

2010 Munich Open Tournament Review

Pre-history:

Let me take you back to the 2009 tournament in Stirling before we start with the actual review: Damien was about to congratulate me on my position when out of the sudden someone jokingly shouted: 'Speech!' (I'm looking in your direction Bertie! :-P) Surprised as I was I suggested hosting a tournament in Munich in the next year. I thought about using my school's PC-labs, not knowing how uncooperative the system administrator would be. It all looked like the tournament wouldn't happen. Then, in August 2010, I had to wait a bit at Munich central station and decided to ask at a small internet café with only 10 computers, if they knew another one with enough PCs to host a tournament. To my surprise they knew.

During the next two weeks Damien, Roman, Arsen and a couple of other sweepers confirmed their participation. Several others made plans about coming.

In Munich

Edu arrived Thursday evening. After he had checked in at the youth hostel we went to a Bavarian restaurant and had Allgäuer Kässpätzle and a beer. While we were there Yannis called me, asking how to prepare himself for the tournament. (He had never played minesweeper before.) Since Yannis' place was only 5 minutes away from the restaurant we decided to visit him. After another 2 or 3 beer Edu and I challenged Yannis and his girlfriend to show that they are ready to take part in a minesweeper tournament. Soon they were bitten by the minesweeper bug – trying to win an intermediate board. After a while they eventually won 2 boards.

Bertie's plane landed on Friday morning but Edu and I underestimated how long it would take him to get to the youth hostel. After waiting for about an hour at Hackerbruecke station I decided to do a bit of sightseeing with Edu and we went to Theresiewiese, where the Oktoberfest is held every year. Although Oktoberfest had ended the weekend before we could still have a look inside the huge beer tents and we also went to see the Bavaria statue. By the time we were back at the youth hostel Bertie was already there waiting for us. It would be another 5 hours until the next sweeper arrives, so we decided to take a train to the city centre and what followed then turned out to be something that would have been a good practice for the Munich marathon that took place two days later: Bertie, Edu and I walked from Karlsplatz Stachus to Marienplatz, grabbed some hotdogs on the way (before we bought our food nobody seemed to notice the guy selling them and after we were done eating there were suddenly 10 people who had queued up behind us), walked to Odeonsplatz and through the Hofgarten. At that point we had already walked 6 to 7 km. But Edu and Bertie said they would also like to see the Chinese Tower in the English garden (a huge park, seriously, huge). We started walking and kept looking at our maps but however we soon got lost. Or in other words: we thought we were on the right way when Bertie noticed that we were talking south instead of north. It took us another 30 minutes to finally find the Chinese Tower. After some more food there we went back to the youth hostel to meet Joni. By then we had walked approximately 20 km. We ate dinner at a Bavarian Restaurant near where I grew up. Back at the youth hostel we met Tommy and later Damien and Rupert. We hung out at the youth hostel's bar and had some beers. I think I got home way past 2 in the morning. What a great way to prepare yourself for the upcoming tournament. ;-)

The next morning, right when I had finished breakfast, Christoph called me, asking if I could bring a notebook to the internet café for the case that we would be too many participants. I rushed to the internet café to find Eva and Christoph already busily working, trying to set up the computers. During the next couple of hours sweeper after sweeper arrived at the internet café and soon there were about 20 people in the building. As you can read in Damien's review we had a few problems with the different operating systems of the computers, which forced us to start over two hours later than originally planned. By the time we finally started our now shortened competition I had spent 30 minutes playing Minesweeper and twice as much taking about Rubik's Cubes and similar puzzles with the rest. How do you keep Manu or me from sweeping? You place a scrambled 7x7x7 cube on our desk, leaving us unable to concentrate until the cube is solved.

My plan for the tournament was to play expert for the first two hours and then hope for some easy intermediate boards, similar to what I had practiced at home several times before. Going by the others' AR times and previous tournament results Damien, Roman and Tommy were all fast enough to win. But Manu was clearly the main competitor for me. I sat next to Daniel; Tommy, Manu, Bertie and Stephan sat right at the next table. During the first hour Manu and I kept asking and telling each other what times we got so far and after a the first few sub50s I was quite confident that I was doing well. (But Manu was already a few seconds ahead.) Tommy was a bit behind but still in reach. At about halftime Manu stood up to check what times the others had gotten so far: Damien, Roman, Arsen, Edu and Rupert were sitting at the same table. Manu came back with good news – good news for us: no sub50s over there. After two hours Manu and I had both 5 sub50s and a few decent intermediate games. Manu was probably 10 seconds ahead but his hand seemed to be giving in as he said can't play much longer. A few minutes before the end of the 2 and a half hours I had a 33s est. 40s blast with no guesses left but all in all I was happy with my performance. After the tournament Christoph and I walked around writing everybody's scores and total sum on paper and saving the video replays. However, we were already so much behind the schedule that we could only take a group picture and declare on which position Eva, Christoph and Daniel had finished. Dennis had had to leave even earlier. We took the subway to get to the bowling centre and it soon became obvious who had spent his time practicing how to play Minesweeper or rather focussed on bowling. :-D – just kidding Damien. Before the next tournament I make sure that I do better at bowling. After a bit more than a round we already had to leave the bowling lane to the next group but while we were

still at the bowling centre I grabbed a microphone and we held the winners ceremony in front of 150 people. We then headed back to the youth hostel's bar to party some more.

Most of us could sleep in on Sunday morning. Some others were crazy enough to meet at 10 for the next competition: the 2010 Nonosweeper World Championship. Eva, Bertie, Tommy, Christoph, Stephan and I competed another 2 hours in 8 tournament rounds of which Stephan won 7. Needless to say that he won by a big margin of points, although my total time was only 2 seconds worse than his. After the Nono Tournament I headed back home to grab two t-shirts for Eva and Christoph, who had forgotten to take theirs on Saturday. I met the others at Marienplatz again and we went to see the Olympiastadium. After relaxing in the sun there, Tommy and I left. Tommy had to catch his train and I would meet Eva and Christoph about 30 minutes later at Central station to give them their t-shirts. A bit later the rest of the group met to eat dinner at Kurgarten, where Joni, Edu, Bertie and I had already been on Friday evening. Too soon the Russians, Damien and Rupert had to leave to catch their flights.

On Monday Nicole, Manu, Edu, Bertie and I met at the Deutsches Mueseum and then went to check the out the Cubikon shop. A shop that only sells twisty puzzles like the Rubik's Cube and similar things. It wasn't easy, but somehow we managed to leave after over an hour of trying to find out how some of those puzzles work and how to solve them. After that we went back to the city centre, Edu to grab his luggage at the youth hostel, and we to find a place to have dinner.

Nicole, Manu Bertie and I only met in the late afternoon on Tuesday and only walked a bit around Marienplatz and Stachus. After dinner Bertie had to leave and I also said goodbye to Manu and Nicole, as their only plan for Wednesday was to visit the zoo. Back home one of the first games I got was a 40 on Expert. I couldn't resist sending a text message to Manu, no matter how geeky but at the same time pro-ish that felt.

I hope everybody who came to Munich for the tournament had a good time - I had a great meeting and talking with all of you – and I hope you enjoyed your trip. Maybe we can have a tournament in Munich again if you want. Or maybe one of you will host next year's world championship. One thing is for sure: this wasn't the last Minesweeper Tournament for any of us.

Stay Sweepin' ;-)

EWQMinesweeper a.k.a Fritz 13 December 2010