



## **American Public Overwhelmingly Favors Sports Sanctions Against Russia**

### *Ban would include Grand Slam appearances by Daniil Medvedev*

**South Orange, NJ March 22, 2022** - The Russian invasion of Ukraine, features death, destruction, a refugee crisis reminiscent of World War II and worldwide condemnation. But beyond the bombs, and acts of inhumanity lay multiple levels of lesser significance than the human toll, including the desire for reprisals and boycotts of all things Russian.

Included in that discussion are matters from the world of sports, and a Seton Hall Sports Poll has found that a clear majority of Americans say that governing bodies around the world should use their platforms to sanction national governments and their athletes for hostile actions against other nations and/or human right violations.

The Poll found that by a margin of 61 to 17 percent the general population of the U.S. supports such sanctions, with 67 percent of sports fans and 71 percent of avid fans in agreement. Those who said no to sanctions numbered just 16 percent of sports fans and 15 percent of avid fans. The remainder did not know or held no opinion.

The Seton Hall Sports Poll was conducted March 11-14 across the United States using a national representative sample weighted according to gender, age, ethnicity, education, income and geography based on U.S. Census Bureau figures. The Poll featured 1,528 adult respondents with a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percent.

#### **Daniil Medvedev and Grand Slam Tennis**

Asked specifically whether Russian tennis star Daniil Medvedev should be banned from upcoming Grand Slam tournaments, the general population said yes by a 43-30 percent margin (27 percent “don’t know/no opinion”). Among sports fans the margin for banning him was 44-33 percent (23 percent don’t know/no opinion) and among avid fans, it was 48-30 percent in favor of a ban, with 22 percent saying don’t know/no opinion. Medvedev has been ranked number one in the world, but will lose that position when the new rankings are issued on Monday.

“What is happening in Ukraine is a human tragedy that is significantly more important than sports,” said Professor Charles Grantham, Director of the Center for Sport Management within Seton Hall’s Stillman School of Business, which sponsors the Poll. “Banning one of tennis’ top players from a Grand Slam tournament may seem punitive but not compared to Russia’s actions on the world stage.”

## **Ice Skating**

The support for banishment grew even stronger when respondents were asked whether the International Skating Union (ISU) got it right in excluding Russia from the World Figure Skating Championships later this month. That action bars, among the team, Olympic gold medalist Anna Shcherbakova and 15-year old Kamila Valieva, who made headlines earlier this year for a doping controversy. Among the general population, 54 percent supported the ban with only 20 percent opposing it (26 percent said don't know/no opinion). Among sports fans the ban was supported by a 59-21 percent margin (20 percent don't know/no opinion), and among avid fans support was 63-20 percent with 17 percent in the don't know/no opinion category.

## **World Cup Soccer**

FIFA, the governing body of world soccer, has banned Russia from 2022 World Cup competition, and this too was heavily supported by the American public. The general population favored the ban by a 64-15 percent, a greater than 4 to 1 margin (21 percent don't know/no opinion). Among sports fans, support for the ban was even greater, with 69-16 percent favoring sanctions (15 percent don't know/no opinion). Among avid fans, support rose again to 71-15 percent (14 percent don't know/no opinion).

## **Moving Soccer Championship from Russia**

Support was similarly overwhelming for UEFA, the governing body of European soccer, for dropping St. Petersburg, Russia as the site of its Champions League final (relocating it to Paris). The general population of the U.S. approved of this move and sanction by 69-10 percent. Among sports fans, that approval rose to 74-10 percent (greater than 7 to 1 margin). Among avid fans, an even greater margin approved of these sanctions, with 79-8 percent (nearly 10 to 1) in favor. The don't know/no opinion on this was 21, 16 and 13 percent respectively.

“Soccer is the world’s most popular sport and FIFA’s World Cup and UEFA’s Champions League are its prestigious tournaments,” said Seton Hall Marketing Professor and Poll Methodologist Daniel Ladik. “The exclusion of Russian athletes, teams, and venues sends a small but important message that the world does not approve and will not abide the actions of the Russian state.”

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Questions with charted breakdowns below; an online version of this release may be found at <http://blogs.shu.edu/sportspoll/>

## **ABOUT THE POLL**

The Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted regularly since 2006, is performed by the Sharkey Institute within the Stillman School of Business. This poll was conducted online by YouGov Plc. using a national representative sample weighted according to gender, age, ethnicity, education, income and geography, based on U.S. Census Bureau figures. Respondents were selected from YouGov’s opt-in panel to be representative of all U.S residents. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls. The Seton Hall Sports Poll has been chosen for inclusion in iPoll by Cornell’s Roper Center for Public Opinion Research and its findings have been published everywhere from USA Today, ESPN, The New York Times, Washington Post, AP, and Reuters to CNBC, NPR, Yahoo Finance, Fox News and many points in between.

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### March 2022 Seton Hall Sports Poll

*This SHSP was conducted March 11<sup>th</sup> through March 14<sup>th</sup> and includes responses from 1,528 US adults with a margin of error of 3.2%. The sample mirrors the US Census percentages on age, gender, income, education, ethnicity, and region.*

Q1. Which, if any, of the following statements best describes you?

I am an avid sports fan      16%  
 I am a sports fan              38%  
 I am not a sports fan        46%

Q4a. Should sports governing bodies around the world use their platforms to sanction national governments and their athletes for hostile actions against other nations and/or human rights violations?

N=1,528	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	61%	67%	54%	71%	65%
<b>No</b>	17%	16%	17%	15%	18%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	22%	17%	29%	14%	17%

Q4b. Should individual athletes who are Russian citizens be banned from competing in the United States? (e.g. National Hockey League, National Basketball Association, Association of Tennis Professionals/Women's Tennis Association, Major League Soccer)

N=1,528	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	37%	37%	35%	41%	35%
<b>No</b>	37%	41%	33%	39%	42%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	26%	22%	32%	20%	23%

Q4c. The governing body of European soccer, UEFA, removed Russia as the site of its scheduled Championship game, assigning it to Paris. Do you agree with this decision?

N=1,528	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	69%	74%	64%	79%	73%
<b>No</b>	10%	10%	10%	8%	11%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	21%	16%	26%	13%	16%

Q5a. FIFA, the governing body of world soccer, banned Russia from participating in the forthcoming 2022 World Cup Tournament. Do you agree with this decision?

N=1,528	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	64%	69%	58%	71%	69%
<b>No</b>	15%	16%	15%	15%	16%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	21%	15%	27%	14%	15%

Q5b. The International Skating Union (ISU), the body that runs the sport around the world, said no athletes from Russia or Belarus “shall be invited or allowed to participate” in events until further notice. The ISU decision means Olympic champion Anna Shcherbakova and 15-year-old teammate Kamila Valieva will be excluded from the upcoming World Figure Skating Championships at the end of March, 2022. Do you agree with this decision?

N=1,528	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	54%	59%	48%	63%	57%
<b>No</b>	20%	21%	19%	20%	22%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	26%	20%	33%	17%	21%

Q5c. Russian Tennis player Daniil Medvedev was recently named the Association of Tennis Professionals’ number one ranked tennis player. Do you think he should be banned from the remaining Grand Slam tennis tournaments in 2022 (i.e. Wimbledon, the French Open, and US Open)?

N=1,528	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	43%	44%	40%	48%	42%
<b>No</b>	30%	33%	27%	30%	35%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	27%	23%	33%	22%	23%

## 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 among the most diverse national Catholic universities in the country.

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.

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