

General Assembly 2007

June 22, 2007 - Copenhagen/Denmark



Presidential Report

The first 2 years of EMA - this is a successful start of modern Mahjong culture in Europe. Players and national organizations from different countries all over Europe are obsessed with the idea of a global Mahjong community, meeting and playing the one-and-only in a friendly and peaceful way: Mahjong. This report is a view on some important aspects of EMA history since 2005.

The Board

There are 7 elected members in the board: Martin Scheichenbauer, Tina Christensen, Stéphane Parcollet, Uwe Martens (President), András Boda, Marco Milandri and Chris Janssen (he was the successor of Marianne Croeze and later Désirée Heemskerk after they resigned). The board asked Martin Rep soon after the inaugural meeting of EMA to join the board as a Special Advisor. Discussions and decisions at the board were done by email communication. A special mailinglist kept all members of the board up-to-date.

Ranking System

The first things to do after the founding of the European Mahjong Association in June 2005 during the Open European Mahjong Championship in Nijmegen was to set up a European Ranking System - the MERS. Since that time 21 MERS competitions took place all over Europe, and 238 players are listed today. We all know that MERS is not perfect. But it was an important vehicle for the development of Mahjong tournament and travelling culture in Europe. With an evaluation by official observers appointed by EMA and reports about nearly every MERS tournament we have tried to improve this part of the European Mahjong community. We will have to discuss modifications of the Ranking System to keep it popular and successful in future.

WMO

In October 2005, the World Mahjong Organization (WMO) was founded during the China Majiang Championship. The inaugural meeting was also visited by American and European officials e.g. from the EMA, France, Denmark and Hungary. Nevertheless WMO is still a Chinese organization. There is no clear decision about membership of EMA or European Countries. We will discuss and decide this question before the World Mahjong Championship that will be held in Chengdu in November. During that Championship an Assembly of WMO will take place. We hope we can develop a World Organization where the members discuss as equal partners and take their decisions in a common and democratic way.



International Mind Sports Association

With the support Ms. Erica Terpstra, the chairman of the Dutch Sports Federation and member of the International Olympic Committee, we tried to contact the International Mind Sports Association (IMSA) in Paris and asked to become a member of this organization. We only got a short answer via email, that the Board of IMSA will decide in April 2006, but never get any more feedback from Paris, although we sent another letter in summer 2006.

Rules and Regulations

In 2005 the China Majiang Organizing Committee published an English translation of the rules from 1998. The translation was not reasonable, and soon it was obvious that this rulebook could not be the Mahjong standard rulebook. One year later, in summer 2006, the World Mahjong Contest Center (WMCC) and the World Mahjong Organization (WMO) published a new rulebook in Chinese and English as the worldwide standard, the Mahjong Competition Rules (MCR). In this rulebook some changes of the scoring are published as a development of the old rules from 1998. The English translation was discussed with some rule experts from EMA and with Tom Sloper from the U.S. Thanks to the cooperation between Tom and the Europeans the English translation is reasonable and helps to standardize Mahjong playing in the English speaking world. But of course it is still a problem that the Chinese didn't discuss the rule's changings with European oder American players and officials before they were published. We hope that further changings will be developed by an international committee of WMO.

The Board of EMA has published Regulations for the OEMC 2007 which introduce some minor changes especially about penalties for European tournaments. We know that not all players love the European adaptation of the rules. The adaptation was necessary to find a way to continue competitive playing with the majority of European players. We all hope for a unique worldwide standard of rules in future, developed by experts not only from China.

Website

Soon after OEMC 2005 the website of EMA was online. It is a basic platform with informations about our association, about tournaments, MERS and other EMA related subjects. Thanks to Flemming Lindblad from Denmark who created our website mahjong-europe.org - Tina Christensen and I try to keep it updated. We tried to get a better EU-domain for our site (e.g. ema.eu or mahjong.eu), but we didn't succeed.

The World Wide Web and email are important tools to organize our multinational association. During the next years we will have to develop the virtual network among players and organizations in Europe.

Logo

In November 2006 the logo of EMA was created by Franck Menant from France. Thanks to Franck (who did this work free of cost!) and to Stéphane Parcollet for his support!



MahjongTime and MORSE

In early 2007, the online platform MahjongTime.com asked EMA to sign a partnership agreement for a 3-years-cooperation. MahjongTime.com is interested to have EMA as exclusive partner for special European online competitions. MahjongTime.com will create an EMA co-branded website and be a sponsor of tournaments like the European Championship. We signed an agreement in May 2007 and created a special European Mahjong Online Ranking System, called MORSE (similar to MERS). The partner agreement is the first contract signed by EMA. In future it will be necessary to create EMA as a legal entity. If sponsorship and international cooperation with business partners becomes more important, EMA should be able to cooperate in full responsibility.

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The first 2 years of EMA were very successful. To continue this history, we have to do a lot of work: improving the Ranking System; improving the communication between EMA and member organizations and between EMA and players; developing a world standard rules together with China Majiang and other partners within the World Mahjong Organization; supporting the creation of more national Mahjong organization in European countries - and making Mahjong popular all over Europe.

Edeweicht, June 17, 2007

Uwe Martens
President of the European Mahjong Association EMA