

Triple crown: Sebatindira makes TT history in Jinja

Teen Titan. Nearly a week after the dust settled, the Jinja Open Table Tennis Championship continues to reverberate for the rise of 10-year-old prodigy Sebatindira, whose triple-title sweep has rewritten the tournament's history books.

JINJA OPEN TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS - WINNERS

Boys U13: Joseph Sebatindira
Girls U13: Patience Anyango
Boys U19: Joseph Sebatindira
Girls U19: Parvin Nangozi
Corporate Men: Karl Kiconco
Corporate Women: Esther Amoding
Women Doubles: Patra Nansirumbi & Patience Anyango
Men Doubles: Joseph Sebatindira & Joshua Magaya
Mixed Doubles: Joshua Magaya & Parvin Nangozi
Women Singles: Jemimah Nakawala
Men Singles: Joseph Sebatindira
Rising Stars: Men - Gisubizo Prince (Rwanda); Women - Patra Nansirumbi (Uganda)

BY INNOCENT NDAWULA

Six days on from the vibrant close of the sixth DStar Foundation-organised Mandela Group of Companies-powered Jinja Open Table Tennis Championships at St Andrew's Church Hall in Jinja, the lingering discussion remains the same: the unstoppable surge of 10-year-old global superstar Joseph Sebatindira, who not only dominated his age categories but also stunned seasoned seniors to claim a historic triple crown.

Sebatindira — ranked World No.1 in the U-11 division — swept the Boys U-13, Boys U-19, and Men's Singles titles, the first time in the tournament's history that one athlete has clinched three crowns at a single edition.

Coach Dan Mutabazi, speaking after the event, could hardly be-

lieve it.

"Him winning U-13, U19 and Men's titles in the same tournament — it has never happened here before," Mutabazi said. "This boy is different. His hunger is unmatched."

Total dominance

And to add another layer to Sebatindira's triumph, this feat came immediately after his no-show abroad. To say the least, his response was world-class.

Sebatindira's historic triple sweep was built on emphatic winning margins that underlined both precision and maturity beyond his age. In the Boys U-13 final, he barely broke a sweat as he eased past Ali Kalisa 11/4, 11/4, 11/5 for a commanding 3-0 victory. He maintained the same authority in the U-19 final, outlasting long-time rival Joshua Magaya 11/9, 11/7, 11/7 with a composed blend of patience and explosiveness.

In the Men's Singles final, his toughest of the three assignments, Sebatindira overcame a slow start—losing the opening game 9-11—before flipping the match on its head with a breathtaking surge of 11/1, 11/5, 11/3, sealing the title 3-1 and etching his name in Jinja Open folklore.

Women's charge

The women's draw produced its own flurry of standout performances, led by Jemimah Nakawala, who reclaimed the Women's Singles crown after a gritty 3-1 win over Patra Nansirumbi marked by a dramatic 18-16 third game.

In the junior ranks, Parvin Nangozi edged Nakawala to take the Girls U-19 title, while Patience Anyango swept

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One Man Show. Sebatindira (R)'s triple crown lit up Jinja as the Mandela Group-powered sixth edition delivered records and regional shocks. PHOTO/COURTESY- DSTAR FOUNDATION

through the Girls U-13 category without dropping a game.

The doubles action added further sparkle as Nansirumbi & Anyango clinched the Women's Doubles, Sebatindira paired with Magaya to take the Men's Doubles, and Magaya & Nangozi combined effectively to win the Mixed Doubles.

The corporate titles went to Karl Kiconco and Amoding Esther, while Rwanda's Prince Gisubizo and Uganda's Nansirumbi walked away with the prestigious Rising Stars accolades.

Rwandan surprise

The other major plot twist came from Rwanda's Gisubizo Prince, who eliminated defending men's champion Sam Ankunda Mbabazi 3-1 in the Round of 32, injecting a regional flavour and edge the tournament has been striving toward.

"Gisubizo beating the champion early on showed how high the standards have risen," Mutabazi added. This year's event drew over 450 entries, including players from Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya, and several Europe-based athletes.

**450
RECORDED
ENTRIES**