

KBF Premier League

Kenya's Top-Tier Basketball Competition Organisation Profiles & Competition Overview

The KBF Premier League — formally known as the Kenya National Basketball Classic League — is the pinnacle of club basketball in Kenya, organised and governed by the Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF). Established in 1987, the league features 12 teams in both men's and women's competitions, drawing participation from state parastatals, military institutions, banking corporations, and universities. The men's league champion earns an automatic entry into the Road to BAL — Kenya's qualification path to the Basketball Africa League, Africa's premier continental club competition co-organised by the NBA and FIBA.

League Overview

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Full Name | KBF Premier League / Kenya National Basketball Classic League (KNBL) |
| Governing Body | Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF) |
| Established | 1987 |
| Format | 12-team round-robin regular season, followed by best-of-series playoffs |
| Season Duration | Annual — August through July (approx. 11 months) |
| Teams | 12 men's teams, 12 women's teams |
| Home Venues | Nyayo National Stadium Gymnasium (primary), KPA Makande Gymnasium (Mombasa), USIU-A Courts |
| Top Prize | KBF Premier League title; men's champion qualifies for Road to BAL |
| Most Decorated | Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) — 9 men's championships |
| Reigning Champions | Nairobi City Thunder (Men, 2024 & 2025); Equity Bank Hawks (Women) |

2024-25 Men's Premier League Standings

Final Regular Season Standings (as at September 2025)

| Team | W | L | Record | Position |
|-----------------------------|----|----|--------|----------|
| Nairobi City Thunder | 22 | 0 | 22-0 | 1st |
| Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) | 22 | 4 | 18-4 | 2nd |
| Ulinzi Warriors | 22 | 8 | 14-8 | 3rd |
| Equity Bank Dumas | 22 | 10 | 12-10 | 4th |
| Umoja | 22 | 10 | 12-10 | 5th |
| Eldonets Platinum | 22 | 12 | 10-12 | 6th |

| Team | W | L | Record | Position |
|-------------------|----|----|--------|----------|
| UoN Terrorists | 22 | 12 | 10-12 | 7th |
| Strathmore Blades | 22 | 14 | 8-14 | 8th |
| Stanbic Shields | 22 | 14 | 8-14 | 9th |
| ANU Wolfpacks | 22 | 15 | 7-15 | 10th |
| USIU Tigers | 22 | 15 | 6-15 | 11th |
| NBK Phoenix | 22 | 16 | 6-16 | 12th |

Women's Premier League — Active Teams

The KBF Women's Premier League runs concurrently with the men's competition and features 12 teams, including a strong contingent of university programs that compete directly against corporate-backed sides.

Current Women's Premier League Participants

| Team | Notes |
|-------------------|---|
| Equity Bank Hawks | Defending champions, consistent title contenders |
| KPA Women | Strong parastatal program based in Mombasa |
| Zetech Sparks | University side, one of the most competitive women's programs |
| Strathmore Swords | Top university program, previously unbeaten in KUSF |
| USIU Flames | Only university side to win the Women's Premier League (2015) |
| UoN Dynamites | Red Bull Half Court World Finals 2022 participants |
| Stanbic Aces | Banking sector representative in the women's league |
| ANU Panthers | University program affiliated with ANU Wolfpacks |
| Eldonets Women | Corporate-backed women's side |
| Safe Spaces | Community club program |
| Storms | Active league participant |
| The Swish | Active league participant |

Organisation Profiles

The following profiles cover all 12 organisations currently competing in the KBF Premier League, detailing their corporate background, team names, league history, and participation in other competitions.

Nairobi City Thunder — The Thunder

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Sector | Private (Twende Sports Limited) |
| Men's Team | Nairobi City Thunder |
| Women's Team | — |
| Based In | Nairobi |
| Founded | 1998 (as NSSF Stars); rebranded & professionalized 2023 |
| Championships | 2x KBF Premier League Champions (2024, 2025) — first Kenyan club to qualify for the BAL |
| Other Leagues | Road to BAL, Basketball Africa League (BAL), EABCC |
| Background | Originally a corporate team under the National Social Security Fund. Acquired in 2023 by Twende Sports Limited, who professionalized the organization. Went undefeated (30-0) in 2023-24 season and became the first Kenyan club to compete in the Basketball Africa League in 2025. |

Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) — The Dockers

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Sector | State Parastatal (Kenya Ports Authority) |
| Men's Team | KPA Dockers |
| Women's Team | KPA Women |
| Based In | Mombasa (home court: KPA Makande Gymnasium) |
| Founded | Established alongside KPA as a state corporation sports program |
| Championships | 9x Men's Premier League Champions — most in league history |
| Other Leagues | Road to BAL, EABCC, FIBA Zone 5 (historical) |
| Background | Owned and funded directly by the Kenya Ports Authority state corporation. The most decorated basketball club in Kenya, with nine national championships. Fields both a competitive men's and women's side. A perennial contender for the KBF title and a regular in continental competition. |

Ulinzi Warriors — The Soldiers

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Sector | Military / Government (Kenya Defence Forces) |
| Men's Team | Ulinzi Warriors |
| Women's Team | Ulinzi Swords |
| Based In | Nairobi (Moi Air Base, Eastleigh) |
| Founded | Affiliated with the Kenya Defence Forces; folded 2007, returned 2012 |
| Championships | 8x Men's Premier League Champions |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Other Leagues | EABCC, Road to BAL (historical), FIBA Zone 5 (historical) |
| Background | Funded and sponsored by the Kenya Defence Forces. An eight-time national champion and long-standing rival of KPA. Currently in a rebuilding phase focused on nurturing young talent, having claimed a 2025 KNBL bronze medal and a spot in the Zone 5 tournament. |

Equity Bank Group — Equity Dumas (M) / Equity Hawks (W)

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Sector | Banking — Private (Equity Group Holdings) |
| Men's Team | Equity Bank Dumas |
| Women's Team | Equity Bank Hawks |
| Based In | Nairobi |
| Founded | Banking sector sponsorship, long-established program |
| Championships | Women's Premier League Champions (2015 Hawks) |
| Other Leagues | EABCC (Dumas — inaugural 2024 edition) |
| Background | Equity Group Holdings sponsors both a men's and women's basketball team in the KBF Premier League. The women's side, the Hawks, are former champions and consistent title challengers. The men's team, Equity Dumas, competes in the top tier and represented Kenya in the inaugural EABCC in 2024. |

Stanbic Bank Kenya — Stanbic Shields (M) / Stanbic Aces (W)

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Sector | Banking — Private (Stanbic Bank Kenya / Standard Bank Group) |
| Men's Team | Stanbic Shields |
| Women's Team | Stanbic Aces |
| Based In | Nairobi |
| Founded | Recently promoted to Premier League tier |
| Championships | No Premier League title to date |
| Other Leagues | KBF Division 1 (Men's — prior to promotion) |
| Background | Stanbic Bank sponsors both men's and women's Premier League teams. The Shields were recently promoted to the Men's Premier League — a notable achievement given KBF's constitutional rule that prohibits a single sponsor from fielding two teams in the top tier. The Aces compete in the Women's Premier League. |

National Bank of Kenya (NBK) — NBK Phoenix

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Sector | Banking — State (National Bank of Kenya) |
| Men's Team | NBK Phoenix |
| Women's Team | — |
| Based In | Nairobi |
| Founded | Recent entrant to the Premier League |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Championships | No Premier League title to date |
| Other Leagues | — |
| Background | The National Bank of Kenya sponsors the NBK Phoenix men's team in the KBF Premier League. A relatively new addition to the top tier, the Phoenix have been competing to establish themselves alongside the established banking sector rivals such as Equity and Stanbic. Referred to informally as 'fellow bankers' in the league. |

Umoja Basketball Club — Umoja

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Sector | Private Club (Community / Investor-backed) |
| Men's Team | Umoja |
| Women's Team | — |
| Based In | Nairobi |
| Founded | Established club, significantly strengthened in 2024-25 |
| Championships | No Premier League title to date |
| Other Leagues | EABCC 2025 (semi-finalists) |
| Background | A privately run Nairobi basketball club that has grown rapidly in recent seasons, attracting several top players from Equity Dumas ahead of the 2024-25 season. Umoja reached the EABCC semi-finals in 2025 on their debut in the regional competition, signaling their emergence as a serious continental contender. |

Eldonets Platinum — Eldonets

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Sector | Corporate (Eldonets Company) |
| Men's Team | Eldonets Platinum |
| Women's Team | Eldonets Women |
| Based In | Nairobi |
| Founded | Established Premier League participant |
| Championships | No Premier League title to date |
| Other Leagues | — |
| Background | A corporate-backed club fielding both men's and women's sides in the KBF Premier League. Eldonets Platinum consistently competes in the mid-table range of the men's league and is a regular fixture in the top tier of Kenyan basketball. |

Strathmore University — Blades (M) / Swords (W)

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Sector | University — Private |
| Men's Team | Strathmore Blades |
| Women's Team | Strathmore Swords |
| Based In | Nairobi (Madaraka Estate) |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Founded | Basketball program well-established alongside university (est. 1961) |
| Championships | Multiple Division 1 and university championship titles |
| Other Leagues | KUSF Regional Conferences, KUSF National Play-Offs, FASU Games |
| Background | One of the premier university basketball programs in Kenya. Both the Blades (men) and Swords (women) compete at the top domestic tier against professional clubs. The Swords are perennial Women's Premier League contenders. Strathmore is one of the few universities consistently competitive at the same level as corporate and parastatal clubs. |

University of Nairobi (UoN) — Terrorists (M) / Dynamites (W)

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Sector | University — Public |
| Men's Team | UoN Terrorists |
| Women's Team | UoN Dynamites |
| Based In | Nairobi |
| Founded | One of the oldest university basketball programs in Kenya |
| Championships | Multiple university championships; Dynamites — Red Bull Half Court World Finals 2022 |
| Other Leagues | KUSF Regional Conferences, KUSF National Play-Offs, FASU Games |
| Background | The University of Nairobi fields both men's and women's teams in the KBF Premier League. The Terrorists men's team was coached back into the Premier League by Dr. Eugene Genga. The Dynamites women's team represented Kenya at the 2022 Red Bull Half Court World Finals — a major international milestone for university basketball in Africa. |

United States International University Africa (USIU-A) — Tigers (M) / Flames (W)

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Sector | University — Private (International) |
| Men's Team | USIU Tigers |
| Women's Team | USIU Flames |
| Based In | Nairobi (Kasarani) |
| Founded | Active basketball program, internationally affiliated institution |
| Championships | Women's Premier League Champions — 2015 (Flames, only university side to win) |
| Other Leagues | KUSF Regional Conferences, KUSF National Play-Offs, FASU 3x3 Challenge (hosted) |
| Background | USIU-Africa is home to one of the most competitive basketball programs among Kenyan universities. The Flames are the only university side in history to have won the KBF Women's Premier League, claiming the title in 2015. The university hosted the 4th FASU 3x3 Challenge. Both men's and women's sides compete in the Premier League. |

Africa Nazarene University (ANU) — Wolfpacks (M) / Panthers (W)

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Sector | University — Private (Faith-Based) |
| Men's Team | ANU Wolfpacks |
| Women's Team | ANU Panthers |
| Based In | Ongata Rongai, Nairobi |
| Founded | Long-standing Premier League program |
| Championships | University-level championship titles |
| Other Leagues | KUSF Regional Conferences, KUSF National Play-Offs |
| Background | Africa Nazarene University is one of the smaller institutions competing at Premier League level, making their sustained participation in the top tier notable. Both men's Wolfpacks and women's Panthers compete in the KBF Premier League, making ANU one of only a handful of universities with dual Premier League representation. |

Organisations by Sector

The KBF Premier League is unique in African basketball for the diversity of organisations it brings together — state institutions, military bodies, major banks, and universities all competing at the same level.

| Organisation | Sector | Men's Team | Women's Team |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Nairobi City Thunder | Private | City Thunder | — |
| KPA | State Parastatal | KPA Dockers | KPA Women |
| Ulinzi Warriors | Military / KDF | Ulinzi Warriors | Ulinzi Swords |
| Equity Bank | Banking (Private) | Equity Dumas | Equity Hawks |
| Stanbic Bank | Banking (Private) | Stanbic Shields | Stanbic Aces |
| National Bank (NBK) | Banking (State) | NBK Phoenix | — |
| Umoja | Private Club | Umoja | — |
| Eldonets | Corporate | Eldonets Platinum | Eldonets Women |
| Strathmore University | University (Priv) | Strathmore Blades | Strathmore Swords |
| Univ. of Nairobi | University (Pub) | UoN Terrorists | UoN Dynamites |
| USIU-Africa | University (Priv) | USIU Tigers | USIU Flames |
| ANU | University (Priv) | ANU Wolfpacks | ANU Panthers |

Sources: Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF), Afrobasket.com, FIBA Basketball, Standard Media, People Daily, Wikipedia (KBF Premier League). Standings reflect 2024-25 regular season data as of September 2025.