



Observer report for Varberg Mahjong MCR Open (MCR, MERS 2 (Days=2 ; Countries=0 ; Players=0))

Observer: Erwan de KERGOMMEAUX (Fr) - EMA 04290030

Date: 22nd and 23rd of August 2026; social play on Friday 21st

Place: Varberg, Halland, Sweden.

Registration Fee: Without lunch: 400SEK (including coffee/tea and snacks) With lunch: 600 SEK

Website or other source(s) of information: All information was available before the tournament on the (dedicated) website of Varberg Mahjong Society (varbergmahjong.se/tournament/vimo26/): registration, program, list of participants, location, name of the referee, and so on. The players received regular email updates in the preceding weeks and days

Participants: 40 players from 5 different countries as follow:



= 33



= 2



= 2



= 2



= 1

Playing schedule: 2 days, 7 rounds (4+3) of 115 mn and the last hand finished to the end.

Location: At the Varbergs Folkets Hus, Magasinsgatan 17 in Varberg. Short walk from the central station (train and bus). The venue had a gaming area and a break area and there was plenty of space between the tables in a quiet setting (The same venue had hosted 80 players the previous year).

Players were host comfortably, with snacking place.

Equipment: We played with standard mahjong sets, all the same and mostly almost new, on same quality of tables. All in good condition.

Refereeing: Gustaf Wilén (from Sweden) was non-player referee.

Scoring: We didn't use score sheets, but an app on our smartphones. It was user-friendly and highly appreciated, featuring secure data saving after each round and validation by every player at the table before the final submission and the end of the game.

Information / communication during the tournament:

Information was clear and well communicated before (on the website) and throughout the tournament, either by the referee or by the organizer. Global information was given to all participants during the tournament opening meeting, which included the welcome messages to the players, the tournament schedules, the assignment of the referees and the observer for the tournament, and other rules and instructions about the event.

Visible clock was projected; every player could see it well. A gong clearly informs players of the start and the end of sessions. Ranking was updated between each session very quickly thanks to

the use of the app. All players had personal access to the application and could view their own results and statistics.

Sessions: Excellent playing atmosphere, FFF (Fair-play, Friendly and Fun). Most of the players were also playing a social event on Friday evening with pizzas and drinks provided by the club

Catering: Free snacking with water, tea, coffee, cookies, fruits, vegetables ... was available between the rounds. We had lunch in the same room on Saturday and in the adjoining space on Sunday. Lunch was a buffet prepared locally by the club's volunteers on each day. The quantities were correct.

As some players considered the first day's lunch break too long, the organizer shortened it for the second day to everyone's satisfaction, allowing the tournament to conclude earlier in the afternoon on Sunday.

For those who chose the option without lunch, restaurants near the venue offered takeaway meals.

Prizes: Trophies for individual ranking (1st, 2nd and 3rd) ; and also prizes awarded to the top 3 teams.

Complaints / Comments:

1. About lunch and the food proposed:
 - a. Not much variety for people with different dietary habits (vegan or vegetarian)
 - b. One dish, the chicken, was still almost frozen
 - c. A few players were sick the Saturday evening
 - d. Lunch break too long on Saturday (but so, reduced the next day)
2. About use of the app
 - a. Some players unfamiliar with the app would have appreciated having a few slides explaining how it works at the start of the tournament.
 - b. I've heard many compliments on the quality and user-friendliness of the mobile application.

Conclusion: A wonderful tournament, featuring a majority of Swedish players this year. Excellent organization and respectful players, all in a calm and pleasant atmosphere. Congratulations to Johan for the app's quality, reliability, and usability.

From a personal standpoint, after playing in over 50 Mers tournaments, I think the EMA should make a ruling on the use of apps versus score sheets and officially approve one—or perhaps two—of them.

Lyon, France
3rd September, 2026.

