

Seton Hall Sports Poll on NFL Labor Dispute

PUBLIC FAVORS PLAYERS 35-22%; AN INCREASE SINCE FEBRUARY

S. Orange, NJ, March 3, 2011 – A Seton Hall Sports Poll conducted this week shows that with increased awareness of the NFL labor situation, the public is favoring the players, and that there is a growing belief that next season will indeed be impacted by a possible lockout.

The new poll shows the public favoring the players by 35-22%, a market change from the February poll which had it at 21-18% favoring the players. The “neither” category shrunk from 53-31%.

When asked whether they thought the possible lockout would impact the 2011 season, 33% said yes, up from 23% three weeks ago.

“This is a battle of millionaires vs. billionaires and not a traditional labor dispute,” noted Rick Gentile, director of the poll, which is conducted by The Sharkey Institute. “At this point, it appears the public will blame the owners more than the players if there is a work stoppage in keeping with the nationwide sentiment against management.”

Indeed, this mirrors public sentiment in the Wisconsin teachers dispute, where a recent CBS-New York Times Poll showed majorities opposed to cutting public employees compensation packages and reducing their collective bargaining power.

When asked which they were following more closely, 50% said the teacher’s union issue in Wisconsin and 22% the NFL labor issue.

The poll surveyed 786 randomly dialed Americans across the country, and has a margin of error of plus/minus 3.6%.

The public shows strong support for one position over another in several areas: 1) They believe the owners’ claim that the players are too highly compensated by a 64-23% margin, 2) They believe the players deserve to see the owner’s financial records before considering a lower percentage of revenue by a 60-32% margin, 3) they do not think the U.S. government should get involved by an 83-12% margin, and 4) They do not think the league should be allowed to collect money from the television networks if no games are played by a 73-18% margin.

On the matter of expanding the schedule, by 44-39% the public thought going from 16 to 18 games was a good idea, but by 59-35% they said that the players deserve extra compensation if the schedule did expand.

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.

Media: Marty Appel Public Relations (212) 245-1772, AppelPR@aol.com; Rick Gentile (917) 881-9489

The poll results:

1. Are you aware of the labor dispute between the Teachers' union and the state of Wisconsin?

1-	Yes	67
2-	No	33

2. Are you aware of the labor dispute between the NFL owners and the players?

1-	Yes	55
2-	No	45

3. Which story are you following more closely?

1-	Teachers' union and the state of Wisconsin	50
2-	NFL owners and players	22
3-	Don't know/	28

4. Do you believe the owners' claim that the players are being too highly compensated?

1-	Yes	64
2-	No	23
3-	Don't know/	14

5. Do you believe the players deserve to see the owners' financial records before considering a lower percentage of revenue?

1-	Yes	60
2-	No	32

6. Do you believe the owners' claim that their profit margins are suffering?

1-	Yes	38
2-	No	45

7. The chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee has suggested that the owners open their books to the players. Do you think the U.S. government should get involved in this labor dispute?

1-	Yes	12
2-	No	83

8. Do you think the league should be allowed to collect money from the networks if no games are played?

1-	Yes they should be allowed to collect	18
2-	No they shouldn't be allowed to collect	73

9. Do you think the expansion of the season from 16 games to 18 games is a good idea?

1-	Yes	44
2-	No	39
3-	Don't know/	17

10. Do you think the players deserve extra compensation if the season expands from 16 to 18 games?

1-	Yes	59
2-	No	35

11. Where do your sympathies lie in the dispute, with the owners or with the players?

1-	Owners	22
2-	Players	35
3-	Neither	31

12. The current collective bargaining agreement between the owners and players expires on Thursday of this week. Do you think an agreement will be reached before the deadline?

1-	Yes	17
2-	No	68
3-	Don't know/	16

(IF NO TO ABOVE)

13. Do you think the dispute will be resolved so there is no impact on the next NFL season?

1-	Yes	48
2-	No	33
3-	Don't know/	19

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

1-	Very closely	24
2-	Closely	22
3-	Somewhat closely	40
4-	Not at all	15