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Siena New York Sports Poll

NY'ers Give Sanchez Slight Nod over Tebow as Jets QB
Yankees Top Team; Jeter NY's No. 1 Athlete; Giants and Eli Closing Gap
Majority Oppose Mixed Martial Arts; 65% Believe Pettitte will Succeed

Loudonville, NY – Mark Sanchez holds a slim four point advantage over Jets newcomer Tim Tebow among all New Yorkers, as well as among Jets fans when asked who they would rather see as the starting quarterback in 2012 according to a new poll released today by the Siena College Research Institute. Once again, the New York Yankees and their captain Derek Jeter are New York's favorites, but after their Super Bowl victory, the New York Giants and their quarterback, Eli Manning have increased in popularity as almost half of New Yorkers are Giant fans and 11 percent say Eli is the Empire State's top current athlete.

Fifty-two percent side with opponents of mixed martial arts (MMA), who say that it is dangerous, even barbaric and that we should not allow such a violent sport to be practiced in New York as opposed to 38 percent that agree with supporters that say it should be legal as it is in many states and that if legal, MMA would generate fan interest, direct revenues and be an engine of economic development. After Andy Pettitte's signing with the Yankees, 65 percent of all residents and 78 percent of Yankee fans think the lefthander will have at least a somewhat or very successful season in the Bronx.

“Both Tebow and Sanchez are very popular with an identical 63 percent favorability score among sports fans. Coach Ryan, seen unfavorably by nearly as many New Yorkers as view him positively, will have to juggle a quarterback controversy when the season arrives as Sanchez is only a four point pick to start over Tebow both statewide and among the Jet faithful,” according to Dr. Don Levy, SRI's director.

“Nearly a third of New Yorkers call the Yankees their number one favorite team and an additional twenty-two percent are fans of the Bronx Bombers. As the baseball season gets underway, hopes are high as seventy percent of all New Yorkers and eighty-two percent of Yankee fans think chances are good or excellent for a 28th World Series championship,” Levy said.

“Nearly eight in ten Yankee fans and two-thirds of New Yorkers believe that this spring will be a fountain of youth for Andy Pettitte and that Pettitte, a fan favorite seen favorably by fifty-four percent of all New Yorkers, will have a successful 2012 campaign,” according to Levy.

“It must be great to be Derek Jeter! Number TWO is seen as the single greatest athlete currently playing for a New York team or simply associated with New York by more than twenty-five percent of all state residents, nearly forty percent of Yankee fans, over a third of sports fans and is the top pick of fans of every other

professional team in the state. A staggering seventy-four percent of all residents, and nearly ninety percent of sports fans view Jeter favorably,” Levy adds.

Seventeen percent of state residents, up from 10 percent last September; call the New York Giants their top team. A total of 49 percent of New Yorkers rank the Giants in their top three favorites which puts them within four points of the Yankees. Last September the Yankees held a 20 point edge. Giant quarterback, Eli Manning is viewed favorably by 70 percent of New Yorkers while Coach Tom Coughlin is seen favorably by 38 percent but is unknown by 54 percent. Sixty-five percent of all New Yorkers and 80 percent of Giant fans think the Giants have a good or excellent chance for another championship in the 2012-13 season.

Fifty-seven percent of all state residents, 69 percent of men and 47 percent of women describe themselves as sports fans.

Rounding out the top five favorite teams for New Yorkers after the Yankees (53%) and the Giants (49%) are the Mets (26%), the Jets (26%) and the Knicks (24%). In addition to Jeter and Manning, Carmelo Anthony, Mariano Rivera, Alex Rodriguez, Tim Tebow and Jeremy Lin are named by at least 2 percent as the greatest current New York athlete. While large majorities of New Yorkers think both the Yankees and Giants have a good or excellent chance to win a championship this year, no more than 39 percent give any of the other New York area teams a good chance to win this year.

“While a majority of New Yorkers oppose the legalization of mixed martial arts, young state residents strongly support MMA as do fifty percent of men. MMA is strongly opposed by women and older residents. This is one issue where lines are drawn by age and gender and feelings are strong in each direction,” according to Levy.

Jeremy Lin of the New York Knicks is viewed favorably by 57 percent of all state residents and unfavorably by only 6 percent. Carmelo Anthony’s numbers are 38 percent favorable and 17 percent unfavorable. Lin is highly regarded by both men and women as well as young people, New York City and suburban residents.

“While Lin-sanity may have subsided, the Knicks’ point guard has taken a big bite out of the Big Apple’s fans in a New York minute,” Levy said.

The SRI New York Sports Poll was conducted March 25 – 29 and April 1 - 3, 2012 by random telephone calls to 807 New York adults via landline and cell phones. Data was statistically adjusted by age and gender to ensure representativeness. SRI reports this data at a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of \pm 3.5 points. For more information or comments, please call Dr. Don Levy, Director Siena College Research Institute, at 518-783-2901. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at www.siena.edu/sri/research



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Siena College Poll Trends – April 2012

Q. 18 Turning to one other subject before we close, would you describe yourself as a sports fan, or not?

DATE	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2012	57	42	0
September 2011	64	36	0
March 2011	59	41	0
April 2010	61	39	0
November 2009	60	40	0
March 2008	61	38	1
February 2008	63	37	0

Q. 19 Now, thinking about some sports teams in the New York area, which of the following teams would you say is your favorite?

DATE	YANKEES	GIANTS	METS	BILLS	KNICKS	JETS	OTHER	DON'T KNOW	NO FAVORITE
April 2012	31	17	9	6	6	5	14	2	10
September 2011	28	10	7	5	3	5	29	2	10
March 2011	30	8	11	5	11	9	16	2	8
April 2010	28	8	9	5	1	3	33	0	13
March 2008	27	9	12	4	3	2	31	0	13

Now, thinking about some sports teams in the New York area, which of the following teams would you say is your favorite?
 Of the remaining teams, which team is your second favorite? Of the remaining teams, which team is your next favorite?
 (COMBINED)

DATE	YANKEES FAN	GIANTS FAN	METS FAN	BILLS FAN	KNICKS FAN	JETS FAN
April 2012	53	49	26	15	24	26
March 2011	55	35	30	16	29	33

Q. 22 Many great athletes participate in organized sports here in the New York area. Who is in your opinion the single greatest athlete currently playing for a New York team or that you associate with sports in New York? ^

DATE	JETER	E. MANNING	ANTHONY	RIVERA	RODRIGUEZ	OTHER	DON'T KNOW	NO FAVORITE
April 2012	26	11	4	3	2	17	27	8
September 2011	25	3	2	2	2	41	22	3

Q. 23F Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Derek Jeter?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2012	74	6	20
March 2008	67	6	28

Q. 23G Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Alex Rodriguez?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2012	51	23	26
March 2008	52	10	39

Q. 23H Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about Andy Pettitte?

DATE	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
April 2012	54	9	36
March 2008	49	10	41

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- Q. 27** Lastly, there is an issue being debated in Albany whether or not New York should legalize mixed martial arts, known by some as cage fighting or ultimate fighting. Supporters say it should be legal in the state of New York. Mixed martial arts or MMA is already legal in many states and if legal here in New York would generate fan interest, direct revenues and would be an engine of economic development. Opponents say MMA is dangerous, even barbaric and we should not allow such a violent sport to be practiced here in New York. Do you side with the supporters of MMA or with the opponents?

DATE	SIDE WITH SUPPORTERS	SIDE WITH OPPONENTS	DON'T HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION
April 2012	38	52	9
September 2011	39	48	12
March 2011	39	41	19

Poll Trend Notes:* All surveys are of New York State residents. The polls of March and September 2011 and April 2012 include both landline and cell phone samples.

^ Inconsequential wording change.