



Observer report for 4th European Riichi Mahjong Championship ERMCM 2016 – (RCR, MERS 5)

Observer: Isabel Bahiano Steenholm

Date: Friday 7th – 9th October 2016

Place: Great Hall of the Maltings in Farham, Surrey. UK

Website or other source(s) of information:

Information on the website ermc2016.com, where date, location, players as well qualifications, schedule, format and rules, accommodation, directions, and referee seminar were available.

Participants: 128 players from 21 countries.

Playing format: 3 days, 12 hanchans where the 10 first hanchans the 16 best placed players qualified for the finals.

Location: The Maltings was very well located just a few minutes' walk from the hotels. The Great Hall, where the sessions took place, was big enough to allow good space between the tables. And a downstairs cafeteria for lunch and breaks. Doors were often open for a quick fresh air. The toilets were cleaned many times during the sessions.



Equipment: Nice and unmarked games and non-automatic tables.

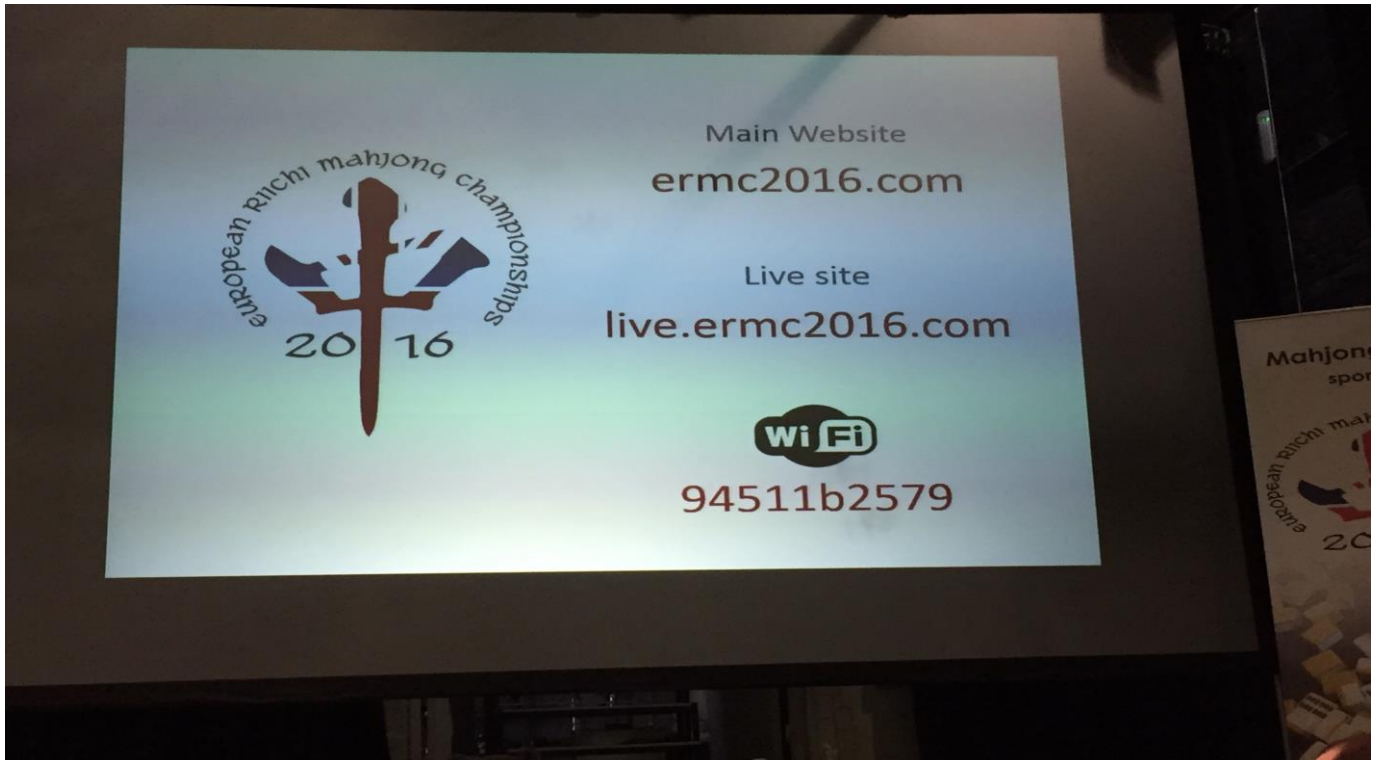
*The tables were a little low but not a big issue.

Refereeing:

Head referee was Sylvain Malbec from France, assisted by Lars Therkelsen from Denmark, David Bresnick from USA, Axel Eschenburg from Germany.

*The referees had extra sticks (red 10000-sticks) that could be borrowed in case of bankruptcy.

Information / communication during the tournament:



Visible clock projected from a computer onto a screen. A gong clearly informs players of the start and the end of sessions, and discrete calls were made to announce 15 minutes remaining. Ranking was displayed after each session on the screens and a live site was provided to check the latest ranking, among with details of each round, and free Wi-Fi as well.

Sessions: Excellent playing atmosphere, FFF (Fair-play, Friendly and Fun).

Prizes: Trophies for the top 4 players, and diplomas for the top 16 as well prizes for the winner of each group divided after the 10th hanchan.

Catering: A catering with for lunch with 3 options: chili con carne, pork and vegetarian dishes rice and couscous and cakes on the tables. Coffee and tea for the breaks. Plenty water bottles was supplied in the playing room.

Complaints:

A few complaints from different players.

- The food was not good, the same every day, not enough for all the players. After finished his table late that was no food left.
- No entertainment at night.
- Tables numbers would be better.
- The tournament format, accordingly to the player, was not good. "It destroys the motivation for the players to reach the top".
- A player made a comment about Fair play and extra time to go to the toilet. Because of medication, the player had to go several times to the toilet and after the referee allowed if the others players agreed, a player on that table said no.

Conclusion: A nice tournament. The biggest till date with Riichi rules. Even though some complaints were made, a nice atmosphere.