

IOC award leaves Kiprotch humbled

By Sande Bashaija, Nation Media.

Stephen Kiprotich has received all sorts of rewards since his Olympic marathon victory last year.

His prize cabinet is probably overflowing and he will have to re-organise it to find space for one precious medal. “This is very special,” Kiprotich said as he smiled ear to ear after receiving the International Olympic Committee (IOC) special medal from sports minister Charles Bakkabulindi on Friday evening.

“I am very honoured and humbled because I didn’t sweat for this medal. It could have been given to any other Olympian,” the Olympic marathon champion said during the ceremony at which **Uganda Olympic Committee (UOC) opened an electronic library and sports research centre.**

The IOC special medal goes to athletes, who excel in sports and demonstrate the spirit of sportsmanship in Olympic events.

Kiprotich ended Uganda’s 40-year wait for an Olympic gold by stunning a hugely experienced field to win the men’s marathon on the final day of the London Olympics. There couldn’t have been a better recipient for the IOC award. An excited Kiprotich spent the evening chatting and taking pictures with guests at the UOC function.

UOC president William Blick said the **e-library** is the first of its kind in East and Central Africa. “South Africa is the only other African country with this type of facility,” Blick said. “This is a milestone for sports in Uganda. It will go a long way in improving sports research in the country.”

State minister for primary education Kamanda Batarigaya was the chief guest at the event in place of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) minister Ruhakana Rugunda.

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