

## **Poll Gauges Fan Reaction to Steroids in Baseball as Season Looms**

### **Seton Hall Sports Poll Finds Nearly 85% Will Support MLB As Much or More Than Before Despite Steroids Hearings and Mitchell Report**

#### ***Democrats, Republicans Split Evenly on Clemens***

#### **Younger Fans Less Concerned About Steroid Use and Oversight Than Older**

S. Orange, NJ, March 21, 2008 – A huge majority of sports fans say they will follow Major League Baseball, buy its tickets and buy its merchandise in 2008, despite a winter of the Mitchell Report, a Congressional Hearing, a Barry Bonds indictment, and the Roger Clemens accusations.

In a poll conducted Monday to Wednesday of this week by the Seton Hall Sports Poll, 88% of those who said they were sports fans said they would be inclined to watch or listen more, or the same as in the past. 83% said they were inclined to buy the same amount or more MLB licensed merchandise, and 85% said they would be inclined to buy the same number, or more tickets to games.

“That’s a healthy sign for Major League Baseball after a very tough off-season,” noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted by The Sharkey Institute. “It’s consistent with what we have seen over the past several years, where despite steroid allegations, particularly revolving around Barry Bonds, baseball has been setting attendance records and television ratings have been climbing. So if MLB had concerns this is an early sign that the support for the game continues to be solid.

The poll was conducted by telephone among a random digit dial sample of 548 adults ages 18 and older living in the continental United States, with 69% of them identifying themselves as sports fans. The poll was weighted to reflect the national distribution age, race and gender. The margin of error due to sampling is +/- 4.2 percentage points for most estimates. The margin is 5.2% for just sports fans. Other factors also may affect the total error.

Another finding of the poll was that those identifying themselves as either Democrats or Republicans had similar conclusions about Roger Clemens and steroid questions, despite the Congressional hearing in which Representatives seemed to be divided along party lines in their questioning. Only 30% of Democrats and 28% of Republicans felt such a hearing should have been held, while 65% of Democrats and 69% of Republicans felt he should be prosecuted for perjury if it is shown that Clemens lied to Congress.

However, a party division did appear on the question of whether the respondents thought Clemens used performance enhancing drugs, with 63% of Democrats thinking he did, and only 41% of Republicans agreeing. 50% of Democrats thought the Mitchell Report was fair in identifying Clemens as a PHD user, to only 39% of Republicans.

In terms of general perception of figures in Major League Baseball, Barry Bonds had a 31% favorable rating among all respondents and 34% among sports fans; Roger Clemens numbers were 32% and 34%, Andy Pettitte 24% and 32%, Alex Rodriguez

45% and 55%, and Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig 26% and 33%. Rodriguez was not implicated in the Mitchell report, but the survey was taken to measure the popularity of the player who is arguably the most talented in the game today.

The poll also found that young people are the least concerned by steroids in baseball. Half of young sports fans (age 18-29) think MLB is doing enough about the problem of steroids; only a quarter of those 60 and older do. Young sports fans are also less likely to discount baseball records due to steroid use.

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We'd like to get your overall opinion of some people in the news. As I read each name, please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of these people – or if you have never heard of them. How about baseball player Barry Bonds?

#### **All respondents, Sports Fans, Democrats, Republicans, Male, Female**

Favorable 31% (34%) (37%) (23%) (31%) (32%)  
Unfavorable 43% (48%) (43%) (54%) (52%) (37%)

How about baseball player Roger Clemens?

Favorable 32% (34%) (36%) (35%) (35%) (29%)  
Unfavorable 33% (38%) (37%) (32%) (41%) (27%)

How about baseball player Andy Pettitte

Favorable 24% (32%) (25%) (27%) (33%) (19%)  
Unfavorable 12%(15%) (13%) (10%) (18%) (6%)

How about baseball player Alex Rodriguez

Favorable 45% (55%) (46%) (46%) (59%) (36%)  
Unfavorable 10% (13%) (11%) (10%) (14%) (7%)

How about Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig?

Favorable 26% (33%) (30%) (28%) (36%) (19%)  
Unfavorable 21% (26%) (21%) (22%) (32%) (11%)

Do you think that baseball players have been scrutinized more than athletes in other professional sports with regard to steroid use?

Strongly agree 19% (22%) (19%) (17%) ((20%) (19%)  
Agree – 42% (44%) (44%) (54%) (41%) (47%)  
Disagree 22% (24%) (23%) (23%) (24%) (22%)

How much have you read or heard about the use of performance-enhancing drugs by MLB Players?

A great deal – 37% (44%) (37%) (44%) (46%) (32%)  
Some 38% (40%) (40%) (44%) (37%) (43%)  
Not much 12% (10%) (18%) (8%) (12%) (12%)  
Not at all 10% (6%) (6%) (5%) (5%) (13%)

Do you think that the naming of players in the findings in the Mitchell Report on steroid use by released in December of last year was fair or unfair to the players named?

Fair 44% (46%) (45%) (52%) (53%) (36%)  
Unfair 47% (48%) (48%) (43%) (40%) (55%)

Do you think the Mitchell Report was fair or unfair in alleging that Roger Clemens used performance-enhancing drugs?

Fair 45% (48%) (46%) (44%) (50%) (39%)  
Unfair 45% (45%) (46%) (46%) (42%) (50%)

Should Congress have held a hearing looking into Roger Clemens possible use of performance enhancing drugs?

Held a hearing 29% (29%) ((28%) (26%) (30%) (28%)  
Not held a hearing 63% (65%) (64%) (69%) (64%) (65%)

Do you think Roger Clemens did or did not use performance-enhancing drugs during his career?

Did 51% (55%) (53%) (54%) (63%) (41%)  
Did not 12% (14%) (13%) (9%) (13%) (12%)

If Roger Clemens is found to have lied to Congress about his steroid use do you think he should be prosecuted for perjury?

Should 67% (69%) (64%) (72%) (65%) (69%)  
Should not 25% (26%) (30%) (21%) (28%) (24%)

Do you think Major League Baseball is currently doing enough in dealing with the steroid problem?

Enough 39% (42%) (47%) (36%) (41%) (37%)  
Not doing enough 50% (50%) (43%) (57%) (53%) (50%)

Which comes closest to your view? Would you say...I take baseball records less seriously than I used to as a result of allegations of steroid use by baseball players or, allegations of steroid use by baseball players haven't affected how seriously I take baseball records?

I take baseball records less seriously 43% (44%) ((37%) (53%) (52%) (35%)  
Allegations have no effect 50% (52%) (56%) (41%) (45%) (58%)

Considering all the recent news regarding steroid use by players, will you be inclined to watch or listen to more, less or about the same amount of games this year?

More 4% (5%) (5%) (2%) ((6%) (3%)  
Less 11% (11%) (10%) (12%) (13%) (11%)  
About the same 80% (83%) (83%) (84%) (80%) (83%)

Considering all the recent news regarding steroid use by players, will you be inclined to purchase more, less or about the same amount of hats, shirts and other baseball related merchandise?

More 1% (1%) (1%) (0%) ((1%) (0%)  
Less 15% (16%) (13%) (14%) (18%) (12%)  
About the same 79% (82%) (83%) (83%) (79%) (82%)

Considering all the recent news regarding steroid use by players, will you be inclined to purchase more, less or about the same amount tickets to baseball games?

More 2% (3%) (1%) (2%) (4%) (1%)

Less 12% (13%) (13%) (11%) (13%) (11%)

About the same 80% (82%) (84%) (81%) (79%) (85%)