

Adler may find himself on the wrong side of his "edge"

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Carl Golden/NJ Voices

Political campaigns are often about gaining an edge; uncovering behavior or comments which can be amplified and exploited to demonstrate an opponents flawed judgment and unsuitability for public office.

Its the reason opposition researchers --- people wh o spend their time poring over hundreds of public documents in search of potentially damaging information --- have become major players in campaigns, achieving status alongside consultants, fundraisers and media spokespersons.

offense; secretly bankrolling the candidate is.

It's apparent that Adler supporters feared Runyan, a retired Philadelphia Eagles football player, posed a serious threat to the Congressman in a district which has a decidedly Republican tilt. They were well aware also that, as a freshman elected in the 2008 Obama victory, Adler was vulnerable in a year when the level of taxpayer discontent with the President and the Democratically-controlled Congress is exceptionally high.

In all likelihood, internal polling data reflected independent surveys showing that Runyan was within a few points of Adler and that the anticipated Republican tide could carry the challenger to a victory.

Consequently, it is alleged, Democrats undertook to shift the odds in their favor by convincing a local businessman to run as an independent Tea Party candidate with a right-of-center ideology. The math is simple: If he draws five per

typical of the win-at-any-cost mentality which has corroded the political process.

The allegations and the continued refusal of the principals at whom the accusations are directed to address them will hover over the Adler campaign and could turn a competitive contest into a long- into-the-night ordeal.

There are times when the edge that's gained cuts in the undesired direction.

Carl Golden is a senior contributing analyst with the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton College.

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