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# American Idol -- Top 36 Wild Card Winners!



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OK, so the wild card round was tonight and four more people got through: Jasmine, Megan, Matt and Anoop. Yep, it's a Top 13!

*Jesse* -- Singing "Tell Me Something Good" with a little too much makeup but otherwise looking cute, Jesse was working too hard to be a soul mama. When you've got it, it comes effortlessly and you NEVER look like you're trying. Randy was mixed but the other three were stronger, with

Simon saying she was indulgent but still glad he put her through. At least she learned to shut her mouth when the judges were talking.

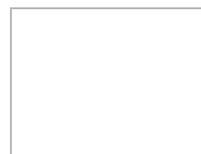
**Matt** -- Sang the Jackson Five while dressed like Justin Timberlake. All the judges thought he was a thousand times better though Simon did not like his look. I thought he was better too but wasn't that enthusiastic.

**Megan** -- Sang the unlikely KT Tunstall gem "Black Horse and the Cherry Tree," an odd choice for someone who claims to be a country gal. Katharine McPhee was a revelation when she did it but I felt Megan was reaching for the bluesiness and flat in places. Paula gave the half-hearted "I enjoyed watching you," Kara gave her a huge plug to go through while Simon and Randy liked her despite the vocal weaknesses. Huh?

**Von** -- Von kept the hair towering high while singing "Sorry Seems To The Hardest Word" at a key that was even higher. Just the key he chose was dreadful and probably ruined his chances because it caused him to sing in a strange falsetto. He did get better in the lower register but not enough. Simon put the kibosh right away and the other judges agreed. Serious Paula showed up here: "I've been studying the way you perform..." Kara really has allowed her to become unexpectedly sober. Simon even referenced Paula as the house expert by saying he asked Paula what Von originally performed. Bye Von, come back next year.

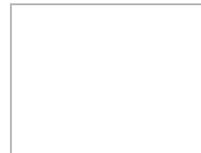
*Jasmine* -- Singing "Reflection" by Christina Aguilera and looking lovely but not too dressed up,

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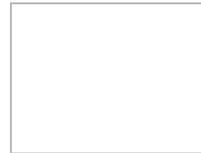
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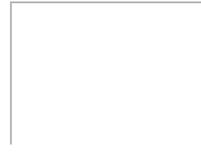
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Jasmine was a bit beauty pageant by which the judges usually mean powering through the big notes without any subtlety. She had a lot of rough notes and most everything she tried was rough around the edges at best, if not a complete disaster. With faint praise, the judges said she was better than before, with Paula saying she was "determined," and Simon saying she sounded at times like a young girl trying to sound grown up but then changed paces by saying she was in the running.

*Ricky* -- Also looking like Timberlake, Ricky sang the Stevie Wonder classic "Superstitious," which Stevie sang on the Grammys alongside the Jonas Brothers (who were cool, but still suitably thrilled). I could have done without the Justin Guarini camera smile but except for one brief bad low note and a high pitched squeal, he was pretty darn funky. The two gals loved him but Simon put the kibosh on and Randy weighed in by saying "Superstitious" sounded too indulgent to him.

*Tatiana* - Just her intro speech annoyed me. Please, put her on a reality show where she belongs, but I won't watch it. Singing "Saving All My Love For You" in a classy dress that worked for her, Tatiana just trudged through the mellow beginning and powered it up whenever she got the chance. Virtually no personality (as a singer; she's got loads as a person), she just sang like Whitney's version (for the third time on this song!) as much as possible and then had a dreadful riff at the end. Why they even discuss her, I don't know. She's not a good singer and Simon was best when he skewered her lie about singing the song again because she couldn't get any other song cleared.

*Anoop* -- Singing "My Perogative" and looking fine, Anoop began goofily, getting all sexy and growly, then got a little better but started shouting and except for the trademarked big *Idol* note toward the end, it was pure karaoke. The audience went berzerk for him and Simon said he's not much of a singer but people like him, admitted they weigh personality as well as singing ability and basically said his winning charm would get him through.

So who did you think did the best? Did the judges make the right choice? Personally, none of them blew me away at all. But the live, immediate decisions by the judges made it a fun hour of TV. Tatiana kneeling down in front of the judges while Paula told her she was going to go places and even be an actress (duh!) almost made dealing with the girl worthwhile. And Anoop's stunned double take when he knew he was gone only to find out there'd be a Top 13 was priceless.

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