

Ford Led Kennedy in August

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President Ford has catapulted into a lead over Senator Edward Kennedy in the first trial heat conducted since President Ford became president August 9.

In the latest nationwide survey, 57 per cent of registered voters choose Mr. Ford, 33 per cent select Kennedy, and ten per cent are undecided. In the previous trial heat between these two men, in May, Kennedy held a substantial lead, 50 to 39

per cent, with 11 per cent undecided.

Kennedy is currently the top choice of Democrats for their party's nomination in 1976, but has not made known his intentions regarding the 1976 presidential race.

The new President is reaping the political rewards of the aura of goodwill which surrounds a president when he first takes office. Analysis of current survey data shows that among persons who express a considerable measure of confidence in the future of the nation Mr.

Ford is chosen over Kennedy by 64 per cent to 27 per cent.

In contrast, Kennedy leads Mr. Ford, 48 per cent to 41 per cent, among persons in the survey who express little confidence in the future of the nation.

Democratic defection is currently at as high a level as it was in the 1972 presidential campaign, with one third of Democrats (33 per cent) in the latest survey choosing Mr. Ford over Kennedy.

Mr. Ford has made substantial inroads into the groups that have consistently been the foundation of Kennedy's support. For example, the vote among Catholics is currently fairly evenly divided, whereas Catholics chose Kennedy by more than a 2-to-1 margin in the earlier (May) survey.

Kennedy continues to hold a lead among young voters (18 to 29 years old) but his margin has slipped from 66 to 23 per cent in the earlier survey to 48 to 44 per cent in the current survey.

Here is the question asked in the survey to determine the relative popularity of presidential candidates at this early stage of the race for 1976:

"Suppose the presidential election were being held today. If President Ford were

the Republican candidate and Senator Edward Kennedy were the Democratic candidate, which would you like to see win?"

	Today	May
Ford	57%	39%
Kennedy	33	50
Other, undecided	10	11

Following are the results by key groups:

	Ford	Kennedy	Other, Undecided
	57%	33%	10%
Nationwide	57	33	10
Catholics	48	42	10
Protestants	63	28	9
18-29 Years	44	48	8
30-49 Years	60	31	9
50 and Older	60	28	12
Men	55	35	10
Women	59	31	10
College	74	20	6
High School	52	37	11
Grade School	45	43	12
Outside South	57	33	10
South	55	35	10
Southern Whites	65	23	12
Northern Whites	63	27	10
Professional and Business	74	18	8
Clerical & Sales	51	37	12
Manual Labor	48	44	8
Republicans	89	5	6
Democrats	33	55	12
Independents	64	25	11
Labor Union Families	50	41	9
Non-union Families	58	31	11
Those Expressing Considerable Confidence in Future of Nation	64	27	9
Those Expressing Little Confidence	41	48	11

(Note: The number of non-whites in the sample of registered voters is too small to permit the reporting of percentages.)

These findings are based on the proportion (approximately 72 per cent) of the population who are currently registered to vote out of a total sample of 1590 adults, 18 and older. The survey was conducted in more than 300 localities during August 16-19.

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