



OBSERVER REPORT  
for  
**LYON OPEN 2024**  
(MCR, MERS 3.5)

**Observer:**  Thibaut ARNOLD

**Date:** November 30th – December 1st

**Place:** Maison des Italiens, Lyon, France

**Source(s) of information:** All information could be found on [https://www.mahjongclubdurhone.fr/mcr\\_detailtournoi.php?ale=&id=5906](https://www.mahjongclubdurhone.fr/mcr_detailtournoi.php?ale=&id=5906): registration, program, list of participants, etc. in English, French, and Italian.

**Participants:**

 Spain	 Russia	 Italy	 France	 Switzerland	 Netherlands	 Sweden
<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>

**Playing schedule:** 2 days, 7 sessions (4+3) of 155 minutes

**Location:** The venue was the same as usual, barely enough for 22 playing tables and one administrative/organisers' table. As there is no ventilation inside, the entrance door was opened a few times during the games, making some tables being victims of an air stream. Snacks were offered during breaks. Water was free, but beer, tea and other sodas were to be paid for. There was not much room to roam around, and no separate room from the playing one. After the games, people were chatting around their tables, as they didn't want to face the autumn cold of the outside, also potentially disturbing the players who hadn't yet finished their games.

**Equipment:** We played with stylised games and tables from the 2019 WMC. Scores were updated on the My Mahjong Company website and projected on a big screen between each session.

**Refereeing:** Loïc De Kergommeaux was non-playing referee the first day. The second day he had to fill in for a sick player and became playing referee. Erwan was supporting non-player referee the second day.

**Complaints:** There was a complaint about not having enough toilets for all 88 players. There often was a queue for it, and made it very difficult to go and be on time for the start of the session.

A complaint was made about the price of the tournament, being quite expensive for the food we were served.

At the start of the tournament, the clock wasn't very distinguishable because of the colour of the font used (red on black), making it difficult to clearly see the remaining time. It was later on corrected.

No substitute player was prepared. Loïc had to fill in himself for a sick player the whole of the second day, and Erwan wasn't around all the time to help with the refereeing.

A few complaints were made about the fact we had to make teams. This is always the case in France (and a couple of other countries), and it just makes more prizes to give out, and more money for everyone to pay for registration (and/or less money for quality food).

**Information / communication during the tournament:** The timer was visibly projected on a big screen for everyone to see. The clock was a bit hard to read on the first day because of the font colour, at first, but it was corrected afterwards. A gong was rung to start each session, and announcements were made to announce when 30 and 15 minutes were remaining.

**Sessions:** Very nice playing atmosphere, no issue about the games. People were being a bit loud at times with all the chatter, but never lasted long. One player was picked randomly before each session to come up and strike the gong to start the games. Each session had a small challenge to complete, rewarding a prize before the start of the next one.

**Catering:** Food was served next to the entrance, and we ate on the playing tables, wooden covers were placed on them, to allow people to sit down and eat easily.

**Prizes:** Trophies and baskets were given out to the top 3 players, trophies and a box of local delicacies to the best team, a box of chocolate for the individual top 4-10 and for the observer, and chocolate was given out as a prize for the best team name.

A pair of mahjong socks were given out to each gong striker, and a box of chocolates for each person completing a session's challenge.

### **Conclusion:**

Very nice tournament overall. People were friendly, and most (all?) of us had fun. Unfortunately wasn't as well organised as the previous editions.

What we should do, though, is stop with teams in MCR. RCR doesn't do this (and I hope it stays that way), but for some reason, MCR does. This is an individual competition, not a team one, it doesn't make sense to have teams in this kind of ruleset. This would also help stop registration fees from rising forevermore. I fear the day where we will have to pay 100 euros at the registration, because there will be prizes and trophies for every small accomplishment, with subpar food and a cramped venue.

The French MCR community is growing larger and larger every year. Even though this is a good thing, the size of their tournaments remain at around 80 players, making it difficult as a foreigner to get a spot when registrations open, as those fill up in less than 10 minutes, leaving a waiting list of 20+ people, with a majority of foreigners. There clearly is a demand, it would be a shame to not be able to offer accordingly! With that said, I'm definitely looking forward to participate in the next Lyon MCR tournament, in 2025, which will be held in a new venue, apparently cheaper and bigger!