

It's Donald Trump or Ted Cruz for the GOP Nomination

This time next year we may very well look back on 2016 as the most politically entertaining year in American history. Why? Well, I think we all know one big reason why and his name is Donald "You're Fired" Trump.

Trump was already a celebrity before his NBC hit show called "The Apprentice." He hosted the show for more than a decade ending in 2015. It was that television show that made him a household name and he then parlayed that fame into a presidential run to do what he calls "Make America Great Again."

Most everyone thought Trump would have imploded by now but he has shown staying power over the last six months. Besides, I don't think Trump can implode in the way any other candidate could or would. When he says something really provocative or what some would call inflammatory, it doesn't seem to hurt him that much politically or in the polls. In that sense he has become kind of like Charles Barkley who can say anything and get away with it because it's just "Charles being Charles." In the case of The Donald it's just "Trump being Trump."

However, with the Iowa caucuses less than a month away, it has become clear that while Trump is considered a flamboyant entertainer by many, he has become in fact a serious candidate on the Republican side of the ledger. Almost every poll shows Trump leading the GOP field among likely Republican voters. And almost every poll shows Sen. Ted Cruz second. Both men are outsiders in terms of the party establishment and that is helping them because the base is down on candidates they see as wimps, that is candidates unwilling to fight for conservative ideas with any conviction.

If you add up the numbers for Trump and Cruz it's anywhere from 50% to 60% of the GOP vote, and if you throw Dr. Ben Carson in there the outsiders are polling near 70%. These numbers have basically been the same for a month or two now. I believe it will be Trump or Cruz for the nomination. There are some big contrasts between the two men even though they are basically pulling from the same group of people, the base of the Republican Party made up of people who are conservative to very conservative. Trump is a New Yorker. Cruz is a Texan. Trump has more money (his own) but Cruz has the better organization across more states. Cruz is an intellectual marksman. Trump is a gunslinger who shoots from the hip. Trump has street smarts and knows how to make money. Cruz graduated with highest honors from Ivy League schools Princeton and Harvard, and legendary Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz – a liberal – says: “Cruz is off-the-charts brilliant.”

One of the most appealing aspects of what Trump says is that when he gets to the White House he will not be beholden to anyone or any group because he is self-funding his campaign. I would venture to say a majority of Americans believe money runs politicians in Washington, D.C. That is to say they are “bought off” in a legal way, of course. Trump says: “I don't need their (special interest groups, other billionaires, and big corporations) money. I can't be bought.” People like to hear that.

On the other side of the race, another potential blockbuster story looms on the horizon. There is a real possibility that Hillary Clinton will be charged with serious crimes in the next few months. The charge will be that she exposed classified information and documents important to our national security when she decided to put the State Department Internet server in the bathroom at her home. And with apologies to professor Dershowitz – that move was what I would call “off-the-charts dumb.”