



Observer report for Swedish Riichi Open 2026 (Riichi, MERS 3)

Observer: Marieke VERHEYDEN

Date: July 11th -12th 2026

Place: Stockholm (Bagarmossen), Sweden

Website or other source(s) of information: All information about date, schedule, venue, referees, registration, payment, access on the website of Uppsala Mahjong: [Swedish Open Riichi Mahjong Championship 2026](#), and all participants received an e-mail a few days before the tournament with additional information about the number of players, the seat drawing, the observer contact info, emergency contact info and the link to the pages with table distribution and ranking. Attached you could also consult the pairing for both 48 and 52 players.

Participants: 52 players (incl 1 substitute player)

Represented countries: Sweden (41), Finland (5), Ukraine (1), Latvia (1), France (1), Belgium (1), Portugal (1)

Playing schedule: 2 days, 9 rounds (5+4) of 90 minutes and short breaks of 20/30 min and lunch breaks of 90min.

Location: The Bagarmossens Kulturhus was easy to find and located near to the metro station. The play room was spacious for only 13 tables but it might have been tight to fit in 20 (max 80 players). There were plenty of toilets. During the breaks you could use the lobby or go outside. Before and after the tournament the players could visit the city of Stockholm but also enjoy the nature reserve and lake at walking distance.

Equipment: We played with identical new game sets and junk mats. Other sets were used during social play on Friday to be sure the tournament material stayed in perfect condition. Tables and chairs were decent. High chairs were provided to place the orasu sheet and scoring table visible to all.

Refereeing: Anna Zubenko was non-player head referee, assisted by non-player referee Jasper Germeys.

Complaints: There were some remarks about the loud door (also mentioned by the host at the welcome ceremony) and a cold draft in some parts of the room, but the event coordinator Anna H did everything she could to solve this. One remark was made about an error on the orasu sheet that was not penalized. Referees decided not to penalize as the difference was just small enough for only a very common hand not to be able to overtake.

Information / communication during the tournament:

A visible clock was projected from a computer on a screen on the podium. A gong clearly informed players of the start and the end of sessions. A notice was given approx. 10min before the end of each session. Ranking was updated fast between the sessions and could always be consulted on the web application, except between the final session and the prize ceremony. Before each session Anna repeated some important information.

Sessions: The atmosphere was friendly but also very competitive and serious. Some players didn't have much experience with playing in real life which may have had a small effect on the pace of the game at some tables, mostly in the first sessions.

Catering: The organisation provided coffee, tea, some soft drinks and tap water. There were small snacks like cookies and fruit during the breaks. Lunch was not included in the tournament fee. If you didn't bring your own lunch, there were supermarkets and snack bars/ restaurants (e.g. burgers, thai, pizza, tapas, bakery...) nearby. The lunch breaks were long enough so everyone had the chance to find something according to their wishes.

Prizes: Trophies for individual ranking (1st, 2nd and 3rd), and one more for the best Swedish player. A chocolate bar was offered to the players who made the highest session scores. The top 10 to 4 received a warm applause.

Conclusion: I enjoyed this tournament very much and I'm sure the other participants did too. Special thanks to event coordinator Anna H for taking good care of us and to helper Lili who did not only keep the venue clean but also gave great head and shoulder massages to players in need. Jasper and Anna did a great job hosting the event, with plenty of humour and respect for all. Both of them substituted temporarily when a) a player arrived late and b) a player was not feeling well. They were clearly well prepared, with an available seat distribution for 48 players and Anna H gave us clear instructions before the start for any possible emergency.