



ONLY 6% SAY INTEREST IN BASEBALL WILL DECREASE IF HOME RUNS DECLINE;

Improved Hitting, Juiced Baseballs Cited Over Worsening Pitching for 2019 Jump

South Orange NJ, October 4, 2019 -- If Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred follows through and finds a way to reduce home runs next season - 85% of the American public will maintain their interest in the game at current levels - and only 6% said their interest would decline.

That was the finding of a Seton Hall Sports Poll conducted this week, where 3% said their interest would increase. 6% didn't know or had no opinion.

The Poll was conducted among 714 adult Americans across the country, either on landline or cellphone. The poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.8 percent.

Asked why they thought Major League home run totals were up in 2019, 34% said it was improved hitting, 24% said juiced baseballs, and only 6% said worsening pitching. 25% said they didn't know or had no opinion.

Home runs were up 11% over the previous record in 2019 with two teams (Twins and Yankees) breaking the 300 barrier for the first time. 6,776 home runs were hit in all, with 25 of the 30 teams topping 200. An average game saw 2.78 homers this season.

"The home run will always be an exciting play, and the public talks about the increase, but on balance, they like baseball whether the totals are up or down," noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, which is sponsored by the Sharkey Institute within the Stillman School of Business.

ABOUT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

One of the country's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall has been showing the world what great minds can do since 1856. Home to nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 rigorous 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 embraces students of all religions and prepares them to be exemplary servant leaders and global citizens. In recent years, the University has achieved extraordinary success. Since 2009, it has

seen record-breaking undergraduate enrollment growth and an impressive 110-point increase in the average SAT scores of incoming freshmen. In the past decade, Seton Hall students and alumni have received more than 30 Fulbright Scholarships as well as other prestigious academic honors, including Boren Awards, Pickering Fellowships, Udall Scholarships and a Rhodes Scholarship. The University is also proud to be the third most diverse national Catholic university in the nation.

During the past five years, the University has invested more than \$165 million in new campus buildings and renovations. And in 2015, Seton Hall launched a School of Medicine as well as a College of Communication and the Arts. The University's beautiful main campus in suburban South Orange, N.J. is only 14 miles from New York City — offering students a wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities. Seton Hall's nationally recognized School of Law is located prominently in downtown Newark. The University's Interprofessional Health Sciences (IHS) campus in Clifton and Nutley, N.J. opened in the summer of 2018. The IHS campus houses the University's College of Nursing, School of Health and Medical Sciences and the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University.

For more information, visit www.shu.edu.

About the poll:

This poll was conducted by telephone April 16-19 among adults in the United States. The Seton Hall Sports Poll is conducted by the Sharkey Institute within the Stillman School of Business. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard landline and cell phones. 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. Recently chosen for inclusion in iPoll by Cornell's Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, its findings have been published everywhere from USA Today, ESPN, The New York Times, Washington Post, AP, and Reuters to Fox News and most points in between.

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The results:

1. More home runs were hit in Major League Baseball this season than ever before. Do you think this is a result of improved hitting, worsening pitching or a "juiced" baseball?

1 - Improved hitting	34
2 - Worsening pitching	6
3 - Juiced baseball	24
4 - All of the above (don't read)	5
5 - None of the above (don't read)	5
6 - Don't know/No opinion	25

2. If home run numbers declined would your interest in baseball increase, decrease or remain the same?

1 - Increase	3
2 - Decrease	6

3 - Remain the same	85
4 - Don't know/No opinion	6

3. How closely would you say you follow sports, very closely, closely, not closely or not at all?

1 - Very closely	17
2 - Closely	37
3 - No closely	31
4 - Not at all	16