

## Seton Hall Sports Poll

### **PUBLIC COMES DOWN HARD ON SAINTS TOO; ONE IN FOUR THINK PUNISHMENT NOT SEVERE ENOUGH – 51% THINK NFL RESPONSE WILL REDUCE INJURIES**

S. Orange, NJ, March 29, 2012 – More than 1 in 4 Americans who follow sports would have gone farther than the NFL did in punishing the New Orleans Saints for the use of “bounties” to reward the infliction of injury on opposing players.

According to a Seton Hall Sports Poll conducted this week, 26% felt the punishment, which included the season-long suspension of the team’s head coach, was not severe enough, with 57% saying the punishment was appropriate. Only 11% felt it was too severe.

51% thought the NFL’s response would have an impact on the number of player injuries during the season.

The poll was conducted among 779 randomly selected people across the country, of whom 618 said they followed sports at least somewhat. The poll has a margin of error of 3.6%; 4% for sports fans.

“When the punishment first came out, the reaction was that it was strong but appropriate, but this shows that a lot of people felt the Commissioner should have even gone further“ noted Rick Gentile, director of the poll, which is conducted by the Sharkey Institute.

### **COLLEGE HOOPS: A DISSATISFIED PUBLIC ON MANY ISSUES**

Meanwhile, as NCAA college basketball heads for the Final Four, the overall public voiced discontent over a number of issues related to the sport.

57% felt the proposal by Education Secretary Arne Duncan - that a 40% graduation rate be imposed to make a team tournament eligible – should be higher, with only 19% saying there should be no requirement.

76% felt that, some, most, or almost all colleges break the rules in recruiting athletes.

59% felt that it hurts the game when players leave school early to turn pro.

77% felt that coaches – both basketball and football – should be more tightly supervised by their universities.

More than 1 in 4 – 28% - think that college basketball players intentionally influence the outcome of games because of gambling interests.

“These results run consistent to polling in previous years,” said Gentile. “People tend to want the college experience to be more about college than a training ground for professional athletes.”

## CALL FOR A FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT AMONG SPORTS FANS

Asked if they would like to see the NCAA football champion crowned with a tournament, rather than the current Bowl Championship Series, 37% of all respondents who said they were sports fans said they would, with the number rising to 50% among those who said they followed sports "somewhat" and 61% saying they followed sports closely.

## WANT PEYTON OR TEBOW ON YOUR TEAM?

Sports fans were asked if they have like to have had Peyton Manning or Tim Tebow on their team, and in both cases 56% said no, indicating they were happy with their own guy. Only 36% said they would have wanted Manning; 37% Tebow.

### 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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### The poll results:

The Final Four of the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament will take place on Saturday. The U.S. Secretary of Education has proposed that a university should only be allowed to participate in the tournament if 40% of its players graduate.

1. Do you think 40% is appropriate, should it be higher, lower or should there be no requirement at all?

1. 40%	16%
2. Higher	57
3. Lower	2
4. No requirement	19
5. Don't know/	6

2. How much importance do you think universities place on graduating basketball players: a high importance, medium importance, little importance or no importance?

1. High importance	22
2. Medium importance	37
3. Low importance	23
4. No importance	7
5. Don't know	12

3. Do you think students who receive athletic scholarships should be prevented from playing professionally until their class graduates, or should they be allowed to go pro sooner?

1. Prevented from going pro	42
2. Allowed to go pro	49
3. Don't know	10

4. The president of the NCAA proposed that college basketball players be required to play at least two years before becoming eligible for the NBA Draft. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

1. Agree	58
2. Disagree	32
3. Don't know/	10

5. How many college basketball programs do you think break the rules in recruiting athletes, all or almost all of them, most of them, only some of them, or very few or none of them?

1. All or almost all	16
2. Most	27
3. Only some	33
4. Very few or none	11
5. Don't know	13

6. Do you think it hurts the game or doesn't hurt the game when colleges recruit athletes they know won't stay for the full duration of their eligibility?

1. Hurts	59
2. Doesn't hurt	29
3. Don't know	13

7. Do you think student/athletes should be paid a salary (in addition to their scholarships) to participate in revenue-producing college sports?

1. Yes	24
2. No	69
3. Don't know	7

8. Do you think basketball and football coaches should be more tightly supervised by their universities?

1. Yes	77
2. No	14
3. Don't know	9

9. Do you think the publishing of point spreads encourages gambling on college basketball or not?

1. Yes	58
2. No	25
3. Don't know	17

10. Do you think that college basketball players intentionally influence the outcomes of games because of gambling interests?

1. Yes	28
2. No	53
3. Don't know	19

11. Do you think there should be a tournament to determine the national collegiate football champion as there is for basketball or are you satisfied with the current Bowl Championship Series?

1. National tournament	37
2. Bowl Championship Series	44
3. Don't know	19

12. How closely do you follow sports, very closely, closely, somewhat closely or not at all?

1. Very closely	19
2. Closely	21
3. Somewhat closely	41

4. Not at all 19

The rest of the questions were asked only of those that follow sports, very closely, closely, or somewhat closely.

THE NEW ORLEANS SAINTS WERE RECENTLY PUNISHED BY THE NFL FOR IMPLEMENTING A BOUNTY SYSTEM TO ENCOURAGE TEAM MEMBERS TO INJURE OPPOSING PLAYERS. HEAD COACH SEAN PAYTON WAS SUSPENDED FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR WITHOUT PAY, THE TEAM FOREFEITED TWO SECOND ROUND DRAFT CHOICES AND OTHER COACHES WERE SUSPENDED AND FINED.

13. Do you think the penalty imposed by the NFL is too severe, not severe enough or appropriate?

1. Too severe	11
2. Not severe enough	26
3. Appropriate	57
4. Don't know	6

14. Do you think the NFL's response to this issue will have an impact on the number of player injuries throughout the season?

1. Yes	51
2. No	39
3. Don't know/	10

15. Peyton Manning recently signed a 5-year contract for 95 million dollars with the Denver Broncos. Would you have wanted to see the NFL team you root for sign Peyton Manning?

1. Yes	36
2. No	56
3. Don't know	8

16. Tim Tebow was recently traded from the Broncos to the New York Jets. Would you have wanted to see the NFL team you root for trade for Tim Tebow?

1. Yes	37
2. No	56
3. Don't know/	7

