

# Babar Azam ICC's Cricketer of the Year for 2022

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**The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk:** It's hard to believe that Babar Azam even further elevated his game during 2022 as the inspirational skipper broke more individual records and ensured Pakistan's star continued to shine brightly. Babar was the only player to breach the 2000-run mark during the calendar year across all formats, and he did it in style as he broke past that milestone in style while amassing a whopping 2598 runs at an imposing average of 54.12.

His haul of eight hundreds and 17 fifties during the calendar year was Babar's best of his career to date and there's no doubt the dynamic right-hander is currently at the top of his game. The 2021 ICC Men's ODI Player of the Year continued to rule in the 50-over format, scoring 679 runs in nine matches. It is a testament to his consistency that he registered scores of 50 or more in eight of those innings. He continues to hold on to his top spot in the MRF Tyres ICC Men's ODI Player Rankings and it was no surprise to see the 28-year-old crowned the ICC Men's ODI Player of the Year for a second consecutive year.

Babar also enjoyed a tremendous year in Test cricket, despite team results not always going his way. He accumulated 1184 runs from just nine matches and did the bulk of the heavy lifting for Pakistan in the longer format. It was also a memorable year for Babar as captain in the white-ball formats – Pakistan won all three ODI series they played, losing just one match out of nine at the hands of Australia. In the T20I format, he led Pakistan to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final – their first since 2009 – as Babar's side finished runners-up behind eventual champions England.



The chips are down, Pakistan are staring at defeat but one man stood between Australia and victory over Pakistan in the second Test in Karachi. Pakistan were bowled out for 148 in the first innings, giving Australia a mammoth 408-run lead. The visitors batted again and set them a target of 506 with close to six sessions

remaining. Pakistan got off to the worst possible start, losing two wickets with just 21 runs on board and with five sessions remaining. In walked Babar Azam and thus began a gritty 10-hour marathon that took Pakistan from an inevitable defeat to almost pulling off an impossible win.

His 425-ball 196 not only fetched him his first Test century in two years but also his highest Test score. He stitched crucial partnerships, first with Abdullah Shafique (228-run stand) and then with Mohammad Rizwan (115 runs). The equation was down to 196 runs in 36 overs but the wicket of Babar four runs short of a well-deserved double ton followed by two quick scalps shut down all hopes of victory. Babar Azam walked off to a standing ovation, having registered the highest score by a Test captain in the fourth innings of a Test.