By Jejje Muhinde;

Nicknamed “Flash”, Kenyan Carl Tundo and his navigator Tim Jessop were named the 2021 African Rally Champion (ARC) after clinching victory in the Rwanda Mountain Gorilla Rally on Sunday with a race to spare, in South Africa.

The Kenyan crew’s work was made easier after their closest rival, Guy Botteril, of South Africa was forced out on day one of the competition after his Toyota Etios retired due to mechanical failure.

Tundo in his VW Polo was a mere 13 seconds ahead of another Kenyan driver Karan Patel who finished second in a Ford Fiesta at the end of the 12 competitive stages of the penultimate fifth round of the 2021 ARC Series.

He only had to finish the Rwanda rally to be crowned African champion, and it was Tundo’s fourth back-to-back victory in the championship.

“We are over excited to have won our fourth consecutive ARC rally. We are celebrating at the highest level, having clinched the 2021 ARC title. It is a fantastic feeling. It is a great moment in our rallying career,” Jessop said.

“It was a super job to win the event and the championship. I didn’t want to be a champion and then come second in the event. An African rally championship title is something that I have dreamt about for a long time,” said Tundo.

Tundo and Jessop have participated in four events; winning all.

Meanwhile, McRae Kimathi, a Federation International Association (FIA) Star driver, also came third in a Ford Fiesta. Kenya’s all-female crew of Maxine Wahome and Linet Ayuko finished fourth with Uganda’s Yasin Nasser and Ali Katumba settling for fifth position after a weekend of mechanical mishaps.

Hamza Anwar was among the casualties of the competition, he retired on day one due to mechanical problems with his Mitsubishi Lancer Evo10.

Giancarlo Davite abandoned the race on opening day after crashing off the road in Round 6

This year’s Africa rally championship closes with the South African round next month. Having already clinched the overall title, the Tundo may choose not to feature in the final leg of the ARC Series.