



INTERNET ARCHIVE


MAY JUN JUL [Close](#)
2 Jun 08 - 2 Jun 08  2007 2008 2009 [Help](#)






Home · Reviews · Interviews · Contests · Forums

SEARCH ARTICLES

A Dose of Reality: American Idol 7: The Top 2 Vie for the American Idol Crown

by [Doug DeBolt](#)

Published: May 21, 2008

-  Print this article
-  E-mail this article
-  More articles by this author



Related Sites:

- [Official site](#)
- [Sirlinksalot: American Idol](#)



It's hard to believe that it's almost over. What began in January is now just 24 hours away from its conclusion, and the verdict is very much in doubt.

So often, I've seen this competition in sporting terms. After all, that's why I started putting my own recreational odds of winning in my power rankings. With all that in mind, it was very, very strange to see the constant boxing metaphors mixed into tonight's show. While both David Archuleta and David Cook are extremely accomplished musicians and singers, seeing them in boxing garb tonight was a bit unsettling. Floyd Mayweather doesn't have anything to fear from these two...

While it was cool to hear "Let's get ready to rumble!" from famed ring announcer Michael Buffer, the constant boxing cliches from sports announcer Jim Lampley were more than overkill. Frankly, the whole exercise was a bit insulting to the average intelligence. Once again, it wasn't about the talent on the stage -- it was more about the producers doing something they thought was cool. It wasn't.

Neither was changing the rules of the *American Songwriter* competition after-the-fact. Instead of the top vote-getter being the winning song choice for both performers, the producers did a double-take and decided to allow the Davids to choose their own "winner's song" from among the top 10 songs in the contest. While it was good for the guys to have the chance to select songs that better reflected their personal tastes, it was a bit galling that the producers apparently realized the contest sucked only after the winning song (that will forever remain nameless) became clear.

With all of that out of the way, we actually did have a singing contest tonight. Both Davids performed three times, and once again, I'll evaluate each performance round-by-round.

Round 1: Clive Davis' Choice

David Cook - "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For"

by U2

Sadly, famed recording mogul Clive Davis should have been making song choices last week, when the powers-that-be at AI selected some curious, if not heinous, tunes for the Top 3. This week, Clive picked a perfect song for big David, and he performed it very well. His vocals were spot-on and the arrangement -- starting boiled down and slow and then building -- suited him very well. Unfortunately, what was obviously missing was originality. This was a very good performance, but it wasn't championship-caliber.

David Archuleta - "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me"

by Elton John

Here was another phenomenal song selection, and little David's performance of it was even better than the choice. While it was a very straightforward, unoriginal version of the song, David's passion was unmistakable. He may have missed his biggest note, and he may have been accompanied by the waving hands of hell, but his performance was stirring and left me wanting more.

Round 2: Original Song

David Cook - "*Dream Big*"

written by Emily Shackleton

I absolutely cringed when I heard big Dave was singing "Dream Big." After all, the opening line is "When I was a little girl," but I hadn't hated it and had given a whopping five out of 10. And then David did his trademark reworking of a song, and I found some merit in "Dream Big." It's still not a great song, but it isn't half bad when Mr. Cook is singing it. There were other songs I'd rather have heard him sing, but hearing him dressing up an incredibly average tune and turn it into something more was pretty impressive.

David Archuleta - "*In This Moment*"

written by Ryan Gillmor

If I cringed at big David's choice, I was absolutely appalled at little David's choice. "In This Moment" was one of only three songs that got my rock-bottom rating -- one out of 10. My exact words were, "Unlike ("A Moment Like This"), this one is incredibly whiny. Unfortunately, that's its most memorable attribute." Again, in the hands of a vocal master, it was a good bit better than the demo, but I still simply hate this song. David's perfect choice was "Here I Am," and for missing on that, he loses some points on my sheet. Sadly, his arrangement is a bit too close to that demo; the only thing less original is Randy's worn "sing the phone book" comment.

Round 2 winner: David Cook

Round 3: Contestants' Choice

David Cook - "*The World I Know*"

by Collective Soul

Most people (including me) expected David to revisit "Hello" or "Billie Jean," but he instead performed a new number. While "Dream Big" was decent, this song should really be regarded as his "winner's song." Big Dave sang this one with passion and conviction, and he turned in perhaps his best performance in several weeks. His vocals were once again perfect, this time on a song that isn't new, but will seem so to most fans. It was good enough that most people will realize that Simon's remarks were way off base, and the result could be a boatload of extra votes to prove the Brit wrong. By insisting that there was only one correct song choice, Simon proved that he thinks there's a set formula that must be followed. I highly suspect that this year's result could show that there may be a new path to victory.

David Archuleta - "*Imagine*"

by John Lennon

Whereas big Dave chose to do something fresh for his final song, it seemed an easy decision for little Dave to reprise his biggest moment of the season with "Imagine." It was a carbon-copy of the original performance, but that's not a bad thing. This kid is like a human jukebox -- plug him in, and he'll give you the same amazing performance every time. He may not do this song in the most original way, but he sings it with flawless vocals and unbridled passion. This may not be enough to secure him the victory, but if he doesn't win, he went out with a great moment.

Round 3 winner: David Archuleta

INTERNET ARCHIVE
Wayback Machine
1 captures
2 Jun 08 - 2 Jun 08

Go

MAY JUN JUL [Close](#)
◀ 2 ▶
2007 2008 2009 [Help](#)

Finale winner: If you're voting based on who had the better night, then **David Archuleta** is your guy, but...
Season winner: ...if you're choosing the winner based on who was more consistent throughout the season, then you're voting for **David Cook**
Prediction: **David Cook** will get the confetti as the winner at the end of Wednesday night's results finale.

Previous Reviews:

[Week 1: Men's Night](#) | [Week 1: Women's Night](#) | [Results](#)
[Week 2: Men's Night](#) | [Week 2: Women's Night](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Week 3: Men's Night](#) | [Week 3: Women's Night](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 12: Doug's Views](#) | [Top 12: Laurie's Views](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 11: Beatles Night](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 10: The Year You Were Born](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 9: Doug's Views](#) | [Top 9: Laurie's Views](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 8: Doug's Views](#) | [Top 8: Laurie's Views](#) | [Idol Gives Back](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 7: Doug's Views](#) | [Top 7: Laurie's Views](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 6: Doug's Views](#) | [Top 6: Laurie's Views](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 5: Doug's Views](#) | [Top 5: Laurie's Views](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 4: Rock and Roll Hall of Fame](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)
[Top 3: The Battle for the Finale](#) | [Results](#) | [Power Rankings](#)

Copyright © 1997-2008 Burlee LLC. All rights reserved. [Reprints](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [About Us/Contact Us](#) | [RSS Feed](#)