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Reuters/C-SPAN/Zogby New Hampshire Poll: McCain Leads Romney; Clinton Leads Obama as Edwards Remains at 20%

Huckabee a distant third, Rudy fourth

UTICA, New York – Republican John McCain lost a little ground to Mitt Romney, as Mike Huckabee picked up some ground on the momentum of his victory in the Iowa caucuses. Democrat Hillary Clinton held even and retained a slight edge against the advancing Barack Obama in the wake of Obama’s win in Iowa, the latest Reuters/C–SPAN/Zogby telephone tracking poll of likely New Hampshire primary voters shows.

Democrat John Edwards also remained steady at 20%, well back of Clinton but within striking distance. But partial polling after Iowa suggests some slippage may be in the offing for both Clinton and Edwards.

Republicans – NH Tracking	1-1/4	12-31/1-3
McCain	32%	34%
Romney	30%	30%
Huckabee	12%	10%
Giuliani	9%	9%
Paul	7%	7%

Thompson	3%	2%
Hunter	<1%	1%
Undecided	7%	6%

McCain’s lead continues to be based on the strength of support among independents, where he holds a 42% to 29% over Romney, with no other Republican winning more than 10% support among this group. Among moderates, McCain’s edge dropped from 53% support to 48% support after yesterday’s polling was added to the Reuters/C-SPAN/Zogby three-day rolling average, while while Romney also lost some ground, dropping from 24% to 22%. Meanwhile, Romney’s edge over McCain among mainline conservatives – the largest voting bloc in the GOP - increased from one to five points.

Huckabee’s bounce from the Iowa victory comes among those who consider themselves “very conservative,” where he jumped from 21% to 28% when just yesterday’s post-Iowa caucus polling is folded into the mix. However, Romney still leads in the category with 33% support. McCain wins 20% among the very conservative.

Among men, McCain’s lead over Romney shrank from five to one point. McCain retains a two-point lead over Romney among women, but both lost ground. Still, no other Republican is close among women.

Geographically, the bulk of population is found in the New Hampshire counties that are considered suburbs to Boston and along the seacoast – which together comprise roughly two-thirds of those who say they are likely to vote in the Republican primary. Romney narrowly leads McCain in those places, while McCain holds a tidy lead up in the more independent-minded north.

This is the second of five three-day tracking news reports to be released in advance of the New Hampshire primary on Jan. 8. Approximately 80% of the sample in this report was gathered before the results of the Iowa caucuses became known, while 20% was completed after.

On the Democratic side, Clinton’s lead includes strong support among women, where she wins 39% support, compared to 26% support for Barack Obama and 20% for John Edwards. Among men, Obama has expanded his edge from three points to seven points over Clinton, while Edwards remained steady with 21%.

Democrats – NH Tracking	1-1/4	12-31/1-3
Clinton	32%	32%

Obama	28%	26%
Edwards	20%	20%
Richardson	7%	7%
Kucinich	3%	3%
Biden	2%	2%
Dodd	1%	1%
Undecided	7%	8%

Among likely-voting Democrats, Clinton also enjoys strength with 36% support, compared to 24% for Obama and 20% for Edwards. Among independents who said they were likely to vote in the Democratic primary, Obama enjoys 34% backing, compared to 26% support for Clinton and 21% for Edwards. Independent voters are important in New Hampshire because they can vote in either the Republican or Democratic primary.

While 64% of likely voting New Hampshire independents said they were planning to vote in the Democratic primary, about 36% said they would vote in the GOP contest – an 8-point swing in favor of the Democrats compared to just one day earlier.

As in Iowa, younger Democrats favor Obama over Clinton, but his advantage is not now near where it was in Iowa. Likewise, Clinton retains an Iowa-like edge among older voters, but she also has a smaller edge here than in Iowa. Edwards is a solid third in all age groups.

The GOP and Democratic three-day rolling tracking surveys were conducted using Zogby International's live operator call center in Upstate New York. The GOP rolling sample included 887 likely voters and carries a margin of error of +/- 3.3 percentage points. The Democratic rolling sample included 893 likely voters and carries a margin of error of +/- 3.3 percentage points. Both tracking survey samples were taken between Jan. 1-4, 2008.

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