



Marist College Institute for Public Opinion
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 ♦ Phone 845.575.5050 ♦ Fax 845.575.5111 www.maristpoll.marist.edu

Many Fans Think College Sports Programs Break NCAA Rules...

Education Should be a Priority, Say Most

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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Contact: Lee M. Miringoff
Barbara L. Carvalho
Mary E. Griffith
Marist College
845.575.5050

Keith Strudler
The Marist College Center for Sports Communication, 845.575.3506

This Marist Poll Reports:

March Madness is in full swing, and with all eyes on the road to the Final Four, sports fans nationwide are weighing in on the nature of college sports.

More than two-thirds of sports fans nationally -- 67% -- think it is common practice for college sports programs to break NCAA rules when recruiting and training college athletes. 26% believe the rules are not broken often, and 7% are unsure.

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

There has been an increase in the proportion of sports fans nationally who say college athletic programs cross the line in their recruiting and training programs. When Marist last reported this question in March of 2012, 55% said it is common for college sports officials to break the NCAA rules. 35% disagreed, and 10% were unsure.

Should the business of college sports trump education? Overwhelmingly, most sports fans say, "no." 95% of fans believe college athletes should be required to attend class and focus on their studies while just 5% of fans say college sports has become a business, and student athletes should focus on training and not be required to go to class.

"Most sports fans still enjoy the notion of amateurism in college athletics," says Dr. Keith Strudler, Director of The Marist College Center for Sports Communication. "They largely

don't want college athletes paid beyond a scholarship, and they overwhelmingly want them to attend classes like other students.”

Show Them the Money?

What is the appropriate compensation for top college athletes? More than seven in ten sports fans -- 72% -- think these athletes should only receive a scholarship. 21% believe they deserve a scholarship *and* a salary while 6% say they should neither receive a scholarship nor a salary.

In last year's survey, 68% of sports fans reported a scholarship sufficed. 27% said a scholarship *plus* a salary was the appropriate compensation while 5% thought these athletes should neither receive a scholarship nor a salary.

What about the salaries for college coaches in top sports programs? A slim majority of sports fans -- 51% -- say they should be paid less than coaches in professional sports programs. 45% say college coaches should be paid about the same amount as professional coaches while 3% think they should be paid more.

There is increasing support for top college coaches to receive the same pay as their professional counterparts. In March of 2012, nearly six in ten sports fans -- 57% -- thought college coaches should be paid less. 39% said they should receive about the same salary as professional coaches, and 4% believed they should be paid more than professional coaches.

T-R-O-U-B-L-E...Playing the Blame Game

When college athletes get into trouble, who should be held most responsible? Seven in ten sports fans nationally -- 70% -- think the athletes should take the blame. 16% say their coaches should be held accountable, and 12% say college presidents and the school's administration should take the heat. Three percent are unsure.

Just how many Americans are sports fans? 62% of adults are while 38% are not. Little has changed on this question since Marist last reported it in December. At that time, 60% of residents considered themselves to be a sports fan while 40% said they were not.

Nothing But Net...Number of NCAA Men's Teams on the Mark, Say More Than Three in Four

77% of college basketball fans think the number of teams in the NCAA men's tournament is about right. One in five -- 20% -- say the 68 teams are too many while just 3% say the number is too few.

Similar proportions of college basketball fans held these views last March when 78% said the number of teams was appropriate. 18% believed there were too many, and 4% believed there were too few.

Nearly half of adults nationally -- 48% -- follow college basketball, at least, some of the time. Included here are 30% who check out the sport a little, 10% who watch a good amount of it, and 8% who follow a great deal of it. 51% do not watch college basketball at all.

There has been a slight bump in the proportion of college basketball fans. In March of 2012, 43% reported following the sport, at least, a little bit. 56%, at that time, said they did not watch college basketball at all.

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, sports 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: Marist National Poll of 1,233 Adults

This survey of 1,233 adults was conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013. 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 landline sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined and balanced to reflect the 2010 census results for age, gender, income, race, and region. Results are statistically significant within ± 2.8 percentage points. There are 754 sports fans. The results for this subset are statistically significant within ± 3.6 percentage points. There are 597 college basketball fans. The results for this subset is 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		62%	100%
College Sports Fans		62%	87%
College Basketball Fans		48%	70%
Gender	Men	49%	58%
	Women	51%	42%
Age	Under 45	40%	40%
	45 or older	60%	60%
Age	18 to 29	18%	16%
	30 to 44	22%	24%
	45 to 59	29%	31%
	60 or older	31%	28%
Race	White	69%	68%
	African American	11%	13%
	Latino	14%	14%
	Other	5%	5%
Region	Northeast	18%	18%
	Midwest	22%	22%
	South	37%	39%
	West	23%	22%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	49%	42%
	\$50,000 or more	51%	58%
Education	Not college graduate	60%	57%
	College graduate	40%	43%
Interview Type	Landline	70%	71%
	Cell Phone	30%	29%

Marist Poll National Adults. Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=1233 MOE +/- 2.8 percentage points. National Sports Fans: N=754 MOE +/- 3.6 percentage points. National College Basketball Fans: N=597 MOE +/- 4.0 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		Sports Fans		
		When recruiting and training college athletes, do you think it is a common practice or not a common practice for college sports programs to break NCAA rules?		
		Common practice	Not a common practice	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		67%	26%	7%
College Sports Fans		69%	26%	5%
College Basketball Fans		69%	25%	5%
Region	Northeast	72%	23%	5%
	Midwest	70%	24%	6%
	South	66%	26%	8%
	West	64%	28%	9%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	62%	28%	10%
	\$50,000 or more	73%	22%	4%
Education	Not college graduate	64%	28%	8%
	College graduate	71%	23%	6%
Age	Under 45	73%	23%	4%
	45 or older	64%	27%	9%
Age	18 to 29	68%	27%	4%
	30 to 44	76%	20%	4%
	45 to 59	71%	25%	3%
	60 or older	55%	29%	15%
Race	White	68%	26%	6%
	Non-white	69%	23%	8%
Gender	Men	72%	24%	4%
	Women	62%	27%	11%
Interview Type	Landline	66%	26%	8%
	Cell Phone	72%	24%	5%

Marist Poll National Sports Fans: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=754 MOE +/- 3.6 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		Sports Fans		
		Which statement comes closer to your view:		
		College sports have become a business and student athletes should not have to go to class but be allowed to focus on training and competing	College sports is amateur sports and student athletes should be required to attend class and focus on their studies	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		5%	95%	1%
College Sports Fans		4%	95%	1%
College Basketball Fans		5%	94%	1%
Region	Northeast	7%	91%	1%
	Midwest	1%	97%	1%
	South	4%	95%	1%
	West	5%	94%	1%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	6%	94%	1%
	\$50,000 or more	4%	95%	1%
Education	Not college graduate	5%	94%	1%
	College graduate	4%	96%	1%
Age	Under 45	6%	93%	1%
	45 or older	3%	96%	1%
Age	18 to 29	4%	96%	0%
	30 to 44	8%	91%	1%
	45 to 59	2%	98%	0%
	60 or older	5%	93%	2%
Race	White	3%	96%	1%
	Non-white	8%	92%	0%
Gender	Men	6%	93%	1%
	Women	3%	97%	1%
Interview Type	Landline	3%	95%	1%
	Cell Phone	7%	93%	0%

Marist Poll National Sports Fans: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=754 MOE +/- 3.6 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		Sports Fans		
		Which comes closest to your view: Top college athletes who play for their college teams:		
		Should get a scholarship to college and get paid a salary	Should only get a scholarship	Should not get a scholarship and should not be paid a salary
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		21%	72%	6%
College Sports Fans		22%	72%	6%
College Basketball Fans		23%	71%	6%
Region	Northeast	18%	69%	13%
	Midwest	17%	77%	5%
	South	28%	68%	4%
	West	16%	79%	5%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	18%	77%	5%
	\$50,000 or more	25%	69%	5%
Education	Not college graduate	20%	75%	5%
	College graduate	23%	70%	7%
Age	Under 45	23%	69%	7%
	45 or older	20%	74%	5%
Age	18 to 29	18%	70%	12%
	30 to 44	27%	69%	4%
	45 to 59	19%	76%	5%
	60 or older	21%	73%	6%
Race	White	17%	78%	6%
	Non-white	32%	60%	8%
Gender	Men	25%	67%	8%
	Women	16%	79%	4%
Interview Type	Landline	21%	74%	5%
	Cell Phone	22%	69%	9%

Marist Poll National Sports Fans: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=754 MOE +/- 3.6 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		Sports Fans		
		What about college coaches, do you think coaches of top college sports programs should be paid more than coaches in professional sports, paid less, or paid about the same amount as coaches in professional sports?		
		Paid more	Paid less	Paid about the same amount
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		3%	51%	45%
College Sports Fans		3%	52%	45%
College Basketball Fans		3%	52%	45%
Region	Northeast	2%	43%	56%
	Midwest	1%	57%	42%
	South	7%	50%	43%
	West	2%	55%	44%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	4%	46%	50%
	\$50,000 or more	3%	55%	43%
Education	Not college graduate	4%	49%	47%
	College graduate	2%	55%	43%
Age	Under 45	4%	45%	50%
	45 or older	2%	56%	42%
Age	18 to 29	5%	39%	56%
	30 to 44	4%	50%	47%
	45 to 59	2%	58%	40%
	60 or older	3%	53%	44%
Race	White	4%	50%	46%
	Non-white	3%	50%	46%
Gender	Men	2%	48%	49%
	Women	5%	56%	40%
Interview Type	Landline	3%	55%	42%
	Cell Phone	4%	42%	54%

Marist Poll National Sports Fans: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=754 MOE +/- 3.6 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		Sports Fans			
		Who should be held most responsible when college athletes get in trouble:			
		The college coaches	The college president and administration	The college athletes	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Sports Fans		16%	12%	70%	3%
College Sports Fans		15%	12%	72%	2%
College Basketball Fans		16%	11%	71%	2%
Region	Northeast	19%	7%	72%	2%
	Midwest	12%	15%	70%	3%
	South	15%	13%	70%	2%
	West	16%	10%	69%	4%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	14%	15%	68%	3%
	\$50,000 or more	16%	9%	72%	2%
Education	Not college graduate	14%	17%	67%	2%
	College graduate	18%	5%	75%	3%
Age	Under 45	15%	11%	72%	2%
	45 or older	16%	12%	69%	3%
Age	18 to 29	18%	12%	67%	3%
	30 to 44	14%	11%	75%	1%
	45 to 59	17%	8%	73%	2%
	60 or older	15%	15%	65%	5%
Race	White	15%	10%	73%	2%
	Non-white	16%	15%	65%	3%
Gender	Men	16%	13%	69%	2%
	Women	15%	10%	72%	4%
Interview Type	Landline	14%	13%	70%	2%
	Cell Phone	19%	7%	71%	3%

Marist Poll National Sports Fans: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=754 MOE +/- 3.6 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		National Adults	
		Do you consider yourself to be a sports fan, or not?	
		Yes	No
		Row %	Row %
National Adults		62%	38%
Region	Northeast	60%	40%
	Midwest	61%	39%
	South	64%	36%
	West	59%	41%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	52%	48%
	\$50,000 or more	71%	29%
Education	Not college graduate	59%	41%
	College graduate	66%	34%
Age	Under 45	63%	37%
	45 or older	61%	39%
Age	18 to 29	56%	44%
	30 to 44	69%	31%
	45 to 59	66%	34%
	60 or older	57%	43%
Race	White	60%	40%
	Non-white	64%	36%
Gender	Men	72%	28%
	Women	51%	49%
Interview Type	Landline	62%	38%
	Cell Phone	60%	40%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=1233 MOE +/- 2.8 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		College Basketball Fans		
		The current NCAA men's basketball tournament starts with 68 teams. Do you think this is too many, too few, or about the right number?		
		Too many	Too few	About the right number
		Row %	Row %	Row %
College Basketball Fans		20%	3%	77%
Region	Northeast	19%	2%	79%
	Midwest	26%	3%	71%
	South	18%	5%	77%
	West	17%	1%	82%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	25%	3%	73%
	\$50,000 or more	17%	4%	79%
Education	Not college graduate	22%	3%	75%
	College graduate	18%	3%	79%
Age	Under 45	23%	1%	76%
	45 or older	18%	4%	78%
Race	White	20%	2%	78%
	Non-white	20%	5%	75%
Gender	Men	17%	4%	79%
	Women	24%	2%	74%
Interview Type	Landline	22%	3%	75%
	Cell Phone	15%	4%	82%

Marist Poll National Basketball Football Fans: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=597 MOE +/- 4.0 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		National Adults			
		Do you watch or follow college basketball:			
		A great deal	A good amount	A little	Not at all
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		8%	10%	30%	51%
Region	Northeast	5%	11%	27%	57%
	Midwest	14%	11%	28%	47%
	South	7%	9%	33%	50%
	West	6%	10%	30%	54%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	7%	7%	23%	62%
	\$50,000 or more	9%	14%	36%	41%
Education	Not college graduate	7%	9%	27%	58%
	College graduate	11%	13%	35%	41%
Age	Under 45	9%	11%	24%	56%
	45 or older	7%	10%	35%	48%
Age	18 to 29	6%	14%	19%	62%
	30 to 44	12%	8%	28%	52%
	45 to 59	9%	12%	37%	43%
	60 or older	6%	8%	33%	53%
Race	White	7%	10%	30%	53%
	Non-white	10%	11%	30%	49%
Gender	Men	11%	14%	32%	43%
	Women	5%	7%	29%	59%
Interview Type	Landline	9%	10%	32%	49%
	Cell Phone	6%	11%	27%	56%

Marist Poll National Adults: Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=1233 MOE +/- 2.8 percentage points.
Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.