


A Dose of Reality: American Idol 7: The Top 5 Perform on Neil Diamond Night


by [Laurie Reid](#)

Published: April 30, 2008

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





Last night's show was the most chaotic, rushed, discombobulated show in *Idol* history. It started out slow with what seemed like an endless homage to Neil Diamond and his music and then sped up to the point where I was getting dizzy. And clearly I was not alone as Paula reviewed Jason Castro's second song before he even had a chance to sing it. Seriously, what is that woman on? Not sure who was behind that format change that confused Paula so, but I would have much preferred hearing each *Idol* sing *one* Neil Diamond song rather than two Neil Diamond snippets.

Related Sites:

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



The show clearly didn't help those falling ratings we've been hearing about. And just for the record, I am not buying those teasers of Seacrest being ousted. I caution against relying on this scuttlebutt. Ryan Seacrest is one of the best things that ever happened to *Idol* (the other being Simon, of course). Now, if the producers want to rethink the whole Paula/Randy thing, then yes, I would be all over that. But Ryan isn't going anywhere.

Ok, so let's get down to it. Neil Diamond gets a B- for his mentoring skills. He looks good, time has been a friend to Mr. Diamond, that is for sure. But he offered nothing of any significance to the *Idols* in the way of good advice or feedback. But then again, Lord Webber is a tough act to follow. Suggesting to Brooke that she change the words "New York" to "Arizona" in reference to his line in "I am I said" was, well, in a word...ridiculous. That's not what the judges have in mind when they tell the *Idols* to "make it your own." But apparently that's the best Neil could do. Hmm.

Jason Castro - "*Forever in Blue Jeans*" and "*September Morn*"

So Jason Castro started us off with "Forever in Blue Jeans". And while he didn't change the words to make it his own, he did sport a pair of blue jeans. Does that count? I think Neil would say yes because chances are Mr. Diamond wore one of those sparkly Vegas-style blouses and polyester pants when he recorded it.

Ok, so then all the other *Idols* had a chance to sing and then Jason came *back* for his second snippet of "September Morn". I love that little crooked smile of his when he sings. He actually sings and smiles out of the side of his mouth. I thought his vocals were fabulous. And sure, the judges are right when they say that Jason doesn't get out of his comfort zone, but I don't think it matters. Because even after all these weeks, I still just want to put Jason in my pocket...the kid is adorable. And I think America agrees. I loved when the camera panned the audience and we got to see Jason's super-cool friends hanging out in the seats usually reserved for the *Idol*'s families. Both Jason and his friends appear amused by the fact that he is among the five still standing. They are happy to sit in the audience and cheer on their friend, but they'd be just as happy to take him back to campus and head over to the keg party. But I don't think that's going to happen this week.

David Cook - "*I'm Alive*" and "*All I Really Need is You*"

David Cook sang "I'm Alive". Neil Diamond said that he has the right material, the right attitude and the right voice. I hope he gets the right amount of votes (read: way more than David Archuleta). For his second time around he sang, "All I Really Need is You". His voice was hauntingly beautiful and he rocked the house. Paula said, "I think I'm already looking at the American *Idol*" and while I agree with her, I'm not sure Paula knows what the heck she's looking at half the time, so I'm not so sure her opinion will have any bearing on anything.

what? Her smile was way too big and she was trying way too hard. So it came as no surprise when defending her performance she told Ryan that she "had a great time." Really? Huh. I had no idea. I am so over the having-a-great-time-up-there crap, I cannot even begin to tell you. She did redeem herself a bit by singing "I am... I said" the second time around. And yes, she took Neil Diamond's advice and changed the lyrics to reveal that she hails from Arizona and not New York. Which made it sooo much more believable for me. Not.

David Archuleta - "Sweet Caroline" and "America"

I am almost tempted to not say a thing about David Archuleta. I am *that* over him. He sang "Sweet Caroline" and butchered the heck out of the melody in an attempt to make it his own. It reminded me of an instrumental version of the song that you might hear in a doctor's waiting room....but with lyrics. I thought it was horrendous. And I *knew* he was going to sing "America". Every song he sings sounds exactly the same to me. Not a hint of creativity in anything. I'm boycotting him from this point forward. I do not want to see him win this thing. I think Disney should make him an offer now and spare us. Disney is in the market for a new squeaky clean kid now that Miley Cyrus posed for those provocative shots in Vanity Fair. I think David Archuleta is the boy for the job.

Syeshia Mercado - "Hello" and "Thank the Lord for the Night Time"

Simon thinks Syeshia Mercado is going home this week. She sang "Hello Again" for her first trip to the stage. It reminded me of a performance you might see in the talent portion of the Miss America contest. It was beyond corny and to add insult to injury she opted to go barefoot for that girl next door look. She came back for a second time to sing, "Thank the Lord for the Night Time" and I was thanking the Lord when she was done. It was very dinner theatre-ish. Syeshia will end up on Broadway, you mark my words. And when she does, the critics will love her. But the Idol critics are not all over the likes of Syeshia, so I'm with Simon...I think she'll be heading home.

So who will join Syeshia in the bottom two? I would love to see David Archuleta on one of those stools, but I'd eat my hat if that happened. So I'm going to say that it will probably be an All Girl bottom two. I think Brooke will be ok, leaving Syeshia to be the one to pack her bags...

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](#)