

FINAL SCORES



Pistons pound Rockets

Rasheed Wallace leads Detroit over Houston 87-79 ■ 1, 4C

Rasheed Wallace: Scored 24 point for Pistons.



'Incredible' superhero

The face is animated but the brains belong to filmmaker Brad Bird, who steered The Incredibles ■ 1D



Pixar Animation

Wednesday, November 3, 2004

Bush nears victory but Ohio count is in dispute

Edwards says Kerry won't concede: 'We will fight for every vote'

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By John Gress, Reuters

Obama takes Ill. Senate race

Democrat Barack Obama, celebrating with family, above, wins seat of retiring GOP Sen. Peter Fitzgerald ■ 13A

Republicans gain in Senate

Bunning wins, Daschle on fence, 11, 13A

GOP keeps control of House

Republicans build on majority, 11, 14A

Same-sex marriage barred

Voters in 10 states OK ban, 18A

11 states pick governors

Parties' power in flux, 20A

Nader unapologetic

Defiant despite 'spoiler' charges, 15A

Coming Thursday: Voting wrap-up

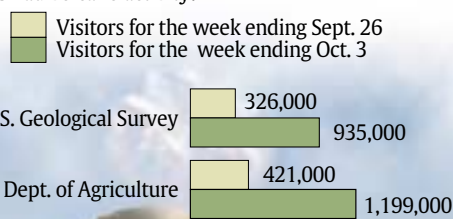
How the 2004 presidential election played out: Complete results, state by state.

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USA TODAY Snapshots™

Mount St. Helens inspires Web activity

Web visitors soared on these sites the week Mount St. Helens had volcano activity:



Source: Nielsen/NetRatings, October 2004 (U.S. home and work)

By Shannon Reilly and Dave Merrill, USA TODAY

Table with 2 columns: Page number and Content type (Crossword, Editorial, etc.)

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By Bob Mack, The Florida Times Union via AP

Rival camps: Florida supporters of President Bush and Sen. John Kerry face off in front of the Supervisor of Elections Office in Jacksonville Tuesday night.

Worried voters pulled in different directions

Exit polls show deep divide within electorate

By Susan Page USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Voters were in a worried mood Tuesday: Fearful of another terrorist attack, downbeat about the economy and pessimistic about whether the war in Iraq had made the United States safer in a dangerous world.

That pulled them in different directions when they went to the polls.

President Bush was more trusted by a double-digit margin when it came to handling terrorism. He had the overwhelming support of white evangelical Christians, many of whom cited moral values as their top issue.

Sen. John Kerry held the advantage when it came to handling the economy. He won a majority of independent-minded voters, a group that had gone to Bush four years ago, and he got the lion's share of new voters. Many of them were energized by their opposition to the war in Iraq.

In some ways, the presidential election on Tuesday was singular and new — the first since the Sept. 11 attacks, with all that meant. One-third of

voters cited their top issues as terrorism and Iraq, concerns that didn't even register four years ago.

But in other ways the election was all too familiar — a reprise of the red-vs.-blue cultural divide that marked the 2000 election, before Osama bin Laden had become a household name. Gun ownership, abortion rights and the emerging issue of same-sex marriage split the nation down the middle.

Voters in 11 states passed ballot measures to define marriage as between a man and a woman, proposals that presumably helped Republicans turn out sympathetic voters.

Surveys of 13,531 voters as they left their polling places across the nation measured their attitudes and asked about the factors that determined their votes.

Either outcome was destined to defy history. If Kerry won, it would be the first time that a president who ran for re-election during wartime was defeated.

If Bush won, it would be the first time that a president who took office after losing the popular vote managed to win a second term. That victory, if it happened, would be shaped by the same cultural divide that helped him carry the Electoral College in 2000 as Al Gore won more votes.

Cover story

Please see COVER STORY next page ▶

Turnout is huge; GOP holds Congress

By Bill Nichols USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — President Bush took an important step toward re-election early today by capturing Florida, a crucial prize in the drive to gain 270 electoral votes and a return to the White House.

But in a nerve-wracking election night and early morning that was eerily reminiscent of the controversial 2000 election, John Kerry turned to Ohio, another critical battleground state with 20 electoral votes, as perhaps his only remaining avenue to the White House.

Ohio remained too close to call, though Bush led with more than 90% of the vote counted. Two news organizations — Fox and NBC — called Ohio for Bush, which would virtually assure his re-election.

Others were more cautious, citing tens of thousands of uncounted ballots, including "provisional ballots" given to voters whose registration could not be immediately verified at the polls. Ohio Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell said the provisional ballots could number as many as 175,000 and might not be counted for 10 days.

"We waited four years for this victory. We can wait one more night," Sen. John Edwards told a cheering crowd at Kerry headquarters in Boston at about 2:30 a.m. ET. "We will fight for every vote."

The dramatic, tension-filled endgame to the bitterly fought campaign capped a presidential race in which a sharply divided nation clashed over the war in Iraq and the way forward for post-Sept. 11 America.

Both men watched the results come in with their families and senior staff — Bush at the White House and Kerry in Boston — after brief public appearances earlier in the day.

"I believe I will win," Bush told reporters at the White House just before 10 p.m. ET Tuesday. A teary Kerry said, "We made the case for change," before voting at the Massachusetts State House.

In addition to the race for the White House, 34 Senate races and 435 House contests were on ballots as Republicans maintained their control of both bodies.

Republicans were assured of increasing their 51-48 majority in the Senate by at least one seat with pickups in four southern states — Rep. Jim DeMint in South Carolina, Rep. Johnny Isakson in Georgia, Rep. David Vitter in Louisiana and Rep. Richard Burr in North Carolina. Democrats won at least one: In Illinois Barack Obama, the keynote speaker at the Democratic convention, won the seat being vacated by Republican Sen. Peter Fitzgerald. Obama will be the third black senator since Reconstruction. Another closely watched race: Republican John Thune had a slim lead over Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle in South Dakota.

While the outcome of the presidential race remained in doubt, it was clear that the country's most expensive election in history — total spending neared \$4 billion — had sparked phenomenal interest. There was also unprecedented oversight in the wake of the 2000 election, which ended up being decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

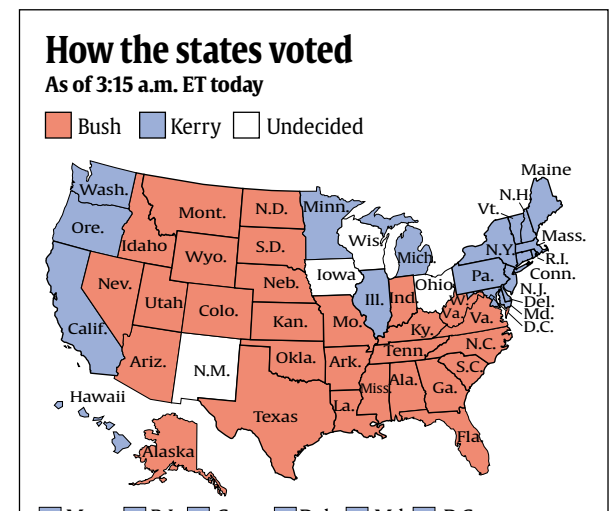
Curtis Gans, director of the nonpartisan Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, said as many as 117.5 million to 121 million voters may have voted — up to 60% of those eligible and the largest total in U.S. history. In the 2000 election, turnout was 51.2% of the voting-age population.

"It's one of those nuclear elections. Voters are stampeding to the polls," said Fred Voight, executive director of the Committee of Seventy, a voting-rights group in Philadelphia.



By Pablo Martinez Monsivais, AP, left; Hector Mata, AFP

Waiting for news: President Bush and wife Laura, left, prepare to leave Waco, Texas, on Tuesday, while Sen. John Kerry is accompanied by wife Teresa Heinz Kerry as he gets ready to vote in Boston.



Source: The Associated Press By Karl Gelles, USA TODAY

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