



# FOOD & DRINK

\$43.44 IN TAMPA

## Fine Host Scores Record Per Caps At Super Bowl

By Tom Powell

**TAMPA** — Fine Host achieved record Super Bowl per caps of \$40.44 during the 25th annual event at Raymond James Stadium here Jan. 28.

Greg Ferder, Fine Host's southeast Region vice president, said revenues were in excess of \$5.1 million with game-day attendance of 71,366. "Final figures are still being compiled so the final number could be a little higher still," he said.

The weather was not all-weather, leading up to the game with temperatures dropping into the 30s. But on Super Bowl Sunday, it was almost perfect, in the low 70s.

Brian Ford, an on-site district manager, developed a very detailed operating plan which he called "The

Book." "Fine Host has operated the concessions for five of the last 11 Super Bowls, so we had a pretty good idea of what to expect," he said.

"Besides our on-site team, we brought in 17 experienced regional VPs, unit managers, siteing, concession managers and chefs from all over the country. We had every area covered."

Ford said the new menu lines and additional locations really helped drive incremental sales. The Baltimore Ravens' 34-7 victory over the New York Giants was particularly gratifying in that time Host also has the food and beverage contract at NFL Stadium in Baltimore.

Fine Host had more than 1,500



**VIEWER SUPER BOWL SCENE** — This is what it looked like during pre-game ceremonies for Super Bowl XXXV Jan. 28 at Raymond James Stadium, Tampa. (All Photo)

points of sale, including 43 permanent concessions, 104 popbles and 130 moving vendors in the arena, in addition to 125 in-event servers in the club level. "We even had our minority partner for vending in Baltimore (AE Pro Vending) send its best beer brewers. We had more than 2,775 employees."

### WINNING TEAM

Ford said the level of teamwork was fantastic. Besides the stadium, Fine Host also provided concessions for the NFL Experience, with sub-contractor Concessions by Christie Co. Revenues here that alone exceeded \$600,000. Fine Host handled all catering plus on-site catering on the property for one week leading up to the game.

Fine Host earned more than \$30 million in events which required a tremendous amount of planning and logistical support in they were spread out all over the site. "Many

were like all previous catering as we had to carefully track everything around the site."

Chris A. Verros, group president of the company, based in Greenwich, Conn., said he was told by Jerry Anderson of the NFL staff, who works closely with Jim Stog, the NFL's senior vice president of special events, that it was the best Super Bowl ever produced.

Brian Ford deserves most of the credit. "I'd say we did more than 4,000 box lunches and approximately \$1 million in catering. The

game was opened three hours early, which really helped."

Verros said it has been "one hell-of-a month," with the Super Bowl coming on the heels of Fine Host working the Orange Bowl in Miami, Fiesta Bowl in Tampa, Arizona Cardinals and Miami Dolphins.

"This has been a fantastic year. Brian did a phenomenal job. He deserves most of the credit. I was

Continued on Page 16



**MILLER TIME IN TAMPA** — Present for a Miller Beer party before Super Bowl XXXV in Tampa was this group. From left, are Greg Verros, Miller, Doug Brown, Volume Services, Bob Hodge, Austin (Texas) Convention Center and All Middle Country, Florida. (All Photo)

FEBRUARY 9, 2001 • 13

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Convention Issue

## Fine Host Scores... Continued from Page 15

never prouder of our operation team. The event gave us a showcase to show what we can do."

While accepting kudos for his 376-page food service operation, "Play Book," Ford said, "We had a good show. It should have been a pageant because I had a lot more time than the teams did to prepare for the game. I also had a lot more people on my team."

"George Blouf (operations manager), Mike Beadles (executive chef), Brian Farrell (concessions manager), Darlene Whitte (marketing manager), and the rest of the management team deserve all the credit. I wish I could list everybody, but they're all appreciated."

### MORE MOUTHS TO FEED

One of the challenges faced was that the NFL added 7,000 additional fans each year. Fine Host then added 100 more points of sale than for a Tampa Bay Red Sox game. "We added two specialty concessions called 'The Food Willie's Wing Hut,' which were extremely popular. We added 15 Miller and Bud beer makers for the NFL last year."

Fine Host's base of Tampa specialty vendors furnished the company's signature Cuban sandwiches, and four specialty drink locations serving sweeter, soups of Tampa Sanga. "We also added 20 points of sale to our permanent stands." One innovation that helped keep the lines moving was a two-tiered carry tray by Easy Carry Inc. allowed patrons to carry more items.

Fine Host reported sales of \$2,718 (\$1) Heinen National (\$2.75) and Lakes (\$2) all beef hot



**FOOT MOSES** — Fine Host had record per caps for Super Bowl XXXV at Raymond James Stadium, Tampa. From Fine Host is Gerry Moran, left, with his son, Colton. From the University of Alabama, Birmingham, is athletic director at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, Birmingham. (All Photo)

sausage steaks. Cakes for \$4.75 and 10 1/2 draft beers with 21 ounces going for \$7.75, and 32 ounces for \$7. The Miller Lite and Bud All In One plastic beer bottles were sold to be a large hit, with 78,236 sold for \$9.25 each.

"The flexibility of the lower ticketed seats (which allowed us to grab even more points of sale both inside and outside the stadium)," Ford said. "We did not raise any prices for the Super Bowl, although we did add some new menu items."

### THE SUITES

The suite menu offered three levels of packages ranging from \$10 to \$120 per person. Ford said 95% of the people ordered the higher priced Gold package. There was one caveat: for most of the 136 suites, 65% of which was taken over by the NFL. Chad Beadles and his staff produced 1,102 pounds of crab claws, 1,200 pounds of shrimp, 5,000 pounds of bread,

deal with. "The event has really grown since we last hosted it at our old stadium in 1991, with the hospitality village, etc. More staff is necessary to run it on."

Farrell said he has 11 concessionaires for the game who produce and sell in and out with all the CBS, telecast and other companies. This was worked out with partnering with the Tampa Police Dept., city planner, NFL and stadium staff.

Complementary Services 986 looked for doing an outstanding security job. "It was a nice partnership as we integrated our people with theirs. They have a great management team," Farrell said that. Besides the additional and game seats, 4,300 club level seats were added, 1,000 on one side and 1,300 on the other.

He noted that since 70% of Super Bowl attendees are males, he had several women's concessionaires for ladies with 11 coffee locations the result.

Mih Arsenovic (P&H) had a 1,413

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