

PS 30: Winning Small at Foxwoods, Montana Slots 2018

320-Character Description: Foxwoods Casino in southern Connecticut is the largest tribal casino in the world. I met fans, fellow gambling podcasters, figured out how to win small jackpots, and now explain how I did it. Plus, Montana slot machine casino gambling.

Opening

Hello! Today's episode #30 of the Professor Slots podcast discusses Winning Small at Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut. Plus, slot machine casino gambling in the U.S. state of Montana.

Thank you for joining me for the Professor Slots podcast show. I'm Jon Friedl and this is the podcast about slot machine casino gambling. It is where I provide the knowledge, insights, and tools for helping you improve your slot machine gambling performance.

Show notes are available within most podcast Apps or at professorslots.com/e30.

"Jon Friedl from The Professor Slots Blog reveals all of his tips and tricks for thriving in the casino environment. Discover how to assess casinos to pick the best near you, choose winning slot machines, and identify your gambling goals: being entertained, earning comps, winning take-home cash, or combine them. Jon has won 90 taxable jackpots and a luxury car in 9 months of slots play - and made a profit at slots gambling since 2013."

On Last Week's Episode...

In case you missed it, on my last episode I went over Winning Strategy 3: Comps, discussing how comps are a great way to be compensated for gambling via slots.

Also last week, I reviewed Missouri slot machine casino gambling, including why this U.S. state only offers 13 riverboats for slots enthusiasts.

I hope you enjoyed listening to my last episode as much as I enjoyed making it for you.

Call To Action #1

Remember to visit professorslots.com/subscribe to get my Free Report Revealing ... The top 7 online resources for improving your gambling performance, including the one I've used as a top-tier slot machine casino gambler.

Let's get started with the first segment of the show: Winning Small at Foxwoods Casino

Introduction

I recently met fellow slots enthusiasts and gambling podcasters at *Foxwoods Casino*, a tribal casino located in southern Connecticut, in part to create this episode. Other goals included promoting my Professor Slots brand and, last but not least, figure out how to win at slots there.

This "Gamblepalooza" meetup was organized by Vito from Cousin Vito's Casino Podcast, who did a great job with what we all hope will become a regular annual event. Also, a special thanks to the staff at Foxwoods casino, especially to our Casino Sales Executive, John, for his professionalism, dedication and attention to details. Thanks, Vito and John!

In this episode about *Foxwoods Casino*, I'll primarily go over what I learned about how to win at slots there. As I've come to understand, and hope you have too, my winning strategies for slot machines isn't about how to be more lucky.

Rather, it's about understanding, or at least using, how casinos have deliberately set up their slot machines in order for slots enthusiasts to take advantage of as an opportunity to win.

What I found at Foxwoods Casino was such a winning opportunity. As I'll explain, a few slot machines have been set up in such a way as to be easily taken advantage of. That's the good news. The bad news (spoiler alert!) is that all such winnings are rather small.

However, easily winning a little at slots is probably very useful to far more people when most slots enthusiasts are low rollers.

This episode has the following sub-sections:

- Introduction to *How to Easily Win a Little at Slots at Foxwoods Casino*;
- My Online Assessment of *Foxwoods Casino*;
- My On-Site Physical Assessment of *Foxwoods Casino*;
- Assessing *Foxwoods Casino* by Talking with Slots Players;
- Assessing *Foxwoods Casino* by Questioning Casino Staff;
- How to Win at Slots at *Foxwoods Casino*;
- Optimizing How to Win at *Foxwoods Casino*; and
- Summary of *How to Easily Win a Little at Slots at Foxwoods Casino*.

My Online Assessment of *Foxwoods Casino*

Winning Small at Foxwoods, Montana Slot Machine Casino Gambling

My first evaluation of *Foxwoods Casino* was done online when preparing to publish my article Connecticut Slot Machine Casino Gambling available at professorslots.com/Connecticut/ back in July of last year.

I learned that *Foxwoods Casino* had grown, partly due to competition with nearby Mohegan Sun Casino, to become one of the largest casinos anywhere. Depending on how casino “largeness” is measured, it is currently reported to be the third or fourth largest casino in the world, although it has ranked as high as second largest in the past.

Other items of interest I learned then was that *Foxwoods Casino* is a American Indian tribal casino owned and operated by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe. Since Foxwoods is a tribal casino, it is not subject to state gaming regulations but rather regulated through a negotiated state-tribal gaming compact approved by the U.S. Department of Interior.

For those interested, this state-tribal compact is available at Connecticut’s Department of Consumer Protection on their Tribal-State Compacts and Agreements webpage along with the state-tribal compact for the Mohegan Tribe for Connecticut’s Mohegan Sun casino.

The final item of interest to slots enthusiasts regarding gaming regulations is monthly actual payout return statistics available on the State of Connecticut’s Gaming Revenue and Statistics webpage.

For the most recent month, March of 2018, the actual payout return percentage was reported to be 91.56%, the lowest payout return since Foxwoods fiscal year begins on July 1st.

As it happens, these statistics show that consistently highest payout returns were at the beginning of Foxwoods fiscal year. From July through October of 2017, the average payout return was 92.05%, with the highest monthly payout return being 92.16% in the month of October 2017.

While Fiscal Year 2017/2018 is not yet completed, the average annual payout return for the last 5 years going back Fiscal Year 2011/2012 has shown a remarkably steady increase. For Fiscal Year 2011/2012, the annual payout return was 91.59%, followed by a steady increase to 92.19% for the most recently completed Fiscal Year of 2016/2017.

Finally, it is well worth noting there has been a steady and significant drop, currently nearly halved, in the total number of slot machines available at *Foxwoods Casino* from Fiscal Year 2008/2009 to present. In Fiscal Year 2008/2009, coinciding with the last year of the relatively recent 17-month-long Great Recession, *Foxwoods Casino* had 8,108 slot machines. This number of slots has dropped steadily each year since, with total number of slot machines currently being 4,106.

So, what does all this mean in terms of winning at slots at *Foxwoods Casino*? Well, it's hard to say. Initial assessments are fact-finding missions, with little in the way of conclusions as much as it might be nice to do so. But, that being said, it sure is interesting when such data-supported trends are seen.

In all seriousness, it is indeed hard to say what is really going on at Foxwoods. However, it is obvious something dramatic and dynamic is happening. Staying focused on winning at slots and setting aside all other considerations, I wonder how we might use this rather interesting information to win more at slots at Foxwoods.

But, before drawing any more conclusions just yet, let's continue this episode with whatever information can be gleaned from actually visiting *Foxwoods Casino*.

My On-Site Physical Assessment of *Foxwoods Casino*

Frankly, *Foxwoods Casino* is simply huge. Upon checking in at 2 p.m. on a Thursday, I went for a walk for a few hours. I didn't have, or want, a map. While walking, I counted six separate sub-casinos within the overall casino. I could talk about my feet getting sore for walking for the next 5 hours, despite wearing comfortable shoes. Instead, let's talk about what I saw.

By far the most important thing I noticed was what I didn't see. I wandered everywhere, without doing any gambling. I was just looking around, letting my feet go wherever they wanted while I soaked in whatever there was to see.

I went to every sub-casino, and visited every high limit area in every sub-casino. And do you know what I didn't see, not once during that 5-hour walk? I didn't see a single hand pay being given out by a slot attendant.

Everywhere I went, there were no hand pays. None. Now, again, I tried not to draw any obvious conclusions just yet. Why? Because it was only late afternoon on a Thursday. I didn't want to bias my observations by drawing the conclusion begging to be made without looking for hand pays when the casino was a little busier.

So, to avoid jumping to a conclusion too soon, I decided to deliberately look for slot machine hand pays until Friday evening. But, tentatively, I held in my mind this possible conclusion: *Foxwoods Casino* gives out a relatively low number of hand-pays to slots players. If confirmed, only small non-taxable jackpots would be possible.

While my personal slots play is high limits, this was personally quite upsetting. However, for the sake of my low roll readers and listeners, I realized this might be just what they most would like. They might most like to spend a little bit of money to win a slightly larger bit of money.

Of course, this would depend on finding a way to win jackpots less than the taxable limit of \$1,200 to generate the hand pays I wasn't seeing. I decided that, if few hand pays was confirmed, then I needed to focus on looking for ways to make small wins with small bankrolls. So, I did. And, I did.

Assessing *Foxwoods Casino* by Talking with Slots Players

After my wandering around on Thursday, I met up with Vito and other early arrivals to Vito's "Gamblepalooza" event. I also had an opportunity to talk and question John, the Foxwood's Casino Sales Executive effectively acting as our event host.

And, what was the first thing Vito said to me? That his wife Amanda was over on a Buffalo slot machine after having won a bunch of free spins. I asked where, and he pointed to where she was. Maybe 20 minutes later, Amanda joined our group – at which point I asked her specifically which machine she was playing.

She told me where there was a row of identical-looking slot machines near the walkway between the casino lobby and the hotel elevators. I asked which slot machine in this row had she played, and she said the slot machine on the far left.

When everyone split up to go gamble, I headed over to those Buffalo slot machines. They were penny machines. They were also all were being used, which can sometimes be a good sign. So, I sat and watched for a little while. Again, there were no hand pays. But, there were small wins.

There were not a lot of small wins, but some. I had to consider if there would be enough to actually make any level of profit, somehow, with the right playing technique. When a machine opened up, I sat down and played to try and get a feel for its odds of winning.

What I seemed to notice, and even for me it was a bit hard to spot, was that the slot machine I was on seemed to be providing a small initial win, what is known as a taste. When the other slot machines in the row became available, I tried playing those, too, to see if it matters.

My conclusion, and again it was based on a slight but noticeable pattern I seemed to be getting from my pattern recognition abilities, was that each slot machine was providing a taste in the first few bets placed, and then no wins other than usual entirely luck-based wins.

It was slight, but definitely there. Combined with the location of these slot machines near a busy walkway, I had a working theory to try out. The next step was to create experiments or make further observations which would either prove or disprove the theory. So, I did just that.

Assessing *Foxwoods Casino* by Questioning Casino Staff

Assessing a casino isn't entirely a linear process. I look for clues everywhere, mostly focused on looking for winning patterns I've seen elsewhere while also keeping an eye out for any new patterns. Because, once I find a pattern put in place by the casino, then all I need to do is figure out how to take advantage of it.

So, between wandering around and then playing those Buffalo machines, I talked with our Casino Sales Executive. And, I asked him questions which would help me continue to look for clues to winning patterns that I'd seen elsewhere. And, he gave me such a clue.

Upon being questioned about Foxwoods having six sub-casinos, John told me which of these sub-casinos was newest and how new it was. He told me that the Great Cedar Casino was 6 months old.

That was important to know, because it would have the latest and greatest in server-based operating software. And, I knew several ways to test those operating systems for winning patterns.

Being years newer than the other sub-casinos, the Great Cedar Casino would have the latest casino operating software choices for casinos to "tinker" with the winning odds of their slot machines.

This bit of information resolved my greatest concern about visiting one of the largest casinos in the world. Some of the sub-casinos would be old, with few winning strategies due to likely not having a central computer.

Other sub-casinos would be a bit more modern, and a few sub-casinos would be the newest. But, this was my first time at Foxwoods. How would I know which sub-casino was oldest, old, new, and newest in order to apply the appropriate winning strategy.

Well, John told me which one was the newest casino. This was my next good clue for figuring out to win at slots at *Foxwoods Casino*. Now, let's bring together everything learned, so far.

How to Win at Slots At *Foxwoods Casino*

For those keeping track, here's what we have learned so far about How to Easily Win a Little at *Foxwoods Casino*:

1. Slot machine hand pays are relatively few, possibly even non-existent;
2. Slot machines near a busy walkway provided an initial win, a taste; and

3. The newest sub-casino was the Great Cedar Casino.

This is what I learned about winning at slots in *Foxwoods Casino* after being there for about 6 hours. I'd have preferred it would only have taken half that time but, well, it was one of the largest casinos in the world.

The next morning, on my way back from breakfast, I kept an eye on slot machines facing the main walkway, the largest walkway I'd yet seen, for the Great Cedar Casino. And, do you know what I saw? I saw a winning slot machine at 8 a.m.

It was a penny machine automatically playing off free spins. The current jackpot was about \$500, and continuing to climb with only 20 or so free spins out of 85 completed.

Francis, the slots player on that machine, was happy to tell those gathered that he'd only put a \$20 bill into the machine. On his first bet, the first push of the button, he won those 85 free spins.

And, he hadn't played maximum credits. Maximum credits was 600, and his bet was for 150 credits. So, for a single \$1.50 bet, he was already up to \$500 and continuing to climb.

About 10 minutes later, we all congratulated him when the rising jackpot went over the taxable limit of \$1,200. Another 5 minutes later, the last free spin was over, and his taxable jackpot on this penny machine stood at \$1,474.27.

This slot machine matched all of the winning criteria I had observed, plus one more that I'd already known was possible from a casino in Ohio. This fourth criteria was simply this: Most likely, with it being a weekday morning, that slot machine hadn't been played for a while before this jackpot.

Again, all of this is simply a working theory of a specific casino slot machine setup built step-by-step with careful observation and unbiased deductive reasoning and critical thinking. The point is, I had a working theory to test. So, I did.

Over the next few mornings, I won small jackpots on the slot machines facing that walkway, trying to only play slot machines that hadn't been played for a while.

Within a few bets, I won \$315.45 on Saturday morning at 4:30 a.m. and, at more normal times, \$89.25, \$87.60, \$135.60, and \$105.60. On several other attempts, I won about as much as I had bet. Three times, I didn't win anything.

Since each bet was between \$1.50 and \$6.00 on these penny machines, according to my gambling records I spent about \$40 in bets and won a total of \$745.50. When using this winning strategy only, and not including what I spent learning to win, my profit was just over \$700.

Optimizing How to Win at Slots at *Foxwoods Casino*

Optimizing this strategy centers around the fourth winning criteria, which was the theory of having higher jackpots when the machine hadn't been played for a while.

With the weekend approaching at one of the largest casinos in the world, the slot machines I wanted to play were getting a lot of use, probably played at least once every hour for 24 hours a day.

But, optimizing this strategy during a busy weekend at the casino is quite possible. I suggest picking your candidate slot machine as soon as whoever is using it is done, and proceed to read a book for a while.

How long should you read the book? I have no idea. I'd suggest waiting between 20 minutes and 2 hours before playing the slot machine. Wouldn't this be boring, you ask? Well, that would entirely depend on the book, now wouldn't it.

I do have to wonder what the casino's reaction would be to someone reading a book at a idle slot machine that has been set up to provide a taste so that observers run and play on another slot machine as a result, thereby recouping the cost to the casino.

Or, other slots players may complain that, if you don't want to play it, they will. So, as usual, there is always more to learn. If you try reading at a slot machine, and you get a reaction from the casino, I'd be very interested in knowing. Thanks.

I did share this winning strategy with other gamblers attending the Gamblepalooza event, with a bit more details offered to a few in thanks. They all came back later saying how much I had helped them win at slots.

One even showed me a voucher for a little over \$1,200, which I assumed was from winning several non-taxable jackpots via the winning strategy I have also described here.

They seemed quite happy with it, which made me happy. But, again, for me as a high roller.... Well, let's just say it was missing a few zeros. But, that's just how it is for me.

Summary of *How to Easily Win a Little at Slots at Foxwoods Casino*

In summary, from Thursday, April 19 through Sunday, April 22 in 2018, I visited *Foxwoods Casino* in southern New England. My goals for this casino trip were to provide another casino trip report, and also to meet members of my audience as well as other visiting gambling podcasters.

Winning Small at Foxwoods, Montana Slot Machine Casino Gambling

My third goal was to figure out if there was any way to systematically win at slots at this tribal casino, one of the largest casinos in the world and certainly the largest tribal casino. All three goals were successfully accomplished.

Through the use of my pattern recognition abilities, deductive reasoning, and critical thinking, I developed a working theory of how to win at slots at Foxwoods from making the following observations:

1. Slot machine hand pays are relatively few, possibly even non-existent;
2. Slot machines near a busy walkway provided an initial win, a taste;
3. The newest sub-casino was the Great Cedar Casino; and
4. Initial wins, or tastes, were larger on idle slot machines.

I then used this working theory myself, as well as shared it with several of my fans and fellow gambling podcasters, to win small jackpots on slot machines at *Foxwoods Casino*.

Call To Action #2

Remember to visit professorslots.com/subscribe to get my Free Report Revealing ... The top 7 online resources for improving your gambling performance, including the one I've used as a top-tier slot machine casino gambler.

Show notes for this episode are now available within most podcast Apps, but are also available on my website at professorslots.com/e30.

Up next is the second segment of the show: Montana Slot Machine Casino Gambling.

Introduction

In this episode segment, I provide a brief overview of the current state of gambling in a U.S. state, U.S. territory, or U.S. federal district emphasizing, by far, anything of interest to slot machine casino gamblers.

Here goes.

Montana slot machine casino gambling does not exist. At least, not exactly as slots. Up to 20 electronic video games are allowed in 1,400 bars and taverns, consisting of more than 16,000 video poker, video keno, and video bingo gaming machines. Montana gaming regulations require these video gaming machines to have a minimum payout percentage return of 80%.

Montana's American Indian tribal casinos are allowed to offer Class II or Class III video gaming devices. There are no minimum payout percentage returns required for electronic gaming machines at Montana's tribal casinos.

Relevant Legal Statutes on Gambling

The legal age for gambling is 18.

Montana state gaming regulations limit the number of electronic video games in its bars and taverns to 20 video poker, video keno, or video bingo machines. These machines are operated along with the state. They are not allowed to pay out cash, but instead provides a voucher for payout by a cashier.

Video gaming machines in bars and taverns are limited to a maximum bet of \$2. The maximum payout is capped at \$800. Montana gaming regulations require these machines to have a minimum payout percentage return of 80%.

Montana's tribal casinos also only offer video gaming machines, including Class II or Class III video gaming devices. Any wins result in a voucher, which again must be taken to a cashier for payout. There are no minimum payout percentage returns required by the state.

Slot Machine Private Ownership

Next up is a usually short statement about slot machine private ownership, which I have included in case you live in this U.S. state and are considering owning a slot machine. Here it is:

Slot machines may be privately owned in this state as long as they are at least 25 years old.

State Gaming Commission

Montana has its Gambling Control Division as a state gaming commission, as part of the Montana Department of Justice.

The Gambling Control Division states on their website that legal gambling establishments exist in every county of the state. Further, that there are currently more than 1,400 gaming operators and locations that offer more than 16,000 video gaming machines to the public.

Also reporting to the Montana Department of Justice is the Gaming Advisory Council which, created in 1989, advises on public policy matters related to gaming, including:

Winning Small at Foxwoods, Montana Slot Machine Casino Gambling

- Amendments to the gambling statutes;
- Additional or modified departmental rules;
- Clarification of existing rules; and
- Operation of the Gambling Control Division.

The Gaming Advisory Council meets twice a year, and submits a report to the Department of Justice that is a part of the Gambling Control Division's Biennial Report prepared for the Montana state legislature.

As usual, Federal law preempts state law with regards to gaming on American Indian reservations. It requires states to negotiate gaming compacts to provide for gaming on tribal lands. Montana has Class III state-tribal compacts with five of the state's seven reservations:

1. Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation has Class III gaming compact federally approved in 2012. This state-tribal compact allows up to 750 Class III slot machines to be operated within the Reservation. Maximum wagers are \$10 and maximum payouts are \$2,500 for "regular stakes" machines. Up to 20% of the Class III Vegas-style machines on any premises may be "high stakes", for which maximum wagers are \$50 and maximum payouts are \$5,000 for "high stakes" machines.
2. Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation currently has no state-tribal compact. A prior short-term compact was terminated in 1997. Negotiations failed in 2006 for another compact. Currently, the Blackfeet Nation operates the Glacier Peaks Casino, which is a Class II bingo-style gaming facility.
3. Chippewa Cree Tribe of Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation has a Class III gaming compact federally approved in 2013. The compact allows up to 750 Class III Vegas-style machines, with maximum wagers of up to \$10. The compact provides for maximum payouts of \$3,000 in up to 500 machines, and maximum payouts of \$5,000 in up to 250 machines.
4. Crow Tribe of the Crow Indian Reservation has a Class III gaming compact federally approved in 1998. Eight amendments have so far extended the compact to 2029. The Tribe may currently offer 925 Class III Vegas-style video gambling machines. Up to 1/3 of these machines may be categorized as "high stakes," with wagers up to \$50 per play, and prizes up to \$5,000 per wager. The remaining 2/3 of these machines are categorized as "regular stakes," with wagers up to \$10 per play, and prizes up to \$3,000 per wager.
5. Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation has a Class III gaming compact federally approved in 2007. This state-tribal compact allows up to 400 Class III Vegas-style video gambling machines with a maximum wager of \$5 and maximum payout of \$2,000. The Tribes may conduct all other forms of gambling that are legal in Montana.
6. Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation has a Class III gaming compact federally approved in 2013. This state-tribal compact allows up to

Winning Small at Foxwoods, Montana Slot Machine Casino Gambling

750 Class III machines at tribal casinos located within the Reservation and on the Tongue River Reservoir Trust Lands. The compact provides for maximum payouts of \$3,000.

7. Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation currently has no state-tribal compact. The last compact expired in 2006. The Tribes offers Class II bingo-style gaming only at Kwa Taq Nuk Casino Resort in East Polson and Gray Wolf Peak Casino in Missoula.

Gambling Establishments

In this section, I'll discuss specific Montana gambling establishments.

As usual, the website links for each casino, assuming they have set up a website, is available by clicking on this segment in the show notes at professorslots.com/e30. Here goes.

Montana has nine tribal casinos plus many bar and tavern locations where video gaming devices are provided. The following limited information is available online for the tribal casinos located in Montana:

1. Apsaalooke Nights Casino in Crow Agency;
2. Charging Horse Casino in Lame Deer;
3. Fort Belknap Casino in Harlem;
4. Glacier Peaks Casino in Browning;
5. Gray Wolf Peak Casino in Missoula;
6. Kwa Taq Nuk Casino Resort in East Polson;
7. Northern Winz Hotel & Casino in Box Elder;
8. Northern Winz II in Box Elder; and
9. Silver Wolf Casino in Wolf Point.

Summary

In summary, Montana slot machine casino gambling does not exist. At least, not exactly as slots. Every county of the state offers video gaming machines, including 1,400 locations and 16,000 video poker, video keno, and video bingo gaming machines.

No more than 20 of these gaming machines are allowed at any one location. Montana gaming regulations require these video gaming machines to have a minimum payout percentage return of 80%.

Montana's American Indian tribal casinos are operated by federally-recognized tribes and, through state-tribal gaming compacts, are allowed to offer Class II bingo-style or

Winning Small at Foxwoods, Montana Slot Machine Casino Gambling

Class III Vegas-style video gaming devices depending upon the terms of specific compacts.

There are no minimum payout percentage returns required for electronic gaming machines at Montana's tribal casinos. These tribal casinos have a very limited online presence.

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On the Next Episode of Professor Slots

Part I of the next episode of the Professor Slots podcast is Foxwoods Casino Trip Report, where I'll talk about what I learned during this 3-day trip beyond simply how to win.

Part II of the next episode of the Professor Slots podcast is another brief overview of the current state of gambling in a U.S. State, Territory, or Federal District. This time, I'll be talking to you about the U.S. State of Nebraska.

I'd also like to mention that it has been two weeks since the release of my last podcast episode where the prior 28 episodes were released on a weekly schedule. It is possible, even likely, that some of my upcoming episodes will also be published every other week rather than every week. Thank you for your patience.

Closing

That's the end of another great episode of the Professor Slots podcast. Thanks so much for listening! Show notes for this episode can be found within most podcast Apps or at professorslots.com/e30.

I plan to have the next episode come out very soon for you, where I'll have more amazing content for the show.

Until the next episode: Have fun, be safe, and make good choices! Bye.