



Observer report for Chow Time international mah-jong tournament in Villejuif

Observer: Anton Kösters

Date: July 9-10th 2022

Place: Villejuif, France

Website or other source(s) of information: All information was available on the website of the organizing mahjong club Fleur d'Orchidee.

Participants: 80 players from 5 countries

FRA	ITA	SUI	NED	GER
				
62	9	4	3	2

Playing schedule: 2 days, 7 rounds (4+3) of 1hr 50min and the last hand finished to the end.

Location: Local cultural activity centre in Villejuif, with all necessary facilities available.

Equipment: A mixture of tournament style mahjong sets and table decks were available.

Refereeing: Caroline Arnaud was non-playing referee.

Complaints: One remark was made that the drawing of lots at the start of the tournament was not public.

Information / communication during the tournament: Visible clock projected from a computer on a screen. A gong clearly informs players of the start and the end of sessions. Microphone and sound system could be improved, announcements were difficult to hear. Ranking up to date between each session, projected on the wall and (novity) made available to all players on internet with a QR-code.

Sessions: Excellent playing atmosphere, good players and good competition.

Catering: Breakfast available at the start of the day. Coffee, tea, cold drinks, beer, wine and snacks throughout the day. A great variety of food for all tastes for lunch in the tournament venue. Cocktail on Saturday evening. Personalized mugs available for refills to avoid plastic waste.

Prizes: Trophies for individual ranking (1st, 2nd and 3rd) and one for the best team.

Conclusion: Excellent tournament. May come again (and again and again).

Other comments:

- This tournament was the first MERS tournament after COVID unfreeze on April 1st 2022. Just before the tournament, a rather strict COVID-19-special-ruling, that was published by the EMA on April 1st, was abrogated in a special vote by the EMA board with immediate effect. Nevertheless, the tournament organizers recommended the players at the start of to take their own protective measures, such as wearing face masks and use sanitizing hand gel. Masks and gel were made available by the organizers to the players. An estimated 25% of the players wore face masks during the rounds and breaks. The playing hall had large sliding doors that were open most of the day so ventilation was OK. On Monday after the tournament a mail was issued to all players that a positive test result on Monday of one player had been reported and recommended to be vigilant and take a test if necessary. My personal feeling is that COVID measures were in accordance with measures for other events were people meet at this moment. Nobody can guarantee a safe tournament, the risk assessment is a personal choice.
- I am in favour of the 'new' regulation to finish the current hand when the sound of the gong. However 1hr 50min playing time is a bit short and I would recommend to play 1hr 55min.