

**NEWS**



**Ascension**  
**CHARITY CLASSIC**



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## **Ascension Charity Classic announces 2024 Legends Charity Challenge lineup**

FOURTH EDITION OF EXHIBITION CONTEST FOR CHARITY FEATURES HALL OF FAMERS MARSHALL FAULK AND AENEAS WILLIAMS, CURRENT ST. LOUIS BLUES STARS JAKE NEIGHBOURS AND SCOTT PERUNOVICH, AND FORMER UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI FOOTBALL STANDOUTS JEREMY MACLIN, DANARIO ALEXANDER, SEAN WEATHERSPOON AND KEVIN RUTLAND

*World Golf Hall of Fame member Hale Irwin to emcee, joined by special guest and National Hockey League Hall of Famer Chris Pronger for fan favorite celebrity event returning to Saturday of tournament week*

**ST. LOUIS (August 29, 2024)** – The Ascension Charity Classic announced today the return of one of the tournament’s fan-favorite events, the Legends Charity Challenge presented by World Wide Technology. For 2024, this marquee exhibition match will feature a “Mizzou” versus “The Lou” lineup. Representing “Mizzou” are four of the University’s all-time football greats in Jeremy Maclin, Danario Alexander, Sean Weatherspoon, and Kevin Rutland. “The Lou” team includes Pro Football Hall of Famers and St. Louis Rams legends Marshall Faulk and Aeneas Williams, along with current St. Louis Blue stars Jake Neighbours and Scott Perunovich.

The Legends Charity Challenge will take place on Saturday, September 7 – following the final pairing of the Ascension Charity Classic’s second round (3:45 p.m. estimated start time) – and will begin on Hole No. 10 at Norwood Hills Country Club.

The two four-person teams for “Mizzou” and “The Lou” will compete for a \$25,000 purse to benefit First Tee of Greater St. Louis and PGA REACH Gateway.

The powerhouse group of competitors will play a seven-hole team scramble exhibition match with each hole given a dollar value that will be awarded per hole to the winning team’s charity. The team that has won the most money for its charity at the end of seven holes will be declared the winner of the 2024 Legends Charity Challenge presented by World Wide Technology.

Stepping into the Legends Charity Challenge emcee role this year will be World Golf Hall of Fame member and Missouri native Hale Irwin. Also joining the Legends Charity Challenge will be special guest and NHL Hall of Famer, five-time All Star, Stanley Cup champion, Olympic Gold Medalist, and former St. Louis Blues captain Chris Pronger.

(more)

Tickets for the 2024 Ascension Charity Classic are on sale. The tournament is open to spectators from Thursday (September 5) to Sunday (September 8) and ticket prices start at \$20. Children ages 16 and under are admitted free with a ticketed adult. For a complete listing of ticket options please visit the tournament website at [ascensioncharityclassic.com](http://ascensioncharityclassic.com).

### **MARSHALL FAULK**

The Indianapolis Colts picked San Diego State running back Marshall Faulk as the second player overall in the 1994 NFL Draft. He was named Rookie of the Year after rushing for 1,282 rushing yards and scoring an AFC-leading 11 TDs. He also caught 52 passes for 522 yards and one touchdown his rookie year. Faulk was traded by the Colts to the St. Louis Rams in 1999 where he helped guide his new team to a Super Bowl title in his first season in St. Louis. That year he became the second player in NFL history to eclipse the 1,000-yard mark in both rushing and receiving and set the then-record for yards from scrimmage with 2,429 yards. He was named the NFL's Offensive Player of the Year for the first of three consecutive seasons. The following year, Faulk earned NFL Most Valuable Player honors after he set the single-season record for touchdowns with 26 that included a career-high and league-leading 18 rushing touchdowns. It marked the first of two consecutive seasons in which he led the NFL in scoring and touchdowns. Faulk, the first player in NFL history to gain 2,000 yards from scrimmage in four consecutive seasons (1998-2001), retired as the NFL's ninth-ranked rusher of all-time with 12,279 yards and scored 100 touchdowns. He also added 767 career receptions, which ranked 16th all-time, for 6,875 yards and 36 touchdowns. His 19,154 yards from scrimmage was sixth all-time. Faulk rushed for 100 or more yards in 38 games and had three games in which he went over the 200-yard mark. He also recorded eight 100-yard receiving games in his 12-year, 176-game career. Faulk was voted to seven Pro Bowls during his illustrious career and entered the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2011.

### **AENEAS WILLIAMS**

Williams was a walk-on at Southern University and by his senior season he led the nation in interceptions. That was a precursor of what was to come. The Phoenix Cardinals drafted Williams in the third round, 59th player overall, of the 1991 NFL Draft. Over the next 10 seasons with the Cardinals and four final years with the St. Louis Rams he established himself as one of the finest defensive backs ever to play. Williams starred at cornerback for the first 12 years of his career before he was moved to safety. He earned Pro Bowl nods at both positions, seven times at cornerback and once as a safety. Williams was named the NFC Defensive Rookie of the Year by the NFL Players Association in 1991. He earned a Pro Bowl nod and All-NFC acclaim for the first time in 1994 when he added another conference interception title with a career-high nine interceptions. Williams was selected to the NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1990s. Williams recorded an interception in every season but his last and had five or more picks in a season six times. He led the Cardinals in interceptions seven times and was the Rams leading interceptor in 2003. In all, he registered 55 interceptions which he returned for 807 yards. His nine pick-sixes tied him for second all-time at the time of his retirement. His knack for the football was not only reserved for the regular season. He recorded an interception in a record four straight postseason games during a span from 1998 to 2001. Williams started at left cornerback for St. Louis in the 2001 NFC Championship Game and Super Bowl XXXVI.

### **JAKE NEIGHBOURS**

Selected by St. Louis in the first round (No. 26) of the 2020 NHL Draft, Neighbours worked his way up the lineup last season. The Canadian began on the fourth line, and finished the year being utilized in a top-six role, which included a spot on the No. 1 power-play unit. Neighbours scored 27 goals during the 2023-24 campaign, which tied Pavel Buchnevich for third on the team.

### **SCOTT PERUNOVICH**

Perunovich was a two-time NCAA champion at the University of Minnesota-Duluth and the 2020 winner of the Hobey Baker Award as the top National Collegiate Athletic Association men's ice hockey player. The St. Louis Blues drafted Perunovich in the second round of the 2018 NHL Entry Draft, and he made his NHL debut with the Blues in 2021. The left-handed defenseman is coming off his most productive pro season with 17 points scored in 54 games.

### **JEREMY MACLIN**

Maclin was a standout wide receiver and electrifying special teams player at the University of Missouri. He holds the NCAA freshman record for most all-purpose yards in a single season, with 2,776 yards (198.3 yards per game). Maclin is the only Tiger ever to be named a two-time First Team All-American, and in 2023 became the eighth Mizzou player to be inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame. As a Tiger, Maclin collected 182 receptions for 2,315 yards and 22 touchdowns, adding 91 career rushes for 668 yards and three touchdowns on the ground. He tallied 48 career punt returns for 577 yards and three touchdowns, and 85 kickoff returns for 2,049 yards and two touchdowns. The Missouri native was drafted 19<sup>th</sup> overall by the Philadelphia Eagles in the 2009 NFL Draft. A 2014 Pro Bowl selection, Maclin retired from professional football in 2019 with 514 career catches for 6,835 yards and 49 touchdown catches in nine NFL seasons for the Eagles, Chiefs and Ravens. Today, Maclin is the head football coach at his high school alma mater, Kirkwood High School in Missouri.

### **DANARIO ALEXANDER**

Alexander was one of the most prolific pass-catchers in Mizzou history. As a senior in 2009 at the University of Missouri, he was a consensus all-American after leading the nation with 1,781 receiving yards on 113 receptions, with 14 touchdowns – all three marks broke Mizzou single-season records. Alexander turned in nine 100-yard receiving games in his record-setting senior season, including consecutive 200-yard games against Baylor (214) and at Kansas State (200). He finished his Tiger's career with a school-record 2,778 receiving yards. The Texas native was inducted into the University of Missouri Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame in 2016. Alexander's NFL career included 83 receptions, 1,395 yards and 10 touchdowns in stops with the St. Louis Rams and San Diego Chargers.

### **SEAN WEATHERSPOON**

Weatherspoon was one of the top linebackers in University of Missouri history. He was a two-time Second-Team All-American (2008, 2009) and was also a three-time First-Team All-Big 12 Conference selection (2007-09). Weatherspoon was a Butkus Award finalist as a senior when he led Mizzou with 111 tackles, including 14.5 tackles for loss and 4.5 sacks as a team captain. He posted 155 tackles (second-most in MU history) his junior year, including 18.5 tackles for loss, 5.0 sacks and three interceptions (two of which he returned for touchdowns). He finished his Tiger's career with 413 tackles, which ranks third on the Mizzou career chart, and was inducted into the University of Missouri Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame in 2017. Weatherspoon was a first-round NFL Draft pick in 2010 by the Atlanta Falcons, with the No. 19 overall selection, becoming the first Tiger linebacker to be a first-round pick. He was also the first Tiger linebacker drafted in any round since Bobby Bell in 1984 (fourth round). Weatherspoon played eight years in the NFL with the Falcons and the Arizona Cardinals and made 329 tackles, with eight sacks and two pass interceptions.

### **KEVIN RUTLAND**

Rutland played cornerback for the University of Missouri Tigers football team from 2007-2010. The speedster from Texas recorded 120 career tackles and six interceptions for Mizzou before spending four seasons in the NFL for the Jacksonville Jaguars and Kansas City Chiefs. His professional career included 31 tackles and one interception.

The Ascension Charity Classic has established a legacy of giving in North St. Louis County and the surrounding Greater St. Louis area. The tournament has generated more than \$2.6 million in giving for charitable organizations since its inception in 2020.

The Ascension Charity Classic will be one of the premier Regular Season events on the PGA TOUR Champions in 2024, which will give way to the Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs—a season-ending, three-tournament series used to determine the TOUR's season-long champion.

For more information about the Ascension Charity Classic, including volunteer opportunities, Pro-Am and hospitality availability, visit the Ascension Charity Classic website at [ascensioncharityclassic.com](https://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](https://facebook.com/ascensioncharityclassic) and Instagram at [@ascensioncharityclassic](https://instagram.com/ascensioncharityclassic).

#### **About Ascension Charity Classic**

The Ascension Charity Classic 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 78 PGA TOUR Champions professionals competing for a \$2.1 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 Golf Channel. For more information, visit [ascensioncharityclassic.com](https://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](https://PGATOUR.com), at [facebook.com/PGATOURChampions](https://facebook.com/PGATOURChampions), on Twitter [@ChampionsTour](https://twitter.com/ChampionsTour) and on Instagram [@pgatourchampions](https://instagram.com/pgatourchampions).

#### **About HNS Sports Group**

HNS Sports Group is a Dublin, Ohio-based LLC founded in 2000. The company offers over 125-plus years of collective experience and is committed to providing professional, efficient and effective client representation in the categories of sponsorship consultation, event management, hospitality management, sales representation and tournament operations within the golf market. To learn more about HNS Sports Group, visit [www.hnssports.com](https://www.hnssports.com).

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