

## Liberals close gap in survey

Race tightens with `Tory sag'

Pollster finds Ontario rebound

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The flagging Liberals appear to be making up ground, according to a new EKOS nightly tracking poll that places them just six percentage points behind the front-running Conservatives. The polling, conducted yesterday for the *Toronto Star* and *La Presse*, represents a glimmer of hope for the Liberals who have been trailing in every major poll for the last 10 days.

"This tightening of the race appears to derive from a combination of Liberal growth and Tory sag compared with last week," said Paul Adams, executive director of EKOS Research Associates.

"Notably, the NDP is holding its own — contrary to some predictions that it was vulnerable to Liberal encroachment."

The poll shows the Conservatives in the lead with 35.8 per cent, the Liberals at 29.6 per cent, the NDP at 19.4 per cent, the Bloc Québécois at 11.6 per cent and the Green party at 3.4 per cent. The random sampling of 694 voters is accurate within a margin of error of 3.7 percentage points.

What's more, Adams points out, if you count the pool of 1,200 voters EKOS polled over the last two nights the news is even better for the Liberals: They trail by just five points using those numbers.

A regional breakdown of the latest poll still shows support for the Liberals ebbing in Quebec, but a notable rebound in Ontario boosts the national numbers.

The EKOS poll taken over the weekend showed the Tories with an almost 12-point lead over the Liberals.

Martin plans to spend the last seven days of the campaign travelling the country in a bid to convince Canadians how different the country will be if they elect Harper the first Conservative Prime Minister since Kim Campbell in 1993.

Martin has already sharpened his anti-Harper rhetoric, but the Liberal leader admits that putting the brakes on the momentum Harper has built up and compensating for the gaffes and missteps of his own campaign will be a formidable challenge.

The possible turnaround comes as even high-ranking Liberals are admitting how bad things are now looking for the party.

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