

The Star-Ledger/**Eagleton-Rutgers Poll**

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WHO'S THE BOSS? NEW JERSEY SPEAKS!

And the Winner is . . . "The Boss" of Course

Stuck in the winter doldrums and in serious need of relief from seriousness, we decided to ask one of the silliest questions in our 30-plus year history on the last statewide *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*: "Who's the Boss of New Jersey?"

Poll respondents were given a choice among four local "bosses:" (1) fictional mob don Tony Soprano from the New Jersey-set television show, *The Sopranos*; (2) imperious Yankees owner George Steinbrenner, who until recently was a boss in the Yankee-Nets partnership; (3) Bruce Springsteen, the Jersey-born rock star commonly known as "The Boss;" and (4) Governor Jim McGreevey, Boss-in-Chief of the state.

And when the dust settled, the winner was – The Boss ! The results of our poll – conducted between January 7 and 13 with a sample of 904 New Jerseyans age 18 or older – showed Bruce Springsteen edging out Jim McGreevey by a margin of 33 to 26 percent. Back in the pack were George Steinbrenner at 12 percent and Tony Soprano at 10 percent. Another 18 percent of those polled refused to be a party to this nonsense. Pollsters commented, "These results clearly verify conventional wisdom in the Garden State that Springsteen does indeed rule."

Having gone so far as to ask a silly question, it seemed only natural that the poll provide an equally silly analysis. The exclusive results of our survey show that Springsteen commanded the vote of most demographic groups, doing especially well among men, adults under age 50, residents of the southern and central portions of the state, and political independents.

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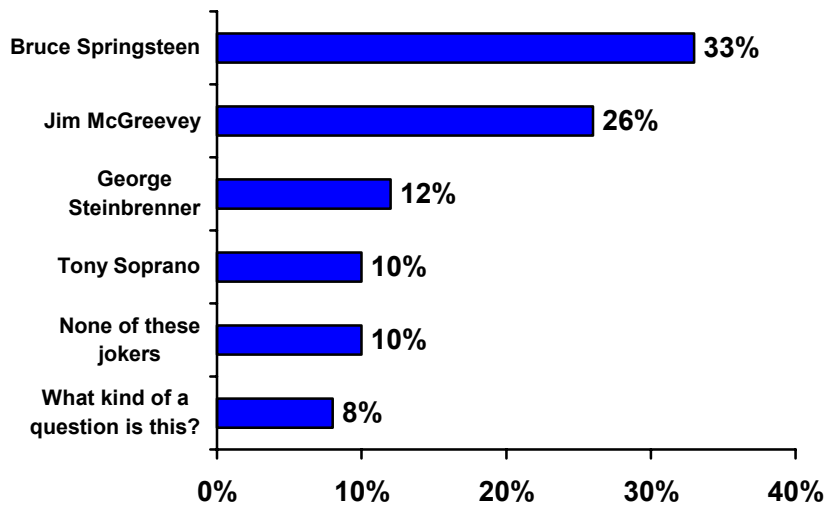
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Suppose there was an election for the Boss of New Jersey. Which one of the following four people would you vote for?



However, there were some surprises in who won other demographic groups. While Springsteen is routinely characterized as a working-class hero, it is the state's governor who was selected as "big cheese" by lower income residents. Jim McGreevey was chosen as Boss of New Jersey by 33 percent of those earning less than \$35,000 a year. Springsteen took only 19 percent of this group's vote, coming in third behind "None of the Above/Leave Me Alone" which had 27 percent.

The governor also scratched out narrow victories over the singer among Democrats (40%, to 37% for Springsteen) and North Jersey residents (32% to 29%). The governor also bested Springsteen among those residents who feel New Jersey is heading in the right direction, but again only by a narrow margin of 35 to 30 percent. Among those who feel the state is heading down the wrong path, Springsteen is the clear winner with 32 percent of the vote. McGreevey placed fourth at 15 percent, running behind "None of the Above/Leave Me Alone" (23%) and George Steinbrenner (17%), but ahead of Tony Soprano (13%).

In other findings, "None of the Above/Leave Me Alone" bested all four named candidates among residents age 65 and older, collecting 36 percent of these "votes." Tony Soprano had his best showing among adults under 30 years old at 19 percent. The mob chief also did better outside of his home turf, getting 15 percent in South Jersey compared to 10 percent in North Jersey. Pollsters speculated that Soprano may have bumped off too many local supporters to take the northern vote. The "Stein" performed

equally in all regions of the state, garnering between 11 and 13 percent of the vote, even in the Phillies' backyard of South Jersey.

And since poll officials had way too much time on their hands this month, analysts tested the relative strengths of some hypothetical "tickets" of Boss and Vice-Boss as it were. Dividing the four candidates into two tickets composed of Insiders versus Outsiders seems to confirm the fact that New Jersey is a state looking for some fundamental reform.














































The ticket of the two candidates who could be charitably characterized as outside the mainstream—Springsteen and Soprano, would best the two insiders—McGreevey and Steinbrenner, by a margin of 53 to 47 percent (excluding those respondents who refused to take part in the "vote"). In fact, The Boss is so popular that even the drag of Steinbrenner on the ticket would not prevent a victory. Springsteen and Steinbrenner, the poll estimates, would beat McGreevey and Soprano by a margin of 56 to 44 percent.

For no apparent reason, other than procrastination from real work, the pollsters looked at the numbers behind the numbers of the closest race—the narrow 53 to 47 percent victory of outsiders Springsteen and Soprano over McGreevey and Steinbrenner. Here's what they found:
































- The race is dead even among women—51 for the Insiders, 49 for the Outsiders. Men break 57 to 43 for Bruce and Tony.
- Want to energize young folks? Go with the Outsiders. It's 64 percent of those under 30 who go for the Rock (Bruce) and Roll (Tony) ticket, as do 55 percent of those between 30 and 49. Those between 50 and 64 tilt toward Jim and George (53 to 47), and the state's seniors overwhelmingly support McGreevey and Steinbrenner over the pistol-whipper-snappers by a lopsided 64 to 36 percent.
- Republicans are super-cool. Yes, among members of the GOP, Bruce and Tony rock—56 to 44 percent over Jim & George. Democrats split narrowly to the incumbent Governor & Yankees owner—51 to 49 percent. Independents split toward the Outsiders by 52 to 48 percent.

The poll also examined the potential of creating a McGreevey-Springsteen dream ticket. This duo would wipe out the competition posed by a George-Tony pairing with a whopping 73-27 margin. Noting the powerful draw of the home-grown rock star, pollsters suggested, "Perhaps it's time New Jersey's incumbent chief executive thinks about amending the state constitution to include an elected lieutenant governor."

Who's The Boss ?

All New Jerseyans	 33%	 26%	 18%	 12%	 10%
Men	 33%	 19%	 18%	 16%	 14%
Women	 32%	 32%	 20%	 9%	 7%
18 to 29 year olds	 39%	 26%	 19%	 9%	 6%
30 to 49 year olds	 38%	 25%	 15%	 11%	 11%
50 to 64 year olds	 28%	 25%	 22%	 16%	 9%
65 + year olds	 36%	 31%	 19%	 10%	 4%
New Jersey is heading in the RIGHT direction	 35%	 30%	 15%	 14%	 7%
New Jersey is heading in the WRONG direction	 32%	 23%	 17%	 15%	 13%

Who's The Boss ?

North Jerseyans	 32%	 29%	 17%	 12%	 10%
Central Jerseyans	 36%	 28%	 17%	 13%	 6%
South Jerseyans	 37%	 20%	 17%	 15%	 11%
Democrats	 40%	 37%	 13%	 6%	 5%
Independents	 35%	 24%	 17%	 16%	 9%
Republicans	 28%	 21%	 18%	 17%	 16%
Income under \$35,000	 33%	 27%	 19%	 11%	 10%
Income \$35-70,000	 42%	 25%	 12%	 11%	 9%
Income over \$70,000	 37%	 23%	 18%	 11%	 10%