



Observer report for French Riichi Championship 2025 (Riichi, MERS 3)

Observer: Henri Devillez

Date: December 13th - 14th 2025

Place: Toulouse, France

Website or other source(s) of information:

<https://soulong-mahjong.fr/champ25/en.html>

Participants: 64 players

FRA	SUI	POR	POL	NED	GER	BEL
						
58	1	1	1	1	1	1

Playing schedule and format: 2 days, 8 rounds (4+4) of 90 minutes.

The format was 8 round-robin rounds with randomized tables and no rematches between players. Winds were also assigned such that every player plays the 4 different wind seatings exactly two times, ensuring more fairness.

A long freeplay session was also proposed on Saturday evening after the 4th hanchan.

Location: Salle "La Butte", pl. Mady Mesplé, Toulouse, France. There was enough places for the 16 tables with enough spacing between the tables. There was an additional restingspace with tables, but this place was not really separated from the playing space and the participants had to be quiet to not disturb the play of the other players, and hardly fitting 64 players. Fortunately the weather was good and there was a big outside court with benches where player could hang out between hanchans. There are also only two toilets for all the players, which is not enough and induces large queues and some small delays. I would not recommend this room for 64 players, 48 players would probably be a better target for the constraint of this room.

Equipment: Standard riichi sets with big MCR tables. The quality of the sets was great, and the tables were good, albeit a bit instable. It is difficult to find a large quantity of big square tables, so I reckon that these tables are a good solution. If there is some way to improve their stability, it would be welcomed.

Refereeing: Two non-playing referees: Pierre Valat and Paul-Arthur Valet. It is great to have two non-playing referees for tournaments of this size and appropriate for the

number of players. I have not heard any complaint about the referees. Also, it is good that the referees had their expenses reimbursed.

Complaints and remarks: I received very few complaints from the players, most of them concerning the stability of the tables, the size of the rooms and the toilets, issues that are already addressed in the report. The wind assignment was mostly appreciated, but some players would rather have 9 hanchans and no prior assignment. I also had a lot of positive remarks about the organization, the refereeing, and the clarity of the announcements.

Information / communication during the tournament:

Several visible clock projected from a computer such that it was visible from at least one player at every table. Announcements were done both in French and in English, and the organizers and referees took special care of clearly communicating remarks and guidelines throughout the day.

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

Catering: Lunch, snacks, various soft drinks and coffee/tea. There were (good) warm meals for lunch (with desserts !) and a special care for dietary restrictions.

Prizes: Trophies for individual ranking (1st, 2nd and 3rd), and an extra trophy for the best ranked French player (who was coincidentally ranked 1st overall). The last ranked player also received a consolation prize (a box of candies), and every player could come back home with a sticker and an ecocup featuring the visual identity of the tournament. I also received a small bag of presents for my help as the observer.

Conclusion: Great tournament in Toulouse, with a very enjoyable laid-back atmosphere and an excellent organization. I was personally impressed by the quality of the organization given that it was the first EMA tournament organized by the club. I am looking forward for the future editions !