



## O B S E R V E R R E P O R T

for

# Thorn Riichi Taikai 2025

(RCR, MERS 2.5)

**Observer:**  Thibaut ARNOLD




**Date:** May 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>

**Place:** Dwór Artusa, Toruń, Poland

**Source(s) of information:** All information could be found on <https://chiithorn.pl/thorn-taikai-2025/> in both English and Polish.

Drawing lots were done on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, livestreamed on YouTube ([https://youtu.be/L\\_2dtkDcUKs](https://youtu.be/L_2dtkDcUKs))

### Participants:

 Poland	 Germany	 Great Britain	 Belarus	 Switzerland	 EMA Guests
29	9	3	1	1	1

(According to rule 12b of the EMA Presidium Ruling file: "Players with a guest EMA number count as members of the organizing country when determining tournament weight")

**Playing schedule:** 2 days, 8 hanchan (5+3) of 90 minutes each.

**Location:** We played in the Artus Court (Dwór Artusa) in Toruń, just like last year, located in the Old Town. The tournament room was situated on the top floor. There were plenty of space for all tables to fit, and even have room to walk around between the tables without any issue. The Break room was a bit smaller but was enough to accommodate everyone with a seating spot. There was also plenty more space for additional playing tables to fit in, if necessary.

**Equipment:** We played with standard mats and games of different styles. The Mahjong Tracker app was used to track scores during the games and tournament. One riichi stick per player at each table. As it's only an Android app, the organisers made sure to have some supplementary phones to help tables out.

**Refereeing:** The initial plan was to have Marta Bacic as head and non-playing referee, and Ken Nico Schultheiss as a playing supporting referee. On Friday, the organisers received a notice that Marta fell ill and wouldn't be able to attend anymore. In the end, three playing referees were appointed: Ken Nico Schultheiss, Artur Libich, and Jakub Bacic, the latter being head referee.

**Complaints:** A few complaints were made during the tournament:

- There was no non-playing referee
- The lighting in the playing room was inconsistent between the tables, some were better lit than others.

**Information / communication during the tournament:** Visible timer projected from a computer on a screen. An announcement clearly informed players of the start and end of each hanchan. Ranking up to date at any time during the tournament via the app.

**Sessions:** Very good and friendly atmosphere during games, and quiet was kept at (almost) all times. Most hanchans did not start on time according to the original schedule. One player fell ill after the second hanchan and was excused and subbed for the rest of the competition. One player was warned at least once for their behaviour at the table because of their frustration.

**Catering:** Just like last year, we were served lunch directly at the venue, everyone had time to eat and find a place to sit, on both days.

**Prizes:** Prizes for the first 4 places, the EMA Observer, the referees, the person with the highest number of declared riichi, the best hanchan, and a prize for the last place (not substitute, including a free entry for next year's edition).

### **Conclusion:**

Very nice tournament, very happy that the drawing lot was made public and streamed upon a few days before the tournament. Toruń is a really nice destination for a tournament. The Old Town is very pretty, and the organising team does a very good job.

People had the possibility of having their portraits taken professionally (and for free), if they wanted to have it added to the EMA Gallery. The same person was snapping pictures all throughout the event.

On Sunday morning, a complete tour and history of the Court, added with fun facts, was prepared by Sonia, right before the first games of the day.

Attendance was a bit low, especially on the Polish side, since this was a national holiday weekend.

There is a clear improvement in quality over the one of last year, and that was very pleasant to notice.

Fun fact: The organisers wanted the person that had the achievement of "Riichi stick hater" to give the award to the "I MUST riichi" person. But funnily enough, this ended up being the same person for both awards!

Very satisfied with my experience and am already looking forward to the next one.