

rufa Women Super League

No real solution.

Balancing club and school football remains a concern at the expense of the players' welfare. The school teams need them to play to justify the bursaries but the clubs...

BY MAKHTUM MUZIRANSA

FTBFWSL RESULTS

Kawempe 3-0 Uganda Martyrs
Amus College 0-1 She Corporate
Kampala Queens 8-0 Asubo
Makerere University 2-3 St. Noa
Lady Doves 1-0 She Maroons
Rines SS 4-1 Olla HS

Kawempe Muslim beat Uganda Martyrs High School (UMHS) Lubaga 3-0 to stay top of the Finance Trust Bank Fufa Women Super League, which had all matches played on Saturday.

Kawempe relied on set-pieces on a wet morning to see off UMHS, which had hitherto not conceded in five games, in front of their scattered but sizeable watching home crowd.

Defensive midfielder Krusm Namutebi scored her first ever league goal off Samalie Nakacwa's corner kick, following a melee in front of goal, in the 39th minute. Five minutes later, Agnes Nabukenya converted a penalty after Jovia Nakagolo was brought down in the area while Asia Nakibuka made it 3-0 in the first half's stoppage time from Hadijah Babirye's freekick from distance.

"You need to find a way to win," Kawempe coach Ayub Khalifah, said as they kept pace with She Corporate which also won albeit 1-0 through Sumaya Komuntale's 85th minute freekick.

"We play the same kind of football with Uganda Martyrs but we probably needed the win more than them today," he continued, emphasizing their title ambitions, while Martyrs' defender Gloria Namugerwa expressed "disappointment" in how they "defended in the first half" but commended team efforts in the second half.

He who plays the piper, calls the shots. However, for both sides, player welfare was a concern as they had requested their match to be pulled earlier in the week to allow for some of their players to take part in the Uganda Secondary School Sports Association (USSSA) Elite Games in Bombo.

Welfare concerns as Kawempe keep pace with She Corporate



Pain and joy.
Kampala Queens Patience Nabulobi (main photo) races away to celebrate one of the eight goals that her side scored against Asubo Ladies (in red) in a drubbing at Lugogo. PHOTOS/JOHN BATANUDE

in players in other classes. In comparison, sources close to clubs that are not school-based say, they pay an average monthly fee of Shs350,000 to their players. That translates to Shs4.2m a year. With that math, it is easy to see why schools need more from their players.

"Health of the players is a right concern. But we also gauge the weight of the games. Agnes playing in Bombo is way less taxing than playing in the league.

"Also, these games happen once in a while," Khalifah explained. However, Kawempe's current crop of school team players will also soon be involved in the Buganda, Uganda Muslim Education Association Games, Kampala qualifiers for USSSA Nationals, the USSSA Nationals, and Kawempe division games, among other competitions.

Meanwhile, Fufa, who should have a better working relationship with schools as their first vice president, thus Mugisha is ironically USSSA's president, also needs the clubs for its league to survive but they also have to fight fixture congestion on an already tight calendar. Suffice to note that the FFWSL broke off in December when schools broke off and only returned in February after they had reopened.

"Fixture stability has been a major issue in women's football. But this season, the competitions' department is trying to ensure there is order," Fufa's director of communications Ahmed Hussein, said.

Eight-star KQ

To continue with action on pitch, new signings, from school side Boni Consilli, Loyce Komugisha and Rinah Ariho were among the goals as Kampala Queens (KQ) wiped the floor with 11th-placed Asubo in an 8-0 win. Komugisha opened her account and KQ's goals on the day in the 11th minute.

Fellow midfielder Zaitun Namaganda bagged two in the 20th and 25th minutes while defender Marriam Amangat made it 4-0 in the 32nd minute.

Four minutes later, Catherine Nagadya made it 5-0 while defender Patience Nabulobi ensured they went into the halftime break leading 6-0. After the break, KQ forced an own goal five minutes into the second half before substitute Ariho got her goal in the 85th minutes as KQ kept seven points off the top with 25 points in 13 games.

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GOALS

"We requested but those in charge (Fufa) blatantly refused even though both teams had agreed and have students playing in Bombo. This is a development league and the fixtures can be flexible.

"We have four girls that played two matches yesterday (in the Elite Games). We also needed them in the league today and you could see that we could not even afford to take them off as this was a must win game. And later in the day (on Saturday), they play in the quarterfinals in Bombo," Khalifah said as Nabukenya and Dorcus Kisakye played their third game in 24 hours. They won the Elite Games quarters

too and played semis and finals on Sunday but the aforementioned duo played with colleagues who play for URA Ladies (formerly Kawempe's second team), who travelled to Kasere for a second division game (Fufa Women Elite League) against She Kasere.

Balancing club and school football remains a concern at the expense of the players' welfare.

The school teams need them to play to justify the bursaries but the clubs - ironically owned by the schools - also need them to compete to justify the investment in club football. If Kawempe's school fees (about Shs3.5m for a new student and Shs2m per term for a continuing student) is looked at in terms of player investment, the school would be investing Shs7.5m a year in a student in Senior One or Five and Shs6m