



**Goal! USA Women's Soccer Victory
Best Sports Accomplishment of 2011**

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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This Marist Poll Reports:

2011 has been a big year for sports! And, of all the great moments, the win by USA women's soccer over Brazil in the World Cup takes the top spot as the best single sports accomplishment of the year. Nearly one-third of sports fans nationally -- 32% -- have this view. The sweep of the Los Angeles Lakers by the Dallas Mavericks comes in a distant second with 18% while Derek Jeter getting his 3,000th hit is perceived to be the most significant sports accomplishment of 2011 by 15%. 13% believe Butler's second trip to the NCAA Championship rates most significant while 11% say the Rose Bowl win by Texas Christian University deserves that description. Five percent think another sports moment is the best, and 6% are unsure.

This Marist Poll has been done in conjunction with The Marist College Center for Sports Communication.

"These results speak to the public's greater respect for women's sports as well as our clear thirst for nationalism through sport," says Dr. Keith Strudler, Director of The Marist College Center for Sports Communication. "We should always consider that while we live in an increasingly global society, sport remains one of the few places to reclaim national identity and superiority. That may be particularly true as the United States faces economic uncertainty amidst the rise of new emerging superpowers."

While those 30 years of age and older -- 31% of those 30 to 44, 39% of those 45 to 59, and 32% of those 60 and older -- rank the World Cup win as the best single sports accomplishment of the year, 30% of those under 30 say the Mavericks' victory deserves the title.

More women -- 37% -- than men -- 29% -- report USA besting Brazil in the World Cup takes the number one slot.

Packers Split the Uprights...Super Bowl Win Called Best Sports Championship of 2011

The Lombardi Trophy isn't the only award the Green Bay Packers have received in 2011. The team's Super Bowl victory is considered to be the best sports championship of the year by 36% of sports fans. Three in ten -- 30% -- say the St. Louis Cardinals winning the World Series was the home run of sports this year while 15% think the Dallas Mavericks' NBA Championship win was a slam dunk. The Boston Bruins' Stanley Cup win and Rory McIlroy's US Open victory are perceived by 8% and 5%, respectively, as the best sports championship of 2011. Three percent select another championship, and 3% are unsure.

There are age and gender differences on this question. While more than four in ten sports fans under 30 -- 41% -- and 38% of those 60 and older rate the Packers' Super Bowl victory as the greatest championship of the year, there is less of a consensus among fans in other age groups. 33% of those 30 to 44 choose the Super Bowl win while 29% select the Cardinals' World Series victory. Among fans 45 to 59, 32% select the Packers' victory while the same proportion -- 32% -- rate the Cardinals' World Series victory as the top championship of 2011.

Lockouts Have Biggest Impact on Sports in 2011...Aaron Rodgers Most Influential Player

A plurality of sports fans -- 41% -- say, when it comes to the biggest impact on sports this year, the NBA and NFL lockouts and labor disputes have left the largest mark. Nearly three in ten -- 28% -- think the scandals in college athletics have had the greatest impact while 15% report investigations and trials for performance enhancing drugs have topped the list. 12% believe college conference realignment has had the most impact, and 4% are unsure.

While 43% of fans in the West, 42% of those in the Midwest, and 42% of fans in the South believe the lockouts had the biggest impact, 41% of Northeast fans say the same about the scandals in college athletics.

Which *player* has had the biggest mark on his sport in 2011? 32% of fans say NFL quarterback Aaron Rodgers has been the most influential. Nearly one in five -- 19% -- report NBA player LeBron James had the biggest impact on basketball while 15% say NFL quarterback Tim Tebow had the biggest effect on football. Golfer Rory McIlroy is deemed by 13% to be the player with the largest impact on his sport while 12% report NBA player Dirk Nowitzki greatly impacted basketball. Nine percent are unsure.

While older sports fans -- 42% of those between 30 and 44 years of age, 31% of those 45 to 59, and 31% of those 60 and older -- say Rodgers had the biggest impact in 2011, younger fans -- 34% of those under the age of 30 -- think LeBron James has.

There is a gender difference. 39% of men say Aaron Rodgers deserves the title of most influential sports player. However, there is less of a consensus among women. Here, 23% select Rodgers while 22% choose LeBron James.

Just how many adults nationally are sports fans? More than six in ten -- 61% -- say they are while 39% report they are not.

About Keith Strudler, Ph.D.

Keith Strudler, Ph.D., is the director for the Marist College Center for Sports Communication. Dr. Strudler founded Marist's popular concentration in sports communication in 2002, now one of the nation's largest in the discipline. He studies and teaches in the areas of sports media, sport and society, and sports reporting and information. Dr. Strudler also writes weekly sports commentary for WAMC, an NPR radio station in Albany, NY.

How the Survey was Conducted

Nature of the Sample: National Poll of 1,026 Adults

This survey of 1,026 adults was conducted on November 8th through November 10th, 2011. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the continental United States were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. To increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined. Results are statistically significant within ± 3.0 percentage points. There are 624 sports fans. The results for this subset are statistically significant within ± 4.0 percentage points. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Nature of the Sample

		National	
		Adults	Sports Fans
		Col %	Col %
National Adults		100%	
Sports Fans		61%	100%
Region	Northeast	18%	17%
	Midwest	22%	21%
	South	37%	39%
	West	23%	23%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	49%	45%
	\$50,000 or more	51%	55%
Race	White	73%	73%
	Non-white	27%	27%
Age	Under 45	32%	33%
	45 or older	68%	67%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	18%	18%
	Gen X (31-46)	18%	18%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	37%	38%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	27%	25%
Gender	Men	49%	58%
	Women	51%	42%
Interview Type	Landline	75%	74%
	Cell Phone	25%	26%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted November 8th through 10th, 2011, N=1026 MOE +/- 3%. National Sports Fans: N=624 MOE +/- 4%. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Sports Fans

Asked of National Adults

Question Wording: Do you consider yourself to be a sports fan, or not?

		National Adults	
		Do you consider yourself to be a sports fan, or not?	
		Yes	No
		Row %	Row %
National Adults		61%	39%
Region	Northeast	59%	41%
	Midwest	59%	41%
	South	64%	36%
	West	60%	40%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	57%	43%
	\$50,000 or more	68%	32%
Education	Not college graduate	60%	40%
	College graduate	64%	36%
Age	Under 45	63%	37%
	45 or older	60%	40%
Age	18 to 29	64%	36%
	30 to 44	61%	39%
	45 to 59	65%	35%
	60 or older	58%	42%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	63%	37%
	Gen X (31-46)	63%	37%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	63%	37%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	57%	43%
Race	White	61%	39%
	Non-white	61%	39%
Gender	Men	72%	28%
	Women	50%	50%
Interview Type	Landline	60%	40%
	Cell Phone	63%	37%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted November 8th through 10th, 2011, N=1026 MOE +/- 3%. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Best Sports Championship in 2011

Asked of Sports Fans

Question Wording: Which one of the following was the best sports championship of the year:

		Sports Fans						
		Which one of the following was the best sports championship of the year:						
		The St. Louis Cardinals winning the World Series	Rory McIlroy winning the US Open	The Boston Bruins winning the Stanley Cup	The Dallas Mavericks winning the NBA Championship	The Green Bay Packers winning the Super Bowl	Other	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		30%	5%	8%	15%	36%	3%	3%
Region	Northeast	38%	5%	21%	6%	24%	4%	2%
	Midwest	38%	4%	1%	12%	44%	<1%	1%
	South	21%	6%	4%	22%	39%	5%	3%
	West	34%	4%	9%	14%	33%	3%	4%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	31%	4%	5%	15%	41%	3%	2%
	\$50,000 or more	30%	5%	10%	17%	32%	4%	2%
Education	Not college graduate	27%	4%	8%	16%	40%	3%	3%
	College graduate	35%	5%	8%	15%	32%	3%	3%
Age	Under 45	26%	3%	11%	21%	37%	2%	1%
	45 or older	33%	6%	6%	13%	36%	4%	4%
Age	18 to 29	23%	2%	14%	18%	41%	3%	<1%
	30 to 44	29%	4%	7%	24%	33%	2%	1%
	45 to 59	32%	5%	8%	16%	32%	4%	2%
	60 or older	33%	6%	4%	10%	38%	3%	5%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	24%	3%	13%	17%	41%	3%	<1%
	Gen X (31-46)	27%	3%	7%	26%	32%	4%	1%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	34%	4%	7%	14%	36%	3%	3%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	31%	8%	5%	9%	37%	4%	5%
Race	White	33%	6%	7%	10%	39%	3%	3%
	Non-white	22%	1%	9%	31%	31%	5%	1%
Gender	Men	33%	5%	9%	17%	31%	4%	2%
	Women	27%	4%	6%	14%	43%	2%	4%
Interview Type	Landline	32%	5%	7%	13%	36%	4%	3%
	Cell Phone	25%	4%	10%	22%	36%	2%	1%

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Best Single Sports Accomplishment in 2011

Asked of Sports Fans

Question Wording: Which one of the following was the best single sports accomplishment of the year:

		Sports Fans						
		Which one of the following was the best single sports accomplishment of the year:						
		Derek Jeter getting his 3000th hit	The Dallas Mavericks sweeping the LA Lakers	Butler making it to the NCAA Basketball Championship game for the 2nd year	The USA Womens Soccer Team defeating Brazil in the World Cup	Texas Christian University, known as TCU, winning the Rose Bowl	Other	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		15%	18%	13%	32%	11%	5%	6%
Region	Northeast	25%	9%	15%	35%	4%	6%	6%
	Midwest	15%	14%	18%	32%	8%	8%	6%
	South	14%	20%	10%	30%	17%	3%	5%
	West	8%	26%	11%	34%	10%	5%	6%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	12%	25%	11%	29%	12%	4%	6%
	\$50,000 or more	16%	13%	15%	37%	10%	5%	4%
Education	Not college graduate	17%	22%	10%	30%	10%	5%	6%
	College graduate	12%	13%	16%	36%	13%	5%	5%
Age	Under 45	18%	27%	9%	26%	11%	7%	1%
	45 or older	13%	14%	15%	35%	11%	4%	8%
Age	18 to 29	22%	30%	10%	22%	10%	6%	<1%
	30 to 44	13%	24%	8%	31%	13%	9%	2%
	45 to 59	14%	18%	14%	39%	7%	4%	6%
	60 or older	13%	11%	16%	32%	14%	4%	10%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	21%	28%	9%	22%	13%	5%	2%
	Gen X (31-46)	13%	26%	13%	32%	8%	9%	<1%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	15%	16%	14%	37%	8%	4%	6%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	11%	10%	14%	32%	17%	4%	13%
Race	White	17%	10%	15%	34%	12%	5%	6%
	Non-white	9%	39%	7%	27%	9%	6%	3%
Gender	Men	13%	20%	15%	29%	12%	6%	5%
	Women	16%	15%	11%	37%	11%	4%	6%
Interview Type	Landline	15%	15%	15%	33%	12%	4%	7%
	Cell Phone	15%	28%	6%	29%	10%	9%	2%

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Story with the Biggest Impact on Sports in 2011

Asked of Sports Fans

Question Wording: Which one of the following stories had the biggest impact on sports this year:

		Sports Fans				
		Which one of the following stories had the biggest impact on sports this year:				
		Lockouts and labor disputes in the NBA and NFL	College conference realignment	Scandals in college athletics	Investigations and trials for performance enhancing drugs	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		41%	12%	28%	15%	4%
Region	Northeast	36%	8%	41%	14%	2%
	Midwest	42%	10%	28%	15%	6%
	South	42%	15%	24%	15%	4%
	West	43%	12%	26%	15%	5%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	38%	12%	23%	21%	5%
	\$50,000 or more	46%	11%	31%	8%	3%
Education	Not college graduate	39%	11%	25%	19%	5%
	College graduate	44%	12%	32%	8%	3%
Age	Under 45	46%	11%	24%	18%	1%
	45 or older	39%	12%	29%	13%	6%
Age	18 to 29	45%	8%	19%	26%	2%
	30 to 44	48%	13%	30%	10%	<1%
	45 to 59	46%	8%	31%	12%	2%
	60 or older	34%	15%	28%	14%	9%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	45%	9%	20%	24%	2%
	Gen X (31-46)	52%	12%	28%	8%	<1%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	41%	12%	33%	12%	2%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	31%	14%	25%	17%	12%
Race	White	40%	12%	29%	14%	5%
	Non-white	46%	11%	23%	17%	3%
Gender	Men	42%	14%	29%	12%	3%
	Women	41%	8%	27%	18%	6%
Interview Type	Landline	38%	12%	29%	15%	5%
	Cell Phone	51%	11%	24%	13%	1%

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Player with the Biggest Impact on Sports in 2011

Asked of Sports Fans

Question Wording: Which one of the following players had the biggest impact on their sport this year:

		Sports Fans					
		Which one of the following players had the biggest impact on their sport this year:					
		NBA player LeBron James	Golfer Rory McIlroy	NFL quarterback Tim Tebow	NFL quarterback Aaron Rodgers	NBA player Dirk Nowitski	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		19%	13%	15%	32%	12%	9%
Region	Northeast	15%	19%	10%	34%	11%	11%
	Midwest	19%	15%	10%	42%	9%	6%
	South	18%	10%	20%	28%	16%	7%
	West	24%	10%	16%	29%	9%	11%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	24%	10%	21%	29%	9%	7%
	\$50,000 or more	16%	15%	12%	35%	14%	8%
Education	Not college graduate	23%	11%	17%	29%	11%	8%
	College graduate	12%	14%	13%	38%	14%	8%
Age	Under 45	26%	9%	12%	35%	16%	2%
	45 or older	16%	14%	17%	31%	10%	12%
Age	18 to 29	34%	5%	9%	28%	22%	3%
	30 to 44	17%	14%	16%	42%	10%	1%
	45 to 59	16%	13%	19%	31%	11%	10%
	60 or older	16%	15%	15%	31%	9%	13%
Generation	Millennials (18-30)	32%	8%	8%	29%	21%	3%
	Gen X (31-46)	18%	12%	17%	42%	9%	2%
	Baby Boomers (47-65)	15%	13%	19%	32%	10%	11%
	Silent-Greatest (Over 65)	17%	15%	14%	29%	11%	14%
Race	White	14%	14%	15%	38%	10%	10%
	Non-white	35%	9%	16%	19%	16%	4%
Gender	Men	17%	14%	12%	39%	13%	5%
	Women	22%	11%	19%	23%	11%	14%
Interview Type	Landline	17%	14%	16%	33%	11%	10%
	Cell Phone	26%	10%	14%	31%	15%	4%

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