

BY GEORGE KATONGOLE

**KAMPALA.** Held under the theme "Playing to Be Champions," the one-day tournament featured age categories from Under-5 to Under-17 and attracted hundreds of young players, parents and coaches from Edgars' various training centres. For many of the children, it was a rare opportunity to play competitive football in a full stadium setting, while families filled the stands to cheer them on.

Teams from Namugongo, Christ the King High School Bweya (CTK), St Marcelino and Old Kampala took turns on the pitch, each eager to defend titles or make a statement. The atmosphere was lively from early morning, with chants and applause accompanying every goal, save and tackle.

Despite the young ages involved, the competition was intense and well organised. Matches were played with discipline and enthusiasm, reflecting the Edgars Youth Programme's core values of Care, Love, Order, Best of ability and Time (CLOBT).

Old Kampala emerged as the most successful side of the day, winning four titles in the Under-5, Under-7, Under-13

# Children's League lights up Wankulukuku Stadium

and Under-17 categories. CTK claimed the Under-9 and Under-15 crowns, while Namugongo lifted the Under-11 trophy. Several finals were closely contested. The Under-9 decider saw CTK edge Namugongo 2-0 on penalties after a 1-1 draw in normal time, while Old Kampala produced a commanding performance to beat Namugongo 3-0 in the Under-17 final.

## National attention

The tournament also attracted national attention. Men's youth teams head coach Laryea Kingstone was among the observers, moving across the different pitches to monitor the action.

"I feel good to see such an arrangement. This is the way to go. As I moved around the pitches, I noticed a lot of zeal and hunger for greatness in the players. Above all, they played with passion," Kingstone said. He added that a few players had shown qualities that could be important for the national teams in the future.

Edgars Youth Programme founder



**Stand up.** Young players from Old Kampala celebrate after winning the Under-17 title during the Edgars Youth Programme Children's League at Muteesa II Stadium, Wankulukuku, on Saturday. PHOTO/GEORGE KATONGOLE

and team leader Edgar Watson Suubi said the Children's League was about developing more than just football skills.

"At Edgars Youth Programme, we do not only compete for championships. We introduce many aspects of life to these boys and girls through football.

We thank the parents for their support and we pledge to continue identifying and nurturing talent," Suubi said. Individual excellence was also recognised. Kian Arthur finished as the Under-9 top scorer, while Austin Ochom was named best goalkeeper in the Under-13 category.

"I feel very happy to get this award because scoring goals is what I love most. I want to keep scoring and become a big footballer in the future," Arthur said.

Ochom credited hard work and preparation for his success, saying the tournament tested both him and his teammates.

## CHAMPIONS OF THE DAY

**U5:** Old Kampala

**U7:** Old Kampala

**U9:** Christ the King, Bweya

**U11:** Namugongo

**U13:** Old Kampala

**U15:** Christ the King, Bweya

**U17:** Old Kampala