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Jandoli School of Communication

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PDF version; crosstabs; website:

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**Siena/St. Bonaventure Annual Sports Fanship Survey: Part 2 – Sports Betting
More Than a Quarter of Americans, 27% Have An Active Online Sports
Betting Account; A Third Have Opened an Account At Least Once**
*Sports Betting Continues to Grow as 60% of Online Sports Bettors Say They Have
'Chased' A Bet; 63% Have Bet a Total of at Least \$100 in One Day; 31% Have
Had Someone Express Concern to Them About Their Usage*
**A Majority of Americans, 53% Are Against Ads for Sports Betting During
Live TV and 56% Say Online Sports Betting Will Corrupt Organized Sports**

NOTE: This is Second of Three Releases – “Sports Betting”

Release 3 – Sports Fanship and Issues in Sport –Mon 4/20

April 13, 2026 – Online sports betting is growing as a facet of American life, with 27% of Americans and half of men ages 18-49 (52%) saying they have an active account with an online sportsbook such as DraftKings, Caesars, FanDuel, or BetMGM, according to a new survey of United States residents released today by the Siena Research Institute (SRI) and St. Bonaventure University’s Jandoli School of Communication. This trend is up from 22% of Americans in 2025 and 19% in 2024, showing a slow but steady increase in online sports betting interest over the past few years of the survey. A third of Americans (33%) say they have opened an account at least once.

Online sports betting behaviors are virtually unchanged since the survey began collecting data on the topic in 2024. Of those with an online sports betting account, 83% say they have placed a bet using their account, unchanged from 2025 and a slight decline from 88% in 2024. Twenty-two percent of Americans and forty-six percent of men aged 18-49 are bettors. Vast majorities of bettors continue to say they participate because it is fun and exciting (92%) that it makes them more interested in watching the games live (89%), because they thought they could make money placing bets (85%), that they enjoyed research statistics on players and teams to make more successful bets (85%), and because they enjoyed betting small amounts on parlays, futures or other bets that pay a lot more than you bet if you win (83%). However, there is a pattern of slight increases in

negative gambling outcomes from prior years in the survey: 60% of bettors, up from 52% in 2025, say they have “Chased” a bet (or, made a higher bet in hopes getting money back from a previous bet); 63% of bettors say they have bet a total of \$100 or more in one day (up from 56% in 2025 and 59% in 2024); and 31% of bettors report having had someone express concern about their usage of online sportsbooks, up from 23% in 2025 and 22% in 2024. Significant shares of bettors continue to say they have felt that they bet more than they should (42%, a slight increase from 37% in 2025) and that they have felt bad or ashamed after losing a bet (43%, up from 37% in 2025). Fifteen percent of bettors, compared to 9% in 2025 and 2024, say they have called a problem gambling Helpline or sought other help with problem gambling, and 22% of respondents overall say they know someone that has or has had a problem with online sports betting – an increase from 16% in 2025 and 15% in 2024.

“The results show that online sports betting remains an active part of life for a significant portion of Americans,” said Don Levy, SRI’s Director. “Since we began asking respondents about online sports betting in 2024, there has been a steady rise in those who say they have an active account – from about one-in-five to now one-in-four – and the share of respondents who bet on these platforms has grown just as much – from seventeen percent of Americans in 2024 to twenty-two percent in 2026. ”

Respondents identify several issues with online sports betting in American society. A vast majority, 74%, say the participation of individuals as young as 18 years old in online sports betting is a ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ serious issue – including 69% of those respondents ages 18-34. They say that recent NCAA rule changes permitting college athletes and athletic department staff to place bets on professional sports are bad for sports by a margin of 51-28%. Further, an overwhelming majority of 85% of respondents identify the alleged insider betting scheme between various coaches and athletes in the NBA as a ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ serious issue.

Half of respondents, 50-33%, agree that online sports betting should be legal in all 50 states, virtually unchanged from all prior years of the survey, and a similarly consistent share of respondents, 49-38% continue to agree that online sports betting is a great form of entertainment that allows fans to gamble responsibly on sports. However, majorities of respondents now say online sportsbooks should not be allowed to advertise during sporting events on TV (53-33%) and that online sports betting will corrupt organized sports (56-29%) – each of which had less than 50% agreement in prior years of the survey. Respondents also say that sports commentators offering remarks on sports gambling during live games is bad for sports by a significant share of 48-29%(albeit a slight decrease from 53-26% who said this was bad for sports in 2025). A growing share of respondents also say that the federal government should aggressively regulate online sports betting to specifically protect customers from compulsive gambling, 67-21% up from 58-28% in 2025.

“Legal and accessible gambling is perhaps the defining issue facing the sports world in the 2020s. What our survey shows is that sports fans have a complicated relationship with sports gambling,” said Dr. Brian Moritz, Associate Professor and sports journalism master’s program Director at the Jandoli School. “It is undeniably popular, and becoming more so every year, and there's wide support for legalized gambling. But the growing support for restrictions on sportsbooks' advertising during live sporting events as well as support for restrictions on betting on college sports show a desire for some guardrails to be put in place around legal and accessible gambling.”

Odds and Ends

- 15% of Americans say they have placed on a bet on a sporting event using an online event-based prediction market, such as Polymarket, Kalshi, Crypto.com, or Robinhood. This includes 42% of the most “Avid¹” sports fans and 33% of men ages 18-49. Still, a vast majority of 65% ‘strongly’ or ‘somewhat’ agree that these services should be subject to the same state regulation which applies to other sports betting activities for as long as they allow users to profit predicting the outcomes of sporting events – including 73% of men ages 18-49.
- The SAFE Bet Act, a bill to establish federal regulations for online sportsbooks, continues to be favored by 64-14% of respondents and majorities of all demographic groups, virtually unchanged from 2025.
- Three-quarters of bettors say they like to participate in prop bets, or bets made on small events that don’t affect the outcome of a game, such as a player making a certain number of shots or passes or who will score first. This is virtually unchanged from 73% in 2025. Still, 66% of Americans agree that online sports betting for college sports including prop bets open individual college student athletes to potentially harmful public pressures. Further, a majority of respondents (52%) say that the NFL working directly with online sports betting partners to limit or outright ban certain prop bets or other bets is good for sports.

¹ Based upon a computation of “Fanship Category” – Avid, Involved, Casual, or Nonfan – derived from the total score of eight questions asking respondents about their engagement in sports fanship activities. See crosstabs for a breakdown by demographic

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This American Sport Fanship Survey was conducted February 16 - 27, 2026 among 3,084 responses drawn from a proprietary online panel (Lucid/Cint) of United States Residents. Interviews conducted online are excluded from the sample and final analysis if they fail any data quality attention check question. Duplicate responses are identified by their response ID and removed from the sample. Three questions were asked of online respondents including a honey-pot question to catch bots and two questions ask the respondent to follow explicit directions. The proprietary panel also incorporates measures that “safeguard against automated bot attacks, deduplication issues, fraudulent VPN usage, and suspicious IP addresses.” Coding of open-ended responses was done by a single human coder. Data was statistically adjusted by age, region, race/ethnicity, education, and gender to ensure representativeness. The probability of being included in any given online survey sample is unknown, very difficult to ascertain, or simply zero (non-internet users). Further, the nature of use of the internet is not uniform within the population, so this limits one's ability to calculate the likelihood of reaching a person through an online poll. Instead of a margin of error, we calculate the credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 1.9 percentage points. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The Siena Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social, and cultural research primarily in NYS. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information or comments, please call Dr. Don Levy at 518-284-3551. St. Bonaventure University's Jandoli School of Communication offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in sports media, journalism, communication and related fields. For more information or comments, please contact Aaron Chimbel at 716-375-2040.