

Sprint king Bolt to adopt cheetah

World and Olympic sprint champion Usain Bolt could meet his match in Kenya Monday when he encounters a cheetah for the first time.

Speaking at a press conference here on his first trip to Africa, the fastest man on earth still displayed his trademark cool, not least because he won't race an adult cheetah -- the fastest animal on earth -- but simply adopt a cub. "It has just sunk in -- I am glad it wasn't a lion," he said with a chuckle.

"The cheetah is much more calm... even with a cameraman trying to take pictures. I am looking forward to holding the cheetah with my hands. It is going to be a wonderful experience."

The triple Olympic and world sprint champion in both the 100 and 200 metres events arrived in the land of long-distance running Friday for a four-day visit, ahead of the launch of an environmental charity campaign to preserve local ecosystems.

The track superstar, who is a member of the "Long Run" charity foundation, said he was looking forward to seeing the diverse wildlife species in Kenya but was scared of meeting the lions.

Bolt will act as an ambassador of the Zeitz Foundation and "The Long Run", the initiative of a German businessman and chief executive of sportswear maker Puma, Jochen Zeitz, who has enlisted the services of the Jamaican and Wales' former Olympic and world 110 hurdles record holder Colin Jackson.

"I was attracted to the initiative because of its objectives on the conservation of the environment and co-existence of different cultures," Bolt said at a press conference.

"I will try to educate the younger kids coming up and they look up to me as a role model and do my best to spread the word on peaceful co-existence and safeguarding our environment. The Zeitz Foundation has a good vision and I want to do my part.

"I do a lot of charity work in Jamaica. But I would like to see first hand the challenges facing Africa in environment," said Bolt.

Bolt said he planned to put on auction early next year the jersey he wore when he broke the world record at the world championships in Berlin, Germany last August, with the proceeds going to the Zeitz Foundation.

Bolt is the world record holder in both the 100 metres and 200 metres events, in times of 9.58 and 19.19sec respectively.