

Advocate staff and wire report

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The two older riverboats in Baton Rouge gained back a bit of the ground they have lost to newcomer L'Auberge in March, the first month since L'Auberge opened in September that its attendance made up less than half the total in the market.

March attendance was 80,853 at the Belle of Baton Rouge, 80,527 at the Hollywood Casino and 145,261 at L'Auberge, compared to respective totals of 71,909, 74,142 and 152,632 in February.

Still, L'Auberge's winnings were double the two other boats combined. The Belle's winnings of \$5.6 million were 23.4 percent below those for March 2012, and Hollywood's \$8.0 million was about one-third below those of a year earlier. L'Auberge won \$15.1 million last month.

L'Auberge has no year-ago numbers to compare to, but its gain from \$11.7 million in February outpaced Hollywood and the Belle's monthly gain considerably.

Harrah's land-based casino in New Orleans won less from gamblers in March than it did both a month and a year earlier, but increased winnings at riverboat and racetrack casinos more than made up for it.

Winnings from all state-licensed casinos totaled about \$232.2 million, up \$25 million from February and up \$4.3 million from a year earlier, according to figures released Thursday by state regulators.

Harrah's New Orleans, with \$31.6 million in winnings, was the only casino winning less in March

Written by Administrator

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than it had in February — and it wasn't much less. Its total was down 11.7 percent from a year earlier and down about \$136,700, four-tenths of 1 percentage point, from February.

Slot-machine casinos at four race tracks took in \$39.2 million, 11.4 percent above February's take and 3.2 percent above their revenue a year earlier.

Statewide, riverboat casinos took in \$161.3 million — up 15.5 percent from the previous month and up 4.7 percent from March 2012.

The Shreveport market, with five riverboat casinos and a racetrack casino, remained the state's largest at \$67.5 million, with \$20.5 million of that from the Horseshoe Casino.

L'Auberge Lake Charles, with \$32.5 million in winnings, accounted for about half of that market's \$64 million for two riverboats and a racetrack with slots.

Harrah's New Orleans had more than half that market's \$57.9 million in winnings; Boomtown won \$11.8 million, the Treasure Chest \$9.6 million and the Fair Grounds race track slots \$4.8 million.

Morgan City's Amelia Belle riverboat won \$5.2 million, up 11.5 percent from February and 4.7 percent from a year earlier.

The Evangeline Downs slots casino took in \$8.9 million, up 11.2 percent from February but 3 percent below the previous March. The most lucrative track casino was at Delta Downs, which won \$18.9 million — 14.9 percent above February's total and 8.7 percent above March 2012.

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