

Without Lionel Messi, PSG visit Vannes in the Coupe de France in their first match of 2022

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Havana, January 3 (RHC)-- Paris Saint-Germain will kick off its 2022 sporting year this Monday against fourth-tier Vannes in the round of 16 of the French Cup, marked by the wave of covid-19 that the country is suffering.

Government measures have reduced the maximum capacity in open-air stadiums to 5,000 spectators. As a result, the match against Vannes, which could have been watched by 9,600 people at the stadium, has to be adapted to this legal limit, which will reduce the attendance by almost half.

PSG, the defending Cup champions, will be hoping to avoid any surprises and seal their place in the Round of 16. It will be their second match in this edition of the Coupe de France, having eliminated fifth-tier amateurs Feignies-Aulnoye 3-0 in December.

Although Lionel Messi was not going to be called up for this match, the positive for coronavirus reported by the club came as a cold shower as he was expected to be present for the following matches in the league, where next Sunday they will visit Olympique Lyon.

Neymar is another of those who is still out due to injury, so Kylian Mbappé will be the only one of the powerful trident that will be present. Alongside him, there will be other stars such as Wijnaldum, Leandro Paredes and Angel Di Maria, as well as young talents such as Xavi Simons, El Chadaille Bitshiabu and Édouard Michut, among others.

Argentine coach Mauricio Pochettino was confident at the pre-match press conference and assured that his and his team's focus is now on playing a good game and reaching the next round. In this context, the 49-year-old assured that for the moment they are not thinking about February, when the round of 16 of the Champions League against Real Madrid will take place.

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