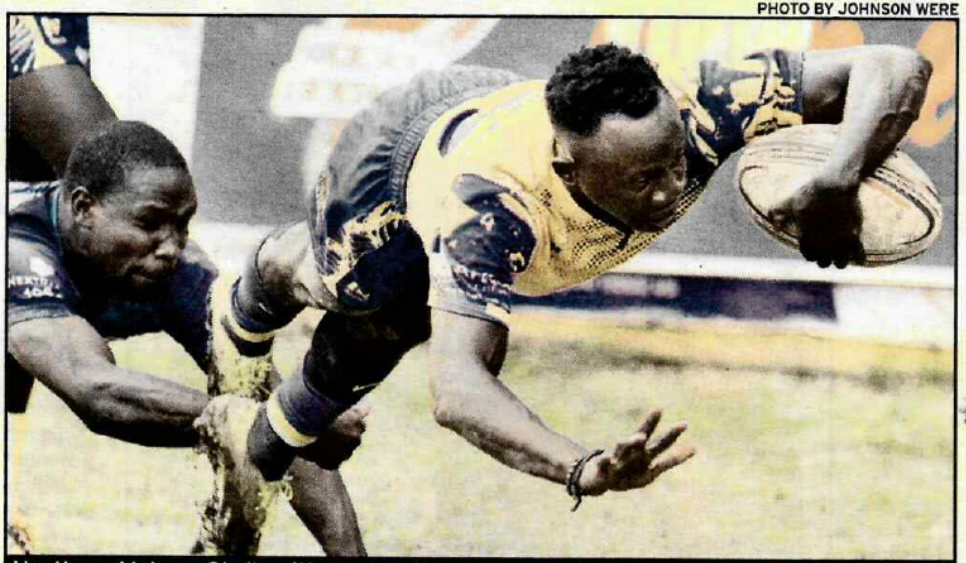
PIRATES, HEATHENS LEAD UGANDA CHARGE

By Faith Kiai

PHOTO BY JOHNSON WERE



Heathens Malcom Okello with the ball dives to score a try against Pirates during the league

Enterprise Cup
Saturday
Wankulukuku
Heathens v Kabras 2pm
Pirates v KCB 4pm
Nakuru
N'scripts v KOBs 2pm
Oilers v Buffaloes 4pm

Four notable Ugandan sides are set to feature in the Enterprise Cup, which kicks off tomorrow at Muteesa II Stadium, Wankulukuku, and in Nakuru, Kenya.

It has been 20 years since Ugandan teams last participated in the 15's rugby competition, and it returns stronger than ever. Uganda's charge in the eight-team tournament is led by champions the Stanbic Black Pirates, Platinum Credit Heathens, KCB KOBs, and the Toyota Buffaloes. These are four of the best sides from the previous Uganda Cup campaign. Kenya is represented by Kabras Sugar, KCB Rugby, Nondescripts, and the Menengai Oilers.

For the Ugandan teams, this presents an opportunity to gain exposure from a higher level of competition.

"We are excited for such a game. Over the last few years, we have been looking for competitions like this to better ourselves as a team and also give us a chance to push for national team places by experiencing different levels of play," said Pirates captain Isaac Massa.

The competition format will see two Ugandan sides (Heathens and Pirates) host matches at Wankulukuku. It goes without saying that it will be a tough challenge. Uganda selected its top four teams from the Uganda Cup, while Kenya held qualifiers to determine its best four sides. The task will be difficult for the hosts, but both teams appear ready for it. Heathens will open their campaign against five-time Kenya Cup champions Kabras, while Pirates will face KCB Rugby. "It's a tough contest, but we shall see how we gel and approach it together," said Heathens player Malcolm Okello.

This will not be an easy competition for any of the sides, which is why teams are bracing themselves for a demanding outing. "It is going to help us build a new generation of players. Those who never got the chance to play in the Bamburi Super Series will now get a taste of what it means to face Kenyan players," said KOBs captain Simon Makumbi.

KOBs and Buffaloes will play their ties in Nakuru, where both teams will be aiming to advance to the semifinals.

For the Ugandan teams, it is all about making the most of home advantage.

points.

In the women's category, Woman Candidate Master Juliet Asaba delivered an outstanding performance, winning all seven of her games to claim the title. Asaba, who also secured a silver medal at last year's Africa Youth Chess Championships in Zimbabwe, proved too strong for her opponents throughout the event.

Suzan Namukobe finished second with 5.5 points, while Africa Youth Chess Championship bronze medallist Suhana Anil Yadav placed third with five points.

The men's category produced the most closely contested battle of the tournament, with three players tied on six points. However, 13-year-old Ronald Wabwire emerged champion after edging his rivals on tie-breaks.

KTLCA teammate Alvin Muhiirwa finished second, while higher-rated FIDE Master Haruna Nsubuga settled for third place.

PHOTO BY JULIUS KAFULUMA



Asaba with her accolade