

Seton Hall Sports Poll

By Better Than 2-1, Fans Say Big Market Teams Have Advantage in Winning

Two-Thirds Call for Greater Use of Video Replays To Resolve Close Calls

S. Orange, NJ, November 5, 2009 – Sixty percent of Americans who follow sports feel that teams located in bigger markets have an advantage in producing winning seasons, according to a poll conducted this week by the Seton Hall Sports Poll. Twenty-six percent felt the bigger market teams did not have an advantage.

The polling took place this week as the New York Yankees, representing the nation's biggest market, played the Philadelphia Phillies, representing the nation's fourth largest market.

Seventy percent of fans feel that Major League Baseball should make a bigger effort to equalize revenue for all teams, as the NFL has done.

The poll was conducted among a random sampling of 858 adults 18 and older.

In a post season marked by a number of controversial umpiring decisions, 66 percent of the respondents felt that MLB should institute a video review process for close plays similar to the one used in the NFL.

"While occasionally a small market team like Minnesota or Tampa Bay will break through and win a division or a playoff round, the big markets continue to prevail in the later rounds, and the fans clearly link that success to the ability to generate bigger revenue," noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted by The Sharkey Institute.

Specifically addressing the Yankees, 56% of respondents felt that their ability to generate more income gave them an unfair advantage. Asked if they rooted for or against the Yankees in post-season play, 28% said "for," and 48% "against", with 23% saying they didn't know, or refusing to answer. About the Phillies, 37% rooted "for" them in post-season, 30% "against," and 32% said they didn't know or refused to answer.

Among other questions, 51% believed that World Series games take longer than regular season games, and 69% found themselves falling asleep or changing channels to see what else was on at some point during the game. (The World Series games averaged 3:30, and 2009 regular season games averaged 2:52).

Fifty percent said they would prefer to watch a regular season NFL game over a World Series game, with 36% opting for a World Series game. And even among those that followed the series, they were split (46% to 44%) in preferring to watch the NFL.

The poll was conducted by telephone among a random digit dial sample of adults ages 18 and older living in the continental United States. The poll was weighted to reflect the national distribution age, race and gender. This release is based on the 858 respondents that said that they follow sports a lot, some, or a little. The margin of error due to sampling is +/- 3 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.

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The results:

1. How closely do you follow sports: a lot, some, a little, or not at all?

1 - A lot	40%
2 - Some	33%
3 - A little	28%

Those answering "not at all" were removed from the analysis.

2. How closely have you been following this year's World Series between the New York Yankees and Philadelphia Phillies: very closely, somewhat closely, not closely, or not at all?

1 - Very closely	21%
2 - Somewhat closely	31%
3 - Not closely	19%
4 - Not at all	29%

3. Have you watched any of the World Series games so far?

1 - Yes	56%
2 - No	42%

4. Do you find that World Series games take longer than regular season games?

1 - Yes	51%
2 - No	36%

5. Does the added length interfere with your ability to enjoy the game?

1 – Yes	33%
2 – No	59%

6. Have you found yourself falling asleep or changing channels to see what else is on at any point during the game?

1 – Yes	69%
2 – No	29%

7. There has been quite a bit of controversy involving some umpires' calls during the post-season. Do you think that Major League Baseball should institute a video review process for close plays similar to the one used in the National Football League?

1 – Yes	66%
2 – No	22%
3 - Don't know/Refuse to answer	12%

8. Would you rather watch a World Series game or an NFL regular season game?

1 - World Series game	36%
2 - NFL game	50%
3 - Don't know/Refuse to answer	14%

9. Do teams located in bigger markets have an advantage in producing winning seasons?

1 – Yes	60%
2 – No	26%
3 - Don't know/Refuse to answer	14%

10. Do the Yankees, located in baseball's biggest market, have an unfair advantage in reaching post-season play because of their ability to generate more income than other teams?

1 – Yes	56%
2 – No	29%
3 - Don't know/Refuse to answer	15%

11. Do you think Major League Baseball should make a bigger effort to equalize revenue for all teams as the NFL has done?

1 – Yes	70%
2 – No	16%
3 - Don't know/Refuse to answer	14%

12. When the Yankees are playing in a post-season game, do you find yourself usually rooting **for** them or **against** them?

1 – For	28%
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2 – Against 48%
3 - Don't know/Refuse to answer 23%

13. When the Phillies are playing in a post-season game, do you find yourself usually rooting **for** them or **against** them?

1 – For 37%
2 – Against 30%
3 - Don't know/Refuse to answer 32%