

No Reason for Duke's Devils to be Blue: They're America's Favorite College Basketball Team for the Sixth Year Running

Kentucky returns to the number two spot

NEW YORK, N.Y. – March 26, 2015 – Well, the last “perfect bracket” fell last weekend (bye-bye, Buckeyes) and the final sixteen teams are prepping for the remaining rounds of this bout of college basketball madness which grips us every March. Duke's Blue Devils are among the teams still in the running, but win or lose they already have at least one victory under their belts: for the sixth year in a row, Duke is America's Favorite Men's College Basketball team. Also readying themselves for the next round after playing their way past Hampton and Cincinnati in the last couple of rounds, the Kentucky Wildcats return to the No. 2 position after a No. 3 showing last year. And UNC's North Carolina Tar Heels round out the top three, dropping from the No. 2 spot last year to No. 3 for 2015.

Filling out the rest of the top five favorite college basketball teams are the Connecticut Huskies, Rising to the No. 4 spot this year after being No. 8 in 2014, and the Ohio State Buckeyes, who moved down one spot this year to No. 5.

These are some of the results of **The Harris Poll**® of 2,244 adults, of whom 588 follow college basketball, surveyed online between March 11 and 16, 2015.

The UCLA Bruins stay in the top ten, rising one spot to No. 6 for 2015, while the Michigan Wolverines drop two spots to No. 7. Meanwhile, the Michigan State Spartans and the Wisconsin Badgers come in at No.'s 8 and 10, respectively, after a 9th place tie last year. And in this year's No. 9 position, Notre Dame's Fighting Irish return to the top 10 for the first time since 2004.

Two teams drop off the favorite men's college basketball team top ten this year: Syracuse, which was No. 6 in 2014, and Wichita State, which was part of the aforementioned 9th place tie last year.

Women's College Basketball

Connecticut is once again America's Favorite Women's College Basketball team this year, while Tennessee repeats in the No. 2 spot and Duke rises one spot to No. 3. UNC and Notre Dame are in a tie for 4th place after ranking in the No. 5 and No. 10 positions, respectively, last year.

Ohio State repeats at No. 6, followed by a three-way tie for 7th place between Baylor (dropping 4 spots from last year), Kentucky (rising three positions) and Stanford (dropping one spot from 8th place in 2014). Rounding out the top 10 is UCLA, making the list for the first time since 2010.

Dropping off the women's top ten list are Michigan State (last year's No. 7), Illinois (No. 9 last year) and Maryland (which shared the 10th spot last year).

Top picks to win the championships

With the Sweet Sixteen impending, Kentucky (48%) is the top pick to be the men's NCAA champion this year by an exponential margin, followed distantly by Duke (6%) and Wisconsin (5%).

In the women’s competition, a third of college basketball fans (33%) pick Connecticut as the likely champions this year – making them the leader by a 10:1 margin over its closest competition on this question.

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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
Duke	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	1
Kentucky	5	1	1	1	1	5	=2	4	*
North Carolina (UNC)	2	3	7	2	3	7	=2	3	2
Connecticut	*	*	*	*	=6	*	=7	5	5
Ohio State	8	9	=4	*	*	*	*	*	4
UCLA	*	5	*	5	5	4	=7	=7	8
Michigan	4	8	3	4	*	2	*	*	*
Michigan State	*	8	*	*	=6	10	*	*	*
Notre Dame	*	*	*	*	*	*	10	*	*
Wisconsin	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Duke	2	1	2	=1	1	1	1	1	1
Kentucky	4	=9	7	=6	4	2	10	3	2
North Carolina (UNC)	1	2	1	=1	2	3	2	2	3
Connecticut	*	*	=9	3	*	=8	*	8	4
Ohio State	3	*	4	=6	3	10	3	4	5
UCLA	5	4	3	8	*	*	5	7	6
Michigan	=8	*	*	*	*	=4	4	5	7
Michigan State	*	*	*	*	*	=4	*	=9	8
Notre Dame	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9
Wisconsin	*	=9	*	10	6	*	*	=9	10

*Not in the top 10.

DROPPED OUT OF THE TOP 10 THIS YEAR

(Last year’s rankings)

Syracuse (No. 6) and Wichita State (Tied at 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	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Connecticut	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tennessee	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Duke	4	3	3	3	=7	=4	7	*	6	8	*	4	3
North Carolina (UNC)	*	6	10	=7	3	7	3	*	5	6	=4	5	=4
Notre Dame	6	*	7	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	=4	=10	=4
Ohio State	*	*	9	4	*	*	6	=8	*	*	*	6	6
Baylor	*	*	*	*	=7	*	*	*	4	2	3	3	=7
Kentucky	*	5	*	*	*	10	10	*	=7	7	7	=10	=7
Stanford	*	4	4	*	*	=4	*	*	=7	*	6	8	=7
UCLA	*	=9	=8	*	*	*	*	=4	*	*	*	*	10

*Not in the top 10.

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

Michigan State (No. 7), Illinois (No. 9) and Maryland (Tied at No. 10)

TABLE 3
MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL CHAMPION

"What team do you think will be the men's NCAA champion this year?"

Base: Follow college basketball

	Total
	%
Kentucky	48
Duke	6
Wisconsin	5
Arizona	2
Virginia	2
North Carolina (UNC)	2
UCLA	2

Note: Other teams mentioned by less than 2%

TABLE 4
WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL CHAMPION

"What team do you think will be the women's NCAA champion this year?"

Base: Follow college basketball

	Total
	%
Connecticut	33
Notre Dame	3
Tennessee	3
Maryland	3
Duke	3
Ohio State	2
Kentucky	2

Note: Other teams mentioned by less than 2%

TABLE 5
COLLEGE SPORTS FOLLOWERS
 “Do you follow any of these sports?”

Base: All adults

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
FOLLOW COLLEGE SPORTS (NET)	41	41	44	42	41	43	44	45	47
College football	33	34	36	35	32	35	37	39	39
Men’s college basketball	24	23	26	26	25	25	26	28	25
Women’s college basketball	8	7	8	9	7	9	8	9	7
College baseball	6	8	8	9	7	9	8	10	10
College hockey	4	3	5	6	3	4	5	4	4
Other college sports	8	7	7	8	6	7	9	8	7
I follow none of these sports	59	59	56	58	59	57	56	55	53

Note: Multiple-response question.

Methodology

This **Harris Poll** was conducted online, in English, within the United States between March 11 and 16, 2015 among 2,244 adults (aged 18 and over) of whom 588 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, The Harris Poll 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 Poll 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 our panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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The Harris Poll® #20, March 26, 2015

By Larry Shannon-Missal, Managing Editor, *The Harris Poll*

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