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WIN-SOME BUSH ALPHABETIZES HIS ATTACK ON GORE

By [Deborah Orin](#)

Published Oct. 28, 2000, 9:00 p.m. PT

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An upbeat George W. Bush flashed a “W” sign for “win” as he rode a slim lead in polls yesterday, while aides to rival Al Gore vowed to convince America that Bush isn’t “up to the job” of president.

As the 2000 race headed into its final week, Gore’s campaign unveiled a new series of slashing ads against Bush, while the Texas governor used wit to get in his licks.

“He is so confident about his abilities, he claims he invented the Internet,” Bush jabbed at Gore at a chilly outdoor rally with GOP running mate Dick Cheney.

“But if he were so smart, how come all the Internet addresses start with W – not only one W, but *three W’s*?” Bush quipped as the crowd began chanting “W” and flashing the “W” salute with the three middle fingers.

Bush vowed to end partisan bickering in Washington, adding: “We’re coming down the stretch, and I’ll tell you our team feels great. But we’re taking nothing for granted.”

Gore was trolling for swing voters at a late-night rally in Minneapolis – hoping to appeal to backers of Ralph Nader and Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura.

“Reform Party. Independent Party. You are all welcome,” Gore shouted to about 8,000 people.

Gore also criticized Bush for “fuzzy math” by spoofing a popular TV commercial for Holiday Inn.

“I may not be an actuary, but I did stay in a Holiday Inn last night,” said Gore, who argues that Bush’s budget plan is not financially responsible.

Gore actually stayed at the Woodlands Inn and Resort in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

In New York, Nader chided Gore for suggesting people shouldn’t vote for the Green Party candidates because it would help the GOP.

“We all have to earn our votes,” he said to a packed hall at Cooper Union.

Earlier, Gore’s aides held two conference calls for reporters to say they unveiled a series of TV attack ads that paint Bush as a friend of the rich and big oil.

“It speaks very powerfully to the concern we’re having in focus groups . . . that Governor Bush in many ways is not up to the job of being president,” said Gore senior adviser Tad Devine.

It’s an axiom of politics that when a campaign turns hard negative at the end of a race, it’s the campaign that believes it’s losing.

National tracking polls show Bush with a lead of 4 to 8 points. Public state-by-state polls are mixed, but private tracking by political pollsters in both parties shows Bush gaining in key states like Wisconsin.

In the electoral-vote tally, most analysts now give Bush about 220 of the 270 needed to win the White House, while Gore has about 180 – assuming he holds California.

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