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Michael Giltz

Freelance writer and raconteur
Posted: January 27, 2010 04:27 AM

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Idol Season 9: Auditions -- Los Angeles

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RATINGS UPDATE: *American Idol* scored 24.2 million viewers on Tuesday's audition show in Los Angeles, per [The Hollywood Reporter](#). That's down just 5% from the 25.5 million people the equivalent episode last January but a step back to reality after last week's episodes somehow *increased* roughly 30% over the year before. It will of course be the #1 show of the week as *Idol* marches towards becoming the first show in TV history to be #1 for six years in a row. Only three shows have been #1 for even five years - *All In The Family* and *The Cosby Show* did it five years in a

row, *60 Minutes* did it non-consecutively.

SHOW COVERAGE: Here are the numbers you need to know in order to slog through the Tuesday edition of *Idol*: 12, 23, 39, 46 and 57. Jump to those minutes to watch the only full auditions of golden ticket winners. (We also see a brief montage of other successful candidates at the end.) Just barely more than one good audition every 15 minutes made this show drag on. And since about 22 people got through to Hollywood, why did so few of them make the cut for air time?

Two guest judges included an uninteresting Avril Lavigne and a very tart Katy Perry, who had the sharpest riposte to Kara who went on and on about the inspiring backstory of a young man: "This is not a Lifetime movie!" No, but sometimes the *Idol* producers want it to be. Here's a rundown of the five people who got winning tickets.

JIM RANGER (12 minutes in) -- Sang "Drive," an original. A quick shot of Ryan shows him warning friends of Jim that it's awfully hard to impress the judges when singing an original. Surprisingly, not only is Jim good, so is his song (though the judges didn't really comment on it). Good raspy Southern rock voice. Annoyingly, Avril and Kara decided this father of three maybe couldn't handle committing to a rock career AND a family AND his church. Uh, isn't that the same issue every person longing for a career

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in music faces? Whether they're a roadie or the lead singer? Do Kara and Avril only hire single people not in serious relationships for tours they're involved in? In any case, Jim had a strong audition and fills a useful niche that could carry him far if he gets by Hollywood.

MARY POWERS (23 minutes in) -- Sang "Love Is A Battlefield" by Pat Benatar. Simon nailed her for looking derivative rocker-chick-ish. And to me her vocals were too much of a copycat of Benatar, down to the vocal quavers. (She also had some dorky hand gestures; I hope they're just dumb and not mimicking the music video.) Powers was also a bit nervous and for all that she wasn't bad, just not distinctive.

ANDREW GARCIA (39 minutes in) -- Sang "Sunday Morning" by Maroon 5. Also a dad (though no on-air complaint from Kara about his dereliction of duty) with parents who were gang members but moved away to give their kids a better chance. Despite a heart-tugging backstory (which can turn me off) Andrew sailed effortlessly through his vocals with a sweet, controlled tone. Love it when people don't get all Mariah on us. Quite strong and the best of the day.

TASHA LAYTON (46 minutes in) -- Sang "Baby Baby Baby" by Joss Stone. Well-dressed woman who is a personal assistant by day and minister by night. Good performance, quickie audition with no sentimental backstory but at least we got to hear her sing.

CHRIS GOLIGHTLY -- Sang "Stand By Me" by Ben E. King. This young man -- who went through literally dozens of foster homes -- was the source of Katy Perry's tart "This is not a Lifetime movie" comment. He keeps his eyes closed throughout most of his audition, which makes me worry about Chris's stage presence and nerves down the road. But it was a sweet, straightforward vocal and he's appealing. Simon and Katy gave him a yes but with a small "y," but I agree more with Kara and Randy that he's pretty intriguing. Plus, he's already got a great last name for a pop star!

So another city with only five full auditions and lots and lots of filler and clueless folk. Again, FOX should post the complete auditions of all 22 golden ticket winners. So what did you think of the five who got through? And what did you think of Katy and Avril?

--30--

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DCDan 02:00 PM on 1/28/2010

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I couldn't agree more. Some of us watch for the performances, to see potential stars in the making, and gauge the contenders' stages of development as the season progresses. I personally couldn't care less about the no-talents, freeks, losers, and borderline sociopaths who bomb their auditions. It would be nice if the producers of the show didn't feel compelled to dumb it down so much. Definitely out of balance.

Also, I thought Katy Perry looked exquisite, her demeanor appropriate, and her snarky comments dead on, mostly. Kara's "oh-no-she-di'in't!" nonsense and derisive neck-snapping is more than grating.

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ScottR 06:39 PM on 1/27/2010

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I thought the guest judges were horrible. I actually kind of liked Avril Lavigne before the appearance. She seemed like a self-important little miss priss. She made it clear that she thought she was way too good for the people around her.

Katie Perry was absolutely mental. She is seriously mentally ill. Sorry, but she was abrasive and completely uncivil. She must be an utter nightmare to be around. Especially after her hit. They should have just kicked her out. She was a complete pill.

I liked the preacher/soul guy, sort of like that guy last year, what was his name? Andrew Garcia killed. I thought he was great, though he isn't a hunk, so his days are numbered.

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Michael Giltz 01:58 AM on 1/28/2010

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Danny Gokey? He's got a new video on the Idol website. Thanks for reading. Looks do matter of course, but Ruben Studdard won and he's no pin-up either.

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BobbyV123 03:04 PM on 1/27/2010

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I thought Katy Perry was fantastic last night. Honest, funny, no BS...and she looked amazing. It was great to hear her call out Kara one more than one occasion. her comments were right on and I would love to see her come back. Avril was annoying as usual. Too immature, giggly, and not really a good judge. Please do not have her back....ever!

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badjuggler 10:29 AM on 1/27/2010

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I personally thought Avril was adorable in her devil hoodie. I just wanted to give her a big hug.

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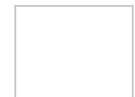
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Michael Giltz 01:11 PM on 1/27/2010
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She did look cute. I just didn't find any of her comments interesting or helpful, especially compared to Katy Perry. But maybe Im just a frustrated Idol judge/pop star.

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