

# DAILY MONITOR

TRUTH EVERY DAY

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 Rugby

## Pirates aim to keep Heathens in check



Pirates star Ondiegi (L) is going through a bad patch so far and needs to step up for the Heathens encounter. PHOTO: EDDIE CHICCO

By Ismail D. Kigongo ([email the author](#))

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*Today – Premier League*

***Pirates v Heathens (5pm, KRFC)***

***Impis v Buffaloes (5pm, Mak)***

***Kobs v Mongers (3pm, KRFC)***

***Nile v Rhino (4pm, Jinja)***

***Reserve League***

***B'faloes II v KK (3pm, KYRFC)***

***Boks v Pirates II (1pm, KRFC)***

***Shield League***

***Lira v Mbale (4pm, Lira)***

MTN Heathens might start to think that they have done most of the hard work in their quest to retain the Nile Special Rugby Premier League title.

They have collected bonus points in each of the six games so far including an impressive 33-0 mauling of archrivals utl Kobs last Friday.

Nonetheless, each passing week presents bigger challenges and today's at Kampala RFC comes in plucky G4S Pirates in what is the final game of a first round many will remember for Heathens' dominance.

With that, the champions have risen to 30 points, six ahead of utl Kobs and Pirates, who share second place. Brian Makalama, the Pirates coach, thinks reputations hardly matter on such days.

“We first aim at victory and then a bonus point will come later if we can. Heathens can be beaten,” Makalama said. Even with the potency of Denis Etuket (10 tries), Pirates have always come out stuck against Kobs and Heathens which means that the winger needs support from a struggling Marlon Ondiegi.

There is an enthralling contest in the middle between Pirates duo of Anthony Kinene and Juma Hillary against Faisal Gama and former Pirate Joel Kimuli.

Such will be the quality on offer that it can be decided anywhere with centre Michael Wokorach, if passed fit following a hamstring problem, Jonathan Bishop Onen and Jude Keremundu carrying the try-scoring responsibility to add to their combined total of 27 tries.

No conclusions

Both Makalama and his direct foe Brian Tabaruka agree that the league is far from done and dusted especially with the

former seeking to rise from two consecutive disappointing second place finishes.

“That gap can be bridged. Heathens prepared hard for their games but we can’t draw conclusions about the league now. It’s about my players putting their minds together,” Makalama stated.

“Nothing is decided yet. All I want is for the team to play as a unit,” Tabaruka said.

Still smarting from that drubbing, Kobs are keen to make a statement against visiting Entebbe Mongers in the early game at Kampala RFC.

Coach Ronnie Lutakome needs an immediate response against the hard-tackling Mongers who beat Kobs last season at the same venue. Elsewhere, Makerere University Impis host Toyota Buffaloes whereas Rhino visit Nile in Jinja.