



*THE BLOG*

# It Depends on What Meaning of “Win” Wins

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By Marty Kaplan

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**Q: Will Barack Obama win on Super Duper Tuesday?**

A: Yes.

**Q: So Hillary Clinton will lose on Tuesday?**

A: No. She'll win, too.

**Q: How can they both be winners?**

A: It depends on whether the winner wins the most votes, the most kind of votes, the most delegates, the most states, or the best states.

**Q: How can that be?**

A: Start with the rules. In California, for example, you can win more delegates in some congressional districts with less votes than in other congressional districts.

**Q: I don't get it.**

A: Neither do the networks. That's why the campaigns will be spinning them like crazy.

**Q: You mean the expectations game?**

A: No, it's way wilder than that. You've got 24 separate state contests (plus American Samoa), but you've also got the aggregate big-picture shebang. In each state, as well as collectively, you've got popular votes, Democrats' votes, and independents' votes. You've got delegates by congressional district, at-large delegates, superdelegates, soft pledged delegates, soft unpledged delegates, hard delegates, and unpledged add-on delegates. You've got red states, blue states, bellwether states, and must-carry-in-November states. Both campaigns are thoroughly prepared to take any outcome on each of those dimensions and confect a convincing “win” out of a grab-bag of “upsets,” “momentum,” “patterns of success,” “X states out of 24,” “Y electoral votes out of 538,” “Z percent of the popular [or independent]

vote,” “the highest percentage of delegates at stake,” “the highest total delegate count [including or excluding Florida and Michigan]”...

**Q: So will there or won't there be a real winner declared on Tuesday night?**

A: If your definition of reality depends on the media, you're in deep trouble. The talking heads are already disagreeing with one another about what the benchmarks of victory should be. Neither candidate will reach the 2025 delegates needed for the nomination on Tuesday. Neither candidate is going to drop out on Wednesday. Proportional representation (something the Republicans, unsurprisingly, haven't come around to) means that neither side will credibly be able to claim a landslide. This mixed outcome is exactly what the networks want.

**Q: Why's that?**

A: Join us for the all-important Chesapeake state primaries on February 12! Stay with us for the make-or-break Texas and Ohio primaries on March 4! It all comes down to Montana and South Dakota on June 3! Get ready for D-Day in Denver! The first brokered convention in over half a century! Brought to you by Clean Coal<sup>®</sup> - America's Fun & Friendly Power Source.

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**Marty Kaplan** 

USC Annenberg professor and Norman Lear Center director