

# Usain Bolt renews Puma deal

KINGSTON, JAMAICA: Jamaican to play lead role in sportlifestyle brand's global marketing activity as world record holder and Olympic gold medalist Usain Bolt announces he has renewed his contract with global sportlifestyle brand and long-term sponsor PUMA until the end of 2013.



While the specific terms of the contract are undisclosed, the figure is by far the largest ever given to a track & field athlete, positioning Bolt as a top earner in the world of sport, a further acknowledgement of his astonishing achievements over the past two years.

Until the end of 2013, PUMA will continue to be Bolt's official supplier of performance, training and lifestyle apparel and footwear. He will play a pivotal role in the brand's global marketing campaigns and serve as the central figure in its London 2012 Olympic programme, expected to be launched early in 2011.

PUMA and Bolt will continue to collaborate on the development of key product lines, building on the 2010 launch of the "Bolt Collection" - a range of apparel, footwear and accessories that Bolt helped develop, and which include graphic elements representative of Bolt and his beloved Jamaica.

## Beyond Bolt

Bolt and PUMA have forged a close relationship over his formative years. When the World's Fastest Man was just a boy of 16 in 2003, PUMA signed the junior sprinter. The brand and the athlete have matured together and Bolt, now 24, has emerged as the one of the world's most talented Track and Field athletes, winning three gold medals in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and smashing two world records in the 100m (9:58) and 200m (19:19) at the World Championships in Berlin in 2009. PUMA, like many Bolt enthusiasts, believes the best is yet to come.

Bolt said: "PUMA's been by my side since the beginning, before anyone knew what I was capable of achieving. They saw potential and took a chance, supporting me all the way, especially when things weren't easy for me due to injuries I suffered in my teens. We've been partners in the truest sense of the word since day one, so it's an easy decision to re-sign

with them. PUMA gets me; we fit together. They take the business of running seriously, but we also know how to have fun, to be spontaneous. We both bring a lot of personality to the sport."

PUMA's investment in track & field in Jamaica extends beyond Bolt. Since 2002, PUMA has also sponsored the Jamaican Amateur Athletic Association (JAAA), which is the governing body for Track and Field in Jamaica, and the Jamaican Olympic Association.

In addition, the company helps foster young talent through sponsorship of seven high school track and field programmes. The partnership also drives the annual ISSA Boys & Girls Track and Field Championships, considered Jamaica's most popular sporting event and where many world-renowned sprinters got their start. Additionally, PUMA partners the Gibson Relays and various invitationals. Outside of the high school sphere, PUMA is the main partner of the Reggae Marathon which takes place in December and draws distance runners from around the world.

Go to [www.puma.com/running](http://www.puma.com/running) or [www.puma.com](http://www.puma.com) for more information.

## **Usain Bolt Media Q&A**

**Q. So you've re-signed with PUMA, how much are you making off this deal?**

**A.** PUMA and I have reached financial terms that are mutually agreeable, but we aren't giving out actual numbers.

**Q. There are reports saying you that this is the largest sum ever given to a track & field athlete. Is this true?**

**A.** I don't have any way of knowing what the other athletes make, but people tell me this is the largest deal for track & field. People also tell me it's up there with what athletes in other sports get, too. I'm very fortunate to have this opportunity with PUMA.

**Q. How do you feel about setting a new financial high water mark for your sport?**

**A.** It feels great. My entire career has been focused on training hard and delivering results that the world hasn't ever seen before. I feel like the world is finally watching track & field, and not just during Olympic years like they did before. They are taking a real interest and becoming more involved in our sport. So with a sponsorship deal of this magnitude that PUMA has given me, it says something very positive about the rising profile of the sport. It says that track and field has reached the big leagues.

**Q. We've heard reports about other sports apparel companies courting you for sponsorships, is this true and can you tell us who they are?**

**A.** That's the nature of the business, companies come calling. My agent has received a number of enquiries, but we are very happy with PUMA and the conditions of this contract.

**Q. Why PUMA?**

**A.** I've been working with PUMA since I was 16. They've supported me when I was relatively unknown, even during early injuries. PUMA has been a great partner. We fit together. They get me and my approach to training and competing. We bring something different to the table. Obviously, there's high performance, but we also make sure to have fun along the way.

**Q. Have your recent back troubles and pulling out of the end of the season made you less attractive to sponsor and endorsement deals?**

**A.** No. PUMA has been with me since the beginning. They know what I'm capable of and they take the long-term view.

Every athlete has to face the fact that their body may suffer stress during a season. Pulling out of the last two races will give me a chance to focus on rehabilitation and prevent greater injury that could be career ending. It's the right thing to do so I can come back next year and really be at my best.

**Q. Was this deal signed before or after your injury problems? Has PUMA tried to renegotiate terms following news of your injury?**

**A.** I can't say specifically when the deal was signed, but there was no renegotiation because of my injury. PUMA isn't like that, they like me are looking ahead, not in the past.

**Q. Can you talk about some of the other terms of this agreement with PUMA? What's the length of this new contract?**

**A.** This particular contract runs through to the end of 2013. The other aspects of the contract are confidential, as most contracts are.

**Q. What are your plans post 2012 Olympics? Are you planning to review the contract once it expires in 2013?**

**A.** I don't have plans yet. I'll see how the next couple of years go, I really want to do well in the World Championships and Olympics and get gold medals again in both. I'll see how I feel after that, but I'm not going to think about that now.

**Q. What will you do with the PUMA brand moving forward?**

**A.** I'll do some photo shoots and media things with them for new campaigns and products. We'll continue to collaborate on product design, for my spikes and the Bolt Collection clothes, shoes and accessories. They've planned some really cool things starting next year ahead of the World Championships and leading up to the Olympics, which I'm really excited about. PUMA know how to take track and field athletics and open it up to a wider audience in creative ways, and take it away from the track into other lifestyle areas. It'll be a lot of fun being a part of these things.

**Q. Do you make a percentage through sales of the Bolt Collection? If so, how much and what's the percentage?**

**A.** Yes I do get a percentage, but I can't disclose what specifically

**Q. As part of this contract, will the Bolt Collection become its own sub-brand of PUMA like the Jordan brand did with Nike?**

**A.** We have big plans for the Bolt Collection moving forward. It's a project that's close to my heart, I've enjoyed working with PUMA on its development so far and we've got some great ideas of how to take it forward. It's too early to relate it to Jordan and Nike, but I'm very involved in the whole development and I really want it to be a big success.

**Q. You also have endorsement deals with Gatorade, Hublot, Nasuba and Digicel. What would you say your total income is when you factor them in with the PUMA contract?**

**A.** I'm doing okay. I'm comfortable and planning for the future. The average length of a sprinter's career is short, so you have to be smart with endorsements and money management so that all of this hard work now will help carry me into the future.

**Q. Is there a bonus structure in place whereby you get paid more for wins or world records?**

**A.** Yes. This is a typical part of a track & field contract, as it is in many other sports.

**Q. How much money do you expect to generate in performance bonuses during next season?**

**A.** It's hard to know. Obviously, it's dependent on how well I compete. This year has been difficult for me from a fitness perspective, and I have a lot of training ahead to get back to 100%, and compete at the level I know I can. But I still have a lot I want to accomplish, so I'm very motivated to stay focused and push myself to be in top form.

**Q. How are you spending all this money?**

**A.** Like anyone else would. I save for the future. I help out my family and friends. I've got a great home in Jamaica.

**Q. Is there anything you indulge in specifically?**

**A.** I'm a pretty simple, laid back guy. I don't need a lot. I guess the one thing I do like to treat myself with is cars. I'm a car guy.

**Q. Some people have concerns that PUMA is exploiting Jamaican athletes and culture. Do you believe this is true?**

**A.** How would they be exploiting Jamaica? That's not been my experience. PUMA has been a sponsor of the Jamaican Olympic team for years. They've sponsored me since I was 16. They are also key partners with the Jamaican Amateur Athletics Association, the JAAA, which is the governing body for Athletics in my country. PUMA has worked with them closely for a long time, and also supports youth athletics, by creating track & field programs at the high school level, providing equipment, sponsoring major tournaments like the ISSA Boys & Girls Champs. The company has invested a lot in both Jamaica and in its athletes, and this helps Jamaica achieve great results on the track.

**Q. Can you tell us more about PUMA's 2012 London Olympic plans?**

**A.** Not me. That's for PUMA to tell you.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>