

# Event Observer Report

**Event:** Seattle Riichi Open 2024, 1/13/2024 - 1/14/2024, Seattle, WA

**Players:** 91 + 1 sub

**Observer:** Tamas Erdos — DC Riichi Mahjong

**Event source of information:** Website ([seattlemahjong.com](http://seattlemahjong.com)), Tournament Discord

## Event schedule:

6 rounds of hanchans (90+0) followed by cut to Top 8. Points reset, 2 hanchan semifinal with top 2 advancing from each table and carrying 50% of points. 1 hanchan final.

## Officials / Referees:

Chase Brechlin (Tournament organizer)

Zach Francks (Head ref)

Edwin Dizon

Jazz Fox-Canning

All referees were non-playing

## Communication:

Communication in person was loud and clear using microphones. Hanchan start, 10 minute warning, 5 minute warning and hanchan end were clearly announced. Time left was displayed in large font via projectors. During breaks, pairings + standings were displayed on projectors. Standings were also available on the website.

**Prizes:** Trophies for top 4. Saki award.

**Catering:** Water was available via fountains. The event was held in a food hall, where other food / drinks / coffee were available for purchase.

**Tournament atmosphere:** Fun, competitive, fair, organized

## Complaints / Issues Observed:

A player reported that during Day 1, Round 3 on Table 1 (the streaming table) they noticed a tile in the wall had a slightly different back color shade and was also slightly different in size. They then drew a red 5 tile and noticed it was also a tiny bit different from the other tiles in the same manner. At the end of the hand, all of differing tiles were checked and identified to be red 5 tiles. After this discovery the entire set was switched out and the hanchan continued. The player reporting this issue did not believe this to be an intentional mistake and there is no evidence that anyone noticed this before.

Several players complained that during Day 1 they only had time for a reduced (40 minute) lunch break instead of the 75 minutes scheduled because of delays, which was not ideal.

A couple of players complained about lack of communication / transparency regarding the algorithm for seeding players during the first 6 hanchans. When asked, the organizers provided more details: players from large clubs like Riichi Nomi, PML and Seattle were placed into separate groups and the players were randomized such that they would not play others from their own clubs. The organizers also noted that WRC uses a similar process to balance tables with Japanese Professionals vs the Rest of the world.

The rules + etiquette briefing before tournament start had minor inaccuracies (suukantsu pao and when to take / discard a tile after a chi / pon).

No prizes or medals were provided for places 5-8. A player reported being disappointed since the side event had prizes for Top 7.

A player complained about difficulty accessing water -- they wished the organizers advised players to bring water bottles.

Several players complained that even though the player assignments for the first 6 hanchans included wind assignments, they had to comply with WRC rules and re-randomize winds at the table.

### **Observer Personal Summary:**

The event space was very spacious and the playing setup was comfortable. Good quality game sets + junk mats were used. Compasses were also provided for each table. Standard all last sheets were used. Post-cut play was on auto tables. Excessive noise was not an issue during the tournament, including post-cut play.

Judges and organizers were available for questions and promptly responded when called. Lunch on Day 2 was held earlier.

Table 1 was streamed using a very impressive 10 camera rig / setup.

A side event with “chaos rules” mahjong was organized for players who didn’t make the cut. The event was fun and well received. Prizes were awarded to the top 7 players of the side event.

Free play was available in the tournament space after the main hanchans concluded.

I had a good time at the tournament and saw no evidence of unsportsmanlike behavior. The event was well organized and smoothly run.

My only personal complaint was the weather in Seattle in January — 15 degrees Fahrenheit does not a warm observer make.