

Amahoro Stadium came alive on Sunday night as the CECAFA Kagame Cup Group C action got underway, with home favorites Rayon Sports and Sudanese giants Al Hilal both recording sharp 2-0 victories to take early control of the group.

Al Hilal were the first to make their mark, surviving a spirited performance from Kenya's Tusker FC. The Sudanese side drew first blood in the 29th minute when defender Kamaradini Mamudu pounced on a loose defensive setup, sending a deflected effort past Tusker goalkeeper Brandon Obiero.

Tusker refused to lie down. Captain Aboud Omar tested Al Hilal's Soufiane Farid Quedraogo three separate times with curling free-kicks, but the goalkeeper stood tall. With Tusker throwing bodies forward late into stoppage time in search of an equalizer, Al Hilal caught them cold on a swift counter-attack, with substitute Salim Adams coolly tucking away a second in the 95th minute.

Speaking after the final whistle, Al Hilal head coach Guy Bukasa Misakabu acknowledged his squad is still finding its groove.

"We are just coming off a short holiday, so the players aren't at full match fitness yet," Bukasa noted. "Getting three points in an opener under these conditions is exactly what we needed."

Second-Half Spark Lifts Rayon Sports

In the late kickoff, the Gikundiro faithful had to exercise patience before their team broke down a disciplined KVZ FC side from Zanzibar. KVZ's compact mid-block frustrated Rayon throughout a scoreless first half, but the persistent pressure paid off in the 67th minute when Rayon earned a penalty inside the box. Substitute Junior Herman Kameni stepped up to send KVZ keeper Hamad Ubwa Hamad the wrong way.



Rayon players celebrating after scoring.

Driven on by a raucous home crowd, Rayon doubled their lead ten minutes from time. Daniel Muhoza reacted fastest to a loose ball in the final third, slotting home to secure the win and put Rayon level with Al Hilal at the top of Group C.

Looking Ahead to Monday & Tuesday

With Group C underway, action shifts back to Kigali Pelé Stadium in Nyamirambo for a massive Group A doubleheader on Monday afternoon:

Gor Mahia vs. Vipers SC at 4:00 PM CAT: A battle for control of Group A after both regional giants claimed heavy opening-day wins.

FC Garde Républicaine will take on APR FC (7:00 PM CAT): Hosts APR FC look to bounce back in front of their home supporters following a tough opening loss to Gor Mahia.

On Tuesday, Group B returns to the pitch at Kigali Pelé Stadium:

Mogadishu City Club will take on Singida Black Stars (4:00 PM CAT): Both teams hunt for their first points of the campaign.

In the other match, Jamus SC will face off with Simba SC (7:00 PM CAT): South Sudan's Jamus SC aim to build on their impressive opening win when they meet Tanzanian powerhouse Simba.