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# Intersport announces 2025 schedule for THE JOHN SHIPPEN National Invitational, elevating Black representation in professional golf

## THE JOHN SHIPPEN National Invitational showcases nation's top Black women and men golfers competing for four exemptions into LPGA Tour and PGA TOUR events

- *Women's Invitational will be played June 3-4 at Blythefield Country Club in Grand Rapids, Michigan for exemptions into the Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give and Dow Championship*

- *Men's Invitational to be played June 21-22 at Detroit Golf Club for an exemption into the PGA TOUR's Rocket Classic*

**DETROIT (February 6, 2025) –** Intersport has announced the 2025 schedule for THE JOHN SHIPPEN National Invitational – a series of competitions created to provide playing opportunities on the LPGA Tour and PGA TOUR for the nation's top Black women and men golfers.

The events are named after John Shippen, Jr., who was both the first American-born golf professional and the country's first Black golf professional.

The women's contest of THE JOHN SHIPPEN National Invitational will be held June 3-4 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the men's competition of THE JOHN SHIPPEN National Invitational will be June 21-22 in Detroit.

"As we head into the heart of the 2025 golf season, we are excited to celebrate the fifth anniversary of THE JOHN SHIPPEN by not only looking back on all the great moments from our first four years, but looking ahead to a terrific series of events this year," said Brittany Jeanis, Vice President of Intersport Golf and Tournament Director for the Rocket Classic. "The opportunities that THE JOHN SHIPPEN have provided for the top Black men's and women's golfers to compete on the LPGA Tour and PGA TOUR have made a significant difference in their career progression, and we look forward to even more of those amazing stories developing this season and in the years to come."

Since 2021, more than 100 of the nation's best Black men and women golfers have competed in THE JOHN SHIPPEN. THE JOHN SHIPPEN has awarded 21 playing opportunities on the PGA TOUR and LPGA Tour and donated $340,000 to local charities, scholarships and fellowships. SHIPPEN alumni continue to see success beyond the National Invitational through player-earned memberships on the PGA TOUR Champions, PGA TOUR Americas and Ladies European Tour.

In 2022, Women's Invitational champion Sadena Parks chose 2021 winner Anita Uwadia to play alongside her in the Dow Championship, and the pair went on to finish tied for 36$^{th}$ – making them the first SHIPPEN

champions to make a cut after securing a start in an event based on their results in THE JOHN SHIPPEN.

In 2023, Men's Invitational champion Chase Johnson made the cut at the Rocket Classic, becoming the first men's SHIPPEN winner to make the cut. Johnson went on to compete in two more PGA TOUR events that season, also making the cut at the World Wide Technology Championship.

Last year, Women's Invitational champion Georgia Oboh teamed with Lakareber Abe to finish tied for eighth at the Dow Championship, the best finish in an LPGA Tour or PGA TOUR event for a SHIPPEN winner. The 2024 season was also a notable one for a former SHIPPEN winner, as Tim O'Neal, the 2021 Men's Invitational champion, secured his first victory in a PGA TOUR Champions event, winning the Dominion Energy Classic. It marked the first victory for a former winner of a SHIPPEN event on one of professional golf's top tours.

"We are looking forward to another great year for THE JOHN SHIPPEN Men's and Women's Invitationals," said Sommer Woods, Co-Founder of Woods and Watts Effect and Tournament Lead for THE JOHN SHIPPEN. "This platform has proven to be a game-changer for our winners and all our participants since the events first started in 2021. As we approach our fifth year, we are eager to continue supporting so many talented Black men and women working toward achieving their dreams on the golf course."

The 2024 SHIPPEN events also marked the first time that purses had been offered, as $60,000 was awarded across the tournaments, with prize money being given to the top three finishers.

THE JOHN SHIPPEN Women's Invitational will be played June 3-4 at Blythefield Country Club in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the home of the Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give. Players will compete in 36 holes of stroke play, with the winner earning an exemption into the Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give (June 12–15), as well as an exemption into the Dow Championship, the LPGA tournament scheduled for June 26–29 in Midland, Michigan. The SHIPPEN winner will choose a partner to compete alongside her in the Dow, which is a two-player team event.

THE JOHN SHIPPEN Men's Invitational will be held June 21–22 at Detroit Golf Club. Participants will compete in a 36-hole stroke play competition, with the winner granted an exemption into the PGA TOUR's Rocket Classic (June 25–29). The final round of the Men's Invitational, on Sunday, June 22, will be open to fans with complimentary admission and parking.

For updated information on THE JOHN SHIPPEN, please visit www.TheJohnShippen.com and follow us on Facebook and Instagram (@TheJohnShippen) and on X (@TheJShippen). For information about sponsorship opportunities or how to get involved, email us at THEJOHNSHIPPEN@intersportnet.com.

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Intersport is an award-winning agency and leader in the creation of ideas, content and experiences that attract and engage passionate audiences. Its industry-leading team offers expert insights in content marketing, customer engagement, experiential marketing, hospitality, production and sponsorship consulting. The Chicago-based agency also owns and operates events across the professional and collegiate sports landscape, including basketball, football, golf, pickleball and volleyball. In addition to launching and operating the PGA TOUR's Rocket Classic, Intersport is the proud operator of other world-class, ground-breaking golf properties such as The Jackson T. Stephens Cup, THE JOHN SHIPPEN National Golf Invitational and the World Champions Cup. Intersport has been headquartered in Chicago since its inception in 1985, with additional offices in Boston, Detroit and New York. Learn more at www.intersport.global/ and on social media (LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook).

**About Woods & Watts Effect**
Woods & Watts Effect is an equity and inclusion consulting firm of transformation engineers, co-founded by Sommer Woods and Michele Lewis Watts, Ph.D. They are a solutions-driven team that adeptly designs programs that assess a company's strengths and areas for improvement relative to inclusion and social equity. Woods & Watts Effect is innovative in their thinking, their engagement and their execution. Through a bold, non-traditional and engaging approach, they produce viable and actionable solutions for sustainable change. More information is available at WoodsWattsEffect.com.

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