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Michael Giltz

Freelance writer and raconteur
 Posted: April 7, 2010 11:19 PM

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Idol Season 9: Top 9 -- Big Mike Loses...And Wins!

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In a dramatic moment on *American Idol*, Michael Lynche received the fewest votes from the public and was in danger of being cut from the show -- a classic case where a talented performer somehow fell through the cracks and the very reason the "save" was invented. And indeed, the judges used their save and Michael Lynche is still in the competition. That means next week two contestants will be cut from the show no matter what.

The night began with the *Idol* contestants doing a Beatles medley. I can't be certain they were lip-syncing but I believe they were. Frankly, simply the idea that their performance seemed canned is bad enough. They all looked great in mod, black and white Sixties outfits, especially Katie Stevens (who inexplicably changed outfits during a commercial break).

All three women were pronounced safe (a gender breakdown that often happens when one sex outnumbers the other). Kara DioGuardi protege Jason DeRulo performed a snippet of one tune and then his hit, "In My Head" with fire, backup singers, a dangerously studded jacket and dance moves that all echoed Michael Jackson. In a strange gambit, they switched to slo-mo black and white in the middle of the live performance. Not a wise move for a new artist to my thinking -- let us get caught up in the moment; don't let us feel like we're watching a video. It was ok overall, though the song was weak.

David Archuleta delivered a piano-led encore of his rendition of "Imagine," this time including the lyrics "Imagine there's no heaven" that he cleverly skipped when in competition. It was good and the best guest performance of the night. Has he dyed his hair?

Rihanna performed a Grammy-worthy spectacle of her new single "Rock Star 101." Another hip-hop song weak on melody (it's certainly no "Umbrella") but she could sell millions of downloads by showing us how she slipped into that skin-tight outfit.

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BECK IN TROUBLE?

Finally it came down to the bottom three: Aaron Kelly, Andrew Garcia and Michael Lynche. (In a poor night, I only got two of the three right.) Aaron was safe and then to everyone's surprise, so was Andrew. Andrew was the only one the judges wouldn't have saved. Michael Lynche did another strong rendition of Kate Bush's "This Woman's Work" and Simon Cowell -- with his usual dramatic flair -- announced he was safe. Who, I wonder, will be the lead judge next season? They're gonna miss Simon and it should be Ellen, but will Randy feel dissed? What do you think? Who is the next lead judge and were they right to save Michael Lynche, ie. could he be in the finals? Because if he doesn't deserve to be in the finals, you shouldn't use the save.

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katiecutie 02:29 PM on 5/15/2010

0 Fans

Found this article online. The gal did not win and pretty sure she didn't make it past the second round, but she is pretty good. Just another American Idol contestant that surprised many I guess. Here it is: "Premier Musique Group (Crayton Corp), added a new act to its marquee this month. Prior to, the company's sole talent was Hulon, a top charting jazz artist that is currently ranked #25 on the Nielson BDS / Billboard music charts. To expand the company's horizons and reach a younger generation, PMG signed American Idol contestant, Courtney Salter, a Neo-Soul / R&B artist from Washington, D.C. PMG plans to have Courtney in the studio later this month to record her debut EP, and hopes to pair her with iconic music producers to broaden her appeal for domestic and international exposure...she said that she is "natural, funky, pro beauty, and real earthy...The 18 year old singer, will be working with the likes of Gary Foote, a bass player of Blood, Sweat & Tears, who has recorded and performed with music legends. Courtney Salter can be found online at

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courtneysalter.com."

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anonimost 05:20 PM on 4/09/2010

6 Fans

I would only save someone I thought had a great shot at winning. I don't see Mike as winning this.

I can't think of anyone who could command the respect that Simon has. I'll be watching Xfactor for him. Idol would have to shock me with someone great/interesting to keep me interested.

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MindyM 06:11 PM on 4/08/2010

32 Fans

I agree with the judges using the save for Mike. This is exactly why it's there - to prevent a talented and deserving singer from being booted off too early. Mike should have a shot at a record deal. Just because Ruben Studdard didn't sell records is no reason to deny Mike his chance at success.

The idea of someone as good as Mike leaving before the likes of Tim, Andrew or Aaron is simply unacceptable. It should have been Andrew going home last night. Then the judges could have kept the save. Now the respective fan bases will have to come out in force to protect the favorites like Crystal, Lee, Siobhan and Casey. But Mike is the best pure singer among the men and definitely deserves another chance. I remember when Jennifer Hudson got voted off way too early when she was on Idol. The save could have prevented that from happening.

I also think Lee was terrible with "Hey Jude". He probably deserved to be in the bottom three just for that debacle. Even though I like him, I thought this was a trainwreck. He sacrificed vocals for performance.

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Charity 06:55 PM on 4/08/2010

43 Fans

Ruben has a far better voice - not to mention ability to hold a note longer - than Mike. Ruben comes off as far more genuine than Mike, too. BTW, the name of his family's group is ...well, I'll just repost it here: The Lynche Mob. OMG

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HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz 10:31 PM on 4/08/2010
59 Fans



I thought the Lynche Mob was a pretty godawful name, too, I must admit. Since Jennifer Hudson could have made the finale, I think she was a shame to leave early. But unless you think the person should be in the finals, does it really matter if they leave a week or two earlier or later than they should?

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markatlarge 05:48 PM on 4/08/2010
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Are you kidding Big Mike should be gone!

Braking News: Michael Lynche save on #Idol will be appealed to the Supreme Court <http://bit.ly/aag2Kf> Tim Urban Lawyers are preparing briefs

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Michael Giltz 10:32 PM on 4/08/2010
59 Fans



Saying Tim Urban and briefs in the same post just got this column a lot more hits.

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Linda Casey 04:48 PM on 4/08/2010

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Although I think Mike has a great voice, he's not going to win this competition, so using the save on him was a wasted effort. If it goes like last year when Matt was saved, then booted the following week when two got the axe, it might be Mike AND Andrew next week, though I still don't know what the theme is for next week's show and will revise my bottom two accordingly, when I find out what it is.

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HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz 10:34 PM on 4/08/2010

59 Fans



I agree. I would only use the save if I thought the person being booted was going to have a shot at the finale. As for next week's bottom two, I assume that would be your prediction, right? We should at least let them sing before putting them at the bottom :)

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stratdude 04:47 PM on 4/08/2010

30 Fans

They shouldn't have saved Big Obnoxious Poser. I'm still waiting for someone to tell him to keep his hands to himself. Go MamaSox, my favorite of all the Idols past or present.

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JohnKevari 04:34 PM on 4/08/2010

2 Fans

Thank God for the Intelligence of the Audience!!!

All year long I've stated that Michael Lynche was not that good despite the opinions of the Judges and the way the producers have made sure they high-lighted him every week.

Finally last night the audience let everyone know Lynche is not that good.

Why doesn't he audience like him? Simple..... He does not look like an American Idol!

Once again, this is a show about performing..... It has nothing to do with Art or anything of that nature.

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HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz 10:36 PM on 4/08/2010

59 Fans



I've been up and down on Michael Lynche myself. But one interesting facet of Idol is that the winner chose by audiences has rarely looked like the teen idol pin-up a record label would choose or you might expect from bland popular taste. Instead it's been Kelly Clarkson (just a regular gal when she won), the very heavy-set Ruben, Fantasia (cool, but plenty of better lookers were on the show), Taylor Hicks, etc. If audiences went for just the Tiger Beat winner, Tim Urban would be a walk. I find that facet of the show pretty refreshing.

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CragAntler 04:32 PM on 4/08/2010

40 Fans

The judges were "a billion gazillion percent" right to use the save on Michael Lynche last night. The man is a natural on stage and performs EVERY song straight from the heart and with professional-level artistry.

The problem with Idol is they have allowed the Bible Belt Brace-faces to completely dominate the

voting results by not restricting votes to just ONE vote per phone number. You can see who is doing all the voting by looking at the results each week. Contestants of "color" are leaving early in the game, while the remaining finalists all get increasingly more MALE, younger, and WHITER. (btw, I'm so white myself, I'm practically CLEAR, so no racial bias here, tyvm).

This is not a contest to see who is the best singer. It's a contest to see who will sell the most MP3 downloads to the Nickelodeon crowd currently on the cusp between boys and Barbies.

I can't stand James' rapid vibrato. He sounds like a nervous Chihuahua. Aaron can't handle the low notes; Andrew and Lee have great sounds, but poor stage presence. Katie needs more seasoning, but I like her strong alto pipes. Siobhan is a good singer with a unique style and a great gimmick in her high range. Tim Urban is Tiger Beat fodder, nothing more.

Crystal and Michael SHOULD be the top two finalists. The question is will the Brace Faces grow up and let the most TALENTED get to the finals of a TALENT competition?

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Linda Casey 04:40 PM on 4/08/2010

30 Fans  Follow



If its racial biased voting, how do you explain that two years in a row there were winners who were people of "color" as you put it, with Ruben and Fantasia.

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filmex 05:14 PM on 4/08/2010

43 Fans

Exactly, Linda. Those that show up here and try to make Idol a race-based contest are so out of it. Lynch is a goner because he is simply a mediocre performer. You could tell from the auditions this year that this was a decidedly down year for African-American contestants.

I would imagine that's because most such contestants that are serious about getting record deals are into rap/hip hop, a genre that Idol's pop/country foundation ignores. That leaves R&B crooners, a small niche in today's market, for people like Mike and Ruben, who was a better singer than Mike, yet went on to sell few records.

The Save was wasted, cause he'll justifiably be gone next week anyway. The show's always been a popularity contest, but calling Mike "the best singer" when he clearly is not is simply wishful thinking, not reality-based.

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Michael Giltz 10:45 PM on 4/08/2010

59 Fans



Every Idol winner has been from the South except for Jordin Sparks. But the show has been so racially diverse -- including when the audience votes, not just the UN-like plotting of the producers for the Top 24 -- and physically diverse I wouldn't say it was racially biased at all. Three out of 8 winners have been black. I think the South dominates because of voting and the advantage of being from a little state. Big states on the coast like Florida, New York, California et al -- they don't really get excited by someone being in the top 10 or even the finals. But a tiny state like Alabama can get really motivated and vote for their homegrown competitor. For reasons of self-mythology, I think Texas behaves like a little state.

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MiraMcB 04:16 PM on 4/08/2010

166 Fans



The save was predictable, once it was revealed who was at risk.

We enjoyed Jason DeRulo's performance a lot! Thought he did an amazing job of it. Great dance moves. Also liked the song enough to go listen to his first several recordings. Really like those, as well. Also thought the slow mo stuff was fly. Sorry. :D

Rihanna, on the other hand. Big fan of hers - HUGE. It looked like a phone-in to me. Didn't care for the song AT ALL. Tuneless mess. Not even a decent backbeat. Surprising.

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HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz 10:46 PM on 4/08/2010
59 Fans



You're right, the slo-mo was pretty cool on second viewing. And at least Rihanna looked good.

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HUFFPOST SUPER USER

emilyringstrom 02:16 PM on 4/08/2010
16 Fans



Personally, I don't understand what's gotten into America, seeing that Andrew is like a cat with 9 lives, and that Kate Gosslin(sp?) on Dancing With The Stars, made it through another week as well. Don't people have eyes and ears anymore?!?!? The woman moves as gracefully as a cow... Sorry! Michael has one of the best vocals on American Idol(but he definitely needs to fine tune his instrument), whilst Andrew is a one-note-samba. Everything sounds the same, and he really has no voice. He's got a quirky voice, but that's it.

The bottom three ought to have included Andrew, Aaron and actually Lee. I normally like him, but he did a poor, poor job in his last performance, and the only thing that saved it was the bag pipe. The best of the night was surprisingly enough, Casey. A wonderful rendition of one of my favourite songs(Jealous Guy)!

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filmex 12:23 PM on 4/08/2010

43 Fans

A lot of disagreement with you this week, Mr. Giltz.

I think this was the first week the live performance was actually live, and it sounded ten times better than ever before.

I think the whole "Save Papa Mike" business was contrived from first to last. No one in their right mind thinks Mike is going to win this thing, not the viewers and certainly not the judges. And after Ruben Studdard sold virtually no records, the producers aren't going to let it happen.

So why waste the only Save on a singer who won't be a finalist? What if Crystal, Casey, Lee or Siobhan end up chopped in the next two weeks. Saving Mike was the best use of that Save? Sure, they've played up the new daddy bit endlessly, but Andrew and Crystal are parents too, but it hasn't been made a focal point of the show.

I think the judges used it because (1) They wanted to appear generous to the New Daddy (2) the producers wanted to get it out of the way so we wouldn't have to go thru this excruciating huddling during the swan-song song anymore (3) They wanted to use it up, so they wouldn't appear to influence the outcome as it gets closer to D-Day...how could you save Crystal if Casey got bounced the following week...wouldn't seem fair.

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MiraMcB 04:12 PM on 4/08/2010

166 Fans



No question it was a risk using the save, but I suspected the minute Ryan said it would be a surprise elimination it was either going to be Siobhan or Michael on the block and would have bet big money the Save was coming. I don't think the judges motives were as silly as that. Rather, I think they view Michael Lynch as an artist with grea potential. No question in my mind that, unless he radically screws up in coming weeks, he will get a contract, win lose or draw, from someone. Doesn't matter if he is in the Top Two. There is a good market out there for him.

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Michael Giltz 10:50 PM on 4/08/2010
59 Fans



Thanks for commenting. On a second viewing, I think the live performance was live as well. But I still didn't like it very much. While having successful artists gives the show essential validity, what really makes money for the producers is the show itself. Great drama is what matters to them -- desperately trying to engineer a certain winner just isn't that important to them, especially since they sign multiple people out of the top ten anyway. I personally wouldn't have used the Save. Other singers should have left before him, but he won't be in the finals and if I don't think he should be in the finals there is no reason to use the Save. The order of when others go home just doesn't matter that much.

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DCDan 10:11 AM on 4/08/2010

2 Fans

I was just sitting around thinking, "Was the Rihanna song on last night's show the worst song I've ever heard just on Idol or on TV, period, ever?" ... Oh wait, there was Puff Daddy's thing last week ...

Back to more important business. One Beatle fanatic, reporting for duty. The "shhoompppp" effect in Come Together was derived from John tragi-prophetically saying "Shoot me!" into the mic, coupled with a slapback-delay effect, masked by a single handclap. And there are four Beatles song credited or co-credited to Ringo Starr (as real name "Starkey"). Besides Don't Pass Me By and Octopus's Garden there were What Goes On, credited to Lennon-McCartney-Starkey, and Flying, from the Magical Mystery Tour soundtrack, credited to Lennon-McCartney-Harrison-Starkey.

Technically, George should have received co-writing credit for "Octopus's Garden". He gave the song a major overhaul between the time it was rehearsed during the Let It Be sessions and when it was recorded for Abbey Road. But since George already had two very solid contributions going onto Abbey Road -- including his first-ever A-side of a single with Something, as well as Here Comes The Sun, he generously allowed Ringo to have the songwriting spotlight alone.

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Michael Giltz 10:53 PM on 4/08/2010

59 Fans



Poor George, bursting with talent and Lennon/McCartney probably got antsy when he wanted to include more than one tune. Of course, even when they kept his contribution down, those songs were "While My Guitar gently Weeps," "Here Comes The Sun," etc. And then Frank Sinatra goes and calls "Something" the greatest love song in ages and always credited Lennon and McCartney. Sometimes you just can't win! Thanks for the info on Ringo and the detail on John and "Come Together." I'd heard about "shoot me" before but didn't realize it was supposed to be in that actual "shummmpppp" sound when he said it.

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Emmy2 06:19 AM on 4/08/2010

16 Fans

In case there was any doubt, the last season of "Idol" should have dispelled it. The winner of "Idol" is the person with the most sophisticated campaign organization, not the person with the best voice. Fox doesn't want to, or doesn't know how to, block programmed voting or timezone spoofing or any of the other tricks that have been used to game the voting. And maybe that's not a bad thing. If their goal is to produce a successful artist, then maybe it makes sense for them to go with the person who is best at working the system. Michael apparently doesn't have an organization that is capable of engineering his victory, so it really doesn't matter how good his voice is. He won't win, but he's a cool guy with a great voice, and he'll have a decent career.

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filmex 12:39 PM on 4/08/2010

43 Fans

The thing is, they get first refusals at offering record contracts to any and all of the contestants. So while there's a certain cachet in promoting a singer as an "American Idol", for every Kelly Clarkson and Carrie Underwood, they also end up with a Taylor Hicks and Ruben Studdard, who don't sell squat.

Which is why the voting is just a lure for the masses. They can let Kris Allen win, because they are going to put out the records by Daughtry and Lambert as well, so they have all the

bases covered.

And I have to disagree, I don't think Big Mike will have much of a career, outside of lounges/dinner theatre/maybe Broadway. There already is a Luther Vandross, and he isn't even charting these days...the money and sales are in Hip Hop/Rap, and Mike hasn't shown any proclivity for that.

People watch "Idol", obsess on its participants, and forget how many unnoticed good singers there are out there...I did a short documentary film on church choirs, and my guess is there isn't a Baptist church choir in the country that doesn't have a male and female singer as good, and probably better, than Big Mike.

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HUFFPOST SUPER USER

liberaldemdave 04:09 PM on 4/08/2010
256 Fans



ummm, maybe the reason that luther isn't charting these days is because he's passed away. it's difficult to release new material from the grave.

...but thanks for your insight. /snark

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HoldthatTiger 07:31 PM on 4/08/2010

2 Fans

"for every Kelly Clarkson and Carrie Underwood, they also end up with a Taylor Hicks and Ruben Studdard, who don't sell squat.

Which is why the voting is just a lure for the masses. They can let Kris Allen win, because they are going to put out the records by Daughtry and Lambert as well, so they have all the bases covered. "

Studdard and Hicks both outsold Allen and Lambert so far, BTW. Actually Studdard sold nearly 2 million copies of his debut CD, and Hicks 704,000 (Lambert sits at under 600,000 and Allen under 300,000 at the moment.) The facts are that the market is trending toward singles sales instead of album sales, and Allen's first single, Live Like We're Dying has sold well over a Million Copies. In view of this changing market it is really rather difficult as to who will sell well, but I personally think that Lynche's style is passe.

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LK10 12:33 AM on 4/08/2010

0 Fans

David has sung the full version of Imagine many times. Don't worry. He still believes in Heaven and Hell. BTW, his hair has always been super black.He is half Hispanic. His mother is Honduran. He just grew his hair out more recently.

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filmex 12:15 PM on 4/08/2010

43 Fans

Really? I've never heard him sing the full version...ever. Even last night he left out the line "...and no religion too", which is the whole point of "the world living as one". Born-again types should steer clear of songs they either don't understand, or can't honor in their entirety.

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DCDan 12:50 PM on 4/08/2010

2 Fans

Agreed, filmex. Archuletta also took the liberty of adding "Take my hand and join

us" for "I hope some day you'll join us" to his dreary, overwrought rendition of Imagine last night. He did that a couple seasons back in competition as well. Not cool. Don't mess with lyrics -- especially Lennon's and/or McCartney's -- by deleting OR altering.

If one listens closely, he also sang "Imagine all the the people sharing FOR the world" rather than "... sharing ALL the world." Subtle, arguably trivial. Still, dumb. And slightly changes meaning of song. That shouldn't really be an option.

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violet4ever 02:15 PM on 4/09/2010

0 Fans

David sang the full version including the verse with "no religion too" at Ford Day not long after Idol. It was a special performance at Ford by both Davids. And he's not born-again. He's Mormon. He's also one of the most humble, honest and kind people I have ever encountered, to the point where he just amazes me. And he's a peace lover too, and never has an unkind word for anyone, even if the person is nasty. I am not Christian nor particularly religious so that is not why I like him. And he doesn't wear his religion on his sleeve and only talks about it if asked. He loves his fans around the world including Jewish and Muslim fans and others. He is just a fine human being and I love his voice. Amazingly voice considering one of his vocal cords was damaged with paralyzed when he was about 12. No autotune, no dancing girls, no fireworks needed. I am one of his many adult fans. I can't wait for his upcoming single, book and album. And no he doesn't dye his hair - his hair was just reflecting the colors of the lighting.

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