



Sizeable Support for Speeding Up Baseball and Increased Scoring;

A Majority Likes the Proposed 3-Batter Rule for Relievers

South Orange NJ, April 16, 2019 -- A third of the American public (33 percent) say they would follow Major League Baseball more if the games moved faster, (58 percent said they would not), and more than a quarter (28 percent) say they would follow more if there was more scoring, (64 percent said they would not). Nine and eight percent respectively, said they did not know.

The Seton Hall Sports Poll was conducted last week among 676 adult Americans across the country, either on landline or cellphone. The poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.9 percent. Certain questions, including those regarding rules changes, were asked only of those who said that they followed baseball, of whom 456 participated with a margin of error of +/- 4.7 percent.

The poll found that a sizeable number of those who follow baseball approve of proposed rule changes currently being considered or tried in the minor or independent leagues, with the idea of relief pitchers having to face at least three batters (unless ending an inning), receiving majority support. Fifty-three percent approved of the relief pitcher rule change, with 38 percent disapproving. Ten percent did not know or had no opinion.

On Moving the Mound Back; On Having a Man on Second to Start Extra Innings

Asked about moving the mound back to 62 feet from its long-time standard of 60'6", 59 percent disapproved, and 29 percent approved. (This proposal, however, is already reported as being scrapped by MLB). Twenty-two percent had no opinion or did not know. A proposal to start extra innings by placing a runner on second base, met with only 17 percent approval, and with 77 percent disapproval.

“While there is sizeable support for changes (especially for the three-batter minimum for relief pitchers), the trick is to find what rules can be integrated without changing the history and statistics of the game,” noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, which is sponsored by the Sharkey Institute within the Stillman School of Business.

On Keeping the Designated Hitter

On the designated hitter rule, which has been in place now for 46 seasons, 61 percent said it should be left as is, with 22 percent saying it should be extended to the National League, making 83 percent in favor of having a DH in the game, or at least in one league. Only nine percent said it should be eliminated from the American League.

Support for Rose in Hall Does Not Grow Despite Legalized Sports Gambling

Asked if they would follow baseball more closely if they could legally bet on the games, 72 percent said no, and 19 percent said yes. Nine percent did not know.

But the emergence of legal gambling in certain states, which has been embraced by Major League Baseball, did not move the needle much on the question of Pete Rose getting into the Hall of Fame. Fifty-two percent said his ban should be lifted, a little less than the 56 percent who supported his election in a Seton Hall Sports Poll conducted in January 2016.

Less Home Runs Equals Less Interest?

With home runs being hit in record numbers in recent years, people were asked if their interest in baseball would change if home runs declined. Six percent said it would increase, 13 percent said it would decrease and 75 percent said it would remain the same. Six percent did not know.

On the question of allowing players accused of using performance enhancing drugs going into the Hall of Fame, 70 percent said no and 19 percent said yes.

Television Remains Dominant Way of Following Baseball

The final questions of the poll were asked about viewing habits. Seventy-nine percent said when they watch, they watch on TV, four percent said they watch online, and 15 percent said both. Fifty-one percent said they primarily follow baseball by watching the games, 30 percent said watching video highlights, seven percent said the radio and five percent said newspapers.

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:

Do you think you would watch or follow more Major League Baseball:

1. If the games moved much faster?

1 - Yes	33%
2 - No	58
3 - Don't know/No opinion	8

2. If there was more scoring?

1 - Yes	28
2 - No	64
3 - Don't know/No opinion	8

3. If you were legally allowed to place bets on the games?

1 - Yes	19
2 - No	72
3 - Don't know/No opinion	9

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

1 - Increase	6
2 - Decrease	13
3 - Remain the same	75
4 - Don't know/No opinion	6

5. Pete Rose has been prohibited from being elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame because he gambled on baseball games while an active player and manager. Do you think because sports betting has been legalized in some states the prohibition on Rose getting into the Hall should be lifted?

1 - Yes	52
2 - No	30
3 - Don't know/No opinion	18

6. Do you think players who have been linked to performance enhancing drug use should be allowed to be members of the Baseball Hall of Fame?

1 - Yes	19
2 - No	70
3 - Don't know/No opinion	12

7. Would you say you watch or follow baseball a great deal, a good amount, a little or not at all?

1 - Great deal	11
2 - Good amount	18
3 - A little	35
4 - Not at all	35
5 - Don't know	1

(IF "NOT AT ALL" SKIP TO DEMOGRAPHICS)

In order to increase offense and shorten the length of games, Major League Baseball has proposed a series of rules changes. Please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of the following proposals:

8. It is proposed to move the pitcher's mound back from the traditional 60 feet 6 inches to 62 feet

1 - Approve	29
2 - Disapprove	59
3 - Don't know/No opinion	12

9. Another proposal is to start extra innings by placing a runner on second base at the beginning of each extra frame.

1 - Approve	17
2 - Disapprove	77
3 - Don't know/No opinion	6

10. Another proposal mandating that relief pitchers must pitch to at least 3 batters (unless finishing an inning) before being removed from the game?

1 - Approve	53
2 - Disapprove	38
3 - Don't know/No opinion	10

11. Do you think the Designated Hitter rule should be extended to the National League, eliminated from the American League or should things be left as they are?

1 - Extended to NL	22
2 - Eliminated from AL	9
3 - Left alone	61
4 - Don't know/No opinion	8

12. When you watch a baseball game do you watch on TV, online, or both TV and online?

1 - TV	79
2 - Online	4
3 - Both	15
4 - Don't know	3

13. How would you say you primarily follow baseball, by watching games, reading newspapers, listening to the radio or through video highlights?

1 - Watching games	51
2 - Newspapers	5
3 - Radio	7
4 - Video highlights	30
5 - Other	5
6 - Don't know	3