

Obama Rally Draws 100,000 in Missouri

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Amy Chozick reports on the presidential race from St. Louis.

Barack Obama attracted 100,000 people at a Saturday rally here, his biggest crowd ever at a U.S. event.

The crowd assembled under the Gateway Arch on a sunny Saturday afternoon to hear Obama speak about taxes and slam the Republicans on economic issues.

Lt. Samuel Dotson of the St. Louis Police Department confirmed the number of attendees piled into the grassy lawn flanked by the Missouri capital and the Missouri River.

To be sure, big crowds don't always signal a big turnout on Election Day. But Obama's ability to draw his largest audience yet in a typically red state that just weeks ago looked out of reach, could signal a changing electoral map.

For months Missouri polls put Obama as much as ten percentage points behind Republican John McCain. It was widely believed that McCain's pick of Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin as his running mate would have won over the state's conservatives and boosted his chances there. So far, that hasn't happened.

A Rasmussen poll released on Friday shows Obama leading in Missouri 52% to 46% for McCain.

Missouri Sen. Claire McCaskill had harsh words for Palin when she introduced Obama on Saturday. Referring to comments Palin made earlier this week in North Carolina about "pro-America" states, McCaskill said "We have reached a new low in America politics when a candidate dares to say that one part of America is pro-America and another part is anti-America."

She also took a dig at McCain for selecting a vice presidential nominee with limited experience. "One [candidate] picked one of the strongest candidates for vice president he could've picked in the United States and well, the other didn't."

Recognizing that big rallies don't always result in cast ballots, the Obama campaign has dispatched thousands of field organizers and volunteers to Missouri to knock on doors in a statewide get out the vote effort. (Photo: Associated Press)

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