

SETON HALL SPORTS POLL FINDS PUBLIC OPPOSES MLB'S TAKEOVER OF DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS OF THE DODGERS

S. Orange, NJ, April 29, 2011 – By a margin of 45%-34%, sports fans oppose Major League Baseball's involvement in the day-to-day operations of the Los Angeles Dodgers, according to a poll conducted this week by the Seton Hall Sports Poll.

The poll was conducted by random dial across the country of 726 people, of whom 495 said they followed sports. The results have a +/- margin of error of 4.5%.

Remarkably, among sports fans, it was women who provided the difference, opposing the move by MLB by 49%-24%, while men were almost equally divided, 44% supporting and 42% opposing. 20% said they didn't know.

"This action still has a number of acts to play out," noted Rick Gentile, director of the poll, which is conducted by The Sharkey Institute. "But for now, in the court of public opinion, the team's ownership seems to be winning versus MLB's decision."

Poll Finds Fans More Concerned With Tattoos, Spitting, Than Racial Composition

The poll examined some criticisms of both the NBA and MLB, and by an overwhelming margin, fans felt big markets had a better chance of acquiring the best players – 84% in baseball, 78% in basketball.

The poll asked some behavioral questions specifically about fan reaction to baseball players spitting (36% thought they spit too much; 47% disagreed), and to tattoos on NBA players (40% thought too many players had tattoos vs. 38% who disagreed).

Despite a preponderance of African American players in the NBA and a preponderance of non-African-Americans in MLB, questions of racial composition seemed to matter far less than the behavioral issues - only 18% of fans said there were not enough African-American players in baseball, and only 23% said there were not enough white American players in the NBA.

In cases, only a small percentage (less than 15%), of those who felt there should be more white or black players, said they would follow the sports more closely if the numbers increased.

"Fans seem to care more about behavior – spitting and tattoos - than about race, which says something positive about sports fans' color-blindness," added Gentile.

NFL Draft Showed Greater Interest than Derby or Pacquiao-Mosely Fight

The poll also asked what event fans were most looking forward to, and the NFL draft (47%) easily topped the Kentucky Derby (29%) and the Pacquiao-Moseley fight, (12%). A demographic breakdown by age showed that 48% of those who selected the Derby first were age 60+ as compared to only 11% for 18-29, , but of the fans who picked boxing, 20% were in the 18-29 age bracket with just 9% at 60+. This is a good showing for boxing, which has struggled for younger fans. The NFL draft was first among all age groups except 60+.

Regular season Major League Baseball outpolled both the NBA and the NHL playoffs on the question of “following most closely”, with 38% to the NBA’s 35% and the NHL’s 17%.

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The results:

1. How closely do you follow sports, very closely, closely, somewhat closely, or not at all?

1 – Very closely	18
2 – Closely	14
3 – Somewhat closely	35
4 – Not at all	33

2. Which would you say you are following most closely, the National Basketball Association playoffs, the National Hockey League playoffs or regular season major league baseball?

1 – NBA	35
2 – NHL	17
3 – Baseball	38

3. Do you think Major League Baseball should have involved itself in the day-to-day operations of the Dodgers?

1 – Yes	34
2 – No	45
3 – Don’t know	20

THE NBA.

4. The players don't play enough defense

1 – Agree	42
2 – Disagree	35
3 – No opinion	14
4 – Don't know	8

5. Because of free agency, big market teams have a better chance of acquiring the best players than smaller market teams

1 – Agree	78
2 – Disagree	12
3 – No opinion	6

6. There are too many players with tattoos

1 – Agree	40
2 – Disagree	38
3 – No opinion	18

7. There are not enough white American players

1 – Agree	23
2 – Disagree	53
3 – No opinion	20

8. Would you follow the NBA more closely if there were more white American players?

1 – Yes	14
2 – No	63
3 – Don't know	23

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

9. The games take too long

1 – Agree	44
2 – Disagree	51

10. Because of free agency, big market teams have a better chance of acquiring the best players than smaller market teams

1 – Agree	84
2 – Disagree	10
3 – No opinion	3

11. Players spit too much

1 – Agree	36
2 – Disagree	47
3 – No opinion	13

12. There are not enough African American players

1 – Agree	18
2 – Disagree	62
3 – No opinion	14

13. Would you follow baseball more closely if there were more African American players?

1 – Yes	14
2 – No	65
3 – Don't know/	21

14. Which upcoming event would you say you are most looking forward to, the Kentucky Derby, the NFL draft, or the Pacquaio / Moseley boxing match?

1 – Kentucky Derby	29
2 – NFL draft	47
3 – Pacquaio/Moseley fight	12
4 – None of them	11