

**European Mahjong Association EMA**  
**General Assembly 2009**  
**July 3, 2009 – Baden/Austria**

## **Presidential Report**

Two more successful years of EMA: more members, more activities and a great step forward towards a worldwide Mahjong community – players and the organizations in Europe prove the power and fascination of the world's best game: Mahjong. This report shows a view of some important aspects of history of EMA since 2007.

### **Presidium and Board**

The General Assembly 2007 elected the president (Uwe Martens, Germany) and two vice presidents (Tina Christensen, Denmark and Martin Rep, Netherlands) as the leading team of EMA. Martin Rep had to resign after only seven months because he was no longer nominated as EMA representative of his national organization. The EMA is grateful for his work and great Mahjong enthusiasm, e.g. for his initiative of promoting Riichi Mahjong in Europe. His resignation weakened the organization because the main work of EMA must be done by the remaining two presidents.

Representatives from all other inaugural member countries and from the five new members on provisional basis are completing the board (12 members incl. presidium). Discussions and decisions at the board were organized via email communication. This is an important instrument to bring all informations as soon as possible to all member countries. Of course it is difficult to get fast decisions in a board of 12 or more members. For that reason the presidium proposes a change of statutes.

### **Riichi Mahjong**

The General Assembly 2007 decided to organize an European Riichi Championship under the roof of EMA which took place in 2008 in Hanover. Indeed there is a Riichi community in Europe – the Championship became a great success. A Riichi ranking was set up, since last summer eight certified competitions were organized, 74 players are in the ranking list. Riichi will be one of the mainstays of EMA and Mahjong in Europe.

Players and officials from Denmark and the Netherlands in cooperation with players from Japan and the U.S. set up the European Riichi Rules as the official standard for EMA competitions.

## **MCR**

Since 2006 the official standard of Mahjong Competition Rules is published by the World Mahjong Organization. Nevertheless some of the rules are still disputed. In 2008 EMA published the „MERS Tournament Regulations“. This should clarify some rules and regulations for tournaments in Europe, in combination with a „Referee Manual“ for standardizing refereeing in tournaments. For the same reason EMA started the training of referees this year during OEMC in Baden.

Some months ago, the EMA Rule Committee for MCR was established. This will improve the discussion and help to develop a consistent set of rules and regulations in future. Of course EMA can't start a solo effort. We need the cooperation with the Chinese experts to avoid the splitting up of MCR.

## **Ranking Systems**

In 2005 EMA established a European Ranking System for MCR. Ranking systems for online competitions and Riichi Mahjong were added. Of course there are still discussions about the quality of our ranking systems. But still it is an important vehicle of the development of Mahjong in Europe. The ranking systems might be evaluated and modified within the next years – but this should be done carefully. The ranking systems are already a part of our history: More than 50 MCR tournaments within the last 4 years (note: 20 MERS competitions since OEMC 2007), nearly 400 players in the MERS: This is a success of our young association.

Until last year Jan Thomasseti from Belgium was the „master of the columns“. Not an easy job, and we are grateful for his work in nearly 3 three years. And we are glad that Sebastien Berret from France agreed to be his successor since June 2008. Sebastien redesigned the presentation of ranking systems, players' list etc. in a real professional way.

## **International connections**

EMA played an active part in the World Mahjong Organization in the last two years. A huge number of players participated in the World Mahjong Championship in Chengdu/ China in 2007, where also the General Assembly of WMO took place with representatives from EMA and the national European organizations. It was decided that the World Championship in 2010 should take place in Europe – a great success for EMA that the Chinese officials accepted the standard of European Mahjong players and organized

Mahjong. EMA is glad that the Nederlandse Mahjong Bond took the opportunity to invite the WMC 2010 to Utrecht/Netherlands.

In September 2008 the President and the Secretary General of WMO asked the President of EMA to become Vice-Secretary General of WMO, and the Vice President of EMA to become Consultant and a member of the Technical, Rule and Pin Committee of WMO. We hope that these official functions will help to qualify the communication between EMA and WMO in future. Of course we are not really satisfied with WMO. It is still not a democratic organization, and it is still difficult to cooperate. On the other hand we need a strong contact to the motherland of Mahjong. We hope that the WMC in Europe next year will help to establish a reliable partnership between China and Europe.

Japan doesn't play a visible role in WMO, but of course is an important partner for EMA. To develop Riichi Rules as a world standard for competitions needs a strong and reliable partnership with Japanese Mahjong Organizations. We are proud that players from other continents participate in European tournaments.

Mahjong Time still is a reliable partner of EMA, establishing online tournaments and ranking systems as an additional chance of playing and competing. MahjongTime supports big Mahjong events in Europe.

**A remark as the resigning President:**

I regret that I can't participate in the General Assembly in Baden. Therefore here is my farewell as an official of EMA: I am very grateful that I had the chance to work for EMA during the last four years. Thank you very much to all national organizations, to all members of the board and especially to the Vice President Tina Christensen for great cooperation. Thanks a lot to all European Mahjong players – your enthusiasm, activities and support is the real proof of our common idea of mahjong culture in Europe. No doubt: EMA will have a successful development in future.

Edeweicht, June 23, 2009

Uwe Martens  
President of the European Mahjong Association EMA  
from 2005 to 2009