

## **SETON HALL SPORTS POLL SHOWS DIMINISHED INTEREST IN OLYMPICS AND APPARENT APATHY TOWARD SPONSORSHIPS**

### ***84 Percent Say They Are Not Influenced by Olympic Sponsors***

South Orange, NJ, February 22, 2006 – Interest in this year’s Winter Olympics as compared to previous Games diminished for 26 percent of Olympic viewers, according to the Seton Hall Sports Poll Conducted by The Sharkey Institute.

The poll, conducted between February 17-21, surveyed Americans who have watched some portions of the coverage and shows 60 percent consider their interest to be the same as in past years, and 14 percent consider their interest to be greater.

The 26 percent mirrors the decline in television viewership from the Nagano Games of 1998, the last non-U.S. based Olympics, which had been the lowest rated Winter Games to this point.

Further, the poll showed 84 percent of respondents saying that they are not more likely to buy a product from an Olympic sponsor, and 85 percent not more likely to buy a product with an Olympic athlete endorsement.

“These are real red flag issues for sponsors and broadcasters to consider going forward,” noted Rick Gentile, Director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll and a professor at the Stillman School of Business, Center for Sport Management. “Diminished interest, along with apparent apathy toward sponsorships are potent messages.” (*Rick Gentile is available for follow-up interview with media*).

The poll of 631 random respondents showed the lessened interest to be about equal among all age groups with the exception of those 18-25, where only 13 percent showed diminished interest, but 29 percent said they were more interested.

On another question, “Does it matter to you personally if an athlete is using performance enhancing drugs,” an overwhelming 84 percent said it did matter, but that number dropped to 54 percent among males 18-25.

*These telephone interviews among 631 U.S. households who have been watching the Olympics, were conducted by the Seton Hall Sports Poll between February 17-21, 2006. The sample was based on a US population random-digit-dialing probability design, giving all numbers – listed and unlisted – a known and equal probability of being selected. Results are cited at a sample tolerance of plus or minus 3 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.*

### **About Seton Hall University**

For 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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Contact: Marty Appel Public Relations (212) 245-1772

1. Which is your favorite event at the Winter Olympics?

Figure Skating: 42.6%  
Alpine Skiing: 14.9%  
Snowboarding: 12.8%  
Hockey: 6.8%  
Others: 22.9%

2. Is your interest in this year's Olympics greater than, less than, or about the same as your interest in previous Olympics?

Greater than: 13.6%  
Less than: 26.2%  
The Same: 60.2%

3. Do you think that the coverage of the winter Olympics is:

Just right: 75%  
Not enough 17.6%  
Too much 7.4%

4. Do you think that the coverage of the US athletes by the broadcaster has been too much, just enough, or too little?

Too much: 16.8%  
Just enough: 73.2%  
Too little: 10%

5. Should professional athletes be allowed to compete in the Olympics?

Yes: 48.2%  
No: 51.8%

6. Do you think that the U.S. government should give direct financial support to U.S. Olympic athletes?

Yes: 59.1%  
No: 33.6%  
Don't Know: 7.3%

7. Is the International Olympic Committee doing enough, too much, or not enough to curb the use of performance enhancing drugs?

Enough: 46.7%  
Too much: 33.3%  
Not enough: 2.2%

Don't Know: 17.8%

8. Does it matter to you personally if an athlete is using performance enhancing drugs?

Yes: 85.4%

No: 14.6%

9. Are you more or less likely to buy a product from a company who is an Olympic sponsor, or does it make no difference?

More: 15.5%

Less: 1.0 %

Makes no difference: 83.5%

10. What about the athletes? Are you more or less likely to buy a product that is endorsed by an Olympic athlete or does it make no difference?

More: 13.5%

Less: 1.7%

Makes no difference: 84.8%

11. Aside from the commercial breaks, do you think that promotional and advertising signage at the Olympics venues is appropriate or too much?

Appropriate: 74.7%

Too Much: 20.4%

There ISN'T ANY: 4.9%

12. Given the spirit and tradition of the Olympics, do you think that the Olympic broadcasts are over-commercialized?

Yes: 40.1%

No: 59.9%

13. Does it bother you when athletes intentionally display their sponsors' brand before or after they compete?

Yes: 21.2%

No: 78.8%