

Bush Still Bests the GOP Field

The Republican presidential contest continues to look like a political production of Snow White and the Nine Dwarves, with George W. Bush in the starring role.

Bush has nearly four times the support of his nearest competitor, Elizabeth Dole, in a new ABC News poll, with their eight other competitors in the single digits. Compared to five months ago hardly anything has changed, with the exception of slippage for Dole.

	Bush	Dole	Forbes	McCain	Quayle	Buch.	Keyes	Bauer	Hatch	Alex.
8/8/99	54	14	4	4	3	3	2	1	1	*
3/14/99	52	25	4	2	6	3	2	1	NA	1

WINNOW - Much can happen; the public is hardly focused on the race at this early stage, and events like this weekend's Iowa straw poll could start a winnowing process that begins to clarify the choices. But it'll take more than a little winnowing for Bush to feel the heat, given that he bests all nine of his opponents combined.

This result is among "leaned Republicans" – Republicans and independents who lean toward the Republican Party. It's even a little more Bush-centric among Republicans only: Fifty-nine percent for Bush, 12 percent for Dole, the rest still in single digits.

Bush likely is benefiting from his well-known name; at the same time, this poll identified him as "the son of the former president" to ensure that respondents were aware it's not his father, back in action with a new middle initial.

As for Dole, the only woman in the field is supported by 20 percent of women, compared to eight percent of men. Last spring, though, her numbers were better in both groups.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone Aug. 4-8, 1999, among a random national sample of 1,017 adults, of whom 417 were Republicans or leaned that way. The results for the leaned Republican sample have a five-point error margin. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:

<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

6. (Asked of leaned Republicans) Suppose your state holds a Republican primary or caucus for president in 2000 and the candidates are: (READ LIST; SCRAMBLE). For whom would you vote - I'll read the list again:

Net Leaned:

	8/8/99	3/14/99
George W. Bush	54	52
Elizabeth Dole	14	25
Steve Forbes	4	4
John McCain	4	2
Pat Buchanan	3	3
Dan Quayle	3	6
Alan Keyes	2	2
Gary Bauer	1	1
Orrin Hatch	1	NA
Lamar Alexander	*	1
John Kasich	NA	2
Bob Smith	NA	*
Other (vol.)	*	*
None (vol.)	2	*
Would not vote (vol.)	2	*
No opinion	7	2