

UGANDA NATIONAL OPEN INDIVIDUAL DRAUGHTS CHAMPONSHIP
VENUE: ALOBO LTD, GULU TOWN; DATE: 4th JUNE 2017

The 1st ever National Draughts Championship organized by the Uganda Draughts Federation (UDF) to take place in Gulu occurred on Sunday 4th June 2017. It was the Uganda National Open pool checkers draughts championship. Other than being the 1st national draughts tournament in Gulu, the event was unique in that it coincided with the Day of Pentecost, the day when the Holy spirit descended upon the earth and was received the disciples and made them to speak in tongues and gave them guidance in executing God's plan on earth. Thus the championship was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and with the Holy Spirit, UDF is sure that their key obstacles to promotion and development of draughts in the country will be overcome. The tournament was played at the Alobo Limited Building Complex, Olal road, Gulu town. This event was the 2nd Pool checkers draughts individual championship on the 2017 UDF calendar.

The Chairman Gulu Draughts Club welcomed the players from other parts of the country to Gulu and thanked UDF for giving Gulu an opportunity to host a national championship. The Technical Director, UDF, thanked all the players for taking off part of their time to participate in the competitions. He thanked the Guest of Honour for honouring the invitation and supporting the event. He urged all the draughts players to support only politicians who render their support for the game and shun those who ignore to associate with them and only think of them towards election period. In the opening ceremony, the Guest of Honour, Hon. Lyndro Komakech, represented by Mr. Richard Jomeo, wished the players success in the tournament and was optimistic that all the medals would be won by the Gulu players maximizing on home advantage. He spelt out the advantages of the game of draughts including transcending cultural barriers and barriers due to level of education.

Before the competitions set off, there was some resistance from some Gulu players to use the Table of Draw to dictate the beginning moves. They preferred the Go-As-You-Please (GAYP) so that every move is decided by the players themselves. The Technical Director spelt out the merits of using the Table of Draw against the GAYP and that it would be an embarrassment if the World Body came to know that International standards/regulations were

ignored. He told the players that in all sports, regulations keep on changing and that FIFA and football governing bodies will embrace use of technology in helping referees make just decisions in hard situations the moment they stop being proud and abandon being primitive. A vote on the issue by the players was 19 in favour of use of the Table of Draw and 18 against its use. A few players who lost the vote resigned taking part in the tournament. In total, 38 players participated in the tournament with Gulu town presenting 27; Kampala, 8; Masindi, 3 and Amuru, 2. The expected players from Mbale, Iganga, Fort Portal, Masaka and Lira failed to turn up.

The tournament started late and was played for 7 rounds instead of 9 under Swiss system with a time control of 5 minutes per game and 3 seconds per move. It was therefore a rapid championship with limited time on the clock. The Gulu players believed they were the strongest in the country and proved very tough in the tournament. In the 1st round, an elite player from Seeta DC, Sam Senoga, drew with Alfred Ocitti (Gulu) and Musa Mukasa (Kisenyi DC) and the year 2016 defending champion drew with Richard Jomeo (Gulu). In the 2nd round, George William Omayya put skilful player Stanley Odeke from Kampala (Nakasero Draughts Club) to the sword whipping him 2 – 0 to the surprise of the Kampala players. Omayya went ahead and drew with pre-tournament favourite, Isaac Bafaki (Nakasero DC). Omayya was denied the Gold medal in the last round of the tournament through a whipping by Sam Senoga, the eventual champion and Gold medal winner. Omayya settled for 3rd position (Bronze medal) and relegated Dan Isabirye on split decision to 4th position to render the veteran draughts player and the only player in the country with International honours to 4th Position with no medal. Dan Isabirye is a master of International Draughts Federation i.e. he is an MF. The results of the tournament are indicated in the table below.

#	Name of Player	Rd1	Rd2	Rd3	Rd4	Rd5	Rd6	Rd7	Total points	Opponent's Total points	Rank
1	Geoffrey Ojara Ojiri	21T0	12T1	35T1	7T1	11T3	6T5	34T6	6	40	27
2	Charles Ojuk	34T2	10T3	20T3	28T3	27T5	19T6	16T7	7	44	20
3	Martin Komakech	28T2	30T2	27T4	37T4	15T4	9T6	17T6	6	52	23
4	Andrew Onen	22T0	23T1	15T1	25T1	12T3	7T4	9T4	4	43	35
5	Alex Ojera	16T2	19T4	8T4	22T5	38T5	36T5	29T7	7	55	18

6	Charles Opiyo	25T1	31T1	28T2	19T3	18T3	1T3	27T5	5	44	32
7	Richard Jomeo	32T1	33T1	18T1	1T3	36T3	4T4	11T6	6	42	26
8	George William Omayo	17T2	37T4	5T6	30T7	24T8	14T10	31T10	10	65	3
9	Paxx Okot	13T0	27T0	23T2	11T4	35T4	3T4	4T6	6	31	29
10	James Oloya	24T2	2T3	36T5	20T6	37T6	21T7	15T7	7	58	16
11	Morris Lamony	30T0	24T0	16T1	9T1	1T1	23T3	7T3	3	46	36
12	Charles Lanek	20T0	1T1	29T1	16T2	4T2	25T3	23T5	5	38	34
13	Emma Amone	9T2	38T2	14T2	15T2	23T4	29T5	18T6	6	47	24
14	Bob Olwoch Ajuu	27T2	22T2	13T4	33T6	20T8	8T8	37T9	9	56	8
15	Patrick Obwoya	37T0	17T0	4T2	13T4	3T6	24T7	10T9	9	48	9
16	Robert Acaye	5T0	34T0	11T1	12T2	17T3	27T5	2T6	6	39	28
17	Karl George Max	8T0	15T2	34T3	38T3	16T4	28T6	3T8	8	52(52)	13
18	Philips Odur	26T1	36T1	7T3	34T3	6T5	32T5	15T6	6	46	25
19	Simon Otika	23T2	5T2	24T2	6T3	25T5	2T6	35T7	7	41	21
20	Abdul Hafiz	12T2	21T3	2T5	10T6	14T6	34T8	26T10	10	50	6
21	Lawrence Opira	1T2	20T3	33T4	24T4	29T6	10T7	32T8	8	52(55)	12
22	Francis Opiyo	4T2	14T4	30T4	5T5	34T7	26T8	24T10	10	54	5
23	Walter Okot	19T0	4T1	9T1	27T2	13T2	11T2	12T2	2	34	38
24	Johnson Okot	10T0	11T2	19T4	21T6	8T7	15T8	22T8	8	54	11
25	Edward Mbiheebwa	6T1	26T1	37T1	4T3	19T3	12T4	28T5	5	43	33
26	Razaki Mwavu	18T1	25T3	38T5	31T5	32T7	22T8	20T8	8	61	10
27	David Kabwimura	14T0	9T2	3T2	23T3	2T3	16T3	6T3	3	41	37
28	Hassan Imran	3T0	35T1	6T2	2T4	33T4	17T4	25T5	5	46	31
29	Fred Kyemba	33T1	32T1	12T3	35T4	21T4	13T5	5T5	5	49	30
30	Isaac Bafaki	11T2	3T4	22T6	8T7	31T8	37T10	33T12	12	58	2

31	Sam Senoga	36T1	6T3	32T5	26T7	30T8	38T10	8T12	12	60	1
32	Musa Mukasa	7T1	29T3	31T3	36T5	26T5	18T7	21T8	8	52(50)	14
33	Lawrence Kaliisa	29T1	7T3	21T4	14T4	28T6	35T8	30T8	8	52(49)	15
34	Christopher Ojok	2T0	16T2	17T3	18T5	22T5	20T5	1T6	6	53	22
35	Denis Ongwech	38T0	28T1	1T3	29T4	9T6	33T6	19T7	7	47	19
36	Alfred Ocitti	31T1	18T3	10T3	32T3	7T5	5T7	38T7	7	56	17
37	Stanley Odeke	15T2	8T2	25T4	3T6	10T8	30T8	14T9	9	59	7
38	Dan Isabirye, MF	35T2	13T4	26T4	17T6	5T8	31T8	36T10	10	55	4

In the closing ceremony, Mr. Walter Okot was grateful for UDF exposing the game to Gulu and pledged to have increased participation by members in the UDF activities. This event was privileged to be honoured by Hon. Christopher Oluba, the Chairman LCIII, Layibi Division who pledged to mobilise support from all political offices in Gulu District for the draughts game. He also pledged shs. 100,000/= towards the opening of a bank account for draughts in Gulu District. The Guest of Honour, Hon. Lyndro Komakech representative, Mr. Richard Jomeo pledged also to mobilize political support for the game in Gulu and said the first people he beat (won) in the tournament were those who resigned because they were not willing to embrace the world/international regulations. He urged them to embrace change and democracy even when the decision is not in their favour. “Those who withdrew, i have defeated them and they are the losers” he said. He urged UDF to strive for inclusion of African games in the Olympics (this effort is already being made by the world draughts federations). He said there was need to have leadership all over the country/districts in the country and that funders will embrace our proposals if the leadership of UDF has wide representation spread over the country other than being concentrated in Kampala.

Isabirye told the players that the world qualifiers will be played on Sunday 18th June 2018 at YMCA, Kampala for both men and women. The best 3 men will qualify to represent Uganda in the world champion from 19th – 29th October 2017 in St. Petersburg, Russia while the best 4 ladies will also represent Uganda in the same city. Uganda was given a slot of 5 men and 4 women in the world champion but two of the men already qualified from the African championship that was played last year in Zambia. The two men already qualified include Isaac Bafaki and Dan Isabirye and these will not be part of the

competitions on 18th June. The arbiter for the tournament was Dan Isabirye. Prizes were given to best 7 players while the first 3 players obtained medals as well. The tournament ended at around 8.30 pm. The picture is a capture of the event that was attended by more spectators than the players showing the level of support for the game in Gulu district.



Report compiled by

Dan Isabirye, MF

Technical Director, UDF