

Observer report for RODE LOTUS MCR 2026

Observer: Thomas BOUTONNET

Date: May 30th – 31th 2026

Place: Leuven, Belgium



Website or other source(s) of information: All information on the website of the Belgian Mahjong Association (<https://www.mahjongbelgium.be/rode-lotus-cup-2026-1mcr-eng/>): practical information, registration, program, special prizes, lunches, list of participants, results, etc.

Participants: 36 players (France 14, Belgium 10, Netherlands 6, Switzerland 1, Italy 1, Sweden 1, Poland 1, Singapore 1 + substitute 1)

Playing schedule: 2 days, 8 rounds (4+4) of 110 minutes

Location: The bridgeclub Pieterman in Leuven is a quiet place, with a playing room large enough to host up to 48 players and another and separate smaller room for breaks and drinks. The playing room is well equipped with air con, with remoted control so the room is neither too hot nor too frisky. The whole place is equipped with three separate toilets rooms : this is not a lot but it was actually enough for the “only” 36 players of the tournament. The bridgeclub Pieterman is well located in Leuven, very close to the historic and touristic city center, with lots of restaurants, shops and attractions nearby. No parking lots at the place of the tournament (and this information was clearly mentioned on the website so everyone was prepared) but lots of parking solutions nearby (unfortunately not free the Saturday, like everywhere in Leuven, but free the Sunday) and the place is at walking distance from the trainstation.

Equipment: All the tables were provided with similar sets of mahjong tiles, so there were no need for players to familiarize themselves with a new set at a new table. Tables had no borders but racks were provided for the players if needed (and this information was clearly mentioned on the website so everyone was prepared).

Refereeing: Marieke Verheyden was non-player referee.

Complaints: Few players were disturbed by the time allocated for a game (110 minutes), saying 115 minutes would have been a more relevant choice ; the clock could have been displayed in a bigger screen, for everyone to see it clearly

Information / communication during the tournament: One computer screen was used for showing the time left for a game ; the start and the end of sessions were also clearly indicated by voice calls. Ranking up to date between each session, printed and posted on walls.

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

Catering: Lunch in the same place and in different rooms (sandwiches, fruits), drinks and others. Dedicated lunches were provided for players with special diet.

Prizes: Trophies for individual ranking (1st, 2nd and 3rd) ; special prizes for the player with the most Chicken hands (« Chicken Run »), for the player who made the last self-draw win with a circle 1 (« Rode Lotus »), and for thes players with the biggest hand for each of the 8 sessions.

Conclusion: Very nice tournament in Leuven. The atmosphere was very friendly. The organiser, Marieke Verheyden, made a point to use English all the time for the announcements, so all the foreign players of the tournament could be well informed. The special prizes were very well enjoyed by the players.