



Dear Mahjong Associations and friends of Mahjong all over Europe and the World,

As you know, we were in the middle of the preparation for the Open European Mahjong Championship of 2020, scheduled to be celebrated in Spain the 24th to 27th September, 2020. April 1st was supposed to be date to announce the country quotas and start all the process of gathering players from all over the globe.

Unfortunately, it is with much regret and sadness that we have decided to postpone the tournament to 2021 because of the global crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At first, we thought September was going to be a safe date for the pandemic to have calmed down enough to have the tournament, but now we have been forced to reconsider this and put the safety of Mahjong players as our priority so we can have a fair and enjoyable tournament later. Our reasoning for this is as the follows:

- First, this pandemic is much more painful than we thought for every country involved. "Returning to normal" is not something we will achieve in just a few months. The restrictions are global now and no one can book any flight or hotel, or make any plans for an undefined amount of time.
- Because this pandemic is not happening in every place at the same time, some countries will have restrictions lifted sooner than others, so we can't guarantee what countries and players will be finally able to participate, if any, which makes it an unfair tournament.
- Even with restrictions lifted, the virus will keep spreading for the rest of the year. For this reason, every sport related event has been cancelled for the rest of the year, including the Olympics, that was going to be celebrated just one month before our tournament. Mahjong, as you know, is a game were players are seated across half a meter of each other and touch tiles together for so many hours a day. It is too much of a risk for us to take.
- As an additional consideration, we had expected to close deals with Chinese companies to supply things like special tile sets. Now it is impossible to have any viable deal, with all of China's production being diverted to medical supplies, logistics being reduced to the minimum, and country borders with very high restrictions.

We truly think that the Open European Mahjong Championship is the most important event for European Players. We can't have it rushed, we can't make it unfair, and more importantly we can't put any player at risk. Postponing the tournament to 2021 is the best way we can organize the tournament in the way we meant it and we will do our best to do it right.

We don't have a definite postponement date within 2021 yet but we will make an announcement as soon as possible.

We hope you all stay safe and take care of yourself.

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