

Weekend Polls Reflect Post-Debate Landscape

A series of new polls released over the weekend offered the first glimpse of the post-CNN debate landscape of the Republican presidential primary race.

Sunday morning, CBS News released a flurry of state-focused polls, providing *Face the Nation* viewers with a complete look at the GOP presidential race's landscape. However, there were six other polls released over the weekend.

Friday, there were two new national polls, as well as three new state-focused polls released, and on Saturday, an additional poll was released covering a key early voting state. With the first-in-the-nation Iowa Republican Caucus six weeks away, and the New Hampshire and South Carolina primaries following right behind, expect more polls on a regular basis.

CBS News Polls

On Sunday morning's *Face the Nation*, viewers got a look at new polls from each of the early voting states—Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina—as well as a break down of each poll's underlying data. The polls reinforced narratives that emerged prior to last week's televised debate.

In Iowa, Ted Cruz' lead over Donald Trump appeared to have grown to 9 points, 40-31. Marco Rubio received 12 percent support, while no other candidate netted more than 6 percent (Ben Carson). Of likely Republican voters polled, 73 percent said they were either firmly decided or very unlikely to change their decision.

In New Hampshire, however, Trump's lead has grown to 18 points over Cruz, 32-14. Rubio was close behind at 13 percent, while Chris Christie took fourth with 11 percent. Carson fell to a

seventh-place tie with Rand Paul at 5 percent. The field is a little less settled, however, with only 60 percent of likely Republican voters saying they were either firmly decided or very unlikely to change their decision.

In South Carolina, Trump's numbers rose to 38 percent, Cruz' to 23 percent, and Rubio's to 12 percent, while Carson fell to 9 percent with Jeb Bush close behind at 7 percent. No other candidate received more than 4 percent (Paul). Nearly two-thirds of likely Republican voters—65 percent—said they were either firmly decided or very unlikely to change their decision.

National Polls

Friday, Public Policy Polling—a hard-left leaning public policy polling firm—released its newest numbers in the GOP presidential race. Trump continued to lead with 34 percent support, followed by Cruz with 18 percent.

Marco Rubio was the only other candidate in double figures, polling at 13 percent. No other candidate received more than 7 percent (Bush).

The poll asked those interviewed about their second choice, which found undecided leading with 19 percent, while Cruz received 14 percent. Trump and Carson each came in at 10 percent.

When the pollsters asked respondents to pick among the current national “Top Four”—Trump, Cruz, Rubio, and Carson—Trump won with 40 percent, while Cruz and Rubio received 22 and 20 percent, respectively. Carson got 10 percent, while 9 percent were undecided.

Later in the day, FOX News released its latest polling numbers, which showed similar results. Trump led with 39 percent, while Cruz (18 percent) and Rubio (11 percent) were the only other candidates to crack double digits. Carson

received 9 percent, while no other candidate had more than 3 percent support.

The numbers represent an 11-point rise for Trump since mid-November. Cruz and Rubio have risen 4 and 3 points, respectively, while Carson lost 9 points since mid-November and 14 point since his high point in mid-October through early November.

The FOX News poll also asked respondents for the second choice. Cruz received 20 percent, Rubio and Carson 13 percent each, and Trump 12 percent. Undecideds made up 10 percent of those surveyed.

The poll also asked if Trump or Cruz were out of the race, how that would affect their votes.

With Trump out of the race, 30 percent said they would support Cruz, while Rubio and Carson received 16 percent each, and no other candidate received more than 7 percent. Nine percent said they were undecided or did not know whom else they would support.

With Cruz out of the race, 46 percent said they would support Trump, while Rubio and Cruz received 15 and 13 percent support, respectively. No other candidate received more than 4 percent support in that scenario, and only 6 percent said they were undecided or did not know whom else they would support.

Georgia Poll

WAGA-TV, an Atlanta-based FOX affiliate, conducted a poll following last week's presidential debate televised by CNN. Georgia is a key Super Tuesday state that goes to the polls March 1.

The FOX 5 poll found Trump with 34 percent support, followed by Cruz at 16 percent, and Rubio at 12 percent. Carson and Bush each received 6 percent, but no other candidate received

more than 3 percent.

With the field limited to the “Top Five” nationally—adding in Bush—Trump’s support soared to 40 percent, while Rubio surpassed Cruz, 19-18. Carson received 9 percent and Bush got 7 percent, while 8 percent said they would be undecided.

Florida Poll

The *Florida Times-Union*, a Jacksonville daily newspaper, released a poll Friday morning that surveyed respondents’ reaction to last week’s debate. The Florida Primary will be held two weeks after Super Tuesday.

The poll is interesting because it pits Trump against two widely popular Florida politicians. Yet the GOP front-runner continues to dominate in the Sunshine State, taking 30 percent to Cruz’ 20 percent. Rubio (15 percent) and Bush (13 percent), combined, would still trail Trump.

The poll inquired about winners and losers of the debate, which 70 percent of those surveyed said they watched. Of those who watched, 26 percent said Cruz won, while 24 percent said Trump won. Thirty percent said Bush—who aggressively attacked Trump during the debate—lost.

New Hampshire Poll

Friday afternoon, the *Boston Herald* released its latest polling numbers for the New Hampshire Republican Primary. The Granite State’s voters go to the polls eight days after the first-in-the-nation Iowa Caucus—on Feb. 9.

While Christian conservatives dominate the voting in the other early voting states of Iowa and South Carolina, moderate and establishment Republicans dominate in New Hampshire. The *Herald’s* polling results reflect that distinction.

Trump again leads the field with 26 percent support, but Cruz and Rubio, tied at 12 percent, Christie (11 percent) have

moved closer. Bush rounds out the top five at 10 percent, while Carson has fallen to 5 percent.

On the question of second-choice candidate, Rubio, Christie, and Cruz each had 15 percent, while Bush received 13 percent. Trump received 9 percent, while 6 percent were undecided.

The poll, conducted by Franklin Pierce University, broke down each candidate's support by political and social/religious ideology. Trump won in nearly every political and social/religious demographic.

Among those who said they were political liberals, 38 percent backed Trump, while 24 percent backed Bush. Trump received 26-percent support from political moderates—Christie received 18 percent—and among politically conservative voters, Trump led with 25 percent, followed by Cruz at 19 percent.

Among those who said they were socially and/or religiously liberal or moderate, Trump received 28-percent support to Christie's 17 percent, while Trump received 24-percent support from those who said they were religiously conservative—compared to Rubio's 15 percent. Of those who said they were "very conservative" socially and/or religiously, 29 percent backed Cruz, while Trump received 27-percent support.

South Carolina Poll

Saturday afternoon, the *Augusta Chronicle* released its latest poll of likely South Carolina primary voters. In that poll, Trump remained in the lead, but Cruz has closed the gap considerably.

Trump took 28 percent to Cruz' 21 percent, while Rubio received 12 percent. Carson and Bush each received 10 percent, but no other candidate received more than 6 percent.

When the options were limited to the "Top Five" in national polling, Trump's support increases to 32 percent, while Cruz'

jumps to 24 percent. Rubio climbs to 16 percent, Bush to 13 percent, and Carson to 11 percent.

Of those surveyed who said they watched last week's debate on CNN, 30 percent said Trump won or did the best, 18 percent gave the win to Cruz, and 15 percent said Rubio did best. Reversing the question, 27 percent said Bush had the worst debate, followed by Trump (14 percent) and Carson (12 percent).