

ADAM IS KING OF THE KITCHEN

NEW MASTERCHEF CROWNED - PAGE 3

MasterChef AUSTRALIA

24-PAGE MAGAZINE

FREE TV GUIDE

INSIDE TODAY

Labor to take key seat: poll

By Chris Johnson

Young women in the bellwether electorate of Eden-Monaro are flocking to Prime Minister Julia Gillard, leaving the Coalition with virtually no chance of snatching the seat or the government from Labor at next month's poll.

A voting trends survey conducted in Eden-Monaro during the first week of the campaign showed strong support for incumbent Labor candidate Mike Kelly, with six out of 10 voters believing he would win the seat.

But the Gillard factor was proving to be the most persuasive among voters in the electorate.

Ms Gillard got a rousing reception when she made a brief stop at the Queanbeyan Kangaroos football club last night to thank volunteers working for Mr Kelly. She was greeted with rapturous applause as she said hello to dozens of families.

Ms Gillard is particularly resonating with women aged under 45, who are turning away from the Coalition in favour of the nation's first female Prime Minister.

Only 22 per cent of that demographic preferred Opposition Leader Tony Abbott, while 67 per cent preferred Ms Gillard. Across all age groups in the electorate, 56 per cent of voters preferred Ms Gillard and 29 per cent Mr Abbott.

The Patterson Market Research poll of 405 Eden-Monaro constituents conducted last week showed primary support for Dr Kelly surged to 53 per cent, while his Liberal opponent David Gazard languished on 36 per cent. After preferences were allocated, the two-party preferred result showed Labor with 61 per cent of the vote and the Liberals with 39 per cent.

It compared with the 53.4 to 46.6 result at the 2007 election.

Pollster Keith Patterson said the survey's findings effectively put Eden-Monaro out of reach for Mr Gazard. "He could pack his tent now," Mr Patterson said.

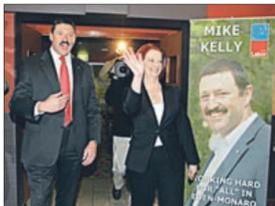
"I can't imagine what could turn this result around except for a Tampa-style incident before polling day. But going on these figures, Labor will retain the seat.

"In our assessment, in the absence of any dramatic failure in the Labor camp between now and the election, we can see no prospect of David Gazard managing to win the seat, nor incidentally can we see any prospect of the Liberals winning the election."

Since 1972 Eden-Monaro has traditionally been held by whichever party wins government.

But Mr Patterson said results from the electorate mirrored those of marginal seats he polled in Western Australia, pointing to the Liberals not making any ground there and possibly losing a seat to Labor.

He said all areas of Eden-Monaro



VOCAL SUPPORT: Prime Minister Julia Gillard with Mike Kelly at the Queanbeyan Kangaroos club last night.

were showing a preference for Labor over the Coalition. That preference was strongest in the urban zone of Queanbeyan, but also strongly weighted in coastal and rural zones.

The three regions have roughly the same population, although the coastal zone has expanded and the rural area reduced with the recent redrawing of electoral boundaries.

"Certainly there is an element of females being enthused by the prospect of an elected female prime minister in Australia," Mr Patterson said. "But also, we believe that there is significant turn-off from the Liberals due to Tony Abbott's well-documented social conservatism with respect to female rights - abortion in particular - and same-sex relationships, and also his theologically based opposition to stem-cell research."

However, the survey also found Ms Gillard's takeover of the prime ministership from Kevin Rudd was a polarising factor in the electorate.

Among Liberal voters, 36 per cent regard the leadership change as a negative, with only 2 per cent viewing it as positive. A total of 32 per cent of Labor voters in the electorate see the change as positive, while 14 per cent regard it as negative.

Primary support for Dr Kelly before the 11 per cent of undecideds are allocated sits at 47 per cent - jumping to 53 per cent once the undecideds are allocated by extrapolating from those who did have a preference.

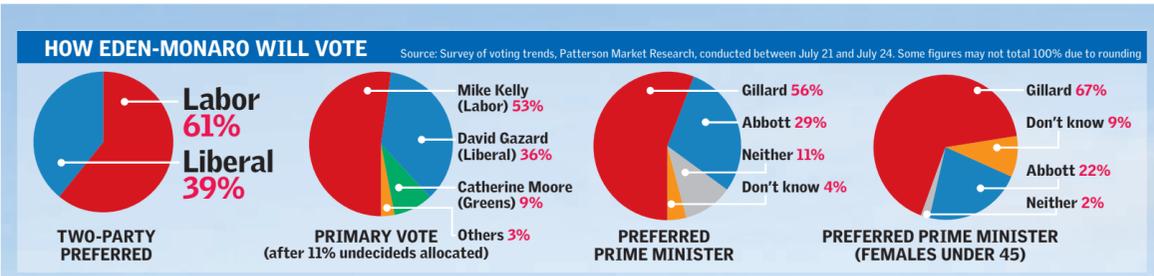
The result means the incumbent is likely to be returned in Eden-Monaro even without Greens preferences.

But the Greens have attracted 9 per cent of the primary vote, another factor in play to ensure the seat remains out of reach for Mr Gazard.

People also overwhelmingly expected Labor to win the seat, with 60 per cent tipping Dr Kelly to 17 per cent tipping Mr Gazard.

Similarly, almost seven out of 10 voters expect Labor to be returned to power and only 20 per cent expect a Coalition victory. The survey's participants said they were influenced more by each parties' policies and ideals, than by the leader.

More reports - Page 4, 5



TRUE BLUE: Richard and Maureen Bennetts with their children Gil and Gene.

FACE TO FACE: Farmers use weather forecasts to foretell the future. Politicians have the electorate of Eden-Monaro. In the second instalment of their series on the bellwether seat, reporter Phillip Thomson and photographer Lannon Harley go to the hills of Adaminaby where they met the Bennetts, a grazing family who are hoping for a Liberal victory. Our team also went to Nelligen to get the views of small business owners. Reports - Page 4

Abbott wins on points, but no momentum

By David McLennan and Danielle Cronin

Opposition Leader Tony Abbott won last night's debate, according to a political marketing expert but not convincingly enough to give his campaign the kick start it needs.

However, audience measures used by the commercial television stations gave the debate to Prime Minister Julia Gillard.

The debate focused mainly on population policy and asylum-seekers. It also touched on industrial relations and the economy, paid parental leave and, briefly, the war in Afghanistan. Ms Gillard was also



CLOSE ENCOUNTER: Julia Gillard, left, and Tony Abbott at last night's debate.

asked again about how she toppled Kevin Rudd for his job. No new policies were announced. Channel Nine's worm found 63 per

cent support for Ms Gillard winning the only leaders' debate for the campaign, while 37 per cent nominated Mr Abbott. Channel Seven's polligraph also gave the debate to Ms Gillard, 53-47 per cent. Both found greater support for Ms Gillard from women than men.

However, Australian National University political marketing expert Andrew Hughes felt Mr Abbott won. "It was pretty much lacklustre without any fireworks but I give the debate to Tony Abbott on points only," he said. "I just think he was able to play to his strengths a lot more than Julia Gillard did, and I think he did some good work high-

lighting some areas where Labor is weak."

However, Mr Abbott did not get the momentum he needed. "I think ... they will sit down and analyse themselves where they are strong on and areas where they need to be stronger in. For Tony Abbott, watch for him to be harder on economic management. "For Julia Gillard, her strengths ... were education, health and [industrial relations]. ... She acted like a prime minister."

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Editorial, Pat's view - Page 8

Leaders ensure this lacklustre event is no real contest

There is no point having another drab affair promoted as a leaders' "debate" during this visionless election campaign.

While it brought Tony Abbott and Julia Gillard to the same stage, it was a low-risk affair.

If we gave them our undivided attention for another encounter, they would again stick firmly "on message" and not let pesky questions divert them from their scripted sales pitch.

They are masters at walking

Comment

ROSS PEAKE



around questions, so last night was business as usual for these tame events - scant debate, little passion and no vision. Gillard scored points for being

positive most of the time, whereas Abbott has to criticise more - that's the nature of his job.

The Prime Minister made it clear Abbott would be allowed only one leaders' debate.

Every opposition leader knows the great benefit of the encounter is being put on equal terms with the prime minister.

For the rest of the time, an opposition struggles against the huge media machine fuelled by ministers. Therefore Abbott only had to survive

last night's head-to-head encounter to feel good.

After a nervous start, he went well. He was strong with his pitch on paid parental leave, although the Coalition has already allowed the Government's legislation to pass the Senate - the scheme will start next year if Labor is re-elected.

He was also direct on Labor's weak spots but did not get a decisive win that would put his campaign ahead of Labor.

At the conclusion, Abbott duly

asked for another round in the ring against Gillard, but what would be the point of another sanitised event when paid political advertisements make the point succinctly?

Both leaders could spend another day spitting up on how not to answer questions and then step back on stage for another round, and voters would come away absolutely no wiser. It would still be "moving forward" versus "action contract".

At no point would Gillard acknowledge her failure on

leadership on climate change nor would Abbott explain how he can credibly drop his passion for WorkChoices.

And how do both of the leaders explain their raucous schoolyard behaviour in question time when they went to cruise control for the hour when many more voters are taking an interest and weighing their vote?

Continued Page 5

Cricket great to fulfil hawker's last wish

By Mary Alexander

A humble Indian hawker who died in a country Victorian town 63 years ago has helped to heal the strained relationship between Australia and India.

The Indian community hailed yesterday the kindness of strangers after the ashes of Poooran Singh were handed over in a moving ceremony in Warrnambool cemetery.

Poooran was cremated after he died aged 77, but with no family members to claim his remains, Guyett's Funerals kept them preserved in the hope that his last wish to be laid to rest on the Ganges River could one day be fulfilled.

Legendary Indian cricketer Kapil



RETURNED: Kapil Dev, left, and Harmel Uppal hold Poooran Singh's ashes.

Dev was inspired to retrieve the ashes after the story was broadcast on SBS Punjabi radio and made international press. "This story is much bigger than anything else,"

Dev told the Warrnambool Standard yesterday.

"I think it's an amazing story. This is definitely different to anything in my life I have ever done."

Poooran Singh was 30 when he travelled from India in 1899 to work as a hawker throughout Victoria's south-west, selling wares from a horse-drawn wagon.

He was welcomed into many family homes, with locals remembering him as a gentle soul who was kind and generous.

Dev was astonished that the Guyett family had held Poooran's ashes for so long.

"It's one of the best, emotional stories with a happy ending. This story has touched many, many peo-

ple's hearts. This is the bridge between the people to say you can love each other.

"... The 2 per cent of negative people cannot ruin our lives. The 98 per cent positive people are here to make a better world."

More than 150 people from Melbourne's Sikh community joined the 400-strong crowd at the cemetery to witness the handover ceremony to Kapil Dev and Poooran's great nephew Harmel Uppal.

"Despite our differences, we are all one today," Mr Uppal said.

The ashes will be taken to Poooran's Indian village for a ceremony and then scattered on the Ganges later in the week, finally honouring the hawker's wishes. AAP

Audit office review faults ACT Gov't's submissions

By David Stockman

An audit of the Federal Government's Infrastructure Priority List has suggested several ACT submissions did not meet basic requirements.

The detailed review from the Australian National Audit Office highlighted four proposed ACT Government projects among a list of 94 for not meeting the "minimum, the profiling proforma".

The projects included the proposed very fast train to link Canberra to the major eastern cities.

"Included in the list of 94 projects were a number of projects that had

not completed a summary of initiative profiling, including four Australian Capital Territory Government projects," the audit said.

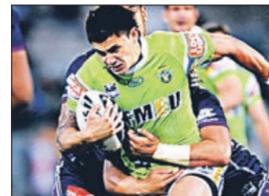
The audit also shows that while the proposed stage 2 development of the Majura Parkway had the best benefit to cost ratio of nine priority projects, it did not receive any Federal Government funding.

ACT Liberal Senator Gary Humphries said the report gave evidence the ACT Government was not battling hard enough to earn federal dollars.

Continued Page 2

SPORT

STORM WARNING



Despite a dismal record against the Melbourne Storm, Canberra coach David Furner is confident the Raiders can outlast a Storm team with nothing to play for except pride. The Raiders have won just one of 13 games in Melbourne since the Storm joined the NRL in 1998.

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NEWS

Best foot forward

Kath Day-Knight would have loved the location, but it was her alter ego, of Kath & Kim fame, who proved it's easy to be foxy and a warrior against disease. More than 100 people joined Turner on the inaugural Sarah Grace Sarcoma Foundation walk at Lake Burley Griffin.

PAGE 2

Australian killed

A NSW woman, 27, is among 19 people killed in a stampede at the Love Parade music festival in Duisburg in western Germany. Authorities are trying to establish if any other Australians have been affected.

PAGE 3

Farewell swotters

Enid Blyton's language is being dragged out of the 1940s by her publisher in order to appeal to modern children. Starting next month with 10 Famous Five novels, Hodder is "sensitive and carefully" revising Blyton's text.

PAGE 3

WORLD

US sailor captured

The Taliban has offered to exchange the body of a US sailor killed in an ambush two days ago for insurgent prisoners. Another sailor is believed alive and in Taliban hands.

PAGE 6

OPINION

Freedom v equality



As election day approaches, it is worth thinking about how strange our system of compulsory voting is, a system we share with only one other advanced democracy.

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WEATHER

CANBERRA
14°
Mostly sunny

Chance of rain: 10 per cent
Wind: Variable, 5-10km/h
UV index: 2 (low)

Outlook: Mostly sunny
SYDNEY: Shower or two clearing, 17
MELBOURNE: Partly cloudy, 15

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