

MEDIA RELEASE

4 April 2008

Kiwis look to sports people to be role models

Kiwis expect professional athletes to set standards both on and off the sports field, Research New Zealand polling shows.

Research New Zealand director Emanuel Kalafatelis said that the poll showed 82% of New Zealanders believe professional sportspeople have a responsibility to behave as good role models.

The debate was recently ignited in Australia following the arrest of Olympic swimming hopeful Nick D'Arcy on charges of assault and assault occasioning grievous bodily harm. D'Arcy's arrest came after his selection for the Olympic swimming team in a dream qualifying meet which saw world records fall. D'Arcy's inclusion in the team is now in doubt.

"Our poll clearly demonstrated Kiwis expect more of their sportspeople than just a great on-field performance. While some may argue that the responsibility of our professional sportspeople is simply to play their sport, it seems Kiwis think they also have a responsibility to behave as positive role models within the community."

"Our poll found that females (88%) felt more strongly about the issue than males (75%). There were also differences of opinion among the age groups, with 91% of Kiwis aged between 51 and 59 saying professional sports people have a responsibility to behave as good role models, compared to 70% of 15 to 29 year-olds," Mr Kalafatelis said.

Research New Zealand polling was conducted between 11 March and 19 March.

The Research New Zealand poll of 500 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone between the 12 and 18 March. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.4 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organisation but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.

Participants were asked: *In your opinion, do professional sports people have a responsibility to behave as good role models?*

Table 1: Should professional sports people be good role models? (by gender)

In your opinion, do professional sports people have a responsibility to behave as good role models?

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	500	194	306
	%	%	%
Yes	82	➤75	➤88
No	14	23	7
Don't know	3	2	4
Refused	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

➤Denotes a statistically significant difference between other sub-group.

Table 2: Should professional sports people be good role models? (by age)

In your opinion, do professional sports people have a responsibility to behave as good role models?

	Total	15 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60+
Base =	500	64	82	98	113	143
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	82	➤70	82	76	➤91	89
No	14	27	14	20	6	7
Don't know	3	3	3	3	3	4
Refused	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

➤Denotes a statistically significant difference between other sub-group.

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