

NEWS



Ascension
CHARITY CLASSIC

presented by **EMERSON**



CHAMPIONS

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APGA Tour star Tim O’Neal joins field at Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson

*TOURNAMENT PROVIDES FIRST-EVER EXEMPTION FOR AN
APGA TOUR PLAYER INTO A PGA TOUR CHAMPIONS EVENT*

ST. LOUIS (August 18, 2022) – The Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson officially announced today that Advocates Professional Golf Association (APGA) Tour star Tim O’Neal has received an exemption to compete in the second annual PGA TOUR Champions event scheduled for the week of September 6—11 at Norwood Hills Country Club in St. Louis, MO.

The Ascension Charity Classic will be O’Neal’s first-career PGA TOUR Champions start. The newly eligible O’Neal, who celebrated his 50th birthday earlier this month on August 3, joins a world-class field that includes recently announced commitments from defending champion David Toms, Bernhard Langer, Justin Leonard, Jim Furyk, Vijay Singh, Jerry Kelly, and John Daly.

“We’re thrilled to have Tim join this elite field,” said Nick Ragone, Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer for Ascension. “By bringing the PGA TOUR Champions and APGA Tour in closer alignment, we hope that other PGA TOUR properties will do likewise as we help make the game more diverse and inclusive.”

O’Neal is the renowned veteran pro golfer who has starred on multiple tours over recent decades, racking up nine PGA TOUR starts, 75-plus Korn Ferry Tour starts and scores of titles. Nine championships came on the APGA Tour, the newly-prominent circuit that has become a force in driving greater diversity in the sport by providing opportunities to African Americans from HBCUs and other underrepresented golfers to compete and win at the highest level of professional golf, career development and mentoring sessions.

“The Ascension Charity Classic PGA TOUR Champions event is a new highlight for me and I am super appreciative of the opportunity,” said O’Neal. “I love the challenge of teeing it up against some of the biggest names and best players in golf and I’m excited to play a role in raising money for the St. Louis-area charities involved.”

O’Neal is a career golf professional who has found success in the sport over decades while pursuing his dream of playing regularly on the PGA TOUR. O’Neal won 16 college tournaments during his years at Jackson State University and is the only African American to have won both the Georgia Amateur and the Georgia State Open. The Savannah native has three wins on PGA TOUR Latinoamerica, and over 75 starts during six full seasons on the Korn Ferry Tour. In 2019, he was the recipient of the Charles Sifford Memorial Exemption at the PGA TOUR’s Genesis Open as designated by tournament host Tiger Woods. In 2021, he won the John Shippen National Invitational, earning an exemption into the PGA TOUR’s Rocket Mortgage Classic.

(more)

In PGA TOUR Q-School competition, O’Neal’s near misses are the stuff of legend. In the 2000 Q-School competition for status on the 2001 PGA TOUR, O’Neal was eight-under for the final day and 16-under for the six tournament rounds but had no way of knowing where he stood approaching the final two holes. He bogeyed the par-three 17th and then, unaware that he was only one stroke inside the qualifying number, he double-bogeyed and missed gaining his card. In 2004, he experienced another near miss (one stroke), but has persevered over the years and now savors an opportunity to compete in PGA TOUR Champions events.

On the APGA Tour, O’Neal is renowned as the most experienced and one of the most popular players, who shares his experiences readily with the younger players chasing their professional golf aspirations. He played in the first APGA Tour event in 2010 and has nine tournament titles, including a win at the 2020 Farmers Insurance APGA TOUR Invitational, the event that launched the APGA Tour’s rise to prominence. He has twice won the APGA Tour Lexus Cup Point Standings (2018 and 2020), a testament to his consistent play over the years. He has played a prominent role in helping the APGA Tour grow from three events in 2010 to seven in 2020 and now 18 with over \$800,000 in prize and bonus money in 2022.

Ascension and the Advocates Professional Golf Association (APGA) Tour, in association with the Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson, announced in February of this year a three-year agreement to host a new professional golf tournament in St. Louis. The APGA Tour St. Louis – Ascension Classic presented by Daugherty Business Solutions will debut Sept. 8-9, 2022, at Glen Echo Country Club in North St. Louis County.

The APGA Tour St. Louis – Ascension Classic presented by Daugherty Business Solutions, which will be the first tournament on the APGA Tour’s Farmers Insurance Fall Series, will be special for O’Neal and the APGA Tour players, who will be able to cheer on their longtime colleague and competitor in his next-level effort against some of the biggest names in professional golf.

The Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson is one of the premier Regular Season events on the PGA TOUR Champions and will give way to the Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs—a season-ending, three-tournament series used to determine the TOUR’s season-long champion.

Tickets for the tournament can be purchased at ascensioncharityclassic.com. Two types of weekly admission options are available, a Clubhouse Ticket as well as a Grounds Ticket. Daily tickets are also offered. Tickets start at \$20, and kids 16 and under can attend for free with a ticketed adult.

All three rounds of the Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson will be broadcast on Golf Channel. Internationally, telecasts air in excess of 170 countries and territories, reaching more than 340 million potential households, and distributed in 15+ markets via GOLFTV.

For more information about the Ascension Charity Classic, including ticket, pro-am and hospitality availability, visit the Ascension Charity Classic website at ascensioncharityclassic.com. For the latest news and updates on social media, follow the tournament on Twitter at [@ascensionccg](https://twitter.com/ascensionccg), on Facebook at facebook.com/ascensioncharityclassic and Instagram at [@ascensioncharityclassic](https://instagram.com/ascensioncharityclassic).

About Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson

The Ascension Charity Classic presented by Emerson is an official event on the PGA TOUR Champions operated by Tournaments for Charity, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit entity. This 54-hole stroke play golf tournament features 81 PGA TOUR Champions professionals competing for a \$2 million purse at historic Norwood Hills Country Club in St. Louis, Missouri. The event is designed to showcase the best golf on the PGA TOUR Champions for the enjoyment of spectators and to benefit local charities in the North St. Louis County area and beyond. All three official rounds will be internationally televised on the Golf Channel. For more information, visit ascensioncharityclassic.com.

About PGA TOUR Champions

PGA TOUR Champions is a membership organization of professional golfers 50 and older, including 33 members of the World Golf Hall of Fame. The Tour's mission is to provide financial opportunities for its players, entertain and inspire its fans, deliver substantial value to its partners, create outlets for volunteers to give back and generate significant charitable and economic impact in tournament communities. All events are televised in the United States, with most receiving complete coverage on Golf Channel, the exclusive cable-television partner of PGA TOUR Champions. Internationally, telecasts air in excess of 170 countries and territories, reaching more than 340 million potential households, and distributed in 15+ markets via GOLFTV. Follow PGA TOUR Champions online at PGATOUR.com, at facebook.com/PGATOURChampions, on Twitter @ChampionsTour and on Instagram @pgatourchampions.

About the APGA Tour

The Advocates Professional Golf Association (APGA) was established in 2010 with the mission to bring greater diversity to the game of golf. The APGA Tour Board of Directors works to accomplish this by hosting and operating professional golf tournaments, player development programs, mentoring programs, and by introducing the game to inner-city young people. In addition to conducting up to 18 tournaments awarding over \$800,000 in purse and bonus money annually, the APGA conducts the Player Development Program to aid young minority golfers.

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