

# 2008 Election Forecasts of the PRIMARY MODEL

(Democratic Percentage of 2-Party Vote in)

	<b>Democratic Candidate</b>		
<b>Republican Candidate</b>	Clinton	Obama	Edwards
McCain	50.5	50.1	47.8
Romney	53.5	53.0	50.8
Huckabee	59.2	58.8	56.5
Giuliani	59.2	58.8	56.5

HOW to read the numbers: In a Clinton-McCain contest, for example, Clinton would get 50.5 percent of the two-party vote, and thus defeat McCain with 49.5 percent. The forecast model includes candidate showing in the New Hampshire Primary along with a cyclical dynamic and an adjustment for partisanship. The forecast standard error of these forecasts ranges from 2.5 to 2.7.

Vote in the New Hampshire Primary, Jan. 8, 2008:

Republicans: McCain (37.2), Romney (31.6), Huckabee (11.2), Giuliani (8.6)

Democrats: Clinton (39.2), Obama (36.4), Edwards (16.9)

<http://politics.nytimes.com/election-guide/2008/results/index.html> 1/9/2008, 8:53 AM EST

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**Comment:** The PRIMARY MODEL predicts that in a race of New Hampshire Primary winners, Democrat Hillary Clinton would narrowly defeat Republican John McCain in the November general election (50.5 to 49.5 percent of the two-party vote). The predicted margin of victory, however, is so small that the confidence attached to this forecast is less than 60 percent, given the size of the forecast standard error (2.5).

In match-ups between the Republican primary winner and Democratic primary losers, McCain would end up in a virtual tie with Barack Obama (49.9 to 50.1 percent) while defeating John Edwards (52.2 to 47.8 percent) by a margin close to one unit of the forecast standard error (2.6). At the same time, in match-ups between the Democratic primary winner and Republican primary losers, Clinton would dispatch Mitt Romney, Mike Huckabee, and Rudolph Giuliani by margins way beyond that error range.

Finally, in match-ups between primary losers, both Obama and Edwards would beat any of the Republicans, and quite handily so in most cases. Candidates not listed in the forecast table would do no better than the weakest one in their respective parties.

The greater likelihood of a Democratic victory in 2008 is no sign of partisan bias. Rather, it has to do with the primary performance of incumbent-party candidates counting far more heavily than the performance of out-party candidates. Nominating a primary loser, or even a candidate with a lackluster primary showing, costs the incumbent party more dearly than it does the out-party.

