
Battle in North Carolina as UNC and Duke are Top Two Favorite College Basketball Teams

Connecticut is favorite women's college basketball team followed by Tennessee

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – March 26, 2009 – As March Madness heads into the Sweet Sixteen, there is some shuffling at the top of the favorite college basketball team roster. University of North Carolina (UNC) moves back into the No. 1 spot (from No. 2 last year) while Duke moves down one to No. 2, and UCLA moves up one spot to No. 3 this year.

These are some of the findings of The Harris Poll, a new nationwide survey of 2,355 U.S. adults, of who 650 follow college basketball, surveyed online between March 9 and 16, 2009 by Harris Interactive:

Rounding out the top five favorite teams are Ohio State (No. 4) and Texas (No. 5), both of whom are returning to the top ten after a one year absence. The remaining teams on the top 10 list are: Illinois (No. 6), Kentucky (No. 7) (tied for No. 9 last year), Boston College (No. 8), Florida (tied for No. 9) and University of Connecticut (tied for No. 9).

Boston College is making its first appearance on the top ten list, while Illinois, Florida and UConn are all returning after an absence of a couple of years. Showing how favorites change over time, six teams dropped out of the top 10 this year: Indiana, Iowa, Georgetown, Tennessee, Kansas, and Wisconsin.

Looking at the Sweet Sixteen, just three from the top ten (UNC, Duke and UConn) are playing this weekend. Only half of the four number one seeds are on the top ten – UNC and UConn – with Louisville and Pittsburgh not making the top ten this year.

Women's College Basketball

College basketball followers were also asked what their favorite women's team is, and for the seventh year in a row the top two teams are the same, but the order is reversed this year with Connecticut moving to No. 1 and Tennessee dropping to No. 2. The rest of the top ten favorite women's college basketball teams are: UNC (No. 3, up from No. 7 last year); Texas (No. 4); Maryland (No. 5, was tied for No. 4 last year); Ohio State (No. 6); Duke (No. 7, down from tied for No. 4 last year); Illinois (No. 8); Rutgers (No. 9) and Kentucky (No. 10, same as last year).

This year, four teams dropped off the list – Iowa, Stanford, Indiana and Wisconsin. Texas, Ohio State and Rutgers are all returning to the list after a couple of years off, with Illinois making their first appearance.

Seven schools, UNC, Duke, Ohio State, Texas, Illinois, Kentucky, and Connecticut, have teams on both the men's and women's top 10 list.

TABLE 1
FAVORITE MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL TEAM: RANK ORDER
 "Which is your favorite men's college basketball team?"

Base: Follow college basketball

	1993	1995	1996	1997	1998	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
North Carolina (UNC)	2	3	7	2	3	7	=2	3	2	1	2	1
Duke	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2
UCLA	*	5	*	5	5	4	=7	=7	8	5	4	3
Ohio State	8	9	=4	*	*	*	*	*	4	3	*	4
Texas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9	7	6	*	5
Illinois	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	2	3	*	*	6
Kentucky	5	1	1	1	1	5	=2	4	*	4	=9	7
Boston College	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Florida	*	*	*	10	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	=9
Connecticut	*	*	*	*	=6	*	=7	5	5	*	*	=9

*Not in the top 10.

DROPPED OUT OF THE TOP 10 THIS YEAR
(Last year's rankings)

Indiana (No. 3), Iowa (No. 5), Georgetown (tied for No. 6), Tennessee (tied for No. 6), Kansas (tied for No. 6), and Wisconsin (tied for No. 9)

TABLE 2
FAVORITE WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL TEAM
 "Which is your favorite women's college basketball team?"

Base: Follow college basketball

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Tennessee	2	1	1	1	1	1	2
Connecticut	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
North Carolina (UNC)	*	6	10	=7	3	7	3
Texas	5	8	6	*	*	*	4
Maryland	*	*	*	*	5	=4	5
Ohio State	*	*	9	4	*	*	6
Duke	4	3	3	3	=7	=4	7
Illinois	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Rutgers	*	*	*	9	*	*	9
Kentucky	*	5	*	*	*	10	10

*Not in the top 10.

DROPPED OUT OF THE TOP 10 THIS YEAR
(Last year's rankings)

Iowa (No. 3), Stanford (tied for No. 4), Indiana (tied for No. 8) Wisconsin (tied for No. 8)

TABLE 3
COLLEGE SPORTS FOLLOWERS
 "Do you follow any of these sports?"

Base: All adults

	2007	2008	2009
	%	%	%
FOLLOW COLLEGE SPORTS (NET)	41	41	44
College football	33	34	36
Men's college basketball	24	23	26
Women's college basketball	8	7	8
College baseball	6	8	8
College hockey	4	3	5
Other college sport	8	7	7
I follow none of these sports	59	59	56

Note: Multiple-response question.

Methodology

The Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States between March 9 and 16, 2009 among 2,355 adults (aged 18 and over), of whom 650 follow college basketball. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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