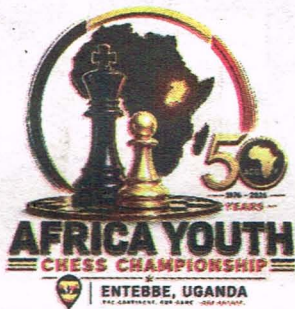


UGANDA'S MBABAZI AFLOAT

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL NSUBUGA



By Michael Nsubuga

Uganda's youngster Jacinta Mbabazi maintained her lead in the Africa Youth Chess Championship U-8 category with a flawless display that has seen her win all her seven games as the event enters the penultimate stage.

Mbabazi, who entered the event ranked 30th, is currently on top of the category, having won all her games against Ugandan Aretha Karabo Kembabazi, Kenyans Zoey Njeri Ngugi, Kanda Luana Kalya, and Aaliyah Jasmine McKenzie, as well as wins against South Africans Coetzee Niki and Gabrieta Amrieta, and against Egyptian Kamel Romaisaa.

Mbabazi (7pts) is one point ahead of McKenzie, Madagascan Rajaobelina Amboarantsoa and South African Mlaba Khethelo, who are all on six points. The best Ugandan in the open category under this age bracket was Matayo Barigye (5pts), who trails the leader, Egyptian Mahmoud Sameir Zeineldin, who was on 6.5 points after seven rounds.



South Africa's Arries (left) takes on Uganda's Elvis Tumusiime at the Africa Youth Chess



Uganda's Jacinta Mbabazi in action in at the Africa meet

In the girls' U-12, Ugandan Melisa Edinansi was involved in a four-way tie at the top with Kenyan Naomi Wamwenje, South African Madalisto Ramonyaluoe, Egyptian Said Tawfeik Fatma and Zambian Janelle Mumba Mutale, all

on 6 points each. Egyptian Ahmed Ezaat Hamza leads the open category with 7 points ahead of Botswana's Keoatile Ngwao and Kenyan Jeremy Aden Duke on 6.5 and 6 points respectively. Uganda's Arena Candidate Master (ACM) Hathi Yug has

5.5 points, half a point below five opponents, all at 6 points each.

Talia Atubet, on six points, was the best-placed player in joint second place, tied with Egyptian Ahmed Mohamed Ghidaa. Kenyan Woman Candidate Master (WCM) Winnie Kaburo led with 6.5 points in the U-12 cluster with 104 players. In the open, Ugandan Ronald Wabwire was jointly leading with Kenyan Nathaniel Manyeki with 6.5 points each, while Faraja Mumo Muli was third on 6 points.

Titled players Egyptian WFM Ahmed Mohamed Zaka and Madagascan WCM Aina Mahasambatra were in the lead on 7 and 6 points respectively, while Kenyan Avyana Pandya and South African Sophia Gina Hagen were also on six points each.