



Observer report for Budapest Riichi Open 2026 (Riichi, MERS 3.5)

Observer: Rene Khezam

Date: April 18th-19th 2026

Place: Budapest, Hungary

Website or other source(s) of information: All the necessary information (general details, sponsors, schedule, results and standings etc.) was on the website:

<https://mahjong.hu/tournaments/budapest-riichi-open-2026> .

Participants: 64 players

Represented countries:

GBR	POL	AUT	GER	HUN	ROU	FRA	ESP	SWE	POR	DEN	UKR	FIN	EUR	BEL
13	9	9	7	5	4	4	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

Playing schedule: 2 days, 9 rounds (5+4) of 75 minutes, after which the current hand is finished and, if applicable, an additional hand is played.

Location: [Codecool Budapest, Nagymezo u 44 \(1st Floor\)](#) . The playing area was just about enough for the number of players. It was well ventilated and bright enough. There was a side room with seating space for relaxing in-between rounds, a hallway of sorts with seating space (stools, sofas etc.) and some entertainment. Additionally, there was a kitchen where attendees could get water, tea, coffee, snacks. There were enough bathrooms for everybody.

Equipment: We played on brand new fold out tables, standard junk mats and sets and sat on comfortable office chairs.

Refereeing: Tamas Erdos was the non-playing head referee. Michael van der Sluijs and Luc Debrun were playing referees.

Complaints: Firstly, the scheduled breaks were a bit too short considering the number of players present. Many, if not all, rounds went overtime by quite a bit and a fair few of the players did not get to have more than 3-5 minutes for a break sometimes. Secondly, the players had the option to choose between two menus prior to the tournament (omnivore or vegetarian), one for each day. Unfortunately, the two menus got mixed up and therefore, participants who chose differently for each day got given the wrong menu. Thankfully, Tamas made arrangements to fix it for whoever was unhappy with the food.

Information / communication during the tournament: A visible timer was projected from a computer on the wall. A very loud gong clearly informed players of the start of sessions and the end was announced verbally. Ranking and scores were up to date between each session on the tournament website.

Sessions: Really good atmosphere with mostly good manners and no interruptions. There was a slight delay on one first day after lunch due to the restaurant having to deal with so many meals being served at once, but the second day was clearly announced to start a bit earlier and there were no issues in the end.

Catering: Lunch was served at Sophie Budapest (a restaurant about 190m away from the tournament venue, approximately 2 minutes of walking). A two course (soup + main) menu was served with the option to choose (a questionnaire via e-mail) between an omnivore or vegetarian menu set before the tournament. The food was fresh, tasty and the portions were quite large.

Prizes: Trophies for individual ranking (1st, 2nd and 3rd). Medals for every player in top 10 and a cheeky surprise for all 5 (!!!) players who achieved a yakuman.

Conclusion: Considering this is the first Riichi tournament in Hungary, it was definitely a success! I think all participants had a good time and gave it their all. A good number of players had fun during the social play organised on the Friday before the tournament weekend, many joined dinner together at restaurants nearby in the evenings and the overall atmosphere was incredibly friendly and welcoming. The effort put in by Tamas + the organising team was clearly visible, and I believe the tournament was overall a fantastic experience.