



US ELECTION 2012

The State of Play

The GOP still can't decide on a candidate to face the President, but they still want your campaign dollars, observes Sir Robert Worcester

Unless there is a landslide towards leading Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney, triggered off by Newt Gingrich dropping out of the race, the last week of July at the time of the Republican Convention will be when the GOP, the Grand Old Party, will decide their candidate to challenge the President's second (and final) term in office. It certainly won't happen during March, as even if every one of the delegates elected during March went to Rick Santorum, he would not hit the magic 1,144 number he'd need to win.

To date of writing, with results to be updated on *The American's* website as they roll in, Mitt Romney has over half the delegate votes so far, nearly twice as many as his closest contestant, Santorum, with Gingrich lagging and Paul nowhere – except on the TV.

In the meantime, the Republicans left in the frame seem bent on slanging at each other and spending vast sums of money, mainly on negative TV ads. These and the media attention on the campaign in the press and radio (talk shows mainly) and of course television and the new media, are demeaning American politics, boring a huge swathe of the American public, and breaking into bits the Healey maxim in politics of 'when you're in a hole, stop digging'.

When they meet in Tampa to elect



Rick Santorum remains Mitt Romney's closest rival. Despite close finishes in Arizona and Ohio, a narrow victory in Oklahoma, a comfortable win in Tennessee, and a walkover in Kansas, the competition looks like going the distance

PHOTO: GAGE SKIDMORE

their candidate, there will be over 2,000 delegates, over 1,000 alternates, and more than twice that total in media covering the outcome, even more media if their candidate has not surfaced at the end of what has become an ABR election, the moderate (by comparison) Mitt Romney unable to 'seal the deal' and his opposition unable to find a candidate to beat him.

This is why I said last month: "Still, in my view, the winner of the Republican nomination looks set to be Mitt Romney...the loser at the General

Election, Mitt Romney". I still believe this to be the case.

If you are a psephology junkie (like me) you'll love the most sophisticated graphics I've yet seen in political analysis. Using exit poll data by the Edison survey firm, it gives insight into who voted how strongly in Republican primary elections in 11 states, from the Iowa caucus in early January to the Ohio primary on Super Tuesday in the first week of March.

Using perceptual mapping and comparing the graphs (much too

2012 Republican Delegate Race at March 10, 2012 (1,144 needed to win)								
State	Date	Delegates	Romney	Santorum	Gingrich	Paul	Delegate Allocation	Open/Closed
Total		2,286	386	163	111	61		
Iowa	Jan 3	28*	6	7	0	1	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
New Hampshire	Jan 10	12*	7	0	0	3	Proportional Primary	Open
South Carolina	Jan 21	25*	2	0	23	0	Winner Take All Primary ¹	Open
Florida	Jan 31	50*	50	0	0	0	Winner Take All Primary	Closed
Nevada	Feb 4	28	14	3	6	5	Proportional Caucus ¹	Closed
Minnesota	Feb 7	40	2	17	1	9	Non-Binding Caucus	Open
Colorado	Feb 7	36	12	17	2	1	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Maine	Feb 11	24	9	3	0	7	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Michigan	Feb 28	30*	16	14	0	0	Hybrid Primary ²	Closed
Arizona	Feb 28	29*	29	0	0	0	Winner Take All Primary	Closed
Wyoming	Feb 29	29	10	8	1	6	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Washington	Mar 3	43	16	7	0	8	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Georgia	Mar 6	76	15	2	47	0	Proportional Primary ¹	Open
Ohio	Mar 6	66	35	21	0	0	Proportional Primary ^{1,3}	Open
Tennessee	Mar 6	58	13	27	9	0	Proportional Primary ^{1,3}	Open
Virginia	Mar 6	49	43	0	0	3	Hybrid Primary ^{2,3}	Open
Oklahoma	Mar 6	43	13	14	13	0	Proportional Primary ^{1,3}	Closed
Massachusetts	Mar 6	41	38	0	0	0	Proportional Primary ¹	Open
Idaho	Mar 6	32	32	0	0	0	Proportional Caucus ³	Closed
North Dakota	Mar 6	28	7	11	2	8	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Alaska	Mar 6	27	8	7	3	6	Proportional Caucus	Closed
Vermont	Mar 6	17	9	4	0	4	Hybrid Primary ²	Open
Kansas	Mar 10	40	-	40	-	-	Winner Take All Caucus	Closed
No. Marianas	Mar 10	9	-	-	-	-	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Virgin Islands	Mar 10	9	-	-	-	-	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Guam	Mar 10	9	-	-	-	-	Non-Binding Caucus	Closed
Alabama	Mar 13	50	-	-	-	-	Proportional Primary ³	Open
Mississippi	Mar 13	40	-	-	-	-	Proportional Primary ¹	Open
Hawaii	Mar 13	20	-	-	-	-	Proportional Caucus ¹	Closed
Samoa	Mar 13	9	-	-	-	-	Proportional Caucus	Open
Missouri	Mar 17	52	-	-	-	-	Non-Binding Caucus	Open
Puerto Rico	Mar 18	23	-	-	-	-	Winner Take All Caucus	Open
Illinois	Mar 20	69	-	-	-	-	Direct Election	Open
Louisiana	Mar 24	46	-	-	-	-	Proportional Primary ¹	Closed

*States have been penalized half their delegates ¹Delegates are awarded by district and statewide

²Some delegates awarded by district and statewide, some proportionately, some winner-take-all

³Election becomes winner-take-all if a candidate meets a certain threshold (usually 50%)

Super Tuesday Results		
Candidates	Votes	Percent
Georgia 76 delegates (100%)		
Gingrich	424,976	47.2
Romney	233,297	25.9
Santorum	176,080	19.6
Paul	58,982	6.6
Ohio 66 delegates (100%)		
Romney	456,513	37.9
Santorum	446,225	37.1
Gingrich	175,554	14.6
Paul	111,238	9.2
Tennessee 58 delegates (100%)		
Santorum	205,012	37.2
Romney	154,911	28.1
Gingrich	132,072	23.9
Paul	49,801	9
Virginia 49 delegates (100%)		
Romney	158,051	59.5
Paul	107,470	40.5
Oklahoma 43 delegates (100%)		
Santorum	96,759	33.8
Romney	80,291	28
Gingrich	78,686	27.5
Paul	27,572	9.6
Massachusetts 41 delegates (100%)		
Romney	265,110	72.2
Santorum	44,255	12
Paul	35,037	9.5
Gingrich	16,990	4.6
Idaho 32 delegates (100%)		
Romney	27,514	61.6
Santorum	8,115	18.2
Paul	8,086	18.1
Gingrich	940	2.1
North Dakota 28 delegates (100%)		
Santorum	4,510	39.7
Paul	3,186	28.1
Romney	2,691	23.7
Gingrich	962	8.5
Alaska 27 delegates (100%)		
Romney	4,285	32.4
Santorum	3,860	29.2
Paul	3,175	24
Gingrich	1,865	14.1
Vermont 17 delegates (100%)		
Romney	23,965	39.7
Paul	15,369	25.5
Santorum	14,273	23.7
Gingrich	4,944	8.2

SOURCE: REALCLEARPOLITICS.COM

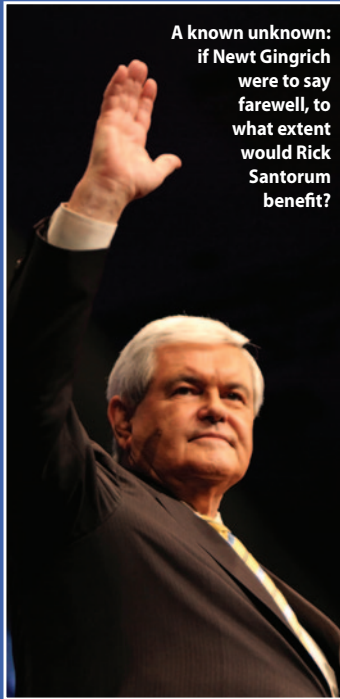


PHOTO: GAGE SKIDMORE

A known unknown: if Newt Gingrich were to say farewell, to what extent would Rick Santorum benefit?

complicated to use in a print magazine) you will be able to see contrasting support between Romney and Santorum, one of whom is most likely to be the Republican candidate standing against Barack Obama.

You will find Edison's analysis at: <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/03/07/us/politics/how-candidates-fared-with-different-demographic-groups.html>.

It compares various demographic and attitudinal groupings in each state, using a perceptual mapping graphic in order to compare which group was stronger (and correspondingly weaker) in getting voters' support.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the single thing that seems to cause the model to portray a centerist position between Santorum and Romney is support for Newt Gingrich, which suggests that current pressure on Gingrich now

running a poor third to Santorum and Romney may be misplaced and there might not be an automatic transfer of support to Santorum if Gingrich stood down.

That such geographically and culturally contrasting states as Iowa, Michigan, New Hampshire and Ohio have similar patterns should have media planners and campaign strategists looking closely at the assumptions they have been making about how to communicate to prospective primary voters to support the candidates they advise.

American elections are a nightmare to understand. Being a Federal country under a Constitution written in 1787 and adopted by all 13 British colonies in 1789, the 10th Amendment to the Constitution provides that "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people". Therefore, within specific guidelines such as that giving the right to vote to those who have reached the age of 18, election rules are laid down by state legislation. Further confusion reigns when comparing the political parties' rules of selecting delegates to their nominating conventions. The Democrats provided for the votes of overseas Americans at their conventions in 1976, but not the Republicans. Now, by 2012, they allow 9 votes each to an interesting mix of people of the Northern Marianas, American Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa.

But still they ignore the plea for delegates for other Americans living abroad. Except, of course, for fundraising. ★

Sir Robert Worcester is the Founder of MORI. Follow him for updates on Twitter: @RobertWorcester.