

Nanyang Modern Mahjong Mindsport Tournament – Report by Anthony To

The Nanyang Modern Mahjong Mindsport Tournament 2018 was held from the 1st of March 2018 to the 5rd of March 2018 on the Mariner of the Seas, a cruise ship operated by Royal Caribbean.



For those people who have never been on a cruise ship, you could imagine it to be a floating city. There are 15 levels inside and around 3000 guests on board. We departed from the Marina Bay Cruise Centre in Singapore which is not too far from the famous Marina Bay Sands hotel. From Singapore we stopped at Port Klang (Kuala Lumpur) and Langkawi before sailing back to Singapore.



There were six representatives from APM, namely, Karen Ong, Zhou Shihao, Chun Yu, Henry Choi, Alex Ivanovsky and myself, Anthony To.

The tournament itself was held on the 2nd and 4th days of the cruise. We played 4 rounds of 16 hands each on both days which started around 8am and we finished at 7pm (with breaks in between). Despite playing such long hours during the tournament, there were some players who were especially keen to continue playing after dinner. Often players were found in the tournament room playing friendly games until midnight!



One unique thing about this tournament is that it employed the Danish system of seating. It meant that you were always seated with players with a similar table score to yourself. This meant that the best players were always seated towards the higher tables. Unfortunately I never got to sit on the highest tables (a sad reflection of my tournament performance).

In the tournament itself, I scored 6 table points on day 1 and 9 points on day 2 for a total of 15 finishing 42/104. Table points are distributed 4-1-2-0 for 1st to 4th respectively, which meant getting 1st place in a round was of paramount importance. I failed to claim a 1st on the first day which really hurt my chances to do better in the tournament. I needed a little bit of luck in some of the rounds as scores were often close. For example in the 2nd round I was leading with 2 hands to go but then 2 players won a hand each in those hands to send me to 3rd. In the last round the Japanese lady on my table self drew 小三元 (Lesser Three Dragons) which was a massive 73 point hand to win the round easily.



From the right: Zhou Shihao, Chun Yu, Karen Ong, Anthony To and Henry Choi



Henry Choi (pictured above) was on table 3 in the last round with a chance to win one of the prizes on offer. Trophies were awarded for the top 10 players, with the top players being awarded some prize money, cruise vouchers and even a free automatic mahjong table. He was leading going into the last 4 hands but Anton (on the left) won the last 4 hands to overtake Henry and win the round. If Henry had won the round he would have finished in 5th but he unfortunately dropped out into 11st and out of the prizes.

The tournament ranking results were:

Henry Choi	11 th
Anthony to	42 nd
Alex Ivanovsky	71 st
Chun Yu	80 th
Karen	86 th
Zhou Shihao	91 st



The winner of the tournament was Dennis from Russia who won with 25 table points (and a massive 1554 hand points). At dinner I had the pleasure of sitting with him and Anton (who finished 4th) and other fellow mahjong players sharing stories about mahjong across the world. Our dinner table was probably the most multicultural table in the whole cruise ship: We had players from Australia, China,

Russia, Holland, France and even players from the Réunion Island. As you can see Mahjong brings people together from across the world!

I would like to thank Pauline and Asia Pacific Mahjong for the opportunity to attend the tournament and promoting guobiao mahjong in Australia as well as Edwin Phua and the team from Singapore Sparrows Mahjong Network for organising the tournament.

Anthony To