



STILLMAN SCHOOL
OF BUSINESS
The Sharkey Institute

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Seton Hall Sports Poll

**BY 2 TO 1, PUBLIC FEELS LIMITED MOUND VISITS
MAKE BASEBALL GAMES FEEL FASTER**

***LENGTH OF GAME, DRUGS, DECLINING INTEREST, BIG MARKET
ADVANTAGE ARE STILL PROBLEMS FOR BASEBALL***

S. Orange, NJ, May 1, 2018 -- By a 2-1 margin, and in the first measurement of “speed-up” rule changes initiated this year by Major League Baseball, 46% of Americans believe that these changes, especially limiting visits to the mound, will make the game feel like it’s going faster. Only 24% said it would not feel faster, (31% had no opinion.)

The Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted last week after three weeks of this season had concluded, presented a positive endorsement for MLB of its changes.

The Poll was conducted by landline and cell phone at 736 adults across the country, and has a margin of error of +/- 3.7%.

The poll showed 53% saying games took too long, with 40% disagreeing. When the same question was asked by the Seton Hall Sports Poll in 2011, only 44% said the games took too long, with 51% disagreeing.

“The balance has shifted,” noted Rick Gentile, director of the poll, which is sponsored by the Stillman School of Business and its Sharkey Institute. “More fans now believe the games are too long, but MLB should be pleased to see that about half the people at least ‘feel’ they are faster paced.”

The “feel” of the games having a faster pace was important to officials at MLB during the winter, when the changes were approved.

By 3 to 1, a rule that was implemented only on the minor league level was soundly booed by respondents. The minors are experimenting with allowing a runner to be stationed at second base to start an extra inning, but only 20% said they favored that at the Major League level, and 60% disdained it.

Baseball still has at least a perception problem when it comes to performance enhancing drugs, with 39% saying they believe the problem still exists, with 31% disagreeing.

Asked if big market clubs have an advantage in acquiring the best free agent players, 80% said yes, compared to 84% when the poll asked the same question seven years ago.

The poll asked whether there are not enough African-American players in the Major Leagues, a question that was also asked in 2011. Attitudes have shifted over seven years:

There are not enough African-American Players in the Major Leagues

	Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
2018	32	39	29
2011	18	62	14

Among white respondents this year, 27% felt there were not enough; while 43% disagreed. Among African-American respondents, 61% agreed while only 19% disagreed.

BY A 4-1 MARGIN, AGES 18-29 SAY THEY ARE LESS INTERESTED IN BASEBALL

Asked whether they were more interested, less interested, or “about the same” regarding interest in baseball, by a 4-1 margin, those ages 18-29 said they were less interested in the game. 23% of that age group said they were less interested, and only 5% said they were more interested.

As an aggregate, 13% of total respondents said they were more interested, 21% said less and 60% said their interest was about the same as in the past. Broken down by gender, 15% of women said they were more interested, and 15% said less. But 11% of men were more interested vs. 27% less interested.

In 2011, the aggregate poll found 17% more interested, 18% less interested, 58% about the same.

More interested, less interested or interest in baseball about the same:

	More interested	Less Interested	About the Same
2018	13	21	60
2011	17	18	58

“The numbers are not shifting in a positive way for baseball,” said Gentile.

The Official Seton Hall Sports Poll podcast discussing this topic with Seth Everett and Rick Gentile can be found at <https://itunes.apple.com/mt/podcast/seton-hall-sports-poll/id1053266467>.

ABOUT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

One of the country's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall University has been a catalyst for leadership — developing students in mind, heart and spirit — since 1856. Home to nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 academic programs, Seton Hall's academic excellence has been singled out for distinction by The Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report and Bloomberg Businessweek.

Seton Hall, which embraces students of all religions, prepares its graduates to be exemplary servant leaders and global citizens. Its attractive main campus is located in suburban South Orange, New Jersey, and is only 14 miles by train, bus or car from New York City, offering a wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities. The university's nationally recognized School of Law is prominently located in downtown Newark.

For more information, visit www.shu.edu.

About the poll:

This poll was conducted by telephone April 23-25 among 736 adults in the United States. The Seton Hall Sports Poll is conducted by the Sharkey Institute, with cell phone interviewing provided by Braun Research.

Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard landline and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus 3.7 percentage points. The error for subgroups may be higher. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

The Seton Hall Sports Poll has been conducted regularly since 2006.

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The results:

1. With regard to your interest in baseball, are you more interested, less interested or is your interest in baseball about the same as in the past?
 1. More interested 13
 2. Less interested 21
 3. About the same 60
 4. Don't know 2

2. I'm going to make some statements about baseball. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the statement: The games take too long.
 1. Agree 53
 2. Disagree 40
 3. Don't know/No opinion 8

3. Big market teams have a better chance of acquiring the best free agents than smaller market teams
 1. Agree 80
 2. Disagree 7
 3. Don't know/No opinion 13

4. There are not enough African American players
 1. Agree 32 (w-27%, A-A 61%)
 2. Disagree 39 (w-43%, A-A 19%)
 3. Don't know/No opinion 29 (w-30%, A-A 21%)

5. Too many players use performance enhancing drugs
 1. Agree 39
 2. Disagree 31
 3. Don't know/No opinion 30

6. Do you think changes to the rules of baseball this year — particularly limits on visits to the pitcher's mound — will make the game feel like it's going faster?
 1. Yes 46
 2. No 24
 3. Don't know/No opinion 31

7. The minor leagues are experimenting with starting each extra inning with a runner on second base. Would you like to see this rule implemented in the major leagues?
 1. Yes 20
 2. No 60
 3. Don't know/No opinion 20

8. More home runs were hit in the major leagues last year than ever before. If home run numbers significantly declined would your interest in baseball increase, decrease or remain the same?
 1. Increase 4
 2. Decrease 12
 3. Remain the same 76
 4. Don't know/No opinion 8