

Sports Popularity

Most Popular Spectator Sports

Percent of people 18 and older who said they love the sport or called it one of their favorites.

NFL football	39.1
College football	33.5
Winter Olympics	31.1
Summer Olympics	31.0
Major league baseball	30.7
High school football	24.0
NBA basketball	22.4
Women's figure skating	21.6
Pairs figure skating	21.5
Pairs ice dancing	21.2

Most Unpopular Spectator Sports

Percent of people 18 and older who said they dislike or hate the sport.

WWF-Pro wrestling	39.9
LPGA golf	36.9
PGA Seniors golf	36.7
Pro boxing	36.2
College wrestling	36.1
PGA golf	36.0
Olympic-Amateur boxing	35.8
Roller Derby	32.3
Arm wrestling	32.1
AHL-Minor league hockey	31.6

Football tops popularity poll

by Associated Press

Football, baseball, basketball and figure skating are the most popular sports in the United States, according to a survey released Wednesday.

And hockey, wrestling, golf, boxing and Roller Derby are the least popular, according to the poll conducted by the Sports Marketing Group in Dallas.

Men and women disagree strongly about every top 20 sport except the Olympics, swimming, skiing and thoroughbred racing. Men are big on football, baseball, basketball and boxing; women go wild for skating and gymnastics.

Hockey checks in at No. 40.

The survey broke down America's sports tastes by sex, age, income, race, job, household status, education, and region to serve companies in the \$20 billion sports marketing industry.

In interviews, 2,060 people were asked to give their opinions of 114 spectator sports in the survey which had a margin of error of plus or minus 1.5 per cent.

PGA golf, shown nearly every week on national television because it appeals to wealthier, older viewers important to the sport's sponsors, ranked No. 43 in overall popularity — behind tractor pulls and body building. The LPGA was even farther behind at No. 69.

The NFL topped all sports with 39 per cent of Americans saying they loved it or considered it one of their favorites. NCAA football ran second, fol-

lowed by the Winter Olympics, Summer Olympics and major league baseball, high school football, the NBA and figure skating.

Some major sports flopped in the survey. The NHL ranked No. 40, men's pro tennis No. 68, women's pro tennis No. 71, and World Cup soccer No. 75.

The survey "told me that World Cup soccer as a public spectacle ranked right out there with open-ocean yacht racing," said Sandy Sulcer, the vice-chairman of DDB Needham Worldwide, the agency which handles major sports marketers such as Anheuser-Busch, McDonald's and GTE.

Pro wrestling topped the unpopularity list, drawing "dislike" or "hate" responses from two of five people. Not far behind were the LPGA, PGA Seniors, pro boxing, intercollegiate wrestling, PGA and amateur boxing.

Men and women clearly had their favorite sports.

The NFL was preferred by three of five men and baseball by two of five men. Only one of five women cared much for either sport.

But when it came to figure skating and ice dancing, women preferred them over the men by a 3-1 margin.

Pro boxing was high on both the most popular and most unpopular sports lists, no doubt reflecting the polarization of men and women. Nearly one of three men called boxing one of their favorites, while 93 per cent of the women indicated they couldn't care less about the sport.

Argonauts sale nears completion at meeting

by STEVE McALLISTER

HAMILTON (CP) — Bruce McNall's associates meet today with the CFL's board of governors amid expectations that the sale of the Toronto Argos to McNall, Wayne Gretzky and John Candy is near completion.

CFL chairman Roy McMurtry said Thursday that McNall's representatives in the Argo sale are flying to Toronto and will meet with the board in a get-acquainted session. Headed by Sue Waks, the vice-chairman and chief financial officer for McNall Sports and Entertainment, the group will also meet with Hamilton Tiger-Cats owner David Braley.

McNall, owner of the NHL's Los Angeles Kings, has expressed an interest in lifting local television blackouts of Argo games if he buys the club from Harry Ornest. Braley wants to be assured that opening up Toronto's home games to the Southern Ontario television market wouldn't hurt the Tiger-Cats' gate receipts.

"I have no objection to lifting a blackout as long as it doesn't interfere with my revenue," said Braley, who lost \$800,000 last year as a CFL owner. "If it enhances it, then all the better."

Three or four minor details have to be sorted out before the completion of the sale, Braley said. But CFL commissioner Donald Crump repeated an earlier statement that the league's television and marketing and television policies weren't standing in the way of the Argo sale.

I suspect they're getting close to a deal — they requested that they come to our meetings," said Crump, referring to the McNall group.

The commissioner continued to be evasive about a new television deal for the league, denying two separate contracts had been drawn up because of the pending sale of the Argos.

Several league observers have expressed optimism that the involvement of the Los Angeles trio in the CFL would create additional television and marketing revenue for the eight clubs.

If the sale goes through, McNall is also interested in televising Argo games on his Prime Ticket cable network and would have to pay-TV rights fees to the league, Braley said.

CBC, TSN and CTV are reported to be the main networks in the new television deal, while Braley said SportsChannel America, a cable network based on the U.S. East Coast is expected to televise 30 games.

The board, which continues its meetings today, overturned a recommendation that the goal posts be placed at the back of the end zone for the 1991 pre-season.

The CFL's rules committee recommended in January that the goal posts be moved from the goal line to the back of the end zone. But the governors turned down the recommendation, with help from football fans across the country.

"The letters I received questioned why we would tinker with the game," McMurtry said.

Five recommendations were rubber-stamped by the governors, including the addition of a seventh on-field official who will be stationed in the defensive back-field.

Younger Hull eyes football

VANCOUVER (CP) — There's another Hull sibling poised to make his mark in pro sport. But it's football, not hockey, for this offspring of Bobby (Golden Jet) Hull.

Running back Bart Hull, younger brother of hockey star Brett Hull, plans to turn pro in the CFL this year, says a Boise State football coach.

The five-foot-11, 220-pound Hull will attend the annual CFL draft Saturday in Hamilton and is rated one of the top prospects by Canadian pro scouts.

"Bart has made plans to turn pro, although he hasn't made it official," Boise State assistant coach Steve Buratto said Thursday in a telephone interview.

Buratto, head coach of the Calgary Stampeders in 1984-85, said Hull has the potential to be a solid contributor in the CFL.

"He has good size and runs fast," said Buratto. "He's put together like his dad."

Bart Hull, blond like his father and brothers, is the youngest of four sons of former pro hockey

star Bobby Hull.

The stocky Hull, 22, played both fullback and tailback last season for Boise state. He rushed 65 times for 253 yards, averaging 3.9 yards a carry, and caught nine passes for 55 yards. Hull scored seven touchdowns.

"He could play fullback in the CFL and be a threat," added Buratto, who compared Hull with Saskatchewan running back Orville Lee, first choice in the 1988 draft.

"He's not as elusive as Orville Lee, but has that same kind of speed. He's a very good prospect."

Hull has one year of college eligibility left after sitting out his freshman year at Boise State to concentrate on practice. He's eligible for the CFL draft because he has been enrolled in university for four years.

Due to U.S. regulations, Hull did not attend the CFL evaluation camp in Edmonton earlier this month.

Hull's three-year totals at Boise State included 350 yards rushing, 11 rushing touchdowns, 25 recep-

tions for 164 yards and two touchdowns, and one kickoff return for 31 yards.

Buratto said Hull was slowed during his junior year in 1990 by an ankle injury suffered in training camp.

Brett Hull, 26, of the St. Louis Blues, led the NHL in goal scoring last season with 72. The Golden Brett had 64 goals this season before Thursday night's game against the New York Islanders to again lead the league.

Bart Hull played minor hockey in North Vancouver at the North Shore Winter Club until he has 12. He turned to other sports while taking high school courses at Vancouver College, concentrating on football and track and field.

Bobby Hull played 16 NHL seasons and scored 610 goals, plus 62 more in the playoffs.

He was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto in 1983.

Bobby Hull's NHL career began with the Chicago Blackhawks in 1957. He later jumped to the Winnipeg Jets to help the World Hockey Association get started, then returned to the NHL late in his career. His last season was 1979-80 with the Hartford Whalers.

PROSPECTS NERVOUS FOR DRAFT

by CHRIS CARIOU

The Canadian Press

Jordan Gaertner was painting his grandparents' condominium when he was taken by the Edmonton Eskimos in the fifth round of the CFL's 1990 college draft.

Mark Norman was nervously fidgeting in Ottawa in 1987, one of the chosen few flown to the draft at the CFL's expense. Projected as a first-round selection, he lasted until the third round, when the Eskimos picked him.

Both can relate to what Dan Farthing is going through this week. Farthing, an all-star wide receiver with the national-champion Saskatchewan Huskies, is expected to go high in the 1991 draft Saturday in Hamilton.

He'll be on hand at the draft with the other top prospects. It's likely to be a weekend of exhilaration for some, dejection for others and frayed nerves for most.

Farthing led the Huskies in receiving in 1990, even though he played only four games after suffering a dislocated shoulder.

A star at Holy Cross high school in Saskatoon, he jumped directly into a starting berth with the Huskies and led the country in receiving in 1987 — at age 17.

"I'd just like the opportunity to try and play and show my stuff," says Farthing. At the CFL's recent evaluation camp in Edmonton, he was a calm, focused but obviously excited young man.

The Saskatchewan Roughriders have three picks in the first round and have shown interest in Farthing. But the physical education student has mixed feelings about being selected by the team.

"It would be kind of a dream" to play in his home province, he says. "But since their training camp is in Saskatoon, I'd kind of like to get out of the spotlight. I'd like to be just another guy trying to get a job on the team."

"That's what I'd enjoy about going somewhere else."

Like many Canadian college players, Farthing is waiting and wondering where he will go.

Norman, a defensive back from the University of British Columbia, says news about the CFL — which teams are best to play for, for example — filters down to the college players.

Many in the East don't want to go to a West Division team and vice versa, he says.

"I hated Edmonton growing up because they won all the time, but I was glad they drafted me."

Adds Gaertner: "There's a lot of wonder about who's going to draft you and how high you'll go if you do go."

Sponsorship bungle costs club

GLASGOW (AFP) — Glasgow Rangers, the reigning Scottish League soccer champions, have been fined a record 23,000 pounds (about \$52,000 Cdn) by the Scottish Football Association after a sponsorship bungle by the Ibrox club.

Rangers are accused of "acting against the SFA's instructions" during last month's Scottish FA Cup third-round match against Dunfermline.

Tennents, the competition sponsors, was furious that a rotating advertising sign displaying the firm's name was not switched on at Ibrox and drew the matter to the attention to SFA chief executive Jim Farry.

As a result, the FA's executive and general purposes committee hit Rangers on Thursday with their

BRIEFLY Sports

second major fine in just over a year following a dispute with the brewery firm.

CBC signs McLean

TORONTO (CP) — Television personality Ron McLean, host of Hockey Night In Canada, has signed a four-year contract with CBC, the network announced Thursday.

As part of the new agreement, the Red Deer, Alta., native will join Brian Williams as host of CBC's coverage of the 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville, France, the network said in a news release.

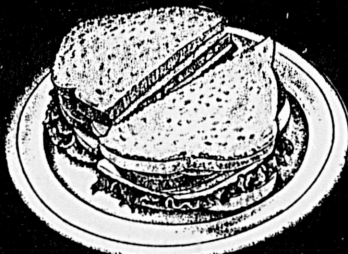
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PEPSI/POWDER KING SKI TIPS

By: Chris Morris, Director of Skiing, Powder King Ski Village

For those of you who are upgrading your ski equipment this year and looking to buy for the first time, here are some important tips.

First of all, make sure your boots are comfortable. If you are trying on new boots, wear and walk in them for up to half an hour. Remember, you will be spending a whole day in them and you want to be sure there is no pinching or pressure points anywhere in the boot.

There are different types of boots: rear entry and conventional design. The best design is the one that fits you the best. Some people feel more comfortable in a rear entry boot while others prefer the feel of a conventional boot. Don't worry about the look of the boot, it is the fit that is important. Comfortable and snug with very little heel lift is the feel you should have in a new boot.

When purchasing ski bindings, make sure you have picked out a binding that is best suited to your height, weight and ability. If the binding is used, make sure it meets "DIN" standards, or ski technicians will be unable to service them.

Now you're looking to buy a pair of skis. What is your ability? In what type of conditions do you most often ski? What is your favorite terrain, moguls or groomed runs? Do you like quick slalom turns or long, giant slalom turns? Tell your salesperson everything they need to know to help you purchase the proper ski.

In a future Pepsi/Powder King Ski Tips, we'll go into more detail about skis. Until then, Happy skiing.

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