In a thrilling game held at a packed BK Arena, the Rwanda Women's Basketball Team secured a decisive 58-38 victory over Argentina, advancing to the semifinals of the FIBA Women's World Cup Qualifiers.

The match, played on Wednesday, August 21, 2024, was attended by President Paul Kagame and First Lady Jeannette Kagame, adding to the electrifying atmosphere.

Rwanda got off to a strong start, with standout performances from Bella Murekatete and Destiney Philoxy, who contributed the bulk of the early points. The first quarter ended with Rwanda leading 20-13, as the team demonstrated both offensive and defensive prowess.

The second quarter saw Argentina struggling to find their rhythm, scoring only nine points. Meanwhile, Rwanda also faced some challenges, as key players like Keisha Hampton and Sifa Ineza found it difficult to hit their stride. Despite this, Rwanda managed to maintain their lead, going into halftime ahead with a score of 27-22.

In the third quarter, Rwanda began to pull away, thanks to solid teamwork and continued contributions from Bella Murekatete and Keisha. By the end of the quarter, Rwanda had extended their lead to 48-29, putting the game firmly in their control.

Argentina, unable to overcome Rwanda's strong defense and consistent scoring, continued to struggle in the final quarter. The game concluded with a convincing 58-38 victory for Rwanda, securing their spot in the semifinals.

Murekatete was the star of the match, achieving a double-double with 18 points and 18 rebounds. Argentina's top scorer, Florencia Cagas, managed only nine points, highlighting the challenges faced by the South American team.

Following the game, Rwanda's team captain, Destiney Philoxy, expressed cautious optimism. "We still have a long journey ahead. Although we've made it to the semifinals, our goal is to qualify for the World Cup," she said.

Great Britian survived a late run by Lebanon to claim thier 1st win of the tournament. Courtesy photo

In other Group D action, Great Britain secured their first win by defeating Lebanon 77-72, in another match watched by President Paul Kagame and First Lady

Jeannette Kagame.

The group stage concludes on Thursday, August 22, 2024, with four matches scheduled. In Group C, Senegal will face the Philippines at 5 PM, followed by Brazil against Hungary at 8 PM. In Group D, Lebanon will play Argentina at 11 AM, and Rwanda will close out the group stage against Great Britain at 2 PM.

Rwanda’s head coach, Cheikh Sarr, emphasized the importance of the upcoming match against Great Britain. “It will be a tough game, as it’s the first time we’re facing them. We need to stay focused and continue our strong performance,” he said.

With their eyes set on the World Cup, the Rwandan team is determined to keep their momentum going and make their country proud.