

# TEN TEEN STARS READY TO RULE 2026



Golfer Elizabeth Mwagale



Golfer Banza Matsiko

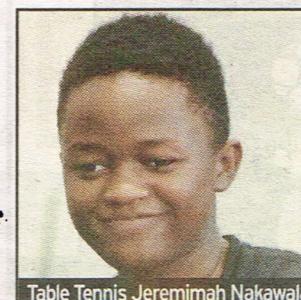


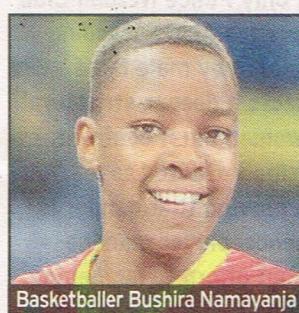
Table Tennis player Jeremimah Nakawala



Table Tennis star Sebatindira



Swimmer Peyton Suubi Mary



Basketball player Bushira Namayanja



Swimmer Zara Marie Mbanga



U20 bronze star Charity Cherop



Rising star golfer Gerald Olipa



He represents a new, aggressive era of Ugandan golf development.

## 9. Zara Marie Mbanga (Swimming)

A breaststroke and backstroke specialist, Mbanga's improvement rate was the highest in the country in 2025. Alongside Suubi, she forms a duo that will define Ugandan swimming for the next decade.

## 10. Bushira Namayanja (Basketball)

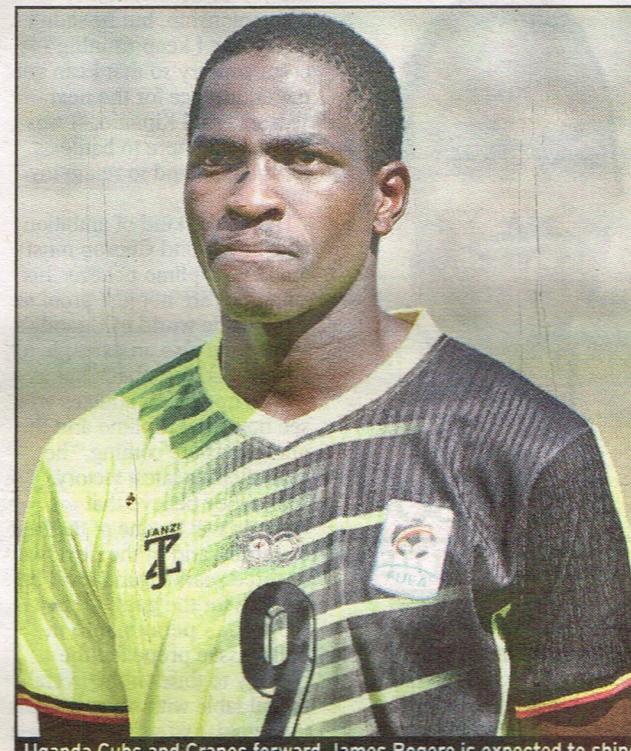
The defensive heartbeat of the Junior Gazelles, Bushira enters 2026 as the gold standard for student-athletes in Uganda. While maintaining elite academic grades at the prestigious, St Noa Girls school, she has simultaneously become a dominant force on the court.

Her standout performance at the FIBA U18 AfroBasket cemented her reputation as a versatile guard with a high basketball IQ, earning her a deserved fast-track into the senior women national team Gazelles conversations during last year's Zone V Qualifiers.

As she navigates high school, 2026 is the year Bushira is expected to transition into a permanent fixture for the Gazelles.

The rise of these ten teenagers proves that Uganda's greatest resource is not just our heritage, but our youth. The success of Ssebatindira on the court or Bogere on the pitch will no longer be just a feel-good story, it is a demand for better facilities and stronger coaching.

These athletes have done their part by breaking onto the world stage, it is now our responsibility to ensure the systems behind them are as elite as the talent they produce.



Uganda Cubs and Cranes forward James Bogere is expected to shine

### (Swimming)

The Jaguar of Ugandan aquatics, Suubi led Uganda to a third consecutive Zone 3 Championship in late 2025.

As a specialist in the 50m and 100m freestyle, she enters 2026 as the country's top female sprint prospect, aiming to shatter national records at the African Aquatics Championships.

### 7. Gerald Olipa (Cricket)

He is one of the rising stars in cricket, he's been heads and shoulders above his age group.

Olipa was the captain of the U19 qualifiers in Nigeria last year. For the last two

years, he was the MVP of the schools secondary boys cricket championship and also leading Mwiri College to a title last year as the captain of the team.

Olipa is rising in the category of batting that Uganda struggles in, hopefully Uganda Cricket can look after him well so can fulfill his potential as a top order batter.

### 8. Banza Matsiko (Golf)

The rising king of the boys' junior circuit, Matsiko's near-par performance at the Uganda Golf Club last year showed a level of maturity that has professional scouts watching.

## Nile Lions depart

By Johnson Were

### Wednesday fixtures

Uganda v Angola  
Algeria v Nigeria  
Tunisia v Cameroon  
Rwanda v Zambia

The national handball team (the Nile Lions) left this morning (Monday) to Kigali, Rwanda for the handball Africa Cup of Nations.

The 16-team tournament is a qualifier for the 2027 World Cup due January 13-31 in Germany that has Denmark as the defending champions.

Team coach Jimmy Orotin has named a 17-man team squad that face-off with Angola in their opening fixture on Wednesday with the main agenda of qualifying from the group stages.

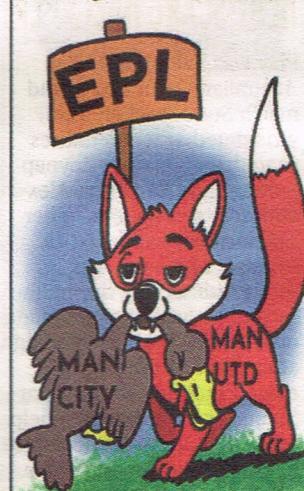
"Our agenda is making in the top four of the tournaments but our immediate target is to make it to the knockout stages and we are taking each game as a final," Orotin said.

"After vigorous training we had to give the players resting time for their bodies to recover, from fatigue and I'm confident they will give in their best to deliver," Orotin added.

The Nile Lions take on Angola, on Wednesday, then face Gabon the following day on Thursday and then end the group stages against defending champions Egypt on Saturday.

In the other group fixtures on Wednesday, Algeria take on Nigeria, Tunisia face Cameroon and hosts Rwanda play Zambia in the final game of the day after the opening ceremony.

## MIC-TOON



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