



FAQ on the Sunshine Tour's Qualifying School

Q. How can I become a member of the Sunshine Tour?

- A. The main way to become a member of the Sunshine Tour is to go to Q School. Some players are eligible for Affiliate Membership with the Sunshine Tour, and they would not be required to enter the Q School. Players qualifying for Affiliate Membership are, amongst others;
- Members of the PGA Tour
 - **FULL** members of the European Tour (this does not include the Challenge Tour)
 - Players finishing within the top 50 positions on the Final Order of Merits on following Tours:
 - Asian Tour
 - PGA Tour of Australasia
 - European Challenge Tour
 - Web.Com
 - Nominated players who are citizens of African countries are also eligible for Affiliate Membership in terms for the General Regulations

Q. How do I enter the Sunshine Tour Q School?

- A. You will need to complete the Q School Entry Form and return it to the Sunshine Tour **along with the entry fee**. The form is available from the Sunshine Tour Membership Department or it can be downloaded by following the link – www.sunshinetour.com. Players can also enter online

Q. Who can enter the Sunshine Tour Q School?

- A. All male professionals and male amateurs with a handicap of scratch or better are eligible to enter. See paragraph 1 of the entry form for further stipulations on eligibility

Q. Do I lose my amateur status if I enter the Q School?

- A. It is not a breach of the Rules of Amateur Status to file an entry for and participate in any stage of the Q School, provided that you waive your right to prize money by completing the prize money waiver form attached to the entry form

Q. Are there age restrictions on entering the Sunshine Tour Q School?

- A. The Sunshine Tour will not accept entries from anyone under 18 at the commencement date of the Q School.

Q. How much does it cost to go to Q School?

- A. The entry fee is R6 300 for all entrants. The entry fee does not include travel and accommodation, which are the responsibility of each participant.

Q. Is it easy to withdraw from the Q School and can the entry fee be refunded?

- A. You can withdraw by contacting the Sunshine Tour Membership Department by telephone, e-mail or fax indicating your intention.

If you withdraw prior to the closing date of entries, a full refund will be given. If you withdraw after the closing date for entries, and you do not compete, a refund of R5 800 will be given. Once you tee off, or are absent on the tee, you are no longer eligible for any type of refund.

Q. How many players get a 'Tour Card' through the Q School?

A. The leading 30 players (& ties) will be eligible for Sunshine Tour membership in Category 11 for the 2015 season. There are two re-ranks in a season and all players obtaining a card will be re-ranked as outlined in the General Regulations.

All players making the 72 hole cut at the Q School will be eligible for membership of the 2015 Big Easy Tour provided they are not listed in the top 100 positions on the Final 2014 Sunshine Tour Order of Merit, and provided they have not been Sunshine Tour members for a period of 5 years or more.

Q. What does it mean to be ranked in Category 11 on the Sunshine Tour?

A. All members of the Sunshine Tour are ranked in a particular Category. There are 12 categories in total. Players in Categories 1 – 11 are regarded as ranked members, and those in category 12 are unranked. When filling a tournament field, players are exempt in order of ranking. The cut off point for players getting into events all depends on the field size and which players enter the tournament

Q. Are there qualifying rounds for co-sanctioned events?

A. Yes there are. These qualifying rounds are treated exactly the same as all others on the Sunshine Tour. There are 10 spots in these qualifiers

Q. On average, how many people play in the qualifying rounds?

A. These numbers vary because our field sizes vary from tournament to tournament. During our summer months, our field sizes are generally 156 pros and in the winter, 72 professionals. (Most of our winter events have in tournament pro-ams).

For the past few years, the average number of entries for the qualifiers in the summer has been around 65 players and 45 players for the winter. In 2013, there were 4 events where all ranked players were exempt.

Q. If I come in the top 30 at q school I get category 11 membership, does this entitle me to automatic entry in all Sunshine Tour tournaments or simply allow me to try and qualify?

A. With a top 15 finish at QS, you will probably get into all the summer events with the exception of the co-sanctioned tournaments. In 2014 we cut off at 29th position from QS and for the Telkom PGA Championship we cut off at 20th from QS for the Dimension Data Pro-Am.

It is unlikely that QS graduates will get into many winter events, other than those 4 mentioned above, unless they have a good re-rank

Q. Are there any other ways to qualify for a tournament if you don't get in on your ranking other than through the qualifying rounds?

A. Yes – if you finish in the top 10 positions in the preceding tournament, you get into the next event, provided it is not a co-sanctioned event. For co-sanctioned events, you need a top 5 finish the week before to get in

Q. If I enter a Sunshine Tour tournament, but don't get in on my ranking, can I play the qualifying round and how many spots are there in the qualifiers?

A. Once the entries for a tournament close (3 weeks before the 1st round), the cut off position is determined and communicated to all members. All players who do not get into the event on their ranking are **AUTOMATICALLY** placed into the qualifying round. **There are 10 spots available in the qualifying rounds for co-sanctioned events and 15 spots available in the qualifying rounds for all other events**, with the exception of the SA Open, which has its own qualifying criteria. There will also be NO qualifying rounds for the Zimbabwe Open and the Zambia Opens in 2015. The fields for these events will be determined purely off the category rankings

Q. If I obtain a 'Tour Card' at the Q School, how do I retain my Tour Card for the following season?

A. Currently, you will need to play at least 8 Order of Merit tournaments and earn enough money to finish in the top 100 positions on the Final Sunshine Tour Order of Merit. The last player to retain his card for the 2014 season earned R52 050 in 2013.

Q. How do I move into a higher Category?

A: There are 2 ways:

- a. You need to win a tournament and then you will move into Category 1, 2 or 3 (depending on which event you win).
- b. If you make more money than the 50th placed player on the Final 2014 OoM during the 2015 season, then you will move into Category 10c. (The 50th placed player on the Final 2013 OoM earned R305 075)

Also, as stated above, on two occasions during the season, there is a re-rank of players within Category 11 based on their current OoM position.

Q. What are the tournament entry fees?

A. On the Big Easy Tour, the entry fees are R500 per event.
On the Sunshine Tour, entry fees for events with prize money of less than R1 000 000 are R100 and events with prize money over R1 000 000 are R250.

Q. Are there any other fees to pay if I get my card?

A. Yes – you need to pay your annual subscriptions to the Sunshine Tour or Big Easy Tour which is a once off payment before you play in your first event of the season. Players who are both Sunshine Tour and BET members (i.e those players finishing in the top 30 at Q School) are not required to pay BET subs if they have paid Sunshine Tour subs.

Q. When does the Sunshine Tour season run from?

A. The season runs from January to December

R. What is the Big Easy Tour (BET)?

A. This is a smaller tour. Each event played over 2 days with prize money of R100 000. The maximum field size is 120 players. There is no cut – the top 30 finishers get paid

Q. If I get a BET card at Q School (finish in positions 1 – 60), am I guaranteed all starts on the BET or are their also qualifiers for the BET?

A. There are no qualifying rounds for the Big Easy Tour. Should our entries for a BET event exceed the field size, then players will qualify down the exemption category list. The maximum field size for a BET event is 120.

Q. If I come between 30 and 60 at Q School, does this gives me BET membership and the opportunity to try and qualify for events on Sunshine Tour?

A. No – you are not eligible to qualify for Sunshine Tour events if you finish between 30 & 60 at Q School. This only entitles you to BET membership

Q. If I miss the 4 round cut at Q School (finish outside of the top 60), will I still be allowed to try and qualify for Sunshine Tour or Big Easy Tour events?

A. No – if you miss the cut at Q School, you have **NO** playing rights on either the Sunshine Tour or the Big Easy Tour for 2015

Q. Am I eligible to try and pre qualify for events on the Sunshine Tour or play the Big Easy Tour if I do not play the Q School?

A. No – only Sunshine Tour members are eligible to play the Sunshine Tour qualifying rounds and only Big Easy Tour members are eligible to play the Big Easy Tour

Q. Do I need to play Q School with conforming clubs?

A. No – however, should you get a card at Q School, your clubs will need to conform before playing your first Sunshine Tour or Big Easy Tour event

R. What are the rules of golf during Q School?

A. Rules governing play will be the following:

- The Current R&A Rules of Golf
- The current Sunshine Tour Conditions of Competition and Local Rules
- The local rules of the host club as approved by the Tournament Director

In addition, you are required to conduct yourself in accordance with the Sunshine Tour Code of Behaviour as contained within the Members General Regulations Handbook.

Q. Do I need to have a caddie at the Q School?

A. No – entrants may carry their own bags. (The use of golf carts or trollies is prohibited.) Other entrants into the 2015 Sunshine Tour Q School, and 2015 Sunshine Tour members or Big Easy Tour members may **NOT** act as caddies.

Q. What does it mean to sign the prize money waiver form?

A. You have two options of entering Q School:

You can enter as an amateur and **MUST** sign the prize money waiver form. This means that should you win prize money at Q School, you are NOT eligible to receive it. If you get a card at Q School, then when you sign a membership form to the Sunshine Tour, you lose your amateur status and become a member of the Sunshine Tour and a professional. Should you miss your card at Q School, then you still remain an amateur – you do not forfeit your amateur status

You can enter as a professional and **NOT** sign the prize money waiver form. This means that should you win prize money at Q School, you can take it. If you get a card at Q School, then when you sign a membership form to the Sunshine Tour, you become a member of the Sunshine Tour . Should you miss your card at Q School, then you lose your amateur status and it could take 6 months to 1 year for you to be re-instated. In this time, you are in limbo and cannot play amateur or professional tournaments

Q. Does the Sunshine Tour assist players with travel and accommodation?

A. No – players need to sort out their own travel arrangements. The Sunshine Tour will endeavour to advertise accommodation options on the tournament info sheets published shortly after the close of entries for each tournament

Please take a look at our Tour Information Centre though our website for information on events, results, OoM's, stats, etc - <http://sst.ocs-sport.com/tic/tmtic.cgi>. Select the season you are looking for in the window at the bottom right hand side of the page