

LAUREUS WORLD SPORTS AWARDS WINNERS 2008



Laureus World Sportsman of the Year: Roger Federer

After another superb year, Roger Federer is just two Grand Slam victories away from equalling Pete Sampras' record 14 wins. In the calendar year 2007, he once again won three Grand Slam events – the Australian Open, Wimbledon and the US Open – to take his career total to 12. He also won the Masters Cup in Shanghai and Masters series events in Hamburg and Cincinnati. Federer's win at Wimbledon was his fifth in succession and equalled the record of Bjorn Borg from 1976-80. Federer has been World No 1 since February 2004 and has been Laureus World Sportsman of the Year for the last three years.



Laureus World Sportswoman of the Year: Justine Henin

Belgium's Justine Henin completed a historic year with her victory over Maria Sharapova in the end of season WTA Championships in Madrid to become the first player to win ten titles in a season since Martina Hingis achieved the feat ten years ago. Her phenomenal exploit also included Grand Slam wins in the French Open and the US Open and she was a semi-finalist at Wimbledon. Even more amazingly she achieved all this despite her season not beginning until February because of personal reasons. During the year, she only lost four out of 67 matches and her winning percentage totalled 94%, the best in women's tennis since 1989.



Laureus World Team of the Year: South African Rugby Team

Brilliantly won their second Rugby World Cup, in France, beating England 15-6 in the final, after going through the tournament unbeaten. Coach Jake White has inspired a major turnaround in the team's success since taking charge in 2004. Percy Montgomery was the highest points scorer in the competition, but Bryan Habana was acknowledged as the player of the tournament as top try scorer. John Smit played a captain's role and Francois Steyn was hailed as the most prodigious young talent in world rugby. Os du Randt, who played in the 1995 World Cup winning side, retired after the tournament as the most capped forward in South African rugby history.



Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year: Lewis Hamilton

Britain's Lewis Hamilton made one of the most remarkable impacts in the history of Formula One in his rookie year. The 22-year-old driver finished runner-up to Kimi Raikkonen, but led the 2007 championship for much of the season, creating numerous records. Hamilton scored the first pole position and victory of his Formula One career in July at the Canadian Grand Prix and followed it with wins in the United States, Hungary and Japan. Among his records during the year: he was the youngest driver to lead the World Championship; he had the most wins in a debut season (four, tied with Jacques Villeneuve); most pole positions in a debut season (six) and most consecutive podiums from his debut race (nine).



Laureus World Comeback of the Year: Paula Radcliffe

Britain's long distance running star Paula Radcliffe made her comeback to racing in the autumn of 2007 after two years absence to give birth to her first child and to recover from a stress fracture of the lower back. She made her return at the Great North Run half-marathon in Newcastle, UK, in September where she finished second, then five weeks later she won the New York Marathon with a time of 2 hrs 23.09 mins.



Laureus World Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability: Esther Vergeer

Esther Vergeer is one of the greatest wheelchair tennis players of all time. She has been in a wheelchair since she was nine after an operation to relieve a brain haemorrhage left her legs unable to move. She was the winner of the 2002 Laureus Disability Award and was a nominee in 2006 and 2007. She has totally dominated her sport for many years and 2007 was no exception. She won all her singles matches during the year, won four Grand Slam tournaments, remained No 1 in the singles rankings, won the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters and was a member of the Dutch women's team which won the World Team Cup.



Laureus World Action Sports person of the Year: Shaun White

Shaun White marched through the 2007 season taking podiums across the world, claiming snowboarding's highest honours with victories at Winter X Games Superpipe, as well as the Burton Global Open Championship and the TTR Tour Championship. Then he swapped the snowboard for the skate deck and notched his best ever skate vert season, eventually taking the AST Tour Title in October at Orlando. The highlight came during his 12th X Games appearance. In the vert event, White exhibited video-game moves: Backside 540 to heelflip body varial to McTwist to air to fakie to 720 to frontside 540 stalefish to frontside 540 to nose grind to lipslide to blunt to fakie to fakie air to frontside 540 to backside 540 to frontside gay twist. Suddenly, a summer X Gold was his. White was recognised by GQ Magazine as one of their Men of the Year. A great 2007 for the icon of Action Sports.

There were three special Awards: The **Laureus Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to Ukraine pole vault legend Sergey Bubka, while Dick Pound, who retired after eight years as Chairman of the World Anti-Doping Agency received the **Laureus Spirit of Sport Award**. American brothers Brendan and Sean Tuohey were the recipients of the **Laureus Sport for Good Award** for their work in founding the PeacePlayers International project.