

RULES FOR THE SA SCHOOLS 'TOP SCHOOLS' SQUASH TOURNAMENT (updated August 2019)

1. The tournament will be held every year at Epworth because the event was initiated by Epworth who agreed to work in conjunction with SA Schools Squash to host the event. Schools with a long-standing association with the Top Schools tournament may request permission to host the event at their school in exceptional circumstances - such as a school centenary.
2. The top school in each of the major school squash provinces will be invited to participate in the Top Schools tournament each year. Only 8 provinces are invited namely Boland, Border, Joburg, Eastern Province, Free State, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Northerns and Western Province.
3. A Country Festival region (Easterns, SWD, Mpumalanga etc) which wishes to be considered for inclusion in Top Schools must submit the names of the players in their "Top School". The SA Schools Squash selectors (in conjunction with the executive) will then decide whether to include such a team as a ninth team for that particular year. Such teams will need to re-apply each year.
4. Each province is requested to have a qualifying event e.g. a league, a derby day or a tournament in order to qualify for the Top Schools Tournament. Which format they chose is up to each province.
5. Each province may use their own selection process (criteria) although it is strongly recommended that they have an inter-schools tournament to determine the winner.
6. If provinces are using the tournament format, entry forms must be sent out timeously to each squash playing school in the province.
7. The organizers of each provincial qualifying event must make schools aware of the rules prior to the start of the event.
8. Each team must consist of 6 players and all players must be bona fide members of that school. Students on exchange from another school (local or overseas) may NOT be selected. Home-schooled students who play league squash for a school may not represent that school (or any other school) at Top Schools.
9. The players must be U19 as at 1 January of that year and no post matric pupils may participate. No grade 7 pupil may play in this event unless he/she is U14 in grade 7 AND happens to be at a school in which grade 7 forms part of the middle school.
10. Teams playing in this event must be submitted to the provincial chairperson who, together with the provincial committee, will check the order.

11. Players **MUST** play in order of strength. The school ladder can include players who have not participated in provincial tournaments. If challenges are held at the school, they must be reported to the provincial chairperson for ratification, particularly if they involve players on the provincial ladder. National selectors have the right to change the playing order.
12. If the top school in a particular province cannot participate, the second team in that province does **not** automatically qualify to participate at Top Schools. A request by the provincial chair (with motivation) would need to be submitted to the SA Schools Squash Executive committee in such a case. The SA Schools Squash Selectors will then determine who the next best team in the country will be to participate in the event. This may **not** necessarily be a school from the province that withdraws. The school which withdraws must submit a valid reason for their withdrawal, as withdrawals may result **in their province** losing the opportunity to participate in Top Schools in the following year.
13. Schools may not enter just because they are the only squash playing school in their province.
14. The Top Schools Tournament will be played in the last weekend of July. However, exceptions may be made should the date clash with the dates for the World Junior Men's/Women's Championships. (If it was possible to play Top Schools to coincide with the 9th August Women's Day holiday, then this will be the first alternative date.)
15. Team Numbers:
 1. If 7 teams are entered instead of 8, a team may be selected by the SA Schools Squash Executive to participate so as to complete the eight necessary for an even 8-man draw.
 2. If 6 teams are entered instead of 8, no other schools will be included and a round robin format will be used.
 3. If there are 8 teams, the teams will play in 2 round robin pools. After the initial round robin, the top two teams will carry their points through to a further pool with the top two teams in the other section. The third and fourth teams in the section will carry their points through to a further pool with the third and fourth teams of the other section. There will thus be a final ranking from 1 to 8.
 4. If there are 9 teams (which can only happen in the event of a Country Festival side being included by application based on strength and agreed to by the national selectors) the teams will play in three pools of three with a 'Super Sixes' carry-over resulting in 7 rounds (which will include a bye) and so six fixtures. In this event, the bottom three teams will play their 'final' round in a 4-team pool with the fourth team being an invitation team from local school(s) who have not played in the previous round. Regardless of the result of this pool, the ranking of this invitation team will not be announced.

16. In the event of 15.1 above, provincial chairs (not schools) may send a request with motivation to the SA Schools Squash Executive if they feel they have a strong, bona fide school team which could be included. Should the Executive agree to this request, this team would compete in the tournament on the same basis as all the other teams entered and, therefore, should they end up winning the tournament, they would be acknowledged as the 'Top Schools Champions'.
17. The teams will be seeded by the SA Schools Squash selectors.
18. In the event of a team winning all its matches in a section in a round robin format, it will be declared the winner regardless of whether the team has scored less points than another province/region.
19. In the event of a two way tie, the result of the fixture between the two provinces (regions) involved will determine the winner.
20. In the event of a three way tie, points between the three teams will be used in a triangular format to decide the winner. Should two teams still end tie, the result of the fixture between the two provinces (regions) involved will determine the winner.
21. The relevant ball for the tournament venue will used i.e. the High Altitude for High Altitude areas and the Pro Revelation for other areas.
22. The tournament, which takes place under the auspices of SA Schools Squash and Squash SA, will be played according to inter-provincial rules, but all other relevant rules shall be applied.
23. Players must make themselves available for the entire duration of the event and must be able to play in all the matches according to the programme.
24. There will be medals for the schools which finish in the top 3 in both the boys' and the girls' sections.