

Sebatindira grabs gold at Portugal Youth meet

By Silvano Kibuuka

Ugandan junior table tennis star Joseph Sebatindira kick-started the year in style by winning a gold medal at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Youth Contender tournament in Vila Real, Portugal last week.

Sebatindira defeated Spain's Luca Lomero in three straight sets (11-7, 11-5, 11-3) in the final to raise Uganda's flag high in Portugal on Wednesday.

On his way to the final, the Primary Six pupil at Nakasero Primary School, who plays for Nakasero Table Tennis Club, overcame France's Deyvan Lemaire 3-1 (11-9, 12-10, 7-11, 11-4) in the semi-final.

Competing in the U13 age category, Sebatindira began his chase for glory in a division he hopes to dominate on the global stage through the WTT

Youth Contender series, which is hosted in various countries, mainly across Europe.

He travelled to Portugal in the company of his coach, Alvin Katumba, who continues to guide his rapid rise.

Following his U13 triumph, Sebatindira is also set to compete in the U15 category at the same tournament, which rolls off today at the same venue.

The victory in Portugal marked a strong comeback for the youngster, who had lost in his first final of the year in Doha in January.

Last year, Sebatindira finished as the undisputed world champion in the U-11 category, having joined the championship circuit at just nine years old and consistently collected titles. He will turn 12 in December this year.

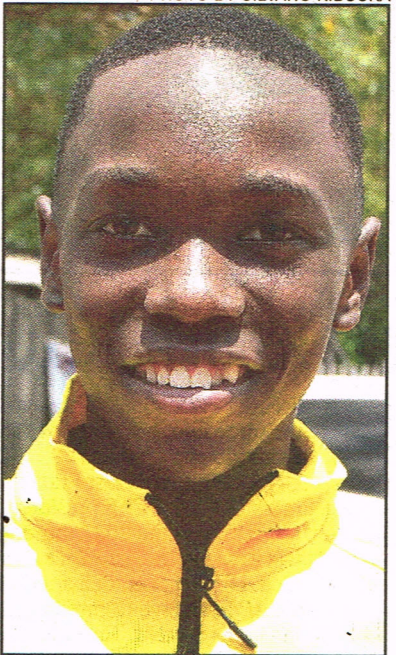
Coach Katumba described the win

as an important comeback, noting that the U13 category presents a tougher challenge.

"I wish we could secure funding for all the challenge tours because being a World Champion is determined by the points accumulated over a period in a particular age category," Katumba said.

Former Uganda Table Tennis Association president Robert Jjagwe, one of Sebatindira's mentors, hailed the youngster's consistency and improvement, particularly after beating strong opponents from France, Portugal and Spain.

"That is why I tagged him 'Sir'. He has a pedigree of bouncing back to win even after a loss. In 2024 he lost the Sheffield final but beat everyone in 2025 to reclaim the glory. He has done the same after losing in Doha," noted Jjagwe.



Badminton star Joseph Sebatindira