

## Report by Graham Quan on the Trip to Batam - 4 to 6 June 2016

Reflections on the Pomain Cup 2016 Indonesia International Mahjong Invitational Tournament at Batam 3-6 June 2016 written by QLD player Graham Quan.



Both my wife (May-Lee Quan) and I were fortunate enough to join the Australian team to play in the International Guobiao competition at Batam Island on 4 & 5 June 2016. Along with Teresa Monsall we made up the QLD representation. For us QLD players, this was an opportunity for high level training in Guobiao. We have had limited experience in this type of game and had, beforehand, played far less than the number of games we actually played in the competition. We were quite exhausted after 128 games over two days but in view of our limited hands-on experience with Guabiao, we were quietly pleased with our end result although at the lower end of the leaderboard.

The competition was very professional with tables that automatically shuffled and dealt the tiles, the rules stringently imposed, umpires constantly on the prowl, and competition fierce and intense right into the last game. I'm sure we all encountered memorable moments that will stay with us for a long time. (I was calling an all-green hand – not realising it - and mahjonged on 7 sticks instead of waiting for 8 sticks and just happened to be playing with Wenlong Li, the Guobiao trainer, and I know he is not going to let me ever forget!) We met up many new faces from other countries all with different styles at the table; many friendly and competitive, some perhaps a little overzealous and vocal, but at the end of the day, all there for the one purpose of doing the best that they could.

The competitors were from ASEAN countries with 64 from China, 5 from Taiwan, 15 from Singapore, 5 from Indonesia and 11 from Australia.

Once the competition part was concluded - with Boey Mun Seng from Singapore being the winner - it was time to relax with an end-of-tournament dinner and award presentations, dancing and singing, and phototaking. New friendships were made, including with the international players.



The competition was very well organised by the Indonesian hosts with representatives stationed at Changi airport, Singapore ferry terminal and Batam ferry terminal to co-ordinate transport to and from the island, meals and accommodation all taken care of and a relaxing end-of-tournament tour of Batam. The logistics in conducting this tournament was quite impressive and the multitude of support staff and the very friendly and cheerful way they were there for everyone made this a nice experience.

To be able to take part in these type of events is something not to miss and I certainly will be imparting my encouragement to my fellow players in QLD and hopefully we can find a way to bring Guobiao as a more regular fixture into APM.

We were delighted to have joined the players and support team from Sydney to make up the Australian contingent, and we had a great team leader in Pauline. For that we are very thankful particularly for the add-on activities of a Singapore tour and superb dinner Pauline organised for those that could attend. A great group to enjoy this experience with and now we have forged friendships with some of the elite NSW players in Aleksandar Ivanovski, Donald and Mary Wong, Michael Zhang (TD), Karen Ong, Ai Ngiok Wong, Henry Choi, and Andy Fu who of course is already well known to us all. And we also had Dat and Mary as support staff.



For our local venue in Brisbane, the Acacia Ridge Hotel, we are very grateful for their sponsorship enabling us to attend this event and for being such a great supporter of Mahjong at their popular venue.