

## **McCain-Obama Race Overwhelms NFL, MLB Interest**

### **Seton Hall Sports Poll Finds Overwhelming Interest Among Sports Fans in 2008 Presidential Contest**

S. Orange, NJ, September 16, 2008 – Is the presidential election just another fall sporting event to sports fans?

In any case, it sure beats the NFL, baseball's post-season, and even the new fall TV lineup. In answer to the question, "which interests you the most", 75% said it was the presidential election to only 12% for the NFL's new season, 6% for the new Fall TV season and 5% for baseball's post-season and World Series. This comes from a Seton Hall Sports Poll of 699 randomly called respondents of whom two-thirds watched some or a lot of the Olympics,

The poll, conducted nationally, found that while 69% of all respondents watched "some" or "a lot" of Olympic coverage, the recently concluded political conventions held their own against that ratings-buster. 58% watched some or a lot of the Democratic Convention, and 54% watched some or a lot of the Republican Convention.

Meanwhile, if the Chinese wanted to improve the impression of their country to Americans, they scored well in that effort. 26% of our respondents said that their impression of China has improved as a result of the Olympic games, while only 11% said it had gotten worse. "If this was one of their goals in bidding for the games, 26% would mark a strong success for them." noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted by The Sharkey Institute.

In other findings:

The Olympics promotes excellence as well as competition. Viewers saw it more as competition: with 55% choosing to "root for the US to win the most medals possible" and 43% for "the greatest athletic achievements by athletes no matter what country they're from "

63% of those surveyed thought that television coverage on the NBC stations did a "good job" of covering foreign athletes vs. 31% feeling there was too much US emphasis.

The poll was conducted by telephone among a random digit dial sample of 699 adults ages 18 and older living in the continental United States, . The poll was weighted to reflect the national distribution age, race and gender. The margin of error due to sampling is +/- 3.6% percentage points for the full sample and 4.3% for sports fans.. Other factors also may affect the total error.

#### **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](http://www.shu.edu).

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### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR OLYMPIC POLL**

Which one interests you the most...

- the Presidential election 72%
- the new NFL season 10%
- the new fall television season 8%
- the baseball playoffs and World Series 6%

Do you think the Beijing Olympics received too much, just enough or not enough coverage on television?

- Too much 13%
- Just enough 66%
- Not enough 12%

Do you think the Democratic and Republican Conventions received too much, just enough or not enough coverage on television?

- Too much 27%
- Just enough 54%
- Not enough 13%

Do you think the International Olympic Committee made the right decision or made a mistake in holding the Olympics in China?

- Right decision 61%
- Mistake 26%

About how much did you watch the Republican convention, a lot, some, not much or not at all?

- A lot 20%
- Some 34%
- Not much 23%
- Not at all 22%

About how much did you watch the Democratic convention, a lot, some, not much or not at all?

- A lot 28%
- Some 30%
- Not much 18%

Not at all 24%

About how much did you watch the Beijing Olympics, a lot, some, not much or not at all?

A lot 36%

Some 34%

Not much 12%

Not at all 18%

Which sport did you follow most closely during the Olympics?

Swimming 53%

Diving 3%

Gymnastics 18%

Track and Field 7%

Men's Basketball 7%

Men's Beach Volleyball 7%

Women's Beach Volleyball 4%

Do you think the sport of Gymnastics received too much, just enough, or not enough coverage on television?

Too much 10%

Just enough 66%

Not enough 18%

Do you think the sport of Beach Volleyball received too much, just enough, or not enough coverage on television?

Too much 20%

Just enough 56%

Not enough 13%

Do you think the sport of Swimming received too much, just enough, or not enough coverage on television?

Too much 18%

Just enough 74%

Not enough 6%

Michael Phelps won 8 gold medals in Beijing. Do you think he received too much, just enough or not enough coverage on television?

Too much 17%

Just enough 73%

Not enough 8%

Which would you say best describes how you follow the Olympics? Do you mostly root for the USA to win the most medals possible or root for the greatest athletic achievements by athletes no matter what country they're from?

Root for USA 55%  
Root for best athletes 43%

Do you think television did a good job of covering foreign athletes or did they put too much emphasis on American athletes?

Yes, good job 63%  
No, too much US emphasis 31%

How much, if anything, did you learn about China itself during the coverage of the Beijing Olympics, a lot, a little or nothing at all?

A lot 17%  
Some 65%  
Nothing 17%

As a result of the Olympic games, has your impression of China improved, remained the same, or gotten worse?

Improved 26%  
Remained the same 61%  
Gotten worse 11%