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Quinn Leads Entering Final Round of Q-School

Four tied for second at 12-under

Scottsdale, Arizona – Fran Quinn shot 4-under 67 in Thursday’s third round to take a one-stroke lead entering the final day of the PGA TOUR Champions Qualifying Tournament (Final Stage) at TPC Scottsdale.

Quinn, who plays out of Holden, Massachusetts, sits at 13-under, while Wes Short, Jr., Jesus Rivas, Simon Griffiths and Richard Green are tied for second at 12-under after 54 holes.

“I didn’t play as well today as I did yesterday, but I really played solid coming in,” Quinn said. “That was really positive. I had a couple of putts that I missed early, but overall, I think I’m very, very happy with it. I just have to go out and do my deal. I can worry about myself. If I do what I can do, I’ll be just fine.”

Quinn made four PGA TOUR Champions starts in 2022, highlighted by a T21 at the American Family Insurance Championship. The Massachusetts native made headlines this summer by qualifying for his home-state U.S. Open at The Country Club, becoming the oldest on record to gain U.S. Open access via both Local and Final Qualifying.

Short, a former Q-school winner, carded a clean round with six birdies at 6-under 65 to move from T7 to T2 on the leaderboard.

“I played really well today,” Short said. “I kept it in play, and I made some putts. That’s the key to this game – you have to make putts and keep it in play. There are only five spots available so you want to get as many under as you can. I was three off the number today, so I knew I had to have a good one to stay within shouting distance.”

Short added: “I shot 20-under here, so I have good memories here. That’s another plus for playing here this week. I’m going to try and make as many birdies as I can. I think tomorrow is supposed to be like this, too (weather wise). The course is if you hit it good off the tee, it’s gettable. I’m hoping to have a good one tomorrow.”

Perhaps one of the most incredible stories this week is that of Jesus Rivas of Bogota, Colombia. Rivas, a former Q-school participant, has remained consistent all week putting himself in position to earn his card. Rivas was introduced to golf at age 11. He walked two-and-a-half hours to the golf course as a kid. At 17, he started caddying and at 22, he borrowed clubs to play. At 26, he turned pro. He won eight times on the Columbian Tour. After sinking a 15-footer for birdie on the first playoff hole, he earned a spot in the 2019 U.S. Senior Open. He went on to compete in the U.S. Senior Open at Warren Golf Course Notre Dame in Indiana that year, marking his first PGA TOUR Champions appearance. To date, Rivas has made five starts on the Champions Tour.

“Tomorrow, we know that’s a day we go out and continue playing,” Rivas said. “You can’t be waiting; you have to go ahead and get in front and that is what God wants. The idea is to win.”

Kent Jones, Brian Cooper and second-round leader Mark Walker, sit T6 at 10-under three shots off the lead entering the final day.

Jones, who plays out of Albuquerque, New Mexico, carded the best round of the day at 8-under to move up 21 spots entering the final round of play. Jones has made 94 starts on PGA TOUR Champions. His best finish is T2 in the 2019 Mitsubishi Electric Classic.

“It’s a lot better than it was yesterday,” Jones said. “I don’t know how it’s going to finish up today, but at least I’m in a position for tomorrow. I’ve got a chance tomorrow so that was a good move today.”

Jones added: “This game, I guess maybe I stayed a little bit patient today. I started off with a couple not really very good shots but made a couple good up and downs and all of a sudden something clicked, and I made five birdies in a row so obviously my putting was really good today. Then I started hitting it better, but I made a lot of putts today. Since the end of the season, I had a little time off and I’ve been working hard to get ready for this. I felt like my strategy was hopefully I would just get better each day and it finally happened today so that’s been it – trying to work hard and get ready.”

Cooper, who began his round with a bogey, rallied to card 4-under with six birdies and position himself in the top 10 heading into the final round of competition.

The Scottsdale, Arizona native is a bit more of a familiar name on PGA TOUR Champions. He’s gone the Monday Qualifying route for the last few years and has had some success. He’s made 10 career starts on PGA TOUR Champions including three in 2021 before an injury sidelined him and a shoulder surgery was required.

“I’ve been in this position before after two rounds,” Cooper said. “It seems like the third round is always the one that snuck up on me and wasn’t a good day. It was a little nervy in the beginning and I kept reminding myself that, ‘you got here doing the hard work so just don’t dwell on that third day stuff’ and I rebounded and played really well on the back.

Cooper added: “Personally, it’s been a long year. I had some shoulder surgery and then went through some stuff off the course, but today was fun. So far, this week has been fun. It’s a tough Tour to get on and all you can do is just get yourself in position on the last day to have a chance. Coming in, that’s all I wanted. I have that. I’m not going to cry here today. It’s been a long year. If anyone follows me on social media, if they go back and read something I posted a little while ago, it’s been a tough year. To be here in the last round to have a chance, I did not see this two months ago. I didn’t. To be here has been quite the journey and I’m happy to have the opportunity so we’ll see how it goes.”

Walker, who was the solo leader after the second round, is tied for sixth place at 10-under entering the final day. Michael Jonzon (9-under) and David McKenzie (9-under) round out the top-10 while Steve Schneiter (8-under), Rick Garboski (8-under), Tim O’Neal (7-under), Andrew Johnson (7-under), Todd Demsey (7-under) and Bob May (7-under) round out the top-15, respectively.

O’Neal, 50, is a longtime staple on the APGA Tour, having earned nine titles on the circuit. He’s also a three-time winner on PGA TOUR Latinoamerica and played six full seasons on the Korn Ferry Tour. Upon turning 50 this past summer, O’Neal finished T33 at the Ascension Charity Classic and T19 at the PURE Insurance Championship.

“I would like to be a little bit better, but I was kind of behind the eight-ball starting today and needed something good to have a chance tomorrow,” O’Neal said. “I put myself in position. I think I’m going to have to shoot something around the same tomorrow, but you never know. I’m just going to go out there and try to make as many birdies as possible.

O’Neal added: “I just made putts today. Yesterday, I had one birdie, two bogeys and very frustrating. Today, I had a clean card, six birdies. I didn’t play the par fives well today, but I’ll take the six under and hopefully I can do the same tomorrow. Same thing I did today, just play aggressive to my targets and try to make as many putts as possible.”

At the end of four rounds, the top-5 finishers will be fully exempt into all open, full-field events for PGA TOUR Champions in the 2023 season. In addition, players finishing sixth through 30th will be eligible to apply for PGA TOUR Champions Associate Membership for the 2023 season, which will afford them the opportunity to enter 2023 PGA TOUR Champions weekly event qualifiers.

Tee times for Friday’s final round will run from 8:00 – 10:10 a.m. off the Nos. 1 and 10 tees at The Champions Course at TPC Scottsdale.

Quick Links: [Leaderboard](#) | [Final-Round Tee Times](#)

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