

# WORLD ELK CALLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

PRESENTED BY



## 2026 Official Rules & Regulations

### **DIVISIONS**

There are four divisions:

- Professional Division\* (Ages 18+)
- Men's Division (Ages 18+)
- Women's Open Division\*\* (Ages 18+)
- Youth Division (Ages 13-17 yrs.)

A free Pee Wee Division will be held at RMEF Headquarters on Saturday as part of the RMEF Youth Experience for ages 1-12. If your child is under 13, they may choose to compete in the Youth Division instead; however, they may only participate in one division and cannot compete in both.

An amateur elk caller is one who participates in competitions for fun and as a non-profit-making activity and who does not receive compensation for teaching elk calling or for other activities because of elk calling skills or reputation. Note: Excludes prizes awarded at RMEF-sanctioned calling competitions.

Contest officials reserve the right to reclassify contestants for the appropriate division.

*\*Any entrant who owns a calling business or works as a sales representative, ambassador, demonstrator or any official capacity, as determined solely by RMEF, for a calling business must enter the contest in the Professional Division. (Female professionals may choose to compete in either the Women's Open Division or the Professional Division.)*

*\*\*The Women's Open Division is open to all female competitors over the age of 18, including both amateurs and professionals. This division is designed to provide a high-level competitive environment where athletes of varying experience levels can compete head-to-head. There are no restrictions based on professional status; all participants will compete under the same rules and standards of play.*

### **DIVISION REQUIREMENTS**

A minimum of six contestants is required for each division. If fewer than six contestants register, that division will be eliminated, and the contestants will have the option to upgrade to a higher division. Each caller will follow the same basic format as outlined in these rules.

Contestants cannot enter more than one individual division. If a contestant has entered the Professional Division in the past and wishes to enter the Men's or Women's Division this year, he or she may do so. However, contestants who are classified as Professional must always enter the Professional Division. The same applies for the youth contestants. If a youth contestant wishes to enter the Men's or Women's Division one year and desires to enter the Youth Division another year, he or she may do so provided they meet the age limit for the Youth Division.

### **COMPETITION FORMAT & SEEDING CRITERIA**

Prelim rounds will follow a pool play format. Each competitor will compete in three matches against other competitors within their assigned pool.

If a division contains an odd number of competitors, one competitor will be selected at random to compete in a fourth match to ensure that all competitors complete three scored matches. This fourth match will not count toward the selected competitor's overall score.

If multiple pools within a division have an odd number of competitors, one competitor from each affected pool will be randomly selected to compete in a cross-pool match. This process ensures that all competitors participate in three scored matches.

The participant with the highest overall record in each pool will automatically advance to the Saturday finals. Any remaining finalist spots will be determined based on overall score totals and tiebreaker criteria outlined below.

Championship Saturday will be a head-to-head single elimination bracket with seeding based on the seeding and tiebreakers listed below: (total of 8 seeds)

#### **Seeding & Tie Breakers**

- Caller overall record
- Head-to-head (two competitors only – if more than 2 competitors in the same pool, head-to-head does not apply)
- Total 3 round overall score
- Total 3 round Bugle score
- Total 3 round cow call score
- Coin flip

### **REGISTRATION**

All contestants **MUST** register [online](#). Registration closes on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

#### **Required Entry Fee:**

To bolster the integrity of the contest and better commit callers who originally sign up to follow through on their commitment to participate, RMEF instituted an entry fee as follows:

- \$100 Professional
- \$50 Men's & Women's Open

- \$10 Youth

All registrants will be asked to submit a brief biography and “headshot” or “hunting/in the field” type photo. Contestants may opt out of this request.

### **VIDEO & MEDIA COVERAGE**

It will be required that all contestants sign a personal film/video/media release. Contestants who refuse to sign the waiver will be disqualified from the contest. The waiver will be available to complete during the check-in process.

### **CALLING DEVICES/PROPS**

Only vocal calling or sounds produced by handheld or breath-operated instruments may be used. Contestants can only produce sounds specified by the announcer. Electronic devices and the use of props such as trees, antlers, breaking branches and other devices are prohibited. (Contestants are prohibited from operating instruments by stepping on them or squeezing them between their knees or under their arms.) Calls, grunt tubes or any other instruments used can be a maximum of six inches in diameter and no more than three feet long. Calls in question will be measured by the officials. Contestants must be able to carry their calls to the calling area on their person. Duffle bags and backpacks are not allowed. A table will be provided for the contestants to put their devices on while they are calling.

### **CALLS**

Contestants will base their calls on the following sequence. For the Professional, Men’s, Women’s Open and Youth, a maximum of 1 minute will be allowed (30 seconds for cow/calf sounds and 30 seconds for bull sounds). Each caller will be asked to produce both cow/calf sounds and bull elk sounds.

Once contestants make the championship round, a 30-second freestyle period (which can be any combination of calls) will be added to each division.

Callers must produce sounds specified by the announcer within 15 seconds from the time the announcer asks. When the caller makes his/her first sound, an official of the contest will start a time clock. The contestant will be able to see the clock at all times when calling. A buzzer will go off at the end of the time limit.

### **CALLING SEQUENCE**

The contestants will be placed into a pool of callers for the prelim rounds. They will participate in three matches with cow/calf and bugle calls in each round. RMEF will predesignate caller A and

caller B prior to the event. If a contestant misses his/her calling sequence during any round of pool play, he/she will be automatically given a loss for that round, and 0 for scores in that match.

For the championship round, the contestants will be placed into brackets by seeding based on total prelim scoring and tiebreakers referenced above. The higher seed will call second. If a contestant misses his/her calling sequence during the championship round, he/she will be automatically disqualified from the contest.

### **LOCATION OF CONTESTANTS**

The competition will be held at the Wilma Theater during the RMEF Big Game Days in Missoula, Montana. Contestants will call in an area designated by the contest officials. During the contestants calling sequence, they will be free to move around the stage. Contestants will not be allowed to practice in the building at any time. Contestants will be required to exit the building if they wish to practice before the competition.

### **CONTEST OFFICIALS**

Contest officials will be announced before the start of the competition. The officials will have the option to inspect and approve all calling devices used by the contestants as well as the right to allow or prohibit any calling devices from being used. The decision of the contest officials is final.

### **LOCATION OF JUDGES**

Judges will score each call from a draped-off area that completely prevents them from seeing or identifying the contestants. RMEF will make its best effort to mitigate the noise from nearby events.

### **JUDGES**

Knowledgeable judges will score the competition and will be comprised of outfitters, guides, wildlife biologists, etc. No person shall serve as a judge if he/she is related to any contestant. There will be a minimum of five judges and always an odd number of judges scoring. Judges will not be allowed to re-score any contestant once his/her scorecard has been submitted.

### **HEAD-TO-HEAD POOL PLAY SCORING**

Judges will evaluate each series of calls from one (1) through ten (10), one (1) being the lowest, and ten (10) the highest for a total possible score of 10 points per contestant per judge. There will be an odd number of judges, and each judge will award points. The winner will be determined by the match scores. Pool play rounds can end in a tie. At the end of pool play, if two competitors have the same overall record, the tie breaker rules listed below will apply to break the tie.

- Total round overall score
- Total round Bugle score
- Total round cow call score
- Coin flip

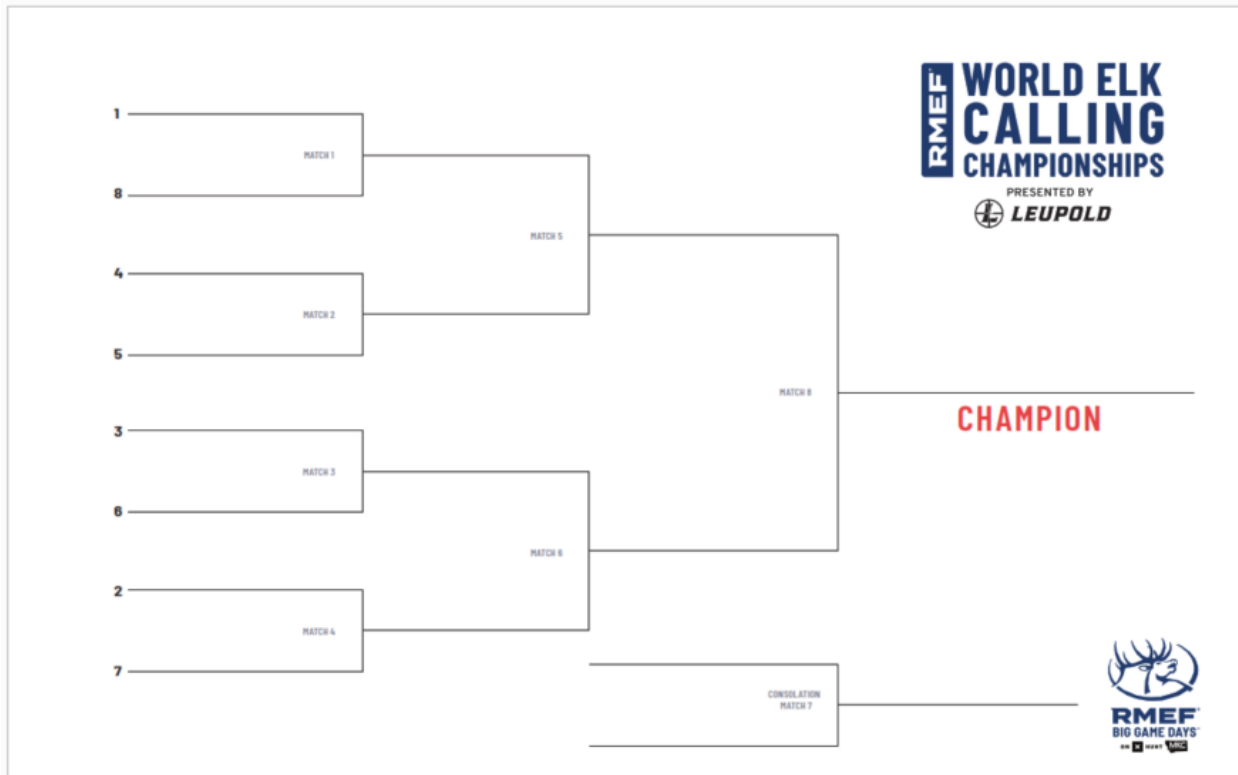
### **CHAMPIONSHIP SCORING**

Traditional single elimination head-to-head bracket.

In unforeseen circumstances, RMEF reserves the right to make a decision in the best interest of the championship.

### **WINNERS**

Winners of each pool will advance to the championship round on Saturday, along with the next highest scores to fill a championship bracket of eight participants per division. Below is an example of the championship bracket for each division.



### **ANNOUNCER**

The prelim pools will be posted prior to the start of the contest. The announcer will welcome the audience and participants and then introduce the judges. The judges will be sequestered behind a

draped-off area that completely prevents them from seeing or identifying the contestants. Contestant bios may be featured on a screen for the audience to see during the prelim rounds and introduced with bios before the championship round.

Example: The announcer will ask the two contestants in pool #1 to come up to the stage, with each caller predesignated as Caller A and Caller B for each match. The announcer will anonymously introduce Caller A, while Caller B sits on a designated stool on the side stage. After Caller A completes cow/calf calls, Caller B will be anonymously introduced, and they will complete cow/calf calls. This sequence will repeat for bull calls.

Scores will be tallied by the scorekeepers and pool play records will be updated after each pool has completed all matches.

### **PRIZES**

Compete for the largest cash prize payout in event history, where champions in each division will also take home a coveted championship buckle.