
The Result in São Paulo : a Second Election

Contributed by Guy Burton
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Contrary to the opinion polls, the PSDB's José Serra swept into the second round at the end of this month with an eight-point lead over his challenger, Marta Suplicy, of the PT. As political deals are brokered by these two parties with the losing candidates, how will the next stage of the election campaign unfold?

So there we have it. The first round is now over and followed expectations, with Marta Suplicy (PT) and José Serra (PSDB) heading for the second round. But contrary to the polls, Marta and Serra didn't draw; Serra pulled ahead and won with 44% against Marta's 36%.

There's also a big loss for those of us who enjoyed his Comical Paulo moments. Paulo Maluf (PP) polled only 12%, failing to deliver the approximately 25% he had been promising us for weeks past.

Luiza Erundina (PSB) came fourth with 4%, which goes to show that even if the pollsters got the front runners wrong, at least they were accurate with the no-hopers.

The eight-point gap surprised the PSDB, but don't expect them to rest on their laurels. Starting this morning you can expect lots of activity as the two second round candidates start negotiating openly with the losing candidates and their parties to get their support for the election at the end of the month.

The PT may have put on a brave face on their performance, but they must be secretly confident that they can get the support of Erundina's party and her financial backers, the PMDB. Helpfully for Marta, the PMDB is already part of her governing coalition in City Hall may.

But someone who will be taking a long hard look at the results on the PT side will be Marta's campaign manager, Duda Mendonça. The Estadão notes that Serra's victory was achieved despite a highly active campaign by Marta, which made intensive use of TV ads and walkabouts. Will he be forced to make changes to the campaign between now and the second round, on 31 October?

For more information and analysis of the São Paulo and other local Brazilian results, visit the election blog being run by Guy Burton and Andrew Stevens at www.saopaulo2004.blogspot.com.