Uganda’s Kampala University have secured a dominant victory at the inaugural Genocide Memorial Netball Tournament, defeating Rwanda’s APR Netball Club to lift the title at the Kanombe Military Police Netball Ground.

The visitors from Kampala outclassed their opponents during the weekend, routing APR 74-14 in their opening fixture before delivering an 81-8 masterclass against Kigali Netball Club on Sunday.

The tournament, organised by the Rwanda Netball Federation (RNF) in collaboration with the Rwanda National Olympic and Sports Committee and the Ministry of Sport, was held to commemorate the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

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While the Ugandan side comfortably controlled the scorelines, the tournament’s opening fixture proved to be a far tighter affair, with APR Netball Club narrowly edging out local rivals Kigali Netball Club 24-23 in a tense, crowd-pleasing encounter.

Speaking after the trophy presentation, Kampala University Head Coach Jesse Asimwe expressed his gratitude for the invitation, noting that the trip offered his squad a profound educational experience beyond the sport.

“We are honoured to participate,” Asimwe told reporters. “Besides winning the medals and trophy, we learnt about the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi after visiting the Gisozi Memorial Centre.

“We now know the facts of what happened in this country. We thank the RFanda Netball Federation (RNF) and the Rwandan government for organising an event that brings together teams from across East Africa.”

> “We now know the facts of what happened… we thank the Rwandan government for bringing together teams from East Africa.”, Jesse Asimwe, Kampala University Head Coach

Addressing the secret behind his team’s overwhelming clinical form, Asimwe

credited the extensive institutional backing of the university’s chairman, Professor Hadji Katereaga, alongside a significant talent advantage. Several players in the university squad pull double duty as active members of the Ugandan National Women’s Netball Team.

“Most of our players started their careers in high school,” Asimwe explained. “In Uganda, we have a highly competitive national league under Netball Uganda. They play a lot of games, which contributes immensely to their development. It is no surprise to see them perform well, this is what they do best.”

The victory serves as a crucial warm-up for the university side as they prepare to defend their title at the East African Netball Games in Dodoma, Tanzania, this coming December.

The tournament’s successful staging relied heavily on regional logistics and local partnerships. Jean Pierre Habimana, the Secretary General of the RNF, extended

formal thanks to the competing clubs, fans, empires, the Ministry of Sports, Olympic Committee (RNOSC), with specific praise for Kampala University's cross-border travel, as well as the Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) for hosting the event on military grounds.

Looking to the future, Deputy, Resident, Director, and CEO of Kampala University Muhammed Faquih Ddungu Kateregga, pledged sustained support for the growth of netball within Rwanda, promising to rally further Ugandan clubs to cross the border for next year's tournament

In a bid to foster regional talent, Kateregga also announced that the university will introduce fully-funded sports scholarships for talented netballers, allowing athletes to balance elite competition with academic pursuits.

Nizeyimana Isabelle the member of the Genocide Memorial Sports Tournament-Rwanda Olympic Committee (RNOSC), reminded the clubs and fans that the event is part of the "Genocide Sports Competition" that will take place every year.

She emphasized that the platform serves to honor all victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, including the athletes and fans who were lost. Urging both visitors and locals to relentlessly fight genocide ideology under the banner of 'Never Again,' she invited the reigning champions back to Rwanda for future editions before wishing them a safe journey back home."

At the closing ceremony, Kampala University's Gloria Ayaa was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player (MVP), while the three officiating umpires were commended with awards for their performance. APR and Kigali Net Clubs finished second and third respectively. Following the success of the weekend competition, the Rwanda Netball Federation confirmed that its next major domestic competition will be the upcoming Peace Cup later this year.

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