



Trump: I'm Now Running Against "Crooked Hillary"

As a basketball player plants his pivot foot to the floor, allowing him to move away from danger and toward opportunity, Donald Trump [has pivoted his campaign away](#) from further dialogue with and attacks on Ted Cruz and John Kasich and toward his increasingly obvious opponent in the general election, Hillary Clinton.



Some are calling it a master stroke, basing his pivot on the assumption that he will receive a first-ballot nomination in Cleveland in July at the Republican Convention, thus giving him the opportunity to sharpen his attacks on his likely Democratic opponent. Both candidates put further distance between themselves and their opponents in primary elections on Tuesday, giving Clinton 1,622 delegates to Bernie Sanders' 1,282, and Trump 955 delegates to Cruz's 650.

In his victory speech, Trump pivoted away from his former opponents and toward his general election rival, telling his supporters, "I consider myself the presumptive nominee, absolutely. It's over, as far as I'm concerned. It's over." On *Fox and Friends* he told his supporters that he is now ready to take on "Crooked Hillary," adding, "I call her Crooked Hillary because she's crooked, and the only thing she's got is the woman card. That's all she's got."

But each candidate brings his or her own baggage to the general election, as well as their strengths.

Advantages to Hillary:

- Name recognition: A former First Lady in her husband's administration, she moved on to become a senator from New York and from there to secretary of state;
- In every poll — every poll — Clinton beats Trump by anywhere from single to low double-digit percentages. Extended to the general election in November, that would translate into a resounding thumping of her rival;
- She's a woman. Adoring fans are willing to overlook many if not most of her indiscretions and liabilities on that account alone;
- Trump is crude, rude and often speaks authoritatively on matters about which he has little knowledge; and
- Trump has attacked Mexico, immigrants, the Republican establishment, and has belittled women whenever it served his purposes.

Advantages to Trump:

- Name recognition: The name Trump is plastered on nearly every piece of real estate his company



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owns, while his stint as host of *The Apprentice* from 2004 to 2015 has added additional luster to the name;

- He has no perceivable ideology, which makes him a hard target for Clinton to attack;
- He has struck a resonant chord with his supporters, singling out immigration, trade, and especially “the establishment”;
- The “establishment” has responded in kind, unleashing a 100-day attack beginning the day after the Wisconsin primary, with little apparent success. Some would say that the attacks levied against the Republican front-runner have been counterproductive, proving the point to his supporters that he is independent of that “establishment”;
- His attack style, in a one-on-one debate with Clinton, could be devastating, as one of Clinton’s many weaknesses is her inability to be as quick on her feet as Trump;
- Clinton carries with her negative baggage in staggering quantities, providing Trump with all the material he is likely to need just by sending one of his staff to DiscoverTheNetworks.com, including the death of Vince Foster, Whitewater, the Rose Law Firm, the cattle futures incident, her connection to Bill Ayers, the Clinton Foundation, as well as Benghazi and the e-mail scandal;
- Clinton is corrupt to the core. One needs only peruse briefly *Hillary Unhinged: In Her Own Words*, authored by Thomas Kuiper who also wrote *I’ve Always Been a Yankees Fan: Hillary Clinton in Her Own Words*, to be reminded of her lying, her hypocrisy, and endless pandering as she seeks higher office;
- She’s a woman. Despite having huge numbers of adoring fans of the feminine sex in her corner, large numbers of that sex hate her for her hypocrisy and pandering, including many prominent liberal figures in the media; and
- Trump hires the most skilled political operatives he can find, paying them out of his own pocket, and he follows their advice.

As Paul Manafort’s influence as Trump’s new campaign manager is being felt, Trump is making an effort to appear more presidential in his public utterances, referring to his former opponents more respectfully and toning down his inflammatory rhetoric. For example, the day after Tuesday’s sweep, Trump is scheduled to give a rare foreign policy speech aimed at calming some Republicans’ fears about his ability to handle international leaders, affairs, and crises. In that speech he is planning to use a teleprompter in an effort to project a more dignified and presidential image.

He is likely hoping that the vast numbers of the general electorate who currently despise him will have short memories and will consequently change their opinions, and their votes, as his attacks on Clinton take their toll.

The momentum is all Trump’s. Polls just completed in Indiana, the quixotic state that has baffled political prognosticators such as Mish Shedlock and Nate Silver, show Trump leading his rivals. In addition, as time marches down to the July convention, there is the “bandwagon effect” that is likely to help him obtain more than enough support from unbound delegates to reach and even exceed the minimum 1,237 that he needs.

In two general-election polls taken just before Trump’s Tuesday romp, Clinton would beat Trump by between three and 11 percentage points. Now that the general election, for all intents and purposes, has begun, additional polling will show if Trump’s pivot changes anything.



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In addition to the “bandwagon effect” during the home stretch of the primaries is another advantage favoring Trump: the “underdog effect.” Americans have traditionally supported the underdog, even to the point of spending hundreds to buy Super Bowl tickets to watch two teams play each other in which they had no interest during the season. As the clear underdog going into the national race, this is likely to work in Trump’s favor as well.

Some consider the primaries as the appetizer; the main course is about to be served.

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