

Benzema wins Ballon d'Or award



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Havana, October 18 (RHC)-- Karim Benzema stamped his name on one of the most prestigious lists in world soccer, after receiving the Ballon d'Or award given to the best player of the 2021-2022 season.

At the Théâtre du Châtelet in the French capital, the "Cat" climbed to the Olympus of the discipline, after several months of exquisite performance on the fields and an unquestionable leadership in Real Madrid.

The famed striker, 34 years old, had memorable performances -both collectively and individually-, and few underestimated his aspiration to kiss the trophy awarded by France Football magazine.

Benzema, who succeeds Lionel Messi in the throne, was champion and Pichichi (top scorer) of the Spanish LaLiga, king of the European Champions League and top scorer of that competition, in addition

to adding remarkable performances in his return to his country's senior team.

Precisely, the Merengue striker became the first player from his country to win the award since Zinedine Zidane in 1998, shortly after being crowned at the World Cup in France.

Behind the big winner of the Parisian night were Senegal's Sadio Mané, Poland's Robert Lewandowski, France's Kylian Mbappé, Egypt's Mohamed Salah, Croatia's Luka Modric, Brazil's Vinicius Jr, Norway's Erling Haaland and Belgium's Kevin De Bruyne and Thibaut Courtois.

France Football has awarded this prize every year since 1956. Between 2010 and 2015 it was called the FIFA Ballon d'Or, with four going to Argentina's Messi and two to Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, but soccer's top body is no longer associated with the award.

The most decorated stars are Messi (seven) and Ronaldo (five), while Michel Platini (France), Johan Cruyff (Netherlands) and Marco van Basten (Netherlands) won three per capita during their careers.

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