The Atlas Lions are kings of CHAN once again! Morocco’s national team claimed a historic third TotalEnergies African Nations Championship (CHAN) title, edging debutants Madagascar 3-2 in a roller coaster finale at Moi International Sports Center, Kasarani, on Saturday.

Champions in 2018 and 2020, Morocco faced a fearless Malagasy side, but experience and class ultimately prevailed. Oussama Lamlaoui was the hero, scoring twice — including a jaw-dropping 40-yard strike — to finish as tournament top scorer with six goals.

The victory not only delivered gold and USD 3.5 million to Morocco but also showcased their resilience and flair on Africa’s biggest stage. Madagascar, however, made history themselves, securing silver and USD 1.2 million in just their second CHAN appearance, becoming the first island nation to reach a CAF senior final.

The final exploded into life as Madagascar shocked the crowd, opening the scoring inside nine minutes through Felicite Manohantsoa. Morocco responded quickly, with Youssef Mehri equalizing from Khalid Baba’s assist. Lamlaoui put the Atlas Lions ahead before Madagascar fought back through Toky Rakotondraibe, sending fans into a frenzy.

But the moment of magic belonged to Lamlaoui. Spotting goalkeeper Michel Ramandimbisoa off his line, he unleashed a stunning 40-yard strike that sealed Morocco’s triumph and left fans and foes alike in awe. Despite late Malagasy pressure, Morocco held firm to lift the trophy.

The final capped a thrilling month-long CHAN, co-hosted by Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda — the first time the tournament spanned three countries. Packed stadiums, electric atmospheres, and competitive football made this CHAN one to remember.

For Morocco, it was glory reclaimed. For Madagascar, a silver lining: proof that underdogs can write African football fairytales.