



Observer report for Valencia Open 2023 (Riichi, MERS 2.5)

Observer: Christopher Endicott

Date: April 29th – 30th 2023

Place: Valencia, Spain

Website or other source(s) of information: Tournament website can be found at: <http://riichi2023.mahjong-valencia.es/>

Participants: 20 players

Countries represented:

Spain: 10

Portugal: 3

France: 2

United Kingdom: 2

Belgium: 2

Netherlands: 1

Playing schedule: 2 days, 9 hanchan (5+4) of 75 minutes each

Location: Port Azafata hotel, adjacent to Valencia airport. The tournament took place in a spacious function room with good facilities and good ventilation.

Equipment: We played with standard riichi sets and junk mats on venue-provided tables.

Refereeing: Antonio Ayllón was our playing referee.

Complaints: None.

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. Ranking up to date between each session, displayed on the projection screen until beginning of next session. Printed sessions sheets provided to each player in advance with session timings and table numbers.

Sessions: Enjoyable atmosphere with a mix of levels of experience of play. As far as I could see, everyone had a good time playing riichi at the event. The first 5 hanchan were pre-allocated with typical random seating, whereas the final 4 hanchan were organised Swiss-style.

Catering: Lunch was served in the hotel restaurant each day, with a mixture of traditional Spanish dishes. Otherwise there were drinks, fruit and snacks available for the duration of the event. There

was an optional dinner on the Saturday evening, again in the hotel restaurant, which was well attended.

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

Conclusion: Very well organised tournament, the Valencia riichi club clearly have plenty of experience with this kind of event and I look forward to returning for another tournament soon. All the players that I spoke to during the event were positive about the location and generally about the use of Swiss table assignments in the latter half of the event, although I know this can be controversial. Given this was communicated in advance of the event, I do not see any issue with it being used.