equipped with a live well system capable of keeping a tournament limit of bass alive. Any boat equipped with a motor that exceeds the horsepower rating of the boat according to the manufacturer is prohibited from being used in the VA Elite 70 Tournament Trail.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

Each contestant is expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation. NO COMPETITOR MAY FISH WITHIN 50 YARDS OF ANY OTHER BOAT WHICH IS ANCHORED(Anchor or PowerPole/Talons/Raptors/etc.) WITH THE TROLLING MOTOR UP, FURTHERMORE NO COMPETITOR MAY FISH WITHIN 25 YARDS OF ANY OTHER BOAT WITHOUT THE OTHER BOATER'S PERMISSION. PERMISSION MAY NOT BE GRANTED TO ANY COMPETITOR AT THE EXCLUSION OF ANY OTHER COMPETITOR. No hole sitting by a non- competitor or by another competitor, to aid a tournament participant will be allowed. Violators will have their catch disqualified.

## TACKLE AND FISHING METHODS

Only artificial baits may be used. No live or cut bait is permitted (pork baits are permitted). All bass must be caught alive in a legal and sporting manner. No snagging. Each competitor may only use 1 rod at a time. No more than 1 line in the water at a time per angler. Trolling with the combustion motor is not permitted. No competitor may leave the boat to land or catch fish.

## STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS

All participants are expected to abide by all state and federal laws and game regulations. Any angler who intentionally violates a law or regulation in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage will have their catch disqualified. In the case of multiple governing authorities, the strictest law is applicable. Any participant who consumes, or is under the influence of alcoholic beverages, stimulants or depressants during any VA Elite 70 Tournament function will have their catch disqualified. (Prescribed medications taken per doctor's instructions are excluded.)

# SCORING

A limit of 5 bass (largemouth, smallmouth, spotted bass) may be weighed in. 12" Minimum length (Chick/James), 12" Minimum length (Potomac after June 16<sup>th</sup> 15" before) and 14" Minimum length (Buggs Island, Smith Mountain Lake, Chowan River and Lake Gaston). Lengths will be measured with mouth closed. A short fish brought to the scales will not be weighed, and will result in a 1- pound penalty. Dead fish will be penalized .5 (1/2) pound. The dead fish penalty will also apply to any fish weighed as a Big Fish if that fish is dead. All culling must be done at the time the 6th fish is caught; no competitor may continue fishing with more than the tournament limit in the live well at any time during the tournament. **You may not cull a dead fish.** Points - Will be awarded based on the individuals finishing position. The winning angler will receive 200 points, 2nd Place will receive 199, 3rd Place 198, etc... Anglers not weighing fish will receive one less point than the last place angler weighing in fish. Anglers not showing up will receive one less point than an individual not weighing in fish. Points Champions – Angler of the Year, the angler that accumulates the most points in the 3 regular season tournaments (will be crowned the VA Elite 70 Alpha Series Points Champion. For winning the points, that angler will receive FREE entry into the following Season (\$1500 value) and a sweet championship belt. If there is a tie for the end of the year points, the Championship will go to the angler with the highest total weigh over the 3 regular season tournaments.

**Tournament TIES:** In case of a tie, the prizes/points will be divided equally between the participants equally. Big fish IS NOT a tie breaker.

# EMERGENCIES

Competitors shall remain in the boat at all times during the tournament, except in the event of sickness or brief excursions for "nature calling", severe storm or other such hazard. It is permitted for a competitor to leave the boat for marina services. Competitors may leave the boat to dislodge it, but only to return the boat in the direction it came from. Leaving the boat to advance it is not permitted. (In falling water conditions, a competitor may leave the boat to advance it only to return from water they accessed without leaving the boat.) If for any reason the competitor decides to leave the tournament waters early, that angler shall bear full responsibility for notifying a tournament official. In case of a breakdown, a competitor may return with fish by another tournament boat.

# LATE PENALTY

Competitors who are not checked in by the check in deadline will be penalized at a rate of 1 pound per minute, up to 15 minutes at which time their catch will be disqualified. Late penalties will be deducted from total weight.

# PROTEST AND POLYGRAPH TEST

**Any protest must be submitted in writing to the tournament director within 15 minutes of the close of the weigh-in.** The VA Elite 70 Tournament Trail reserves the right to give a polygraph test to any participant at any time. This test does not have to be administered on site and may be set up by the tournament director at his discretion. All participants agree to abide by the results of any polygraph.

**TRUTH VERIFICATION** - Each contestant agrees to submit, by signature on the Va Elite 60, LLC Waiver Form , to a polygraph examination and to abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass an examination will result in disqualification from the tournament.

# LIABILITY INSURANCE

All members must carry a minimum of **\$300,000** of liability insurance on any boat they use during any VA Elite 70 Tournament event. Failure to do so or reporting of false information will result in disqualification of catch.

# VIOLATION OF RULES AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

The violation of a tournament rule by any angler may result in weight loss, the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day (eligible for a restart), loss of weight for the entire day, disqualification for the entire tournament or, in an extreme circumstance, ineligibility to participate in future VA Elite 70 Tournament events. If an angler is disqualified from a tournament their weight will be recorded as 0 lb. If the director feels that their violation was a willful attempt to gain an unfair advantage or to intentionally cheat, then the director has the right to refuse entry from that angler in the future.

# RULES INTERPRETATION AND ENFORCEMENT

**These rules will be unchanged during the 2024 Season**

Interpretation of these rules will be left to the Tournament Director. Infractions of any rule may result in disqualification of catch.

**Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director immediately any violation or infraction of any tournament rules. Failure to report violations, or suggestions to another competitor that they violated these rules, may cause for disqualification OFFICIAL PROTESTS MUST BE FILED IN WRITING by the witness within 30 minutes of the check-in time of the final flight of each tournament day**

PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered waters. Waters deemed off limits by authorities or tournament officials should be treated like a wall. **No boats of casting behind that boundary while fishing**. All angling must be done from the boat. On the Chick/James River tournament, the Pits in the back of Chippokes and casting over any dams (concrete or earthen) are off limits. In addition, there is no fishing at the Chickahominy Dam. You are not allowed to cast pass the dock at Rockahock. See diagram in Tournament HQ If you feel that the area you are fishing may fall into these areas, discuss with the tournament director prior to the tournament for further clarification.