

POLL FINDS KENNEDY TRAILS 2 DEMOCRATS

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Senator Edward M. Kennedy would run a slightly poorer race against President Nixon in 1972 than either Senator Edmund S. Muskie or Hubert H. Humphrey, and his popularity has declined since his accident in Chappaquidick, according to a Louis Harris poll published yesterday in The New York Post.

A poll of 1,573 voters across the country early this month showed that in percentage vote Mr. Nixon would beat Senator Kennedy, 48 to 38, Mr. Muskie, 47 to 38, and Mr. Humphrey, 48 to 39.

A similar poll conducted by the Harris Survey in May found Mr. Kennedy a stronger candidate for the Democrats than either Mr. Muskie or Mr. Humphrey by 10 percentage points.

The question posed in the poll was: "Suppose in the election for President in 1972, it were between President Richard Nixon for the Republicans, (Senator Edward Kennedy, Senator Edmund Muskie, Hubert Humphrey) for the Democrats, and George Wallace as an Independent?"

The survey also found Mr. Nixon slipping against Mr. Muskie and Mr. Humphrey. His 19-point lead over Mr. Muskie in May is now nine points, and the President's 18-point margin over Mr. Humphrey in May is now also nine points, Mr. Harris reported.