

Bolt, SFP up for Laureus Awards

Jamaican Olympic stars Usain Bolt and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce will be among the world's biggest sporting names at today's Laureus World Sports Awards in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Regarded as the most recognised sport awards, the Laureus pits triple world record holder Bolt, who became the first man to win back-to-back Olympic sprint double titles at last year's London Olympics, against Barcelona footballing great and four-time FIFA world player of the year Lionel Messi and swimmer Michael Phelps. Tour de France winner Bradley Wiggins, Formula One winner Sebastian Vettel and Mo Farah, the double Olympic champion are the other individuals nominated for the sportsman of the year award. Fraser-Pryce, had another big year in 2013, successfully defending her Olympic 100m title at the London Olympics before winning silver medals in the 200m and 4x100m. She will go up against Serena Williams, Lindsey Vonn along with British heptathlete Jessica Ennis, Allyson Felix and Missy Franklin. Messi can pick up another accolade for last year's goalscoring exploits after he scored a record 91 goals to cement his status as the world's top footballer. The winners of the annual awards, chosen by 46 members of the Laureus sports academy, will be announced in a televised ceremony hosted by actor Morgan Freeman. Selected sports editors, writers and broadcasters around the world voted for shortlists of nominees in five categories: sportsman, sportswoman, team, breakthrough and comeback. LeBron James is represented twice in the team category as both his Miami Heat and the US Olympic basketball team are nominated. Spain's football team is also nominated after defending its European Championship title, along with the European Ryder Cup team, F1's Red Bull and China's Olympic table tennis team. Phelps, who is in Rio for the awards ceremony, won four gold and two silver medals in London to take his career total to 22, becoming the most decorated Olympian of all time with 18 gold, two silver and two bronze. Wiggins won the time trial gold in London and the Tour de France in an 11-day span, while Vettel became the youngest F1 driver to win three straight titles. Novak Djokovic won the men's award last year and Rafael Nadal was the winner in 2011. Andy Murray is among the candidates for breakthrough athlete of the year after capturing the Olympic singles gold and his first Grand Slam title at the US Open. Ernie Els is nominated in the comeback category after winning his fourth major at the British Open. SAO PAULO (AP):