

The Primary Slog

Governor Mitt Romney continues to lead in the race for the Republican nomination, but his progress is painful and slow. He fairly consistently loses evangelicals, voters who describe themselves as “very conservative,” and low- and middle-income voters, while doing well among the affluent and those who describe themselves as “somewhat conservative.” The state-by-state results have largely reflected how many of each group can be found in each place. He is comfortably ahead in the delegate count, and it is hard to see anyone passing him. But it is not at all clear that he can win a majority of delegates. If he wins the nomination, having Obama on the ballot against him will help him win over some of the groups that are now cool to him. But his trouble with blue-collar voters will not be so easily fixed.

Senator Rick Santorum has done remarkably well given his disorganized and lightly funded campaign. But that disorganization is one of the reasons he is unlikely to get the nomination – he has not even filed a full slate of delegates for the upcoming Illinois contest – and ought to worry Republicans if he does. Santorum, if nominated, would have to build a national organization essentially from scratch.

Keep reading this post . . .