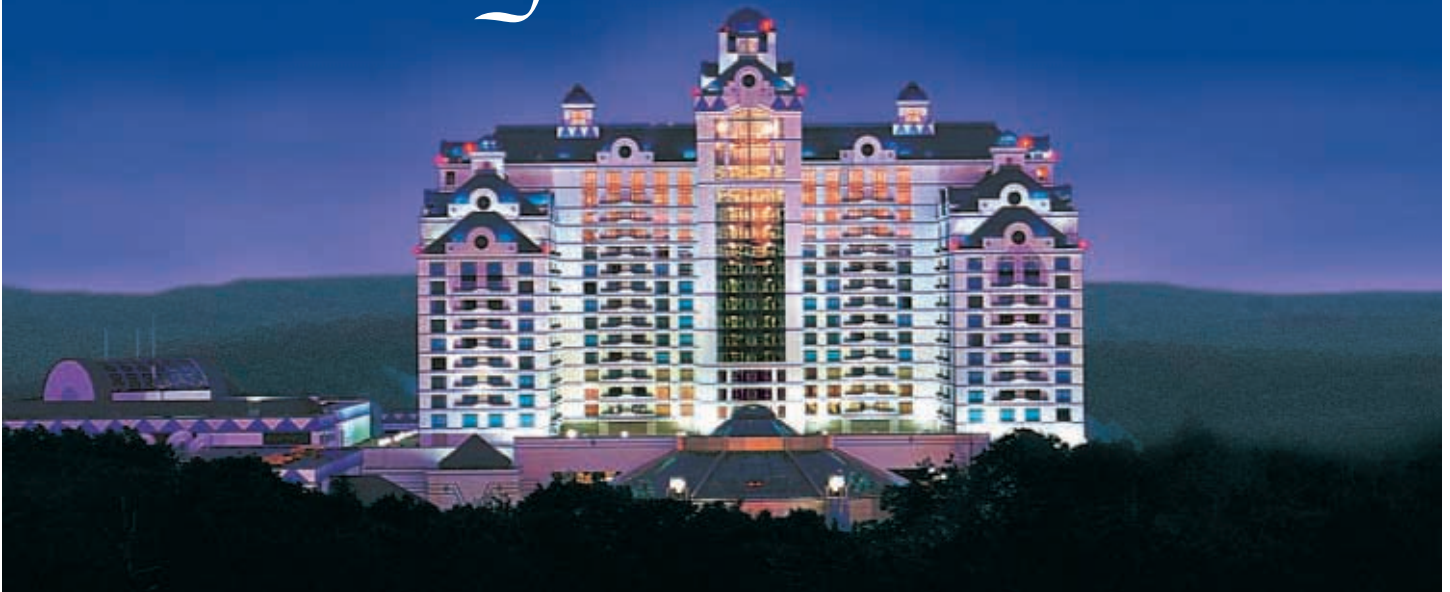


Foxwoods



by Allan Anderson

In 1986 the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation opened the original high-stakes bingo hall. Today Foxwoods comprises six casinos that collectively offer more than 7,400 slot machines and an incredible 388 tables for 17 different types of table games, including 76 for poker. There's a luxurious, high-tech Race Book, as well as the world's largest Bingo Hall. Foxwoods is the largest resort casino in the world, with 340,000 square feet of gaming space in a complex that covers 4.7 million square feet. More than 40,000 guests visit Foxwoods each day.

Historical Perspective

February 1992: The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation opened the original Foxwoods High Stakes Bingo & Casino February 15. It offered a 46,000 square-foot gaming space with 170 table games including roulette, poker, and blackjack. At the time, Foxwoods was not licensed to have slot machines. The facility, including an expansion of the bingo hall, cost \$60 million and

totaled 250,000 square feet. The casino contained a retail boutique, museum, three restaurants and a piano bar. Foxwoods was built next to the original 2,100-seat bingo hall, which opened in 1986 and is now called the Festival Casino. The enterprise employed about 2,300 people, nearly all from Connecticut and Rhode Island.

January 1993: The Mashantucket Pequot Tribe and the State of Connecticut negotiated an agreement allowing the tribe to operate slot machines at Foxwoods. The tribe agreed to pay the state 25% of its slot machine revenue (called net win) each year. The agreement provided that the tribe's obligation to make such payments would cease if the state legalized the operation of slot machines anywhere else within Connecticut, or if any other entity in the state operated slot machines. Under the agreement, Foxwoods provides the state with 25% of the slot revenues, or a minimum of \$100 million annually.

November 1993: A \$240 million expansion increased Foxwoods' size to 1.3 million square feet. Now known as Foxwoods Resort Casino, the total facility included the Great Cedar Hotel, six large gaming areas with mixed slots, keno, racebook, table games, a theater complex, retail shops, a beauty salon and a health spa. Also completed were an ice-cream parlor, deli and pizza stand. Four full-service restaurants were now operating, with a fifth restaurant located in the Two Trees Inn, which opened in July 1993. The two hotels offered a total of 594 rooms. The expansion increased the number of table games to 234 and slot machines to approximately 2,650. Frank Sinatra celebrated the formal opening of the new facility with five performances in the new 1,400-seat showroom/theater, which also converts to a large screen film/video theater.





1st Issue



2nd Issue



3rd Issue

April 1994: After federal recognition of the nearby Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe amended its slot revenue agreement with the state. The new agreement provided that both tribes' obligation to make slot payments would now terminate upon the legalization or operation elsewhere in the state of any kind of commercial casino gaming. Each tribe agreed to make payments of 25% of their slot machine win, or 30% in any year that the annual payment for such tribe falls below a minimum threshold of \$80 million

June 1994: A \$65 million expansion is completed, adding another 300,000 sq. ft. Bingo is moved to a new hall which seats 3,200 and can be converted into an entertainment center capable of holding more than 4,000 for headliner performances and boxing events. The old bingo hall is converted into a slot



room, increasing the casino's slot total to more than 3,800 machines. At this time there are nearly 230 table

games and a variety of entertainment options for guests. The casino gaming area now measures 190,000 sq. ft.

October 1995: The success of Foxwoods' operations and management capability was recognized when a selection committee appointed by the governor to review proposals for the development of a casino facility in Bridgeport, Connecticut, selected the Tribe's proposal over a proposal submitted by an affiliate of Mirage Resorts, Inc. Authorizing legislation for this development was defeated by vote of the Connecticut General Assembly on November 17, 1995.

March 1996: Foxwoods opened the first full-service, non-smoking casino on the East Coast. This was the second phase of a two-level 140,000-square foot casino expansion project. The first phase, which opened on December 22, 1995, contains a state-of-the-art Race Book, an expanded poker room and a 30-table high-limit gaming area. Foxwoods now offered its patrons 4,244 slots and 308 table games, as well as many other entertainment options.

July 1997: Foxwoods opened the first three levels of the Grand Pequot Tower, its signature hotel property.

This first phase added 50,000 square feet of casino space including more than 900 slots and 60 table games and an additional 2,500 parking spaces. Two Gourmet restaurants, Fox Harbour and Al Dente, along with the Intermezzo Lounge opened in August 1997.



November 1997: A high-limit gaming area and Club Newport-International opened along with some remaining floors of the Grand Pequot Tower Hotel. The Veranda Café, a 24-



hour coffee shop/café, opened in December 1997 along with the 25,000 square foot Grand Pequot Ballroom.

April 1998: To complement the Grand Pequot Ballroom, additional conference facilities opened. More than 55,000 square feet of meeting space with 27 conference and break-out rooms combined with the Grand Ballroom to create a premier location for trade shows, conferences and major events in southern New England.

October 1998: Foxwoods opened the 20,000 square foot state-of-the-art Grand Salon and Spa featuring an indoor pool and fully equipped fitness





center. Services include hair and nail care, massage therapy and tanning.

December 1998: The first of 23 luxurious Villas with premium amenities located on the 22nd and 23rd floors of the Grand Pequot Hotel are introduced. The villas average 1,400 square feet, the largest of which is the 5,000 square foot Mashantucket Villa. Each villa has elegant décor, the finest amenities and around-the-clock butler service available.

December 1999: The Millennium is celebrated in grand style as Foxwoods hosts an invitation-only party for 3,500 guests and is featured on the ABC Television Network global broadcast of major events around the world.

January 2000: Total Foxwoods contributions to the State of Connecticut from slot revenue reaches more than \$ 1 billion, reflecting 25% of all Foxwoods Resort Casino slot revenues generated since 1993. There are more than 5800 slot machines operating in five separate casinos. The employee population stands at approximately 11,500. More than 40,000 guests visit Foxwoods daily.

December 2000: Foxwoods proudly opens the markedly upscale Stargazer casino and Paragon restaurant atop the landmark Grand Pequot Tower, putting the finishing touch on a construction project that began in 1995.

The elegantly appointed casino and restaurant feature rare and exotic wood veneers from Australia, marble and granite floors with decorative rosettes, and ceiling coffers with hand painted murals, Turkish crystals and fiber optic lighting accents. Foxwoods opens the new upscale jewelry retail outlet, Pave'.

January 2002: Legendary Blues artist B.B. King cuts the ribbon to open the B.B. King Dance & Nite Clubs, the latest addition to the Foxwoods night scene.

August 2004: The Hard Rock Cafe swings open its doors as part of a \$99 million Rainmaker Casino expansion. In addition to 20,000 sq. ft. of gaming space that adds 750 new slots and additional table games, the expansion includes a seven-story, 2,100 space parking garage and the 3,700 sq. ft. Wampum Rewards Mega Store.



Hard Rock Cafe at Foxwoods

December 2004: In preparation for a spring 2005 opening, the clubhouse at Lake of Isles golf resort opened to the public. Located opposite Foxwoods, Lake of Isles features two championship courses designed by Rees Jones around a spectacular 90-acre lake in a pristine natural setting. One course is private, for members and guests only, and one is open to the public. A Golf Academy is also slated for the course.

February 2005: The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation announces new \$700 Million Development Project that will further distinguish Foxwoods as a world-class destination. The project will commence Summer 2005 with an anticipated completion date of 2008. The project will add a new 825 room hotel tower, a 5,000 seat multi-purpose arena, 145,000 square feet of additional meetings and convention space, bringing the total to 200,000 square feet when complete, 8 new restaurants and retail locations, new nightclubs, a new spa and an additional parking garage.

The author would like to thank the following for their help in putting this article together. Sandra Rios, Public Relations Manager, Foxwoods

Resort, Bob Hiestand, Jim Gagnon, Terry Shaffer, Jim Goetz, and Phyllis Spagnola.