

Colin Kaepernick Wins Amnesty International's Highest Honor



Colin Kaepernick may not have a job on the football field, but much of the world is still cheering for him.

Amnesty International, the global human rights organization, gave Kaepernick its highest honor — the 2018 Ambassador of Conscience Award — in Amsterdam on Saturday. Past winners of the award, which “celebrates individuals and groups who speak out for justice,” include former South Africa president Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai, the education activist from Pakistan who survived an assassination attempt by the Taliban, and rock group U2.

The organization recognized Kaepernick for his protest against police violence: his action, kneeling during the national anthem before NFL games, sparked a movement replicated across America and the world, starting a debate about free speech and patriotism that was inflamed by the President of the United States, one of Kaepernick’s most relentless critics.

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25 “When high-profile people choose to take a stand for human rights, it emboldens others,” says Augusta Quiney, Amnesty International’s director of Art for Amnesty, a program that works with artists and entertainers on human rights activism. “For us, this is an opportunity to be on the right side of history.”

30 His former teammate Eric Reid, who knelt in solidarity with Kaepernick during the anthem — and remains unsigned as a free agent this NFL offseason — presented Kaepernick with the award.

35 Quiney points out that this summer marks the 50th anniversary of the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, where U.S. track stars John Carlos and Tommy Smith raised a fist on the medals stand to protest Civil Rights abuses in America. Activist athletes like Carlos, Smith, and Muhammad Ali, who refused to serve in Vietnam and spoke out against the war there, faced 40 consequences for their actions: Carlos and Smith were vilified and received death threats, Ali was stripped of his titles and lost the prime 45 earning years of his career.

“Colin Kaepernick Wins Amnesty International’s Highest Honor,” by Sean Gregory, *Time Magazine*, 2018

Check your hypotheses



- 1 Read the *Time* article and see if you were right.
- 2 In which ways is Kaepernick’s gesture **connected to** the 1968 Olympics Black Power salute?