



Observer report for Tenpai Championship 2023 (Riichi, MERS 2)

Observer: Ben Thomas (GER)

Date: 16–17 December 2023

Place: Tampere, Finland

Website or other source(s) of information: Registration page on the Tenpai club website was available well in advance of the tournament, containing full information, including location and schedule, in Finnish and English. The page was regularly update with a list of registered players to date.

Participants: 32 players

Represented countries:

 FIN	 GBR	 GER
30	1	1

Playing schedule: 2 days, 8 rounds (4+4) of 75+15 minutes each.

Location: Lautapelikahvila Taverna, a board game café close to Tampere rail station. On the first day (Saturday) the café was shared with other customers, meaning there was more background noise. On the second day (Sunday), the tournament had exclusive use of the café.

Equipment: Sets and junk mats were brought along by various local players, all in good condition. Some of them included compasses. There was slight variation in tile size and design between sets.

Refereeing: Petteri Huuskonen (FIN) was non-playing referee.

Complaints: None

Information / communication during the tournament:

Players were issued with personal schedules at registration, and throughout the tournament the table assignments for all rounds could be seen on a notice on the wall. Tables were all pre-assigned, including the winds, which were allocated such that each player would play two hanchan from each starting position. There was no drawing of lots in presence of the players.

An organiser made a vocal announcement to indicate the start of each round, thereafter the timer could be seen from a computer screen projected onto the wall, with a clear ringing sound when the time was up. Between rounds, the leaderboard was projected onto the wall, as well as a reminder of the start time of the next round.

Sessions: One player was delayed travelling such that they would miss the first hanchan on Sunday. They were able to inform the organisers with enough notice such that the round could still start on time with a substitute player, with the usual penalty for a missed game being applied.

In one game the players did not fill in the scoresheet correctly, with the scores not adding to zero. A constant adjustment was applied to the score of each player concerned such that the total score did add to zero. No penalty was applied.

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

Catering: Free water was provided. Other refreshments could be purchased from the bar, including coffee refills for €1. The venue had lunch options including wraps, salads and toasted sandwiches, and players who wanted to have lunch on-site were invited to order ahead of time during the first break.

Prizes: Trophies for the top three players. There was also a trophy for the highest-placed Finnish player to keep for a year.

Conclusion: Well-organised tournament, in a great location with a very welcoming atmosphere. I am grateful to the organisers for putting on a great event, and to the players for their friendliness and good sportsmanship. I would happily encourage more foreign players to consider taking part in future!