

Ballon D'Or

(December 4th 2008)

Pre-Listening / Background information

On this week's main report we take a look at the annual award for the best player in Europe, the Ballon D'Or

A. Main Idea – matching information

Listen to the whole report and fill in the table below with the appropriate information. Match the years on the left with the winner of the award on the right.

	Winner		Year
1	Ronaldo	A	2006
2	Michel Platini	B	1963
3	Michael Owen	C	1998
4	Marco Van Basten	D	2001
5	Fabio Cannavaro	E	2008
6	Lev Yashine	F	1956
7	Stanley Matthews	G	1971
8	Zinadine Zidane	H	1988
9	Matthias Sammer	I	1983
10	Johan Cruyff	J	1996

B. Comprehension

Listen to the whole report and answer the following questions.

1. What three reasons does the report give for Ronaldo's award?
2. What was so remarkable about Luis Suarez and Alfredo Di Stefano's victories in the early 1960s?
3. How about Lev Yashine's?
4. Explain the process of choosing the winner.
5. What reasons are given for Iker Casillas not winning this year?
6. Cruyf, Platini and Van Basten have what honour in common?

C. Listening - vocabulary

Listen to the whole report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase. Then write the meaning of the word.

1. '...League title and a Champions League winners medal in his _____ it was always going...'

2. '... magazine France Football in 1956 to _____ the best player on the continent.'

3. '...to players from anywhere in the world, so _____ / _____ it is a rival to FIFA's World Player of...'

4. '... choosing 50 players they feel have _____ at a high level throughout the year....'

5. '...who have won the _____ award on three different occasions are Michel...'

6. '...in 1992 when he starred for the Netherlands in their European Championship win. ...'

7. 'Strikers have always been the _____ choice of voters and the past few years winners ...'

ANSWERS

Ballon D'Or

(December 4th 2008)

A. Main Idea – matching information

Listen to the whole report and fill in the table below with the appropriate information. Match the years on the left with the winner of the award on the right.

	Winner		Year
1	Ronaldo	A	2008
2	Michel Platini	B	1983
3	Michael Owen	C	2001
4	Marco Van Basten	D	1988
5	Fabio Cannavaro	E	2006
6	Lev Yashine	F	1963
7	Stanley Matthews	G	1956
8	Zinadine Zidane	H	1998
9	Matthias Sammer	I	1996
10	Johan Cruyff	J	1971

B. Comprehension

Listen to the whole report and answer the following questions.

1. What three reasons does the report give for Ronaldo's award?
42 goals / Champions League winner / Premier League winner
2. What was so remarkable about Luis Suarez and Alfredo Di Stefano's victories in the early 1960s?
Since then no other Spanish player has won

3. How about Lev Yashine's?

The only ever goalkeeper to have won

4. Explain the process of choosing the winner.

- 1. France Football chooses 50 players**
- 2. 96 journalists choose their best 5 players in order**
- 3. Points are given for 1st, 2nd and so on**
- 4. Player with most points is the winner.**

5. What reasons are given for Iker Casillas not winning this year?

A goalkeeper / strikers are preferred

6. Cruyff, Platini and Van Basten have what honour in common?

They have won the award three times

C. Listening - vocabulary

Listen to the whole report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase. Then write the meaning of the word.

1. '...League title and a Champions League winners medal in his pocket it was always going...'

possession

2. '... magazine France Football in 1956 to showcase the best player on the continent.'

Promote / highlight / show off

3. '...to players from anywhere in the world, so in effect it is a rival to FIFA's World Player of...'

actually / in reality / therefore

4. '... choosing 50 players they feel have performed at a high level throughout the year....'

played

5. '...who have won the coveted award on three different occasions are Michel...'

many people want it / desired

6. '...in 1992 when he starred for the Netherlands in their European Championship win. ...'

played really well / best player

7. 'Strikers have always been the preferred choice of voters and the past few years winners ...'

wanted more / most popular choice

Transcript

Ronaldo is the new European Footballer of the Year after being presented with the Ballon D'Or trophy earlier this week. With 42 goals, a Premier League title and a Champions League winners medal in his pocket it was always going to be Ronaldo. So, on this week's main report we take a look at the award itself, the Ballon D'Or.

The Ballon D'Or or Golden Ball award was established by French football magazine France Football in 1956 to showcase the best player on the continent. Now, the first ever winner was English and Blackpool star Stanley Matthews who was then followed by two Spanish greats, Luis Suarez and Alfredo Di Stefano. For a country that has produced a long line of top quality players it is amazing to think that no other Spanish player has won the award since then.

Although the title of the award is European Player of the Year it is now open to players from anywhere in the world, so in effect it is a rival to FIFA's World Player of the Year trophy. The process of deciding the top player is a rather complicated one with the magazine first of all choosing 50 players they feel have performed at a high level throughout the year. Then, 96 journalists from all around the world choose five of these players and place them in order; giving five points to the best player, four for second, three for third and so on. Whichever player then has the most points is the Ballon D'Or winner.

Three players who have won the coveted award on three different occasions are Michel Platini who won it three years in a row from 1983 to 1985, Johan Cruyff won it three times between 1971 and 1974, with two different clubs, Ajax and Barcelona, while fellow Dutchman Marco Van Basten won it in 1988, '89 and in 1992 when he starred for the Netherlands in their European Championship win. Winners do tend to come from successful international winning teams, thus Matthias Sammer from Germany in 1996, Zidane for France in 1998, Brazil's Ronaldo in 2002 and Italian skipper Cannavaro in 2006.

Unfortunately for 2008 European Championship winning captain and Real Madrid title winner Iker Casillas, this trend did not continue this year. The fact that he is a goalkeeper probably did not help his cause either as only one ever keeper has won the award, that's Russian Lev Yashine in 1963. Strikers have always been the preferred choice of voters and the past few years winners have included, Kaka, Ronaldinho, Schevchenko and even Michael Owen in 2001. Therefore, 42 goals in one season was always going to be enough for Ronaldo to walk off with this year's award.