



Observer report for Valentijnstoernooi 2025 (MCR, MERS)

Observer: Benjamin Kam

Date: February 16th, 2025

Place: Heemstede, The Netherlands

Website or other source(s) of information: All information on the website of Bamboe Acht : registration, program, list of participants,...

Participants: 84 players competitive + 64 players non-competitive

Countries represented:

- Competitive:
 - Belgium (11)
 - Germany (1)
 - The Netherlands (72)
- Non-competitive:
 - Germany (1)
 - The Netherlands (63)

Playing schedule: 1 day, 4 rounds of 1 hour 25 minutes per round

Location: Tournament was held in the school “College Hageveld” in Heemstede. There was plenty of parking space. All 37 tables could fit easily in the large auditorium, where the playing area was. There was plenty of space between tables. Just next to the auditorium, there was a large break room where players could enjoy drinks and snacks. Lunch was provided in the school’s cafeteria. The building is fairly old, and not well insulated. Even with the heating on, it was fairly cold in the playing area, as well as in the break areas as it was a cold winter day outside. Multiple people, including myself, played with a jacket.

Equipment: At the very start there was a tile missing in one of the sets but was quickly replaced with a spare set. We played with tables that had no border so extra care was needed when shuffling and building the walls. Tables were sturdy, and though nothing happened someone mentioned one of the legs on one table was not fully locked in place.

Refereeing: Eric Van Balkum was non-player referee. There were also two playing referees.

Complaints: None.

Information / communication during the tournament:

A large, well visible clock was projected from a computer on a screen. A gong clearly informed players of the start and the end of the rounds. At the end of the rounds, there was also an

announcement to clarify that players could finish their hand but not start a new one. The observer did not see an East sign. Ranking between each session was projected on the screen and published on the website.

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

Catering: Many, many, many snacks available throughout the day from the morning (several cakes, fruits, cookies, ... until the evening (deep-fried snacks) just before the results ceremony. During lunch, there were sandwiches with cheese or ham, a warm soup, and a warm pannini. For vegetarians, there were salads, warm vegetarian soup, and a warm pannini with just cheese. Coffee and tea and other drinks were freely available during the breaks. All these above were included in the registration fee. During the last break, before the rewards ceremony, there was also beer and soft drinks available for purchase.

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

- I) the 16th player as it was the 16th Valentijn tournament.
- II) The player with mahjong points closest to 0
- III) The lowest ranked player
- IV) The last player who won a game by self-drawing bamboo eight
- V) The player with the highest point winning hand

Conclusion: Very nice tournament, very nicely organized. As almost everybody spoke Dutch (all except two people were from The Netherlands and Belgium), it had a warm and family-like atmosphere.