

Seton Hall Sports Poll on the BCS

NEARLY HALF OF COLLEGE FOOTBALL FANS STILL DON'T 'GET' WHAT MAKES UP THE BCS FORMULA FOR NATIONAL TITLE GAME

OVER 70% WOULD LIKE A TOURNAMENT LIKE NCAA BASKETBALL

S. Orange, NJ, December 4, 2008 – According to a new Seton Hall Sports Poll, almost half of the nation's college football fans are not familiar with the formula used to determine the teams in the NCAA's national championship game.

The poll was conducted this week among 1,052 people randomly called across the country, including 599 college football fans. This is the third year in which Seton Hall Sports Poll has questioned fans about the BCS formula

And while that figure – 46% - represents some progress for the NCAA (last year's poll put the number at 54%), it does carry over to 74% of fans thinking that there should be a tournament similar to the NCAA basketball's elimination tournament held each March. (Last year the figure was 77%).

"Imagine if fans didn't understand how teams got to the World Series or the Super Bowl," noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted by the Sharkey Institute. "This is a major American championship and its own fans don't really know how the competing teams are chosen."

A year ago, then President-elect Barack Obama injected his own view that there should be a playoff system, but 82% of respondents said that he should stay out of the debate rather than use his influence. This year, the question was asked in general about "elected officials" and 81% said they should stay out of it. 60% agreed with the idea of an 8-team playoff, similar to the 63% who agreed with Obama's 2008 suggestion,

"It's frustrating to fans, year after year, to see no change in the system and no greater understanding of the road to the title game," said Gentile. "and the polls reflect that."

Asked what sort of a playoff would be preferred if that system was adopted, those who follow college football found 34% favoring an 8-team playoff, with 36% citing 16 teams, and 9% voting for a 4-team playoff.

84% of college fans (and 83% of all respondents), felt that the BCS formula should be altered to allow all major universities a fairer opportunity to play for the national championship.

The poll was conducted by telephone among a random digit dial sample between November 30-December 2, 2009. The poll was weighted to reflect the national distribution age, race and gender. The margin of error due to sampling is +/- 3.8 percentage points for most estimates. The margin of error is higher for certain sub groups. 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:

Results are shown for respondents who call themselves college football fans. 2009 and 2008 numbers shown where applicable. Numbers are rounded off, causing some to add up to more than 100%.

BCS POLL Questionnaire – NOV. 30-DEC. 2, 2009

	2009	2008
1. Do you think college football does a good job, fair job, or poor job of selecting the national champion each year?		
1 - Good job	32%	31%
2 - Fair job	41	33
3 - Poor job	23	27
4 - Don't know	4	
2. Do you think there should be a tournament for college football teams along the lines of the basketball tournament in March?		
1 - Yes	74	77
2 - No	21	18
3 - Don't know	5	
3. How many teams do you think should be included in the championship tournament: 4, 8, 16, 32 or some other amount of teams?		
One – 4	9	12
Two – 8	34	38
Three – 16	36	33
Four – 32	11	6
Five – Other	6	8

Six - Don't know

5

4. College football uses a complex ranking system called the BCS poll. How familiar are you with the various components that make up the BCS formula? Are you very familiar, somewhat familiar, not very familiar, or not at all familiar?

1 - Very familiar	13	12
2 - Somewhat familiar	40	32
3 - Not very familiar	24	28
4 - Not at all familiar	22	26
5 - Don't know	1	

5. What do you believe would be the best system for ranking college football teams: winning percentage, coaches' poll, media poll, or the BCS computer rankings?

1 - Winning pct.	40	43
2 - Coaches' poll	19	23
3 - Media poll	6	5
4 - BCS computer	25	17
5 - Other	4	5
6 - Don't know	6	

6. Should the BCS formula be altered to allow all major universities a fairer opportunity to play for the national championship?

1 - Yes	84	71
2 - No	10	18
3 - Don't know	6	11

7. President Obama as well as several U.S. Senators have called for the replacement of the BCS with an 8-team playoff. Do you agree with them?

1 - Yes	60	63
2 - No	29	23
3 - Don't know	11	

8. Do you think elected officials should use their influence to change the way the college football championship is decided or should they stay out of it?

1 - Should use their influence	14	13
2 - Should stay out of it	81	82
3 - Don't know	5	5

9. Do you think it will make a difference to those in charge of college football that these elected officials want a playoff system?

1 - Yes	44	36
2 - No	46	53
3 - Don't know	10	12

10. In recent weeks, head coaches from a number of major universities, including Notre Dame, Michigan and LSU, have come under fire by critics asking for them to be fired. How much influence do you think fans and boosters should have in the hiring and firing of coaches: a lot, some, or none at all?

1 - A lot	10
2 - Some	52
3 - None at all	36
4 - Don't know	3

11. Do you think the role of a college football coach should be more about winning games or educating the student athletes?

1 - Winning	27
2 - Educating	61
3 - Don't know	12