



## FANTINI'S GAMING REPORT®

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### Special Reporting Service

May 5, 2020

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### *Fantini's COVID-19 Gaming Daily*

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**NOTE:** *As states are beginning to lessen restrictions and casinos are planning re-openings, we welcome all news and developments for these and anything COVID-19 related. Send your news releases to [Editor@FantiniResearch.com](mailto:Editor@FantiniResearch.com). In addition, you may reach Editor Blake Weishaar at [BWeishaar@FantiniResearch.com](mailto:BWeishaar@FantiniResearch.com) or by phone at +1 302 730 3793.*

#### RE-OPENINGS BEGIN

##### DEADWOOD OPENS DOORS THURSDAY

Casinos in Deadwood, South Dakota, can reopen at 8 a.m. Thursday representing the first commercial gaming market to reopen.

Casinos will be able to operate both slots and table games with physical distancing and sanitation measures in place.

The city's reopening resolution:  
[https://www.cityofdeadwood.com/vertical/sites/%7BECDE07BE-19F7-4F11-A017-CFDAD3EEEE69%7D/uploads/Resolution\\_2020-17\\_Emergency\\_to\\_Address\\_the\\_Re-Opening\\_of\\_Deadwood\\_Businesses.pdf](https://www.cityofdeadwood.com/vertical/sites/%7BECDE07BE-19F7-4F11-A017-CFDAD3EEEE69%7D/uploads/Resolution_2020-17_Emergency_to_Address_the_Re-Opening_of_Deadwood_Businesses.pdf).

OTHERS TO FOLLOW: ID, LA, NZ

- IDAHO. Northern Quest casino will reopen on Wednesday and will not require masks to be worn.

Other tribal casinos will soon begin phased openings.

- LOUISIANA. Casinos could reopen this month, according to the state Gaming Control Board.

Gambling will be very different as every other device will be disabled in order to follow social distancing protocols, Chairman Ronnie Jones said.

- NEW ZEALAND pubs and taverns are preparing to welcome customers back to gaming rooms as the country will likely ease restrictions in a few weeks, the New Zealand Herald reported.

The venues are working with the Gaming Machine Association to ensure gaming rooms are safe for players in terms of problem gambling and sanitization.

COEUR D'ALENE IS BUSY; NEWGIOCO, QUEBEC

Coeur d'Alene Casino in Idaho continues to remain busy but not as much as last weekend as the casino had to turn away guests by 2:30 p.m. when it reached capacity, CEO Laura Stensgar told GT Video.

Having been closed since March due to the virus, the casino opened Friday at 7 a.m. instead of the pre-determined 9 a.m. due to higher demand.

Lines to get in were a half-mile long and the casino had its highest table drop ever on Saturday night.

The casino turned away a few guests for not wearing masks, which will be mandated through next week. After that, restrictions will be eased if the number of COVID-19 cases remains low.

The nearest new cases are a two-hour drive south of the northern Idaho casino.

Video: [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/tino-magnatta-3a59986\\_gtad-facebook-instagram-activity-6663194813959151616-XjZz/](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/tino-magnatta-3a59986_gtad-facebook-instagram-activity-6663194813959151616-XjZz/).

- NEWGIOCO GROUP began reopening betting shops in Italy with personal protection including antiseptic hand sanitizers, face masks and gloves for employees and customers.

- QUEBEC. Loto-Quebec reopened retail lottery sales after suspending them for six weeks.

Sales in convenience stores will remain suspended.

## AC RELIEF BILLS INTRODUCED

Legislation has been introduced to provide tax and fee breaks to Atlantic City casinos, including:

- Reducing the gaming revenue tax for two years after reopening from the current 8 percent plus a 1.25 percent investment alternative tax based on monthly revenues.

The tax would be zero on revenues less than 25 percent of the prior year. At 25 to 49 percent of revenue the tax would be 25 percent of the current rate.

Fifty to 74 percent of normal revenues would be taxed at half the current rate, and 75 percent on 75 to 99 percent of normal revenue.

- Defers the \$500-per-slot licensing fees for one year, waive parking fees for two years and waives certain hotel room fees for the remainder of this year.

- Waives taxes and fees that fund the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority.

- Offers three-year, interest-free state loans to cover May and August payments casinos make to Atlantic City in lieu of property taxes.

Senate President Steve Sweeney introduced S 2400 and S 2398, while Rep. Louis Greenwald introduced Assembly versions A 4031 and A 4032.

## LOUISIANA BILL, TOO

Louisiana senators are considering a bill to remove the 23 percent tax on casino promotional play to jumpstart the casino industry after COVID-19 shutdowns.

One dollar in promotional play translates to \$5 in gross revenues, bill sponsor Sen. Barrow Peacock said, calling that a win for the state's bottom line.

## UNIONS: PROTECT EMPLOYEES

Union leaders are calling for casinos to test all employees for COVID-19 at the casinos' expense before returning to work and to ensure other health and safety measures.

UNITE HERE and the Culinary Workers Union released a plan of health and sanitation guidelines for casinos to follow.

It includes no discipline of any worker who does not report back to work in any state where a coronavirus case has been reported within the prior two weeks. Any employee declining to return to work should be considered on involuntary layoff, and applications for unemployment benefits should not be challenged.

Other provisions are using biometric data and no-touch timeclocks, providing protective gear, installing plexiglass barriers at lobby counters, hourly or more frequent disinfecting of high-touch surfaces and issuing face masks to guests.

Full guidelines from the union: <https://unitehere.org/wp-content/uploads/20200502-UNITE-HERE-Gaming-Guidelines-Health-and-Sanitation.pdf>.

COMPANIES: EVRI, MOHEGAN, PARI-MUTUEL URBAIN, SKYLINE, TBTC, TACT

- EVERI will not be able to file first quarter earnings by Monday's deadline due to the company's employee furloughs, office closures and work from home policy.

The company did not give a time frame on when it would file its 10-Q.

- MOHEGAN GAMING says it remains committed to opening a casino as part of the \$8.74 billion mixed-use development at the former Athens International Airport in Greece despite COVID-19.

Mohegan and partner GEK TERNA are prepared to begin construction on what will be called Inspire Athens.

However, Hard Rock International is appeal the awarding of the license in court.

- PARI-MUTUEL URBAIN hired three new management team members to aid in the company's post-COVID-19 recovery plan and to refocus on horse race betting activity.

Romain Rogister will join as director of commercial networks on June 1. He currently works with telecommunications company SFR in transforming its retail.

Martial Houelle was appointed secretary general, formerly working for utilities provider Total Direct Energy.

Céline Stierlé took on director of communications. She was director of press relations for ID verification provider Idemia.

- SKYLINE ENTERPRISES. The operator of New Zealand casino Christchurch will lay off more than half of its 1,200 employees.

The casino expects revenues to be negatively impacted into next year.

- TABLE TRAC filed a patent application for the Dynamic Automated Social Distancing software for slots.

The software shuts down surrounding slots when a gambler sits down at a machine.

- TRANSACT received a \$2.183 million loan due under the Paycheck Protection Program.

## US RACING HANDLE DECLINES

- UNITED STATES. Wagering on horse racing dropped 24.42 percent to \$639.399 million in April as the number of races were reduced to 746 from 2,612 due to COVID-19.

Year-to-date wagering fell 6.87 percent to \$3.149 billion on 25.65 fewer races.

Full report: <http://www.equibase.com/content/news/releases/050520release.cfm>.

## INTERNATIONAL: JAPAN

- JAPAN. COVID-19 is being blamed for Suncity being the sole applicant for a casino license in Wakayama, Asia Gaming Brief reported.

Bloomberry and Groupe Barrière said they dropped out of the process because of COVID-19. Clairvest said it intends to be an investor in a consortium and not as an operator.

Elsewhere, the national government will release the final version of the basic casino resort policy by July 26 with local government submitting their proposed implementation plans by next July, Bay City Ventures reported.

Local governments will need to select preferred operators and then finalize a business plan, which could take 10 months, Bay City said.

## DOING GOOD: TCSJOHNHUXLEY

- TCSJOHNHUXLEY is manufacturing face masks in its gaming production facilities and will donate 250 of them.

## FANTINI'S VIRTUAL TRADE SHOW

As COVID-19 has caused the cancellation of many trade shows, now is the time to turn to a virtual show to display and advertise all your product lines and news events too. To exhibit your company, contact Dee Wild-Shyver at [DWild@FantiniResearch.com](mailto:DWild@FantiniResearch.com).

See products, demos, and news from exhibitors at [www.FantinisGamingShow.com](http://www.FantinisGamingShow.com).

## CONVENTIONS, TRADE SHOWS, CONFERENCES, EXPOS

Shows and conferences have been canceled or postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak. As new dates become available or for those that transition to webinars, they will be listed in our online calendar at <https://www.fantiniresearch.com/conventions.html>.

## ABOUT THIS REPORT:

*In Fantini's COVID-19 Gaming Daily report we consolidate all developments about the virus that have business and investment implications for the gaming industry. We will post them on our website until further notice. Fantini's COVID-19 Gaming Daily is a Special Report that is included with all levels of Fantini's Gaming Report subscriptions.*

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