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Drew: Julie Claimed Austin's Idol Was Hers

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Drew Basile. Photo: CBS.

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By John Powell – GlobalTV.com

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As Richard Hatch would say, Drew Basile got “bamboozled”. Drew, the most cerebral player on the island this year, met his strategic match when ride-or-dies Julie and Dee took a very successful swing at him. Julie because he orchestrated the vote against her and Dee because she recognized him as the threat he was to her end game. Drew was outsmarted by his own allies.

John Powell: I talked to a lot of people and when they do watch those episodes back sometimes it’s like deja-vu to them as all those feelings start coming back to them. How are you doing today?

Drew Basile: Actually, that’s a good question especially for me, John, because I do feel like I’ve had a very different experience watching then what’s conventionally described because for me it doesn’t really feel like I’m on TV. I’m watching this thing and it has serious ramifications on my life but I don’t really relive it in the same way that has been much vaunted and much described. That kind of vicariousness. That being said last night, definitely tough episode. They came for me. Everybody did. Dee did. Julie did. Jake did. The editors did. I am recovering from my bombardment. (laughs)

John Powell: This year we have a very animated jury. Kellie whispered last night that you looked pissed leaving tribal. How were you feeling at the time?

Drew Basile: I wasn’t mad. I was completely mortified and humiliated. I knew how confident I had been all day, just right before tribal and then during trial with some of the answers and I had started to really have second thoughts about the way things are going. This is something people will vouch for me. Austin will tell you this. Julie will tell you this. This is not revisionism. When I got booted I wasn’t mad. I was embarrassed.

John Powell: You made yourself even a bigger threat because you managed to convince everyone that Julie needed to be targeted. What brought her to the forefront as a target at the time?



Drew Basile and Austin Li Coon. Photo: CBS.

Drew Basile: So Reba had a codified agreement that we would turn on each other at six. There was no illusion. We decided that together. That being said, when Bruce left a vote earlier than I thought he would it kind of opened up the floodgates a little bit. You take stock of the lay of the land. Who was a threat that I felt like I would probably get a lot of strategic credit from the jury? What would stand out for me as Number One,

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the people I would maybe be wary of? Who is really strong at the social game? Everyone really was, to be honest. Dee, Julie and Austin were. Then, there are also many independence strategic moves. I felt that Julie had those in a way that maybe Austin and Dee did not because Julie had worked really hard to cultivate that relationship with Bruce. Julie's been really making final three plans with people and those plans were coming to my attention. If I'm hearing about them I wondered about how many I'm not hearing about? That kind of elevated her to be a concern in my eyes.

John Powell: How did you feel seeing Austin warn Dee about the vote and then Dee warning Julie in turn?

Drew Basile: We kind of knew that Julie knew or we had a strong suspicion that Julie knew because they had a long conversation on the beach. I think Julie heard or saw some event or overheard something but basically the dynamic changed around camp. It wasn't that shocking. We certainly didn't know that she had told Julie explicitly. It's a great move on Dee's part. She really gets props for that. It didn't seem like as big of a deal out there playing as people have taken it to be in watching it so maybe it was an oversight on our parts.

John Powell: We have just started seeing this showmance between Dee and Austin. You actually lived with them. How long has this been going on?

Drew Basile: I think that you haven't seen it because we haven't seen it. (laughs) This was an unusual showmance and then it was late-breaking. It really only kind of appeared at the end of the game. Players who are not in the showmance, who are third-wheeling like Katurah at the reward and then me around camp it, you kind of like: What the heck? Where did this come from? Now, all my plans are overturned and how do I recalibrate and reconfigure? They always had had a good rapport. They're two very attractive, young people. They're both single. It makes sense. It was this warehouse full of fireworks and as soon as some sparks were there, they blew up immediately!

John Powell: You worked closely with Austin throughout the entire game. What was it like one working with him and you would know more than anyone but did he ever ask for his idol back from Julie?

Drew Basile: Working with Austin was the best decision I made the whole game. We had such a solid rapport. Even when in the few moments we had strategic differences we always ironed out things out into a mutual agreement. A lot of people come out of Survivor and they talk about having trust issues. They talk about having worries about if they can rely on people. I didn't really have that in part because I relied on Austin so completely and entirely. The idea that he would have betrayed me was the funniest thing in the world to me.

In terms of asking for that idol, we gave it to Julie. We thought it was the right decision at the time. I'll take accountability as well. I was talking to her about it a few days later and I said 'Austin's idol'. She corrected me. She said 'MY idol'. I saw that as her marking her territory and laying claim. It is kind of sunk-cost fallacy, John, because it's like, I can throw away this the strong foursome based on you know greed, inheritance, whatever, or do I ride it a little longer and deal with this problem to come? Julie recognized that she had the idol. Austin already had an idol. It was a valuable source of agency in her game but it potentially raised her threat level too high to a point she didn't want it to be.

John Powell: Often being on Survivor is like a mirror reflecting the players back at themselves. How, if at all, your Survivor experience changed you?



Drew Basile voted out at Tribal Council. Photo: CBS.

Drew Basile: It's tough. Being out in the primitive environment and watching it back on TV and interacting with fans definitely changed my philosophical opinions and my political opinions to a degree. In terms of who I am? I'm not sure because, John, I felt like certain aspects of my edit were a little ungenerous and in certain aspects were really, really fair. So, you want to internalize the critique without over-correcting, right?... Did I really have as bad a social game as it sometimes seems? It's unclear to me. I think if I were to over-correct based on that lesson I might end up in some dire straits. So, it's a balance. I think Bruce probably said it best in that I need to take into consideration and that the way I'm treating people is not the right way but I also need to kind of fact check that with my family and those who love me too.

Bruce, he's a great guy...The people who started with Bruce were not really great fans of him. Everyone who met Bruce come merge loved Bruce. We really liked Bruce even if we were against him strategically. I do think he just was in unfortunate situation where he got the wrong group of people to start with and the wrong dynamic crystallized.

John Powell: Is there anything you wish they had shown on the series when it comes to your journey?

Drew Basile: You've got to be thankful for what you get, to be sure. I don't really I have any personal or strategic moments that didn't make it. That Kellie vote required a lot more fine tuning but it was such a packed episode. The outcome was so surprising that you don't want to spoil that. It was a little unfortunate to be a painter with masterful outlines and then it all just gets flattened out. That's how it felt a little bit.

John Powell: Well, you are known for putting things so succinctly. How would you describe the Survivor experience?

Drew Basile: Survivor is a one-of-a-kind adventure in a world that doesn't really allow for adventure anymore. I think that is the chief selling point and why the show now attracting so many people who are not really interested in reality TV...It offers an adventure that doesn't exist anymore. That being said, watching the show back can be tough and as well as interacting with the fans especially if you are a little bit disliked, a little bit villainous. That can be very tough. I think that ambiguity is a good word to describe the experience because experience itself is great but the airing, the outcome and the interaction can be a little challenging.

John Powell: Obviously you cannot say who you voted for but what are the factors you thought about before you cast your vote?

Drew Basile: I'll just speak generally but you have to appreciate the relationships because that's kind of what you base your decision off of, isn't it? For me, obviously, I would want a deserving strategic winner but at the same time my brain hasn't been "gamebotted". There is honesty, emotion, loyalty and connections. So similarly, it would be difficult probably for me to stomach going to the end with people who I didn't care about deeply on a personal level. It is part of why I wanted to go to the end with Austin and Dee. I really valued them. So, if I were to prognosticate on a final jury decision I think that those would be the two factors that would weigh in.



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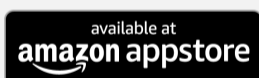
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