

Stars win the league title

African Stars finally won the Namibia Premier League title when they drew 1-1 against Orlando Pirates at Windhoek's Independence Stadium on Wednesday night. Heinrich Kazerua gave Stars an 18th minute lead with a cracking shot, but Stanley Kamesiepo equalised 14 minutes later after a quick counterattack.

Pirates laid on the pressure in the final stages, while referee Jimmy Rukanyira added to the tension by allowing close to ten minutes of injury time. Stars' defence however stood firm and with Stars' fans going crazy on their vuvuzelas, Rukanyira eventually blew the final whistle.

The draw gave Stars a four point lead at the top of the log and with only one round of matches remaining, they cannot be overhauled anymore.

In another match on Wednesday, SKW's faint hopes of challenging for the title disappeared when they lost 1-0 to Civics at the SKW Stadium. Eslin Kamuhanga scored Civics' winner a minute from full time.

But all the drama unfolded at the Independence Stadium, barely a kilometre away as about 4 000 predominantly Stars fans turned up to cheer their team on.

Stars did the early attacking with Rudi Louw, Jamu Ngatjizeko and Ninja Karongee combining well in midfield. Louw had an early shot saved while Brouwers Litombo headed narrowly over the bar after latching on to Kazerua's cross.

At the other end a John Samson header was well saved by Max Mbaeva, but it was Stars who took the lead through a cracking shot by Kazerua. From a long upfield clearance, the ball bounced loose in Pirates' box and Kazerua pounced to slam it into the net from about 25m out.

Stars' fans roared their approval and they continued to attack with an Edison Muheua cross being punched clear by Pirates keeper Helmuth Maletsky, while Andrew Tjahikika headed narrowly over the crossbar from a freekick.

But Pirates struck back on 32m when they launched a quick counter attack and Stanley Kamesiepo hit the back of the net with a fine shot after being put clear by Nicodemus Hifitikeko.

Stars immediately came back and nearly regained the lead when a chipped shot by Kazerua hit the crossbar, after a fine buildup between Karongee and Ngatjizeko. Rudi Louw came close early in the second half, heading over from a Dennis Ngueza cross, but it was Pirates who started applying more pressure, especially after Klaas Blom, Mohammed Ouseb and Meraai Swartbooie came on as substitutes after 63m. Blom was causing all sorts of problems with his tricky runs while John Samson also had Stars' defence at full stretch.

With ten minutes remaining, Stars' fans started honking away on their vuvuzelas, but their celebrations were put on hold as the match dragged on and on into injury time.

Stars' defence, with Pat Uanivi and Andrew Tjahikika outstanding, stood firm until Rukanyira finally blew his whistle to signal the end of the match. Stars' players and fans started celebrating wildly and minutes later the chairman of the NPL JJ Doeseb handed the league trophy over to Stars' captain Andrew Tjahikika.