

Observer report for 'La Cup' – Villejuif

Observer: Anton Kösters

Date: June 26th 2010

Place: Villejuif, France

Website or other source(s) of information:

Tournament was announced 2 months in advance. Communication with the organizers OK.

Participants: 56 players, 53 French and 3 Dutch.

Playing schedule: 4 rounds of 1h 45min. Duration of the rounds was a novelty to me, but a good trade-off between a schedule of 4*2h and 4*1 ½ h. I prefer to have sufficient time in a round to finish 16 hands and 1h 45min pretty much allow you to get very far.

More in general, the disadvantage of 1½ hr rounds is that you always leave the table with the feeling that everything could have been different if you just had had the time to finish the remaining hands. In a top-tournament, a session involves 16 hands and normally 16 hands should be played. Duration of the session and level of players should be such that the majority of the tables are able to finish these 16 hands.

Location: 'Maison Pour Tous Jules Vallès'. House for everybody, so also for a mahjong tournament. Quiet location, nice hall big enough for 56 players. Suburbs of Paris, but thanks to the RATP and Google Maps easy to find

Equipment: OK. French standard. Large tiles and good quality table decks.

Refereeing: No dedicated referee. A few non-playing organizers settled eventual issues and Quentin was the (official) playing referee. Not much work for him, as far as I could see. French players are well instructed to accept and play according to the rules.

Complaints: None.

Information / communication during the tournament: OK.

Sessions:

Catering: Apart from some troubles with the coffee machine in the morning, players were well received with all kinds of pastries, well fed with sandwiches for lunch, well provided with soft and less soft drinks during the breaks and after the tournament with aperitif and snacks. And lots of water since it was 32 degrees in the shade.

Prices: Prices for the numbers 1,2 and 3 and the best team and 4 prizes for the best round. Since the french love their statistics (me too) also prizes for the best attack, defence, the luckiest player (most self-draw hands) the biggest hand.

Since this tournament was also the conclusion of the French club competition, there were a lot of prizes more to be distributed to many players and I must admit that I lost track who won what for what reason half-way. Anyway, few went home empty-handed.

Conclusion:

The big tournament that takes place in Paris in April 'rive droite' has a promising counterpart in June 'rive gauche' for a taste of local Paris club atmosphere. Another good excuse to visit Paris.