

U.S. Indian gaming revenue rises slightly

By Howard Stutz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Following a one-year slide, gaming revenues produced by the nation's Indian casino market grew 1.3 percent in 2010 to \$26.73 billion, the highest single-year figure ever produced by the segment of the American gambling industry.

The increase came about despite a 2.5 percent decrease in gaming revenues in California, the nation's largest Indian gaming state, and a 4 percent decline in Connecticut, the third-largest producer of Indian gaming revenues.

"The positives were that you had smaller states carrying more weight and that balanced things out," said Irvine economist Alan Meister, the author of the Indian Gaming Industry Report produced by Casino City Press. The 10th-annual look at Indian gaming numbers, facts and figures, is being released today.

The numbers cover 2010 because it takes Meister a year to gather the results. State-by-state tribal gaming revenues are not released to the public on a monthly basis as they are for the commercial casino industry.

Meister found that 2010 turned into a rebound year for Indian gaming overall after revenues fell 1 percent in 2009, the first year gaming declined in the Indian market. From 1989 through 2006, Indian gaming typically reported double-digit year-over-year gaming revenue increases.

"In the wake of the Great Recession, Indian gaming, like much of the U.S. economy, showed signs of recovery in 2010," Meister wrote in the report's executive summary.

In an interview Monday, Meister said the continued declines in

California and Connecticut were offset by marked increases from Oklahoma, up 3.9 percent, and Washington, which reported a 7.5 percent gaming revenue increase.

Read the whole story