



ALCARAZ AND SINNER TO DUEL FOR SPORT'S BIGGEST PRIZE AS NOMINEES ANNOUNCED FOR LAUREUS WORLD SPORTS AWARDS; McILROY, McLAUGHLIN-LEVRONE AND LEDECKY AMONG STARS TO MAKE SHORTLISTS

- Nominations for the 2026 Laureus World Sports Awards announced today
- Ballon d'Or winners Ousmane Dembélé and Aitana Bonmatí shortlisted by global sports media
- Mondo Duplantis, Faith Kipyegon, Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone and Melissa Jefferson-Wooden nominated for World Athletics Championships performances
- Europe's Ryder Cup heroes make the Team of the Year list
- India Women's Cricket Team make Laureus history as first women's cricket team to be shortlisted for the coveted Team of the Year Award
- Winners – decided by the legends of the Laureus World Sports Academy – revealed at globally-broadcast event in Madrid on April 20
- Media accreditation for 2026 Laureus Awards [NOW OPEN](#)
- For more information and a full list of Nominees, [CLICK HERE](#)

MADRID, MARCH 3, 2026 – The countdown has begun to the greatest show in sports, as the nominations for the 2026 Laureus World Sports Awards, known as the Athletes' Awards, were announced today. Record breakers, gold medal winners and future superstars will stake their claim for 'The Laureus' statuette – globally recognised as the gold standard for sporting excellence.

The Award winners will be decided by the ultimate sporting jury – the members of the Laureus World Sports Academy – and announced at a gala event held at the stunning Cibeles Palace in Madrid. The Spanish capital will be the focus of the world's media and host to the greatest athletes on the planet, as well as stars from the world of entertainment, for the most prestigious awards in sports.

The 1,300 members of the Laureus Global Media Panel have selected six outstanding athletes in each of six categories, while members of the International Paralympic Committee have chosen the Nominees for the *Laureus World Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability Award*. The result is a celebration of the very best athletes of the past year – an unrivalled roster of greatness from across sport competing now with each other for the one goal they all share. In addition, the *Laureus Sport for Good Award* will recognise a community-sports programme from a shortlist selected by a specialist panel, celebrating their impact in improving the lives of young people through sport.

It was another vintage year for tennis, with a now-iconic rivalry taking centre stage for the *Laureus World Sportsman of the Year Award*. **Carlos Alcaraz** ended the year as World No.1 following victories at the US and French Opens against **Jannik Sinner**, who got the better of the Spaniard at Wimbledon. Having shared the four Grand Slam titles, the two now contest the most coveted individual honour in sport: The Laureus. Paris Saint-Germain's successful conquest of the UEFA Champions League was spearheaded by **Ousmane Dembélé**: the Frenchman collected the Ballon d'Or after finishing the season as top goalscorer as his team finished 2025 with an incredible six titles. **Mondo Duplantis** – winner of this Award last year – rose to new heights in an undefeated 2025, setting four new world records across the season, while **Tadej Pogacar** claimed a quartet of Tour de France stage wins to seal his third yellow jersey. Eleven race wins saw **Marc**

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Márquez achieve a seventh MotoGP World Championship crown with five races to spare, ending his six-year wait to collect another title.

Aitana Bonmati, became the first woman to win three Ballon d'Or awards and the 2024 winner is shortlisted again for the *Laureus Sportswoman of the Year Award*. She is joined by two of Team USA's superstars from the World Athletic Championships. **Melissa Jefferson-Wooden** became the second woman in history to win the Triple Crown (100m, 200m, 4x100m) and **Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone** broke the championship record in the 400m and won team gold in the 4x400m relay at her first championships since moving from the hurdles to the flat. **Faith Kipyegon** receives a third-consecutive nomination after a record-breaking fourth World Championships gold medal in the 1500m. **Katie Ledecky** took her World Aquatics Championships medal count to an unmatched 30 with two golds, a silver and bronze, while **Aryna Sabalenka** defended her place at the top of women's tennis with the US Open title and three Grand Slam final appearances.

This year's Nominees for the *Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award* announced their talents with memorable performances. French winger **Désiré Doué** ensured his debut season for Paris Saint-Germain was one to remember, scoring twice and assisting once in the UEFA Champions League final. **Lando Norris** pipped 2022 *Laureus World Sportsman of the Year* Max Verstappen to the Formula One Drivers Championship, winning his maiden title by two points at the last race of the season. **Luke Littler** became the youngest-ever PDC World Darts Champion en route to completing the Triple Crown (World Championship, World Matchplay and Premier League), while **Shai Gilgeous-Alexander** became the fourth basketball player to win the NBA's regular season MVP, Finals MVP and Scoring Champion titles within the same season. Nineteen-year-old **João Fonseca** debuted at all four tennis Grand Slam tournaments, and 12-year-old **Yu Zidi** – the youngest ever Nominee at these Awards – won bronze in the 4x200m freestyle relay at the World Aquatics Championships. Which of them will win an Award that has foreshadowed some of the greatest careers in sport, including those of Marc Márquez, Lewis Hamilton and Rafael Nadal?

Maiden triumphs dominate the headlines for the *Laureus World Team of the Year Award*, which sees multiple female teams shortlisted for the first time. **Oklahoma City Thunder** won a first NBA title in franchise history, equalling the season win total of the 1996/97 Chicago Bulls (84) in the process. A 5-0 thrashing of Inter Milan brought **Paris Saint-Germain** a first UEFA Champions League trophy and they completed 2025 with six titles including a domestic treble, the UEFA Super Cup and the FIFA Intercontinental Cup. In their Cricket World Cup semi-final against Australia, the **India Women's Cricket Team** pulled off the highest successful run chase in women's ODI history (339) – before winning their first title against South Africa and are the first women's cricket team to be nominated for this Award. The **England Women's Football Team** defended their European Championships crown with a shoot-out win against Spain, whilst the **McLaren Mastercard Formula 1 Team** defended the World Constructors Championship with six Grands Prix to spare. Shane Lowry's half point on the final day in New York saw the **European Ryder Cup Team** win their 16th title, ending a 13-year away win drought for Europe.

This year, the *Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award* recognises the remarkable stories of six athletes who have triumphed on the world stage despite adversity, injury and time away from their respective sports. **Amanda Anisimova** announced an indefinite leave from professional tennis in May 2023 to prioritise her mental health, before reaching two Grand Slam finals only a year after her return. A collision with a bus during a training ride in 2022 could have claimed **Egan Bernal**'s life – instead, Bernal held off Mikel Landa to win stage 16 at the Vuelta a España. **Rory McIlroy** had endured 11 long years without a Major win but ended his drought in sublime fashion with a first Masters title, clinched by a play-off win over Justin Rose. A tendon injury left **Yulimar Rojas** in intense pain and unable to compete at Paris 2024 but, one year after undergoing successful surgery, Rojas won a bronze medal in the Triple Jump at the World Championships. **Leah Williamson** – who captained Arsenal and England to Champions League and European Championship titles respectively – missed nearly 10 months of football following an anterior cruciate ligament



injury in 2023. In 2018, a 38-minute lead for **Simon Yates** vanished at the penultimate stage of the Giro d'Italia: seven years later, he cast out those demons to win the Maglia Rosa by nearly four minutes.

The Nominees for the *Laureus World Action Sportsperson of the Year Award* are an extraordinary group of athletes, each of whom pushed themselves to the limit throughout 2025 and are rewarded with a place on the shortlist for an Award that has celebrated some of the most breathtaking sporting stories of the past quarter century. Despite starting from the back of the grid, last year's winner of this Award **Tom Pidcock** stormed to victory at the European Mountain Bike Championships in Portugal, before taking a podium place at the Vuelta a España in August. Three-time *Laureus World Action Sportsperson of the Year Award* Nominee **Rayssa Leal** receives a fourth nomination in the category, after winning gold in Street at the World Skateboarding Championships. Snowboarder **Chloe Kim** won the *Laureus World Action Sportsperson of the Year Award* in 2019 and 2020 and won an eighth X Games gold in Superpipe to become the most decorated athlete in that event. Two exemplary surfers, **Yago Dora** and **Molly Picklum**, won maiden titles at the WSL World Championships and the World Surf League respectively, ending 2025 as the men's and women's World No.1 seeds. Mountain athlete **Kilian Jornet** summited 72 peaks and ascended a total of 400,000 feet in 31 days during his 'States of Elevation' challenge.

A trio of Para swimmers are nominated for the *Laureus World Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability Award* following success at the World Para Swimming Championships. **Gabriel Araújo** broke his world record in the 150m Individual Medley SM3, on his way to three gold medals. A thrilling 400m freestyle S9 gold was the highlight of a four-gold performance by **Simone Barlaam**, while **David Kratochvíl** completed an astonishing seven-medal haul from seven races aged just 17. In Para Athletics, **Catherine Debrunner** and **Kiara Rodríguez** set championship records in 1500m T4 and Long Jump T47, while Debrunner won five golds and Rodríguez three. **Kelsey DiClaudio** was awarded the MVP award at the World Para Ice Hockey Women's World Championships, after finishing the tournament as its leading scorer. Four of DiClaudio's 11 goals came during the 7-1 victory over Canada in the gold medal match.

Laureus Sport for Good supports over 300 sports-based programmes across 40 countries worldwide. Every year, the *Laureus Sport for Good Award* recognises one of those programmes, as selected by Members of the Laureus World Sports Academy. This year, the shortlist includes: **Fútbol Mas**, a charity founded in 2008 that now supports young people in 11 countries across Africa, Europe and South America; **MindLeaps**, who employ a pioneering programme of academic tuition and dance classes to boost youth employability and critical cognitive skills; **Transformación Social TRASO**, a Mexican charity combining twice weekly martial arts classes with group therapy sessions for children aged 5-12, and young adults aged 15-24; **A.S.D. Gruppo Sportivo Valanga**, a Turin-based charity seeking to improve the physical and mental well-being of participants through sport; **Rugby for Good**, who offer rugby classes for children with ADHD in Hong Kong, China; and **Kings County Tennis League** who, in their 15th year of operation, bring tennis to nearly 1,000 vulnerable young people in Brooklyn, New York.

The full list of Nominees is:

LAUREUS WORLD SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR

Carlos Alcaraz (Spain) Tennis – won the French Open and US Open, ending 2025 as the year-end World No.1
Ousmane Dembélé (France) Football – top goalscorer as Paris Saint-Germain won six titles in 2025, and winner of the Ballon d'Or and The Best FIFA awards

Mondo Duplantis (Sweden) Athletics – won third consecutive outdoor world championship and set four new world records, whilst going undefeated in 2025

Marc Márquez (Spain) Motor Cycling – the 2025 MotoGP World Champion, winning 11 Grand Prix races across 17 starts

Tadej Pogačar (Slovenia) Cycling – won a third yellow jersey at the 2025 Tour de France, claiming four stage



wins

Jannik Sinner (Italy) Tennis – winner of the Australian Open and Wimbledon, alongside the ATP Tour Finals title and the Paris Masters

LAUREUS WORLD SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR

Aitana Bonmatí (Spain) Football – claimed a third-consecutive Ballon d’Or after winning the domestic treble with FC Barcelona and reaching the Champions League and European Championship finals

Melissa Jefferson-Wooden (USA) Athletics – became only the second woman to win the World Championships Triple Crown – the 100m, 200m and 4x100m

Faith Kipyegon (Kenya) Athletics – won a fourth World Championships gold medal in the 1500m final: the first woman to achieve the feat

Katie Ledecky (USA) Swimming – won two gold medals at the World Aquatics Championships, taking her total World Championship medal count to 30

Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (USA) Athletics – broke the World Championships 400m record, whilst winning gold with Team USA in the 4x400m relay

Aryna Sabalenka Tennis – year-end World No.1 for the second-consecutive year, after reaching three Grand Slam finals and winning the US Open

LAUREUS WORLD TEAM OF THE YEAR

England Women’s Football Team – defended their European Championship title with a penalty shoot-out victory over reigning world champions, Spain

European Ryder Cup Team Golf – claimed a 16th Ryder Cup title after a 15-13 win: Europe’s first away win since 2012

India Women’s Cricket Team – won a maiden World Cup title, after recording the highest successful run chase in women’s ODI history in a semi-final win against Australia

McLaren Mastercard Formula 1 Team (UK) Motor Racing – won their 10th World Constructors’ Championship with six races to spare

Oklahoma City Thunder (USA) Basketball – equalled the 1996/97 Chicago Bulls team for NBA season wins en route to winning their first NBA championship

Paris Saint-Germain (France) Football – won a first UEFA Champions League title, defeating Inter Milan 5-0 and a historic six titles across the calendar year

LAUREUS WORLD BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR

Désiré Doué (France) Football – scored twice for Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League final and finished second in voting for the 2025 FIFA Kopa Trophy

João Fonseca (Brazil) Tennis – debuted at all four Grand Slam tournaments, reaching the third round of the French Open and Wimbledon

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (Canada) Basketball – became the fourth player in basketball history to win the NBA regular season MVP, Finals MVP and scoring champion in the same season

Luke Littler (UK) Darts – became the youngest-ever PDC World Darts champion, completing the career Triple Crown

Lando Norris (UK) Motor Racing – won a maiden Formula One World Drivers’ Championship title at the final race of the season

Yu Zidi (China) Swimming – the youngest-ever World Aquatics Championships medallist at only 12-years-old

LAUREUS WORLD COMEBACK OF THE YEAR

Amanda Anisimova (USA) Tennis – reached the Wimbledon and US Open finals, two years after stepping away from tennis to prioritise her mental health

Egan Bernal (Colombia) Cycling – won a first Grand Tour stage since a near-fatal crash in 2022

Rory McIlroy (UK) Golf – won a first Masters title, ending an 11-year wait for another Major win, and completed the Career Grand Slam

Yulimar Rojas (Venezuela) Athletics – returned to the global stage at the World Athletics Championship,

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winning bronze after a two-year absence due to an Achilles injury

Leah Williamson (UK) Football – won the UEFA Women’s Champions League and the European Championships, one year after returning to football following an ACL injury

Simon Yates (UK) Cycling – won the 2025 Giro d’Italia, seven years after losing a 38-minute lead in 2018

LAUREUS WORLD ACTION SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR

Yago Dora (Brazil) Surfing – won a first WSL World Championship title and secured the WSL World No.1 seed
Kilian Jornet (Spain) Ultra Running – summited all 72 of the 14,000-foot peaks in the USA over the course of just 31 days

Chloe Kim (USA) Snowboarding – became the most decorated woman in X Games history with an eighth gold medal in Superpipe

Rayssa Leal (Brazil) Skateboarding – won Street gold at the SLS Super Crown World Championships, her fourth consecutive title

Molly Picklum (Australia) Surfing – won a first World Surf League championship after defeating 2023 champion, Caroline Marks, in a best of three match

Tom Pidcock (UK) Cycling – won the European XCO title as well as a first Grand Tour podium at the Vuelta a España

LAUREUS WORLD SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR WITH A DISABILITY

Gabriel Araújo (Brazil) Para Swimming – won three gold medals at the 2025 World Para Swimming Championships whilst breaking the world record in 150m individual medley

Simone Barlaam (Italy) Para Swimming – four golds at the World Aquatics Championships took his career tally to 23

Catherine Debrunner (Switzerland) Para Athletics – won five gold medals at the World Para Athletics Championships, setting a championship record in 1500m T54

Kelsey DiClaudio (USA) Para Ice Hockey – finished the World Championship as MVP and leading scorer

David Kratochvíl (Czech Republic) Para Swimming – won four gold, two bronze and a silver medal at the World Para Swimming Championships

Kiara Rodríguez (Ecuador) Para Athletics – won three gold medals and set the Women’s Long Jump T47 championship record at the World Championships

LAUREUS SPORT FOR GOOD SHORTLIST

A.S.D Gruppo Sportivo Valanga (Italy) Multi-sport x Inclusion – offers educational opportunities through a combination of sports workshops and sports psychology

Fútbol Mas (Global) Football x Wellbeing – promotes inclusivity, teamwork and respect through football tournaments

Kings County Tennis League (USA) Tennis x Inclusion – breaks down economic barriers preventing local youth from accessing tennis

MindLeaps (Global) Dance x Employability – develops cognitive skills through an innovative programme of dance classes and academic tuition

Rugby For Good (Hong Kong, China) Rugby x Inclusion – champions social and gender equity for children with ADHD

Transformación Social TRASO (Mexico) Martial Arts x Wellbeing – offers twice-weekly boxing and martial arts classes alongside professionally-led group therapy



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