UGANDA, KENYA RENEW VICTORIA CUP RIVALRY

By Michael Nsubuga

What started as a conversation between two team officials, Uganda's Innocent Kihika and the then Kenya Golf Union chairman Anthony Muhoro, over a drink during the then East African Golf Challenge in 2015 has since grown into a big competition, which has spurred rivalry between the two nations.

Co-founder Kihika says that during that competition, which included several East African nations, they noticed it usually came down to Uganda and Kenya. He recalls sitting by the bar at the old Kigali Golf Club, watching the 18th hole, and witnessing a really tough loss for Kenya because of a missed putt. This led to a lively discussion about which team was actually the best.

Kihika said this sparked the question: why not have Uganda and Kenya go head-to-head directly? Why not create a competition that really challenges them? He remembered them deciding to make it their own version of the Ryder Cup, emphasising the rivalry, pride, and strong team spirit that would exist between the two countries. As they say that is all now history because the Victoria Cup has quickly become one of the most anticipated fixtures on our calendar.

In an emotional speech during the flag-raising ceremony for this year's edition at Entebbe Club on Wednesday, Kihika said the event was created to push the two countries beyond their comfort zones. He urged the players to remain focused as they fight for their respective countries. "To Team Uganda, you carry the hunger, you carry the memory of the past defeats, and you carry the memories of 2019 and 2025 when you won it. Let every missed putt from the previous years sharpen your focus this week. "To Team Kenya, you carry confidence. But remember, confidence without concentration becomes comedy very quickly in golf. And to both teams, this format, inspired by the Ryder Cup, is about partnership, strategy, and trust. It's about standing on the tee and knowing your teammate believes in you," Kihika stated.

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Elvis Muigua (L) and John Musiimenta feel the Victoria Cup