

Elite Games open with Bukedea Comprehensive, St Noa glory

BY GEORGE KATONGOLE

USSSA Elite Games

FOOTBALL BOYS

Gold: Bukedea

Silver: Mentor SS

Bronze: Uganda Martyrs Lubaga

MVP: Gabriel Oyiru Ogwang
(Mentor)

Golden Glove: Samuel Ayiko
(Mentor)

Top Scorer: Amis Yabil (Bukedea)

FOOTBALL GIRLS

Gold: St. Noa Girls

Silver: Kawempe Muslim S.S

Bronze: Sheema Girls

Golden Glove: Lilian Nakiryia (St. Noa)

MVP: Patricia Nayiga (St. Noa)

Top Scorer: Agnes Nabukenya
(Kawempe)

BOMBO. If the new schools sports season was looking for a dramatic opening script, the USSSA Elite Games delivered one. Late goals, penalty shootouts and new champions defined the curtain-raiser at St Janan Secondary School, where Bukedea Comprehensive



Title Tussle. Mentor SS and Bukedea Comprehensive clash in the boys' final. Bukedea prevailed 4-2 on penalties to claim their maiden USSSA football crown. PHOTO / GEORGE KATONGOLE

School and St Noa Girls SS announced themselves as early title contenders.

The tournament, which traditionally signals the start of the annual schools sports calendar, served up emotion, pressure and talent across football, rugby 7s, handball, basketball, volleyball and netball.

St Noa continue dominance

St Noa Girls retained their crown with a 5-4 penalty victory over Kawempe

Muslim after a goalless final in girls' football. The champions showed composure in the shootout after earlier beating Sheema Girls 3-0 in the semifinals. Kawempe reached the final in style, thumping Uganda Martyrs High School Lubaga 5-1 in the semis, with Agnes Nabukenya starring in attack and finishing as top scorer.

St Noa goalkeeper Lilian Nakiryia won the best goalkeeper award, while Patricia Nayiga was named MVP.

The victory continued St Noa's recent dominance after winning national and regional titles in previous seasons.

Bukedea break new ground

The boys' final produced late drama as Bukedea Comprehensive defeated Lira's Mentor 4-2 on penalties after a 1-1 draw.

Bukedea coach Sam Kamulindi praised his players' unity and character.

"We thank God for this trophy. The teams were strong, but what helped us was teamwork, character and togetherness in the camp. The boys played with their hearts," Kamulindi said. He added that the team is still a work in progress. "They are not yet at the level we want, but we are building them. They have shown what we have been teaching in training," he said.

Bukedea's journey to the title was impressive. They eliminated giants St Mary's SS Kitebe 4-1 on penalties in the quarterfinals after a 1-1 draw. They later beat Fort Portal SS 3-0 in the semifinals, with Amis Yabil scoring twice and Denis Ssewagudde scoring from a free kick.

Mentor SS also enjoyed a remarkable run to the final. Mentor reached the final after beating Uganda Martyrs High School Lubaga 1-0 in the semifinals. Earlier, they had eliminated Kyadondo 5-4 on penalties.