Rwanda national football head coach Adel Amrouche acknowledged his team gave their all in a hard-fought 1-0 loss to Nigeria away from home on Saturday but rued missed chances and controversial officiating that influenced the crucial 2026 World Cup qualifier.

Amrouche had vowed to spice things up for the Super Eagles, and despite a spirited display, Rwanda came up just short in Uyo. Tactical changes were made to ignite the attack, but the visitors were unable to find the breakthrough they sought.

The coach remains proud of his squad’s progress and resilience, noting that Nigeria’s position in Group C is slim and the race far from over. Special recognition was given to his goalkeeper Fiacre Ntwari, who impressed despite limited club minutes, embodying the team’s belief in its philosophy and potential.

Acknowledging the challenges of building a competitive side from a less developed domestic league, Amrouche stressed patience and optimism for future improvement.

Arokodare’s Late Strike Keeps Nigeria’s World Cup Hopes Alive.

Tolu Arokodare came off the bench to score within five minutes, securing a narrow 1-0 victory over Rwanda and maintaining Nigeria’s push for 2026 World Cup qualification.

The win takes the Super Eagles to 10 points from six games, keeping them close behind Group C leaders South Africa (16) and Benin (11), both with a game more played. Rwanda drop to fourth with eight points, their hopes hanging by a thread.

After dominating possession but struggling to break down Rwanda’s compact defense in the first half, Nigeria coach Finidi George made the decisive substitution, replacing Frank Onyeka with Arokodare. The KRC Genk striker’s instant impact proved the difference

Nigeria controlled the closing stages with fresh legs introduced to see out the result, recording their first clean sheet since June — a vital boost as the group stage approaches its climax. With three rounds of fixtures remaining and only the top

team in group assured of a place at the finals next month, the West Africans must realistically win against Bafana Bafana of South Africa for a top spot to avoid missing a second successive edition of the World Cup.

Group C Standings After Matchday 7:

1. South Africa – 16 pts

2. Benin – 11 pts

3. Nigeria – 10 pts (1 game in hand)

4. Rwanda – 8 pts

5. Lesotho – 6 pts

6. Zimbabwe – 4 pts