

elete Athlete Profile: Don Harper, Professional Bass Fisherman



Above: Pro Bass Fisherman Don Harper pictured with his many fishing awards spanning his twenty-five year career.

About Don Harper

Professional Fisherman with over 35 years of experience and 25 years of tournament fishing

Member of B.A.S.S., FLW, and BASSCHAMPS

Six-time Angler of the Year

Occupation: Teacher and Coach, E.C.I.S.D

Career Wins:

- 22 Top-Ten Finishes in 210 Events
- 10 Wins
- Total Winnings: \$135,000

Holder of Kentucky State Record for the largest stringer caught in a one-day tournament of 62.8 pounds

Unlike other professional sports—cycling, running, triathlons—in which, literally, time is money, in the world of professional bass fishing, it's weight that reigns. And like other professional sports, professional bass fishing tournaments offer some pretty serious (six- and seven-figure) cash purses to the lucky fisherman (or woman) who can weigh in with the days' heaviest catch. Just ask Don Harper of North Fort Worth, Texas, a professional bass fisherman whose total winnings come to \$135,000.

Late in the summer of 2007, elete was connected with Don who related to us his experience in using **elete Electrolyte Add-In™**. Don used to suffer debilitating cramps while fishing. Sitting in an open boat for hours under a blazing hot Texas sun and exposed to brutal Southern humidity, Don was losing electrolytes, which was affecting his performance. Don credits **elete Electrolyte Add-In** with banishing his cramps and allowing him to continue to follow his true passion and sport—bass fishing. Here's Don's profile...



Above: Don Harper pictured at his favorite fishing hole—Lake Amistad in Texas.

How did you first get involved with professional bass fishing?

“A good fisherman comes up through his local bass clubs as he or she gains the knowledge to locate fish and compete. The team tournaments are open to the public. Once you believe in your ability to win, you turn toward the big money tournaments as a professional.”

For the layperson, could you briefly just describe the protocol of a bass fishing tournament?

“The rules are usually standard for all tournaments with some exceptions of times for the beginning and ending protocol of the tournament-fishing day.

Most tournaments go by the state regulations, which are set up by the Parks and Wildlife Service. Any of the state laws that are broken results in disqualification. Some large tournaments are changing and going to a three-fish stringer instead of a five-fish limit. This change will cut down on the number of fish that do not survive the live release protocol.”

What is it about pro tournaments that you love so much?

“These tournaments are set up to make it as fair as possible to all entries. There are a set number of practice days, and then the lake goes off limits until everyone can get to the tournament site. Then the fishermen get one or two more practice days before the event takes place. I also enjoy the larger payouts for the winners.”

When did you first begin competing, and what are some of the recent awards you’ve received?

“I have been a member of a bass club since 1970 and have been competing ever since. The most recent open tournament that my partner and I won was the Sequin Open on September 8, 2007 at Lake Amistad. We weighed in five fish for a total of 26.82 pounds.”

What are some of the events in 2007-2008 you will be competing in?

“This will be a new experience for me as a tournament fisherman. My family and I have recently moved to North Fort Worth, and I must locate a new club to join and check out the professional tournament trails to fish. I also plan on fishing Lake Amistad when I can because I have twenty-five years invested in that lake.”

How do you prepare for a tournament?

“I fish as many practice days to prepare for a tournament as I can afford. I invested \$1,500 in preparation for the State Invitational Tournament held on Lake Amistad and did not draw a paycheck. You do everything you can to prepare: You buy the newest baits, maintain the best boat possible, work as hard as you can to locate fish, and most of the time you only hope to place in the money.”

What is the biggest factor in terms of professional fishing paying off?

“Family comes first. You must make sure everything is okay on the home front before you



leave. Being gone for weeks at a time is hard work and it's hard on the family."

Any interesting or little-known fact about yourself?

"I am a teacher of 36 years now retired. I believe in teaching children about the outdoors and starting them out early in life to respect what God has given us to enjoy. Share those things with your child, teach them to fish, teach them how to survive in the great outdoors and they will never be afraid or go hungry."

Personal philosophy?

"Everyone wants to know how you won or where you caught the fish.

To that end, I have the following tale to relate... A group of polar bears is sitting around an ice hole fishing. How many fish are there and where did you catch them last time? My Pledge: As a pledged fellow polar bear who has caught some fish, I promise not to reveal any of the secrets of how or where I caught them, and if I do, my fellow bears throughout the world will ban me from my fishing hole hook, line, and sinker."

Knowledge of fishing, the understanding of the importance of recreation, together with high standards of sportsmanship and conduct are the unique contribution that I can give anyone trying to get involved in any sport.

All physical activity has value in promoting not only the general health of the individual, but his or her emotional and social development as well."

How did you find elete Electrolyte Add-In?

"I found **elete** through a friend that rides in a bicycle club. He introduced me to the product about three years ago."

Tell us a little about your experience using elete Add-In. How has elete helped you?

"I use **elete** to replace all the other products out there that are full of sugar and calcium. As we get older everything vigorous that we do causes soreness and leg cramps. **elete** will take care of these problems up front. Before a tournament, I start taking **elete** the day before. It doesn't matter if it is winter or summer, my body needs the help that **elete** can give for the tired muscles and leg cramps. I just mix the product in my water bottles according to the directions. If it is cold weather, you don't take in as much liquid as you should, so I take hydration on a timed basis—every hour. During the summer months your body will call for the hydration on a regular basis. Listen to your body! Make sure you take extra water bottles along in the boat, just in case of a breakdown or an overnight stay on the water."

What are the specific benefits you've noticed using elete Add-In?

"As I have mentioned, I use **elete** for muscle fatigue and leg cramps. But most of all, like older athletes, I can stand to lose some weight. **elete** can help me do that by leaving out the sugars and carbohydrates that all of the other electrolyte drinks provide. More and more, the educated athlete must watch what he or she is putting into their body and make sure it is the best possible choice to help their performance."



Above: Don Harper pictured above at Lake Amistad with the day's catch.

One of the reasons is our electrolytes aren't right.

The aging process can be delayed through regular exercise and **elete** will help keep you working out on a regular basis. We are working toward a life-long commitment to leisure activity. We all must nurture this attitude of life-long participation in physical activity. Hold tight to this acquisition of information and judgment that contributes to the 'Good Life.'

elete will assist each individual in establishing appropriate electrolyte balances to develop the physical skill and coordination suitable to the individual's needs and desires." ■

What would you like people to know about elete Electrolyte Add-In?

"**elete** is for everyone that is in need of hydration. It doesn't matter about the workload. We all need the best supplements on the market to maintain our health. **elete**'s cost is only one-tenth the cost of the expensive power drinks that are full of sugar and other ingredients that can harm the body.

I truly believe that people drink those drinks because of the taste than anything else. Get over it! Your body is 97 percent water. Water is what you need. Add **elete** to replace the minerals and electrolytes that your body has lost during the day. **elete** allows me to withstand fatigue for longer periods of time and gives me the endurance needed to stay out there and keep fishing.

You will find that the proper electrolyte product will enhance mental alertness and sensory perception. Your ability to rest and relax at night when you sleep will improve. Flexibility, coordination, and strength are developed through physical activity. Many people stop these activities because of the pain it causes.

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