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Palin-palooza Wrap-up

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Distinctly Catholic

Our experts split evenly on Sarah Palin's chances at securing the GOP nomination.

Colin McEnroe and Matt Green think she can't survive the gruelling process, albeit for slightly different reasons. Mark Silk and Steve Schneck both think she is an odds-on favorite to win the GOP nod should she run.

I am going to break the tie and side with Silk and Schneck. Here's why.

Matt Green is right to point out that running a campaign organization is a big task, of the kind Palin has never excelled at. But if she has enough cash, there will be plenty of hired-hands to do the work. And Green is wrong to think that a lack of gravitas is an impediment to the GOP nomination.

27 percent of Americans think President Obama is not a Christian. That's enough to win a GOP primary.

Ditto McEnroe's concern that Palin will not pass the "I Can Imagine That" test. Indeed, Palin has already erected an effective narrative to deal with any mistakes: The media is out to get her. I can't imagine that Mitt Romney will hit her hard in debates. He would risk the wrath of the Tea Party, which has the GOP much more scared than the Democrats right now.

There is one scenario in which Palin trips up so badly, she could lose the GOP nomination.

Running for office is a very complicated, technical process. There are lots of legal forms to fill out, rules to follow, etc. The Mama-Grizzly-in-Chief does not seem like the kind of person who worries overmuch about details and while hiring a highly competent campaign manager and some top-flight lawyers could do the trick, she seems less concerned about surrounding herself with competent people than she does

with loyal people. Loyalty is a good thing, but if she defines loyalty as people who do not question her judgment, look for some big FEC difficulties, and that could bring self-inflicted wounds to her campaign, wounds from which she can't actually recover.

That said, it is astonishing -- simply astonishing -- that Palin is still standing, that anyone listens to her, that she has maintained such a hold on the popular imagination of the right. If the Katie Couric interview did not end her political future, and it should have, what will?

Of course, even if she runs and loses, she may kill the GOP's chances in 2012.

Do you think Palin devotees are going to really get excited about John Thune? Can he look into the camera and caress it as she does? Anybody ever read a tweet from Thune, or Romney, or Huckabee?

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I think the nomination is hers if she wants it and that in the general election, independents will flee to the Democrats and Obama will win in a landslide.

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