

Total CHAN 2018 Qualifiers: Rwanda eye win over Tanzania in Mwanza

Written by Administrator
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Kigali: Rwanda tackles Tanzania away in the first leg of their 2018 African Nations Championship (CHAN) Central-east Zone, second round qualifier this Saturday afternoon at CCM Kirumba Stadium in Mwanza.

According to the Rwanda Football Association, the game which kicks off at 15h00 local time will be live on Azam Tv and ZBC2.

Rwanda, known as the Wasps, have appeared at two CHAN tournaments - 2011 when they were eliminated in the group stage and 2016 when they reached the quarterfinals as hosts.

The Wasps were last in action when they stumbled to a 2-1 defeat away to Central African Republic in a 2019 Africa Cup of Nations qualifier last month.

The Rwandan team delegation arrived in Mwanza on Friday. The first group of the delegation comprised of players managed to arrive in the host city in the morning but the remaining batch struggled to make it to Mwanza on time as their scheduled flight from Dar es Salaam broke down and could only be assured another flight later in the evening.

Despite all these challenges, the Antoine Hey led side will have to fully focus on today's game and ensure that their plans for this qualification round are achieved.

Speaking to local media before departure, head coach Antoine Hey said, "We will go into the game looking for nothing less than a win and believe we can achieve our target and reach the next stage. We have to avoid committing any mistakes and stick to our game plan."

"We will do all we can to get a positive result in first leg. It will be a tough game but I believe in my players' ability to do a good job ahead of the second leg next week," the German added.

Opponents, Tanzania, known as the Taifa Stars, appeared at the first CHAN tournament in the Ivory Coast in 2009, but have not qualified for the finals since. Their attempt to reach the 2016 edition ended in the preliminary round when they were beaten 4-1 on aggregate by Uganda.

The Taifa Stars come into the match having participated as a guest team at the 2017 Cosafa Cup in South Africa, where they finished top of their group and ended up winning the bronze medals.

Tanzania coach, Salum Mayanga said, "We want to win both legs but we need to start it at home. I am impressed with the COSAFA achievement and I am sure that my team will play well to win.

"I left out the three players due to injury but others are fit to take up their places. Last week, we called up John Bocco to supplement the striking force after Mbaraka Yusuf's injury. The others will make our squad deeper and competitive," Mayanga said.

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Tanzania and Rwanda have met in 14 previous matches, according to FIFA's statistics. Each side has claimed six wins, while two matches ended in draws. The teams' most recent clash saw Rwanda win 2-0 in a friendly in Kigali in June 2015.

The return leg is set for Kigali on July 22 at Stade de Kigali. The winner will face either South Sudan or Uganda in the third round.(End)