

SETON HALL SPORTS POLL FINDS MLB HAS PERCEPTION PROBLEMS ON BOTH DRUGS AND RACE

However, Its Athletes Score Best Among Team Sports in Image

One in Four Thought Tiger's Masters Return Helped His Image; Rating As World's Top Athlete Drops Dramatically

S. Orange, NJ, April 22, 2010 – Major League Baseball has problems with public perception in both the areas of drugs and racism, according to a poll conducted this week by the Seton Hall Sports Poll.

Sixty-three percent of respondents felt that MLB has not rid itself of abusers of performance enhancing drugs, with only 20% believing that it had. In addition, 78% agreed that teams have not signed certain available free agents because they are African-American. This was suggested last week by Minnesota infielder Orlando Hudson.

"We both know what it is," Hudson told reporter Jeff Passan of Yahoo! Sports, speaking of the failures of Jermaine Dye and Gary Sheffield to land contracts. "You'll figure it out. I'm not gonna say it because then I'll be in (trouble)."

The poll was conducted earlier this week among 855 randomly called adults 18 and over throughout the United States, with a margin of error due to sampling of 3% for most estimates. Other factors also may affect the total error.

"At the same time that MLB honors the legacy of Jackie Robinson with all players wearing number 42 for a day, this is a troubling perception for them," noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted by The Sharkey Institute. "Likewise, despite efforts to rid the sport of drugs, there remains an overwhelming feeling that PEDs are still very much in use."

Baseball did fare well however in the public perception of its sport, with 55% of its Major League athletes producing a positive impression on the public, as compared to 49% of football players 44% of basketball players and 39% of hockey players. 61% had a positive image of tennis players and 60% had a positive image of golfers.

Speaking of golfers, only 24% felt that Tiger Woods' performance at the Masters helped to restore his public image, with 53% saying that it had no effect and 13% saying it hurt his image. "It was not quite the coming out party that Tiger might have hoped for," said Gentile, "but it was, at least, a step in the right direction."

Seton Hall also asked respondents to name the "greatest athlete in the world" without presenting suggested answers. Woods and LeBron James were virtually tied (at 10%), for top honors, although a similar Gallup Poll conducted in 2001 showed Woods at 38%, far ahead of Michael Jordan's 6% who was second - a dramatic downturn for Woods. Rounding out the top five this year were Kobe Bryant (6%), Derek Jeter (3%), and Peyton Manning (3%).

Sixty-two percent of respondents felt that Ben Roethlisberger should not be suspended by the NFL or the Steelers, with the 6 game suspension announced on the final day of polling, at which point this question was no longer included in the poll.

The public is evenly divided on whether pro athletes make good role models for young people, (47% yes, 44% no), with 93% saying that they should be more conscious of that responsibility.

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The results:

1. Do you think professional athletes make good role models for young people?

1 – Yes	47%
2 – No	44
3 - Don't know	9

2. Do you think professional athletes should be more conscious of being good role models for young people?

1 –Yes	93
2 – No	6
3 - Don't know	2

Please say whether your overall view of the athletes who play each of the following professional sports is very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative:

3. How about Golf?

1 - Very positive	16
2 - Somewhat positive	44
3 – Neutral	23
4 - Somewhat negative	8
5 - Very negative	4

6 - Don't know 5

4. How about Basketball?

1 - Very positive 11
2 - Somewhat positive 23
3 - Neutral 44
4 - Somewhat negative 21
5 - Very negative 6
6 - Don't know 5

5. How about Baseball?

1 - Very positive 13
2 - Somewhat positive 42
3 - Neutral 25
4 - Somewhat negative 24
5 - Very negative 3
6 - Don't know 4

6. How about Football?

1 - Very positive 12
2 - Somewhat positive 37
3 - Neutral 25
4 - Somewhat negative 18
5 - Very negative 5
6 - Don't know 3

7. How about Tennis?

1 - Very positive 24
2 - Somewhat positive 37
3 - Neutral 26
4 - Somewhat negative 3
5 - Very negative 2
6 - Don't know 9

8. How about Hockey?

1 - Very positive 11
2 - Somewhat positive 28
3 - Neutral 30
4 - Somewhat negative 18
5 - Very negative 3
6 - Don't know/ 11

9. Do you think Tiger Woods' performance in the Masters helped restore his public image, hurt his image or had no effect on his image?

1 - Helped image	24
2 - Hurt image	13
3 - Had no effect	53
4 - Don't know/	10

10. Are you familiar with the recent controversy surrounding Ben Roethlisberger's alleged off-the-field behavior?

1 – Yes	48
2 – No	51

11. Do you think he should be suspended by either his team or the National Football League?

1 – Yes	25
2 – No	62
3 - Don't know/	13

12. Do you think Major League Baseball has succeeded in ridding the sport of abusers of performance enhancing drugs?

1 – Yes	20
2 – No	63
3 - Don't know/	18

13. There have been accusations recently that Major League Baseball teams have not signed certain available free agents because they are African Americans. Do you think race is a factor in the signing of free agents?

1 Strongly Agree	41
2 – Agree	37
3 - Neutral	13
4- Disagree	5
5 – Strongly Disagree	2
6 – Don't Know	2

Who is the world's greatest athlete?

Tiger Woods	10%
LeBron James	10%
Kobe Bryant	6%
Derek Jeter	3%
Peyton Manning	3%
Brett Favre	2%
Phil Mickelson	2%

(Asked by Gallup/CNN/USA Today, June 2001)

Tiger Woods	38%
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Michael Jordan	6%
Allen Iverson	4%
Shaquille O'Neal	3%
All others under 2%	