

# UMass Lowell Center for Public Opinion

## 2017 Sports Poll – Sports Betting & Fantasy Football

### August 14, 2017 – August 21, 2017

N=1,000 American adults  
Margin of error +/- 3.7% for all respondents

See <http://uml.edu/polls> for full questionnaire/topline results and detailed methodology disclosure.

Survey Co-Directors: Joshua J. Dyck, Ph.D. and Francis T. Talty, Ph.D.

Survey Analysis by Joshua J. Dyck, Ph.D.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

In partnership with the Washington Post, the UMass Lowell Center for Public Opinion surveyed 1,000 American adults on their attitudes about sports. This, the fifth release in a series, focuses on Americans attitudes towards and participation in fantasy sports and sports betting.

### FINDINGS:

***A majority of Americans approve of making betting on professional sporting events legal; this is the highest level support on record***

- 55% of Americans approve of making betting on professional sports legal compared to just 33% who disapprove and 12% who did not express an opinion. Compared to a 1993 Gallup/CNN/USA Today poll where just 41% approved of gambling on pro sports and 56% disapproved, we see a significant increase in support for gambling over the last couple of decades. The fact that a majority now approves of betting is likely to spur a discussion in the states about whether governments should move to legalize gambling on professional sports and other types of gaming. As of now, sports betting is only legal in four US states: Nevada, Delaware, Oregon and Montana.
- Support for betting on sports is strongest amongst avid fans, men, Latinos, and those under age 50. 63% of men approve of betting on pro sports compared to 47% of women. Among all sports fans, 57% favor betting compared to 43% among non-fans. But for the most avid fans, who represent 20% of American adults, 70% approve of betting on sports. More Latinos (65%) approve of pro sports betting than white (53%) or black (51%) respondents. Only 41% of those 65 and over approve of sports betting, but majorities of 18-29 year olds (62%), 30-39 year olds (58%), 40-49 year olds (68%) and 50-64 year olds (51%) approve of betting. *These age differences suggest that the approval of professional sports betting is likely to increase over time.*

***One in five sports fans have bet on pro sports in the last 5 years; nearly ¾ of those who have bet on sports says it makes watching sports more interesting***

- Not only are Americans in favor of the legalization of sports gambling, but 17% of all Americans and 21% of all sports fans have placed a bet on pro sports in the last 5 years. Among those who have placed a bet, nearly ¾ (73%) indicated that placing a bet makes watching sports more interesting and only 1% say it made it less interesting; 26% had no opinion on the issue.

***16% of sports fans have participated in a fantasy sports league; sports betting is more popular and prevalent than fantasy football***

- With all of the focus on fantasy sports in recent years, just 16% of sports fans participated in a fantasy league in the past 5 years. Among those who participated in fantasy sports, the vast majority (80%) participated in fantasy football. Of those who play fantasy sports, 51% said it led them to watch more games. Less than a quarter (23%) of those who participated in fantasy sports played in a daily fantasy league like Draft Kings or Fan Duel. That means that only 3% of all Americans have participated in daily fantasy leagues in the last 5 years.
- With all the focus on fantasy sports and especially the number of controversies surrounding daily fantasy sports, it is important to note that the majority (57%) of Americans who have placed a pro sports bet in the last 5 years *did not participate in fantasy football, including daily fantasy football*. Only 15% of those who bet on sports participated in daily fantasy football. The market for professional sports betting, which is only legal in 4 of the 50 states extends well beyond the domain of fantasy and daily fantasy football.