

## **CALIPARI'S KENTUCKY COACHING CONTRACT IS WHAT'S WRONG WITH COLLEGE ATHLETICS**

### ***SETON HALL SPORTS POLL MEASURES ATTITUDES TOWARDS COLLEGE SPORTS***

S. Orange, NJ, April 20, 2009 – Mirroring the feelings Americans have had towards corporate salaries and bonuses, a survey last week by the Seton Hall Sports Poll found that 77% of the public thought John Calipari's \$31.65 million, eight-year contract to coach Kentucky basketball was a reflection of what's wrong with college athletics.

The poll of 631 respondents across the country also showed that 61% felt that half or more of colleges break the rules in recruiting athletes, and that 60% feel it hurts the sport when colleges recruit athletes that they know won't stay for the full duration of their eligibility. The public felt that only 32% of men's coaches place a high importance on graduating basketball players.

"The public views college sports as big business, but is not happy about that" said Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted by The Sharkey Institute. "The reaction to Calipari is similar to the recent controversy over UConn coach Jim Calhoun being the highest paid person on the Connecticut state payroll. The public has had enough of inflated compensation."

The poll also showed that 30% - nearly one in three – think that college basketball players intentionally influence the outcome of games because of gambling interests. "This is fairly remarkable in that there hasn't been a point shaving scandal in the US in thirty years," said Gentile.

As for the question of turning professional, 62% felt the NBA rule stating a player must wait at least one year after high school was fair to the athletes; 68% felt that NFL rule of playing two years of college ball was fair, and 59% of the MLB rule that allows drafting right out of high school was fair.

"The attitudes toward recruiting and the draft have been remarkably stable over our three years of polling and reflect a general acceptance of the tension between college and professional athletics." said Gentile. .

The poll was conducted by telephone April 14-16 among a random digit dial sample of 631 adults ages 18 and older living in the continental United States. The poll was weighted to reflect the national distribution age, race and gender. The margin of error due to sampling is +/- 4.0 percentage points for most estimates. Other factors also may affect the total error.

#### **About Seton Hall University**

For more than 150 years, Seton Hall University has been a catalyst for leadership, developing the whole student, mind, heart and spirit. Seton Hall combines the resources of a large university with the personal attention of a small liberal arts college. Its attractive suburban campus is only 14 miles from New York City, with the wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities the city offers. Seton Hall is a Catholic university that embraces students of all races and religions,

challenging each to better the world through integrity, compassion and a commitment to serving others. For more information, visit [www.shu.edu](http://www.shu.edu).

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The Seton Hall Sports Poll results:

1. Do you think colleges should be allowed to use lower admissions standards for athletes because they contribute to the school in other ways or not?

1 – Yes	23%
2 – No	73%

2. How many college athletic programs, do you think, break the rules in recruiting athletes? Would you say more than half, about half, or less than half?

1 - More than half	36%
2 - About half	25%
3 - Less than half	24%

3. Do you think it hurts the sport, or doesn't hurt the sport, when colleges recruit athletes that they know won't stay for the full duration of their eligibility?

1 – Hurts	60%
2 - Doesn't hurt	30%

4. Do you think schools should be punished by the NCAA if scholarship athletes have to leave school because they fail to make grades or not?

1 – Yes	38%
2 – No	58%

5. How much importance do you think men's coaches place on graduating basketball players? Would you say a high importance, medium importance, little importance or no importance?

1 - High importance	32%
2 - Medium importance	38%
3 - Little importance	17%
4 - No importance	5%

6. Do you think that students who receive athletic scholarships should be prevented from playing professionally until their class graduates or should they be allowed to go pro at any time?

1 - Prevented from playing professionally	44%
2 - Allowed to go pro	52%

7. Do you think the media coverage prior to the NBA and NFL drafts plays a role in encouraging athletes to make themselves eligible for the draft before their class graduates?

1 – Yes	80%
2 – No	13%

8. Do you think the media coverage prior to the draft has any affect on teams' draft selections or not?

1 – Yes	61%
2 – No	30%

9. Do you think the current National Basketball Association rule that states a player must wait at least one year after high school before becoming eligible for the draft is fair to the athletes or unfair?

1 – Fair	62%
2 – Unfair	33%

10. Do you think the current National Football League rule that states a player must play at least two years of college football before becoming eligible for the draft is fair to the athletes or unfair?

1 – Fair	68%
2 – Unfair	29%

11. Do you think the Major League Baseball rule that allows teams to draft players right out of high school is fair to the athletes or unfair?

1 – Fair	59%
2 – Unfair	37%

12. Basketball coach John Calipari recently signed a \$31.65 million dollar contract for 8 years to coach at the University of Kentucky. Do you think this is an indication of what's right with college athletics or what's wrong with college athletics?

1 – Right	13%
2 – Wrong	77%

13. Do you think high school players recruited by a particular coach should be able to follow that coach to a different school or should they be held to their original commitment?

1 - Follow coach	29%
2 - Held to commitment	66%

14. How much of the recently concluded NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament did you watch: A lot, some, a little, or none at all?

1 - A lot	21%
2 - Some	24%
3 - A little	23%
4 - None	32%

15. Did you or anyone in your family participate in any pools regarding the NCAA Tournament?

1 - Yes	25%
2 - No	74%

16. Do you think the publishing of point spreads encourages gambling on college sports or not?

1 - Yes	73%
2 - No	20%

17. Do you think that college basketball players intentionally influence the outcome of games because of gambling interests or not?

1 - Yes	30%
2 - No	58%