

Spain mourns death of soccer legend Paco Gento

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Havana, January 18 (RHC)-- Heartfelt messages of condolences from Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez to FIFA marked today the sadness over the death at the age of 88 of the legendary Paco Gento.

The only player in the history of soccer to have won six European Cups, he was highly valued by the Consejo Superior de Deportes (CSD), played for Real Madrid for 18 seasons, from 1953 to 1971, during which time he also won 12 Leagues, two Spanish Cups and an Intercontinental Cup, among other awards.

"Farewell, legend. The only player in history to have lifted six European Cups has left us at the age of 88. A legend of Real Madrid and Spanish soccer. Our condolences and remembrance," wrote the CSD.

For its part, the Spanish Olympic Committee spoke of "a sad day for Spanish sport." "We say goodbye to one of its myths. We will always remember him for his struggle, for his successes and for being a pioneer in the best competitions on the planet. Farewell, Paco Gento. Farewell to the Galerna del Cantábrico (as he was called)".

"Spanish sport remembers today Paco Gento, the Galerna del Cantábrico, loved and respected on and off the pitch. An example of talent and dedication in the national team and at Real Madrid (...) my love to his family and friends," said the chief executive, Pedro Sánchez, on his official Twitter account.

For its part, the club of his love, also expressed its condolences.

"Real Madrid C. F., its president and its Board of Directors deeply regret the passing of Francisco Gento, honorary president of Real Madrid and one of the greatest legends of our club and of world soccer," he said.

He was known as the 'Galerna del Cantábrico' for the wind that lashes the coast of his native Cantabria, was a left winger and was elected honorary holder of the Merengues since 2016. He played 600 games and scored 182 goals.

"The figure of Paco Gento faithfully represents all the values of Real Madrid, and has been and will continue to be a reference for madridismo and for the world of sport," the club specified.

Gento was capped 43 times by the Spanish national team, with which he played in the 1962 and 1966 World Cups.

José Miguel González 'Michel' described him as "the Spanish footballer who has been a reference for many generations and who is not very well thought of. You will not be able to go quietly as you liked to live; you were so great that we remember you at the highest personal and footballing level. Universal Ballon d'Or," he said.

"Your countless titles with Real Madrid and your World Cup appearances in 1962 and 1966 will always remain in our memories," FIFA wrote on its official Twitter account.

The Minister of Culture and Sport, Miquel Iceta, pondered that "the memory of Paco Gento will always accompany us."

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