

The Opening Acts:

- **March 26 (Group B):** Tanzania vs. Liechtenstein (14:30 CAT)
- **March 27 (Group A):** Kenya vs. Estonia (18:00 CAT)
- **March 27 (Group A):** Rwanda vs. Grenada (21:00 CAT)

Rwanda Football Federation (FERWAF) President Fabrice Shema has officially declared the gates open for the FIFA Series 2026, confirming that the Land of a Thousand Hills is ready to host this historic international window from March 26–31.

Speaking from the heart of the capital as final preparations concluded, Shema framed the tournament as a pivotal chapter for the nation's sporting and economic ambitions.

“This tournament is a proud moment for our nation and a clear sign of our growth,” Shema stated. “We aren't just hosting matches; we're inviting the world to see Rwanda's attractions. This visibility will drive growth in our hospitality sector and benefit the entire country.”

Beyond the tactical battles on the pitch, visiting delegations are scheduled to tour Rwanda's iconic landmarks, a move Shema believes will cement the country's reputation as a top-tier destination. The festival will also see the official unveiling of the new FIFA Arena facilities on March 30, a critical upgrade to our local football ecosystem.

The World Arrives in Kigali

The atmosphere at Kigali International Airport has been electric this week as teams from three different continents touched down. As a local observer, the diversity of footballing styles arriving in our city is unprecedented.

The “guest list” for this week's showcase is now complete:

Estonia, the Europeans were the first to arrive on Monday, looking sharp as they headed to their training base. Grenada, the “Spice Boys” have brought Caribbean flair to the arrivals hall shortly after.

Kenya: the regional neighbors, the “Harambee Stars”, landed Tuesday morning. Under the guidance of head coach Benni McCarthy, they wasted no time, heading straight to the Amahoro Stadium annex for an afternoon session.

Aruba, Macau, and Liechtenstein, nations arrived through Monday and Tuesday, settling in for their Group B assignments. And Tanzania, The “Taifa Stars”, led by Miguel Gamondi, rounded out the arrivals on Tuesday night, touching down at 20:00 CAT to a warm East African welcome.

Understanding the FIFA Series Format

This isn't your standard international break. The FIFA Series was designed by the FIFA Council to break down continental barriers, allowing nations to test themselves against unfamiliar styles of play.

The format is built on four key pillars:

- **Improve Competitive Exposure:** Providing structured, high-quality match experience against different continents.
- **Encourage Global Development:** Investing in technical growth across all member associations.
- **Increase International Visibility:** A global broadcast stage for emerging football nations.
- **Guarantee a Winner:** To keep the stakes high, there are no draws. Any match tied at 90 minutes goes straight to penalties.

Match Schedule & Venues

Under a new head coach Stephen Constantine, Rwanda stands alone as a host, being the only nation in this edition to stage two separate groups. The action will be split between the majestic, newly renovated Amahoro Stadium and the vibrant Kigali Pelé Stadium

Group A | Rwanda, Kenya, Estonia, Grenada : Amahoro Stadium

Group B | Tanzania, Aruba, Liechtenstein, Macau: Kigali Pelé Stadium

As the whistle prepares to blow, the sense of anticipation in Kigali is palpable. This is more than a series of friendlies; it is a celebration of how far Rwandan football has come—and a glimpse of where we are going.