

Gaming opens door to success, prosperity

Tribal officials hold great hope that newly-established gaming operation will help with future financial security.



by Donna Behrend

Mlli (pronounced mulee) was the place where Columbia River Indians first came together and stayed when the Warm Springs Reservation was formed so many years ago. Mlli, better known today as Kah-Nee-Ta, is now home to Oregon's newest, and Central Oregon's only, gaming facility.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs opened the temporary Indian Head Gaming Center with great fanfare and ceremony May 1. The Wasco and Paiute rooms, once quiet much of the time and used for small gatherings, are now completely remodeled and filled to the brim with over 130 slot machines. The upper lobby of Kah-Nee-Ta Lodge is now, for prospective gamblers, the gateway to casino-style gaming, and hopefully, great excitement and fun. Indian Head Gaming offers an opportunity for the Tribe to relieve the demand on reservation natural resources. Some believe it is a win-win situation for all.

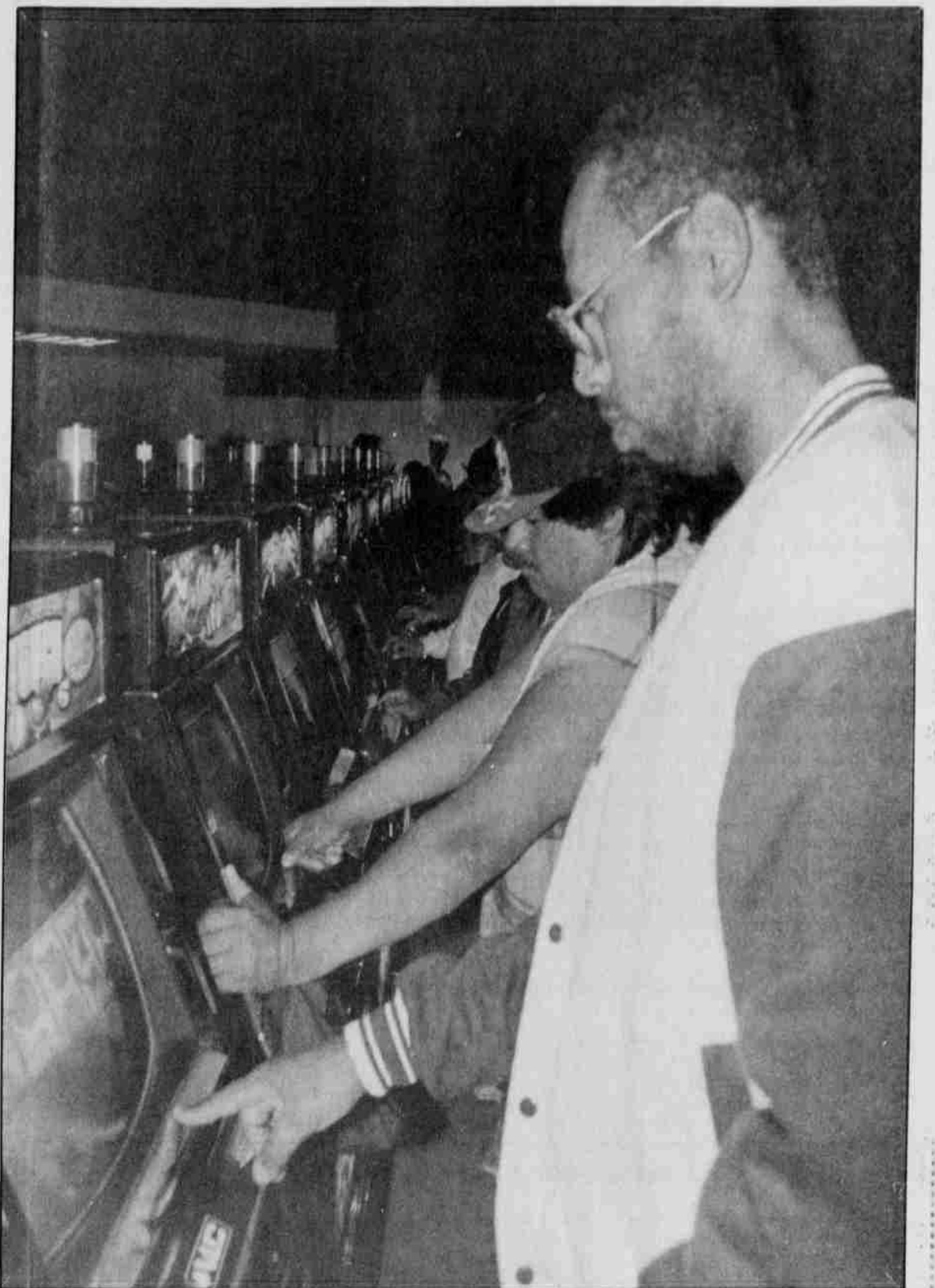
Hundreds of tribal members and various guests and gaming employees joined for a buffet meal that kicked off the start of festivities. As time marched by, revelers became more and more anxious to cut the ribbon and "get the show on the road."

Once inside, members crowded around the machines, eager to exchange their cold, hard cash for playing credits. Squeals of excitement could be heard as several individuals hit jackpots of varying sizes. Money exchanged hands quickly, and the cashier's cage ran out of small bills.

The only constant in life is change and it has hit Kah-Nee-Ta with a bang, plus a few mechanical bells and whistles. The resort remains as beautiful as ever, offering peace and quiet and solitude. Gaming will offer yet another facet of entertainment at the resort.

As Bernice Mitchell said in her statement at the dinner after briefly explaining Kah-Nee-Ta's history, "We have opened another door to Mlli." Hopefully, that door opens on a future that is as bright and prosperous as the past has been for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

Point of Interest: The above logo was designed by Susan Moody. Over 20 entries were received in the logo contest. Taking first place was Moody's entry; second went to Delson Suppah; Oliver Kirk took third place; Travis Bobb's entry took fourth and Jackie Estimo's entry took fifth place. Over \$1,700 were paid out to the winning entries.



Trying to hit the "big won", Jerome Davis tries his luck at one of the 130 machines.



A well-qualified management team has been hired at Indian Head Gaming.



Anita Jackson was pleased with her winnings on opening night.



Gaming Board of directors include, from left to right, Dan Ahern; Leona Ike, secretary; Lynn Davis, vice-chairman; Dick Donaca, treasurer and Rudy Clements, Chairman. Board members were appointed by Tribal Council April 17. Their first meeting was held May 5.



Chris Scott had the "Midas Touch" on the Double diamond nickel machine.