

After Iowa, Here's What the Polls Say About New Hampshire

Traditionally, the Iowa Caucuses whittle the presidential field down considerably. And as has been pointed out numerous times over the past 12 months, this has been an election cycle during which the rulebook was thrown out.

The Republican field shrunk by one on Monday night, and it lost another Wednesday, but it's not likely to shrink any further until after next Tuesday's New Hampshire Primary. On the Democrat side, it's now literally down to a one-on-one battle to the nomination.

With that in mind, the polls have shifted their focus almost entirely on next Tuesday and the Granite State. So, let's take a look at the numbers.

Republicans

In New Hampshire, it's very much a case of Donald Trump, followed by everyone else. To keep it that way, Trump is going to have to be much more successful at driving his get-out-the-vote effort, or he could be getting out of the race:

1. Donald Trump	percent
2. Ted Cruz	percent
3. John Kasich	percent
4. Marco Rubio	percent
5. Jeb Bush	percent
6. Chris Christie	percent
7. Carly Fiorina	percent

8. Ben Carson percent

9. Rick Santorum percent

The Big Field

The size of the field as the primary race shifts to New Hampshire is a byproduct of two factors. First, the Republican Party establishment has failed to coalesce behind a single candidate—a problem it hasn’t faced in many years. Secondly, the demographics of the New Hampshire Republican Party provided a natural “fire line” for several establishment candidates who could not gain traction with Iowa voters.

The short window between the Iowa Caucuses and the New Hampshire Primary make it difficult, although not impossible, for Marco Rubio to capitalize on his big night in Iowa. He has, however, put considerable effort into doing just that, but he faces an unlikely challenger in the Granite State who has been hitting the pavement there for months.

The Kasich Factor

John Kasich, as soon as it was apparent that his message wasn't resonating with Iowans—to his credit—abandoned the Hawkeye State and put all of his efforts into a strong showing in New Hampshire. So much so, the Ohio governor can now claim New Hampshire citizenship.

His appeal fades almost immediately upon crossing the New Hampshire border, though. In South Carolina, he's polling between 1 and 2 percent, and nationally, he's just a hair above 2 percent. It will be important to keep an eye on how he finishes Tuesday night, and whether or not it impacts his appeal beyond the Granite State.

What About Ted Cruz?

Ted Cruz may be reaching the plateau of support he can expect to find in New Hampshire. His base of support is poorly

represented within the party demographics there. He needs to fight for every vote he can get, though, to keep delegate losses to a minimum. New Hampshire is, by far, his biggest obstacle before Super Tuesday on March 1.

A win in New Hampshire is almost entirely out of the realm of possibility at this point, but that's not necessarily bad news for his campaign. A top-three finish would be good for him next week. But he could slip to as low as fifth place, based on the current margins of error.

With Rand Paul out of the race, the conventional wisdom says many of his voters will likely flock to Cruz. But, many of those voters also feel betrayed by Cruz' failure to vote on the "Audit the Fed" legislation Paul worked very hard for in the Senate. Even with Paul's voters, it seems Cruz would see only a very small bump.

Democrats

Hillary Clinton is facing a humiliating defeat, if the polls are even remotely accurate—Bernie Sanders currently leads, 55-37—but it will be interesting to see how the "tie" in Iowa will impact things in New Hampshire. But even more important to watch will be New Hampshire's impact on South Carolina, where Clinton has managed to maintain a firewall.