

World Tantrix Open 2013 – Champions report

Pre-tournament

This pre-tournament section actually take things back as far as WTO 2011 in Almere, where we (I, Monica, Lewis and Lennart) got the question if we wanted to host the next WTO. As you know by now, we agreed to it – which was the beginning of a long journey of organizing.

I went to Trosa on the Tuesday in the week of the tournament, and on Wednesday the first players arrived: Attlia, Peter and Laszlo from Hungary. Attlia, Peter and myself decided to take a trip with the canoe in the harbour. Everything went perfectly fine at the beginning - although I feared we would fall in when getting onto a small island. However, when going back, upstreams, it finally happened – twice!

Of course we had to take a picture when we had gotten up. Blick and me was joking about “this might as well be the top 3”, and for that reason both of us wanted to stand in the middle! We had no idea about how right we would be - at least we got 2 out of 3 correct! (Sorry Peter)



When finally having dried we spent the rest of the evening eating pizza in mum's and Lewis' garden!

Friday

More people arrived, and I had a lunch with blick sharing our top Tantrix secrets and the latest Tantrix gossip. In the afternoon we went for the classical swedish game “Brännboll” and a guided tour with the train in the rain.

By the evening most of the players have found their way to Trosa, and by the time of the BBQ I think most of the players where there.

Did you also have the feeling people were asking you weird questions all evening long? “Do you have two more hands than an octopus?”, “What's your favourite candy?”, “What was your favourite game as a child?”.... The reason was the quiz made by Lennart. Pre-tournament all players were asked to mail some secret information about themselves, which Lennart put together to a quiz. Well, we now know who used to earn his living on roulette , who doesn't buy anything expensive without spending days comparing the product at different stores and who is listening to ABBA's “The winner takes it all” after winning a tournament (Please note: that's not me! :-))



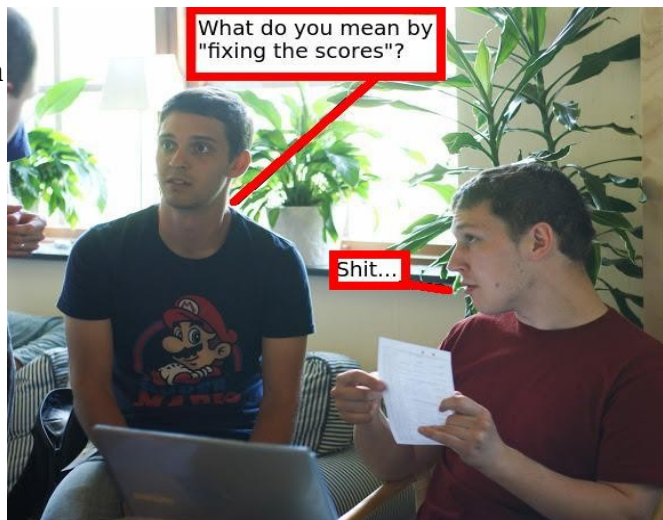
Saturday

The tournament starts, and before realising it actually had started it was time for lunch. Around lunch I had a sequence of the toughest games of the day, playing Chris, Ben, Rolf and blick. Just after the lunch the time came when I had to play blick. The beginning of the game was very hard, but as soon as I made a silly mistake nothing could stop him from a comfortable win. However, I managed to recover a bit in the following games, and was in third place after day 1 (which also was, I think, the only time during the weekend that I wasn't leading...)

After all the games we walked together to the harbour for a trip with the boat, whereupon we had a lovely dinner followed by a performance of the “first Tantrix orchestra”.

Sunday

Me and blick realised that we should copy the strategy from the Brännboll on Friday evening: in the Brännboll the scores were kept track on by a person in the winning team... Hmm... could we do something similar to gain advantage in the WTO? Well, we tried to fix the scores in a way we wanted, but our planes were ruined by a russian spy who caught us in action on camera....



By Sunday lunch, which we spent on the highest mountain in Trosa (don't get too excited...), I was back at the top of the table, with blick not far behind. My second game after lunch was against noone else than blick – a game that would affect the rest of the tournament very very much. By then, I was roughly one win before blick, so if he had beaten me we would be pretty much even. The opening was (for me) the toughest one in the whole tournament – both of us were playing very carefully in the beginning, leaving not many options at all for the opponent. We both had two lines in our color when a favourable draw around move 12 gave me the opportunity to create a ygy which blocked one end of blick's first line and putting one end of the other line along the controlled spaced being created. In the middle of the game I could then spend most focus on adding to my own line, which lead to a 17-14 victory in the end - phew! Now I just needed to focus on not losing by very much against Lorene and Mike, which wasn't the easiest task.

The game against Lorene was really tough in the beginning, but when the tiles finally came I was the one to pick them and thus I managed to win by 1. For the last game against Mike I knew that 5 TP's would be enough for making it impossible for blick to catch up. The game against mike was one of those games where the controlled sides are the main part of the game. From one of those controlled sides I got the opportunity to create a 20-loop. With 7-8 tiles in the bag it was my move: I was one corner away from a 20-tiles loop and Mike was 1 corner away from a loooooong line. Those corners to be connected were also situated right next to each other... After 8 minutes of hard thinking I found the solution, which used most of the tiles in the bag, to connect my loop and block Mike's connection. That gave me the victory in that game as well as in the whole tournament!

I also decided that it was time to let Trouble go to someone else – he's been with me since Budapest 2010. I defeated one challenge on Saturday evening (against Rolf), but after the tournament I gave him as a gift to the player finishing highest who wanted to have him, which was Ben. What Ben didn't know is that after I've moved to Amsterdam in August I'm planning to make a visit and win him back! :-)

In conclusion

Thank you everyone for coming and making this the great event it was. I am really looking forward to the next World Open in Germany 2014 – see you there!



NiklasA
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