By: Rugamba Jerry

The Rwanda Premier League is heading into a tense finish, but after this weekend’s results, APR FC look firmly in control of the domestic title race.

APR’s 2-1 victory over AS Kigali over the weekend could prove decisive. Djibril Ouattara gave the army side an early lead before Iradukunda Pacifique struck the winner in the second half after AS Kigali had briefly fought back to level the match.

The result came only days after APR had suffered a bruising 4-0 defeat to Sudanese side Al Hilal Omdurman, who continue to dominate the overall standings. Hilal followed that win by beating AS Muhanga 2-0 to stay clear at the top.

Late goals from Jean Claude Girumugisha and Ahmed Salem secured a 2-0 victory for Sudanese giants Al Hilal Omdurman against relegation candidates AS Muhanga over the weekend.



Al Hilal pictured in white have 71 points

While much of the attention has focused on Al Hilal’s dominance and APR’s push for the domestic crown, fellow Sudanese side Al-Merrikh have quietly built one of the strongest campaigns in the Rwanda Premier League this season.

Al-Merrikh currently sit third overall on the league table with 58 points from 29 matches, just behind APR (59 points) and league leaders Al Hilal.

Their recent form has been particularly impressive. The Sudanese club beat Etincelles 4-1 last week after earlier victories over Gicumbi and Bugesera, showing the kind of consistency that has kept them firmly in the title conversation.

But the bigger story inside the local league is slightly different. Because Al Hilal and rivals Al-Merrikh are participating as guest clubs while Sudan’s domestic league remains disrupted by conflict, the local title race is effectively being measured among Rwandan teams. That leaves APR in pole position.

And while APR have quietly kept collecting points, some of their closest challengers have stumbled at the worst possible moment.

Rayon Sports, who have spent much of the season trying to keep pace with APR, revived their campaign with a 2-1 win over Marines after previously dropping points in key matches, including a draw against APR in the Kigali derby earlier this month. Rayon is 4th on the table ahead of Kiyovu SC by one point.

Law enforces Police FC at 47 points, once viewed as serious contenders, have faded badly in recent weeks. Consecutive dropped points, including a goalless draw away at Musanze, have left them struggling to stay connected to the top positions.

For AS Kigali, the situation is becoming more worrying. Sunday’s defeat left the club hovering dangerously close to the relegation zone after a season marked by inconsistency and missed opportunities. They’re in 15th position with 29 points

At the bottom of the table, the pressure is rising fast. Rutsiro FC slipped deeper into trouble after losing 2-1 to Amagaju FC remain static at 26 points , while AS Muhanga’s defeat to Al Hilal kept them firmly in the relegation battle at 27 points in second bottom position, Rubavu based Etincelles FC are third bottom placed with 26 points.

The league has taken on an unusual shape this season because of the inclusion of Sudanese clubs, but APR have handled the chaos better than anyone else on the

domestic front. Even after heavy setbacks against Al Hilal, they have continued to do what title-winning teams usually do: recover quickly, grind out results, and stay calm when rivals drop points around them.

With only a handful of matches left, APR now appear within touching distance of finishing as Rwanda’s top club once again.