

AP survey indicates football now more popular than baseball

By WILL GRIMSLEY
AP Special Correspondent
NEW YORK (AP)—Pro football has surged past baseball as America's national pastime, but baseball's World Series remains the No. 1 sports event, according to a special poll released today by The Associated Press.
"Baseball is about as exciting as batting rocks with a stick on a country road," said Ken Booth of Radio Station KEEL in Shreveport, La.

"I vote baseball as still our national pastime," countered John Steadman, sports editor of the Baltimore News - American. "Baseball has a certain simplicity to it that is genuine and good."
Such were examples of the contrasting opinions in the first of a projected series of polls on controversial issues conducted by The AP among the nation's sports writers and sports casters. The newsmen were presented a simple ballot, asking: What is

America's No. 1 sport? What is the top sports event?
Comments and suggestions were invited.
With 727 voting, 474 chose pro football. There were 223 votes for baseball with 30 write-in votes for college football, auto racing, track and field, basketball and horse racing.
The World Series was a sound winner as the top individual attraction, getting 414 votes

compared with 285 for pro football's Super Bowl and 28 scattered choices for such events as the Olympics, Kentucky Derby and Indianapolis 500.
The poll was taken in the wake of the controversy raised by a Harris Poll on the same general theme financed by the National Football League and released the week of last January's Super Bowl.
"We can do a poll, too," snapped Commissioner Bowie

Kuhn in defense of baseball, "and get whatever results we want. It is my feeling these polls can be done and a sample be so selective as to get whatever results you care to get."
Louis Harris, to whom the NFL paid \$38,000, took a sampling of 1,614 sports fans and announced that football was named the favorite sport over baseball by a margin of 29 per cent to 21 per cent. Basketball was third at 9

per cent with the rest of the votes distributed among several other sports. However, the Harris survey gave the World Series an edge over the Super Bowl—23 to 20 per cent, the other 57 per cent scattered among various events.
The AP poll, conducted at a period when the football season had just ended and baseball training was beginning, showed stronger support than the Harris survey for football and the World Series.

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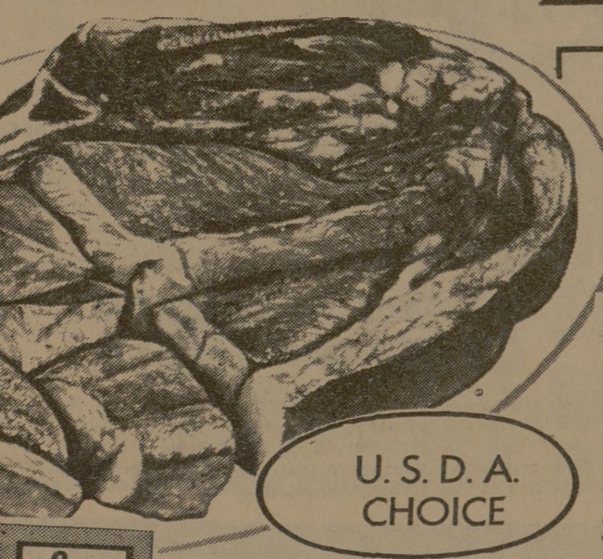
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