

# RULES FOR THE 2024 TEAM 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 Team Trail (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 Team Tournament Trail will be \$300 per team for the single day tournaments, and \$400 for the 2 Day Classic for a total of \$2000 for the season (teams must register/pay for all 6 tournaments which includes 2 day EOY Tournament)). Once the field is set (\*70), interested teams will be put on a lottery list. Those teams on the lottery list will be drawn out of a hat and fill any positions vacated by the teams competing in the following season. The teams registered for 2024 season will have first right of refusal for the 2025 season. There will be a \$50 membership fee for each member. Substitutes will be required to pay the membership fee.

## 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.

## TEAMS

Teams will register themselves as a 'team' prior to the first tournament of the year. A team member may fish alone but will pay the full entry fee OR the team may use a substitute for **2 tournaments**. The same substitute must be used by the team. Substitutes can fish the 2 Day End of the Year Championship.

## 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. **Teams may not solicit information from anyone who has been on the tournament waters during the off limit period.** Teams 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.

Off Limits for the 2 Day Classic. 12:01AM Monday preceding the tournament through Safe Light the Thursday the day before the tournament. The body of water will again go off limit at 7PM that Thursday until Blast off on Friday morning.

## OFFICAL PRACTICE DAY

During the official Practice Day Team Members can fish together or solo in separate boats. The only other person allowed in the boat would be another active member of the Va Elite 70 no exceptions.

## PAYOUT

Prize money will be awarded following the weigh in at each tournament. One place will be paid out per six teams entered. Winners are responsible for all taxes on any moneys or prizes won. 75 Boat Payout- 1st Place \$6000, 2nd Place \$3500 and Big Fish \$750 (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 offending team'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 Team Tournament Trail.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

Each contestant is expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation. NO TEAM 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 TEAM MAY FISH WITHIN 25 YARDS OF ANY OTHER BOAT WITHOUT THE OTHER BOATER'S PERMISSION. PERMISSION MAY NOT BE GRANTED TO ANY TEAM AT THE EXCLUSION OF ANY OTHER TEAM. 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 team 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 Team 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 team 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 teams finishing position. The winning team will receive 200 points, 2nd Place will receive 199, 3rd Place 198, etc... Teams not weighing fish will receive one less point than the last place team weighing in fish. Teams not showing up will receive one less point than a team not weighing in fish. Points Champions – Team of the Year, the team that accumulates the most points in the 4 regular season tournaments (2 Day EOY Tournament is a non-points tournament) will be crowned the VA Elite 70 Points Champions. For winning the points, that team will receive FREE entry into the following Season (\$1900 value). If there is a tie for the end of the year points, the Championship will go to the team with the highest total weigh over the 5 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 with their partners 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 team may leave the boat to advance it only to return from water they accessed without leaving the boat.) If for any reason either or both team members decide to leave the tournament waters early, both members shall bear full responsibility for notifying a tournament official. If one team member leaves the water early, he/she must notify the director before returning to fish and the other team member may continue fishing in his/her absence. In the event that he/she does not intend to return, his/her partner may continue fishing alone for the remainder of the tournament hours. In case of a breakdown, one partner may return with fish by another tournament boat while the other partner is permitted to stay with the disabled 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 Team 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 Team 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 either team member 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 Team Tournament events. If a team 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 team or team members 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.