

# Pennsylvania Gets Casinos

Allentown, Pennsylvania (AP) – Pennsylvania's foray into legalized casino gambling will mark an important milestone on Nov. 14, when the first of as many as 61,000 slot machines statewide are scheduled to begin whirring and ka-chinging at a horse racetrack outside Wilkes-Barre.

The Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, one of five racetracks to be awarded casino licenses by state gambling regulators last month, announced Monday that it will be first out of the gate to open a slots parlor.

The Mohegan Indian tribe of Connecticut, owner and operator of the Pocono Downs harness racing complex, spent USD 70 million on the slots parlor. It includes two gambling floors with 1,083 machines, a food court, bar and patio.

The Mohegan Tribal Gaming Authority purchased Pocono Downs and its off-track wagering facilities for USD 280 million from Penn National Gaming, Inc., in January of 2005.

Pocono Downs hired 400 people to staff the casino. The tribe plans a second phase of development that will nearly double the number of slot machines and add retail shops, a nightclub and other amenities.

The state Legislature has authorized as many as 61,000 slot machines at 14 venues statewide. Officials plan to use some of the gambling revenue to fatten racetrack purses and boost the state's horse racing industry.

Besides Mohegan Sun, licenses were also given to Philadelphia Park in Bensalem; Harrah's Chester Casino & Racetrack; Penn National Race Course near Harrisburg; and The Meadows in suburban Pittsburgh.