

Another Day Another (Four) Polls

Monday is not typically a day when presidential preference polls are released, but the 2016 election cycle has been anything but ordinary.

With the first actual votes that will determine the major parties' presidential nominees just days away, 11 Republicans still in the running, and another debate coming at the end of the week, pollsters are in heavy demand. Monday afternoon—in addition to the Investor's Business Daily poll released earlier in the day—there were four new polls released.

The latest data came out of the early voting states of Iowa and New Hampshire. But the surprises in these polls weren't in who is leading them, but rather what's happening right behind the leader.

The Quinnipiac University poll out of Iowa does show Donald Trump has regained the lead over Ted Cruz, 31-29, but that lead is well within the margin of error—as have been most of the polls released in the past two months—reaffirming the “dead heat” continues in the first-in-the-nation caucus state. It was what is happening in the next tier of candidates, however, that should be getting the headlines.

Ben Carson, once running neck-and-neck with Trump, has fallen off to 7 percent, and Jeb Bush—the favorite to win the nomination less than a year ago—has dropped to 3 percent. Meanwhile, Chris Christie has moved up to 4 percent, and Marco Rubio has climbed to 15 percent.

The poll of 602 likely Iowa Republican Caucus participants found 5 percent were still undecided, and 46 percent of those who did name a candidate said they may still change their minds between now and Feb. 1. The poll has a margin of error

of 4 points.

American Research Group released two new polls, as well; one in Iowa, the other in New Hampshire. In Iowa, the poll also found Trump had regained his lead over Cruz, 29-24, but again, the lead was within the margin of error.

Rubio was the only other candidate in double digits at 10 percent. In this poll, Carson came in fourth with 8 percent, while Bush came in a seventh-place tie with John Kasich at 3 percent. Christie took fifth place with 6 percent, followed by Ron Paul at 4 percent.

The ARG poll offered a new piece of information that could prove telling on Caucus Night. Among voters who were “definitely” participating in the caucus, Trump and Cruz tied at 27 percent, but among voters who “probably” will participate, Trump had 42 percent to Cruz’ 8 percent, meaning that if Trump can push a strong turnout, he could potentially run away with Iowa.

In New Hampshire, ARG found Trump’s popularity, and his lead, have grown over the past month. It also found second-place Rubio now has a challenger for the runner-up spot in the Granite State: Kasich. The Florida senator and Ohio governor are now tied at 14 percent.

Rubio was at 15 percent in December, while Kasich trailed at 13 percent. Rounding out the current top seven in New Hampshire, according to ARG are: Christie (10 percent), Cruz (9 percent), Bush (8 percent), and Paul (4 percent).

The ARG polls have margins of error of 5 and 4 percent, respectively.

The final poll of the day, also from New Hampshire, was released by Monmouth University. It, too, found that Trump’s support and his lead were growing in the Granite State. And, while Carson continues to fade, Cruz and Kasich continue to

rise.

Trump's support has grown from 26 percent in November to 32 percent in the most recent poll, while his lead has nearly doubled from 10 to 18 points. That is largely due to the fall of Carson, who polled at 16 percent in November, and has fallen to 3 percent in the current poll.

Monmouth found Cruz and Kasich are tied for second at 14 percent, with Rubio close behind at 12 percent. They were polling at 9, 11, and 13 percent, respectively, in November. Rounding out the "top seven" in New Hampshire are: Christie (8 percent), Carly Fiorina (5 percent), and Bush and Paul (4 percent each).

Mike Huckabee was the only other candidate to receive support (1 percent) in the poll. About 3 percent said they were undecided. Only one third of voters said their decisions were "locked in," while one in four said they were "up for grabs."

The Monmouth poll had a margin of error of 4.8 points.