

# Kerry wins Texas, three more Southern primaries

The victories are most likely a high-water mark for Kerry in the South, experts say

By Wayne Slater  
The Dallas Morning News (KRT)

AUSTIN, Texas — John Kerry added Texas and three other states from Dixie to his delegate total Tuesday, but the wins probably offer little Southern comfort for the fall, when President Bush hopes to dominate the region.

Bush and Kerry, the likely Democratic presidential nominee, won their respective primaries in Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and the Lone Star State.

For Kerry, Tuesday's sweep — coupled with wins in three earlier Southern primaries — probably will prove to be the high-water mark for the Massachusetts senator in the South, analysts say.

"Kerry's showing the flag here, but he hasn't given much indication that his campaign is really going to put in serious money, except perhaps Florida," said Earl Black, a political science professor at Rice University in Houston.

"It looks like he and many of his advisers might be persuaded that Kerry can be the Democratic Lincoln — win the presidency without the South," he said.

At stake Tuesday in four states were 465 delegates to the Democratic National Convention in July. The contests were the first without serious competition for Kerry after North Carolina Sen. John Edwards dropped out. Kerry had more than 1,500 delegates, but based on the proportional allocation of the Democrats' delegate system, he wasn't expected to reach the 2,162 needed

to secure the nomination until later this month.

Analysts say that absent a collapse of the Bush campaign, the president's home state probably will remain in the Republican column in November — as will much of Dixie. In 2000, Bush won every Southern state.

## Democrats favor Southerner

Exit polls of Democratic voters Tuesday found they liked the idea of Kerry putting a Southerner on the ticket.

Asked whom he should pick as his running mate, nearly half favored Edwards. Nearly a quarter want New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, while everyone else was in single figures.

As for the prospect that Kerry can beat Bush, 45 percent of Democrats in Tuesday's primary put it as "very likely," according to the exit polls. About one-third said it was "somewhat likely."

Experts point to Louisiana or Arkansas as potential targets in the South for Kerry.

But his best hope might be Florida, where Al Gore lost in a nail-biter in 2000 that required a 36-day recount and decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. Two new polls have Kerry with a slender lead over Bush in the Sunshine State.

In recent days, Kerry traveled Florida with a message tailored to retirees and rekindled charges that Bush and Republican state officials "stole" the last election.

The Bush campaign countered with nearly \$1 million in political ads in Florida before Tuesday's primary, twice as much as in any other state. And on the stump, Bush has fired up an aggressive message of particular appeal in the South: that Kerry is a political liberal who

would raise taxes and imperil national security.

The Kerry camp has served notice that it intends to compete in the South, despite the odds. For one thing, the strategy would force Bush to spend time and money in the region rather than be free to concentrate elsewhere, particularly hard-fought Midwest states where swing voters could provide the margin of victory.

Bruce Buchanan, a political science professor at the University of Texas at Austin, said while Kerry's general-election prospects in the South will be "very difficult," his military credentials as a Vietnam War hero should win him votes.

"He's the guy who stopped bullets. He's credible in a way that (1988 Democrat nominee) Michael Dukakis and (former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean) couldn't be," Buchanan said.

But Republicans say a strong conservative message, particularly one that emphasizes social conservative themes and labels Kerry a liberal, will be popular in Southern states.

## Analysts look at Northern strategy for Democrats

Political analysts say that while a Republican presidential candidate must capture much of the South, a Democrat could win the White House without any of the original 11 Confederate states.

Assuming Kerry were to win every state won by Al Gore, he would need to take back only one — possibly labor-friendly West Virginia or Ohio — to reach the 270 electoral votes necessary for victory.

"It's a lot easier these days for a Democrat to put together a North-

ern strategy and win the White House than ever before," said Black of Rice. "You combine the Northeast with the Pacific Coast states and the urban states of the Great Lakes region, and that gives the Democrats almost the electoral votes they need to win."

Of the states in Tuesday's contests, Louisiana's mix of minority voters and economic problems could favor Kerry, who visited all four states.

Still, the president won Louisiana

by 8 percentage points in 2000. And Louisiana Secretary of State Fox McKeithen, a Republican, questioned whether his own primary had much political meaning at all.

"I can't imagine why anybody's going to vote," he said. "Why should they? I wouldn't except I'm the elections official and it would look bad if didn't."

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## GIFT

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\$48 million, according to a College of Education press release.

Frohnmyer noted the necessity of legislative support in matching the \$10 million gift, which is the largest donation the college has ever received.

"It's imperative that this donation be matched by the state of Oregon," he said.

Half of the construction cost is expected to come from other private donations.

"The HEDCO Foundation has chosen to make the lead gift for this critical venture with the hope that it will inspire others to step forward and help make this project a reality," HEDCO Board President Dody Jernstedt, a College of Education alumna, said in the release.

Randy Papé — chairman of University fund-raising initiative Campaign Oregon — said that private gifts are necessary for raising the standards of the college.

"I'm extremely grateful to the directors of the HEDCO Foundation for taking the lead," he said. "We must provide facilities and equipment that match the quality of our students and faculty."

Communication Disorders and Sciences Associate Professor McKay Sohlberg explained the inefficiency of

the college's existing facilities, especially in terms of working with students with speech, hearing and language disorders. She added that, currently, not enough space is dedicated to research.

"The HEDCO complex would really allow us to meet our objectives," she said.

Along with uniting the college's dispersed facilities, the project will include specialized areas for developing instructional assessment tools and a teaching performance studio with an integrated clinic for professional training. The project also involves renovation and expansion of existing facilities.

Junior Jenni Minas, who is studying communication disorders and sciences, said that the project will provide students with better opportunities for research.

"Clinically it'll help us be able to work with equipment that we don't have the chance to work with now," she said.

Minas, a member of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association, said having a centralized complex will also help build community in the college.

"It's absolutely incredible that we're going to be able to have the opportunity to use these facilities," she said.

The college serves nearly 1,500 students and has brought \$147 million in grants to the University during the

last decade, according to the release. The college is ranked second in the nation among public education colleges and first in the nation in terms of faculty productivity.

Kaufman said the project will put students, staff and faculty on the cutting edge of their profession.

"The HEDCO Foundation's transformative gift affirms, from a student and faculty point of view, that they matter and that education matters," he said.

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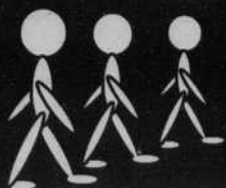
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