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Jaime Laughed Along With Her Survivor Journey

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Jaime Lynn Ruiz and Heidi Lagares-Greenblatt. Photo: CBS.

By John Powell – GlobalTV.com

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Jaime Lynn Ruiz gave us many comedic moments on *Survivor 44*. In fact, Jaime’s possession of a fake immunity idol took up a large portion of her screen time and for good reason. How that situation played itself out was one of the most intriguing and amusing storylines of this season. What Jaime wants *Survivor* fans to know though is that she was playing the game and playing the game hard the entire time.

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“The overwhelming screen-time was the idol, which is fun and hilarious to see but I think that overshadowed what myself and Lauren were really working on doing. I would have loved to have seen my relationships with Lauren and with Yam Yam, our strategies and how we got to the final six. I would have liked them (the producers) to have shown my relationship with Heidi too. I love her! We had really great bonding moments like on Soka, she and I made bone broth together. We literally made cups and we’re sipping it. There’s little moments like that I wish would have popped up to kind of show the relationship building side of my game because I wanted to build personal emotional connections with every single person and that’s what I did. I wish that was shown a little bit more,” she told GlobalTV.com.



Jeff Probst, Heidi Lagares-Greenblatt, Jaime Lynn Ruiz, and Lauren Harpe. Photo: Robert Voets/CBS.

Jaime and Lauren tried desperately to break up the Tika Trio of Carson, Carolyn and Yam Yam but their pleas and schemes fell on deaf ears. They had thought that since Carson and Yam Yam left Carolyn out of so many votes that she would have been an easy target at last night’s tribal council.

“Yam Yam and Carson were able to prove their loyalty to Lauren and I through a couple votes. That was a big trust builder for us to see. If they are willing to leave Carolyn out of a vote, specifically because we asked them to, that to me was a huge indicator...They were willing to risk their relationship with Carolyn and completely leave her in the dark. It seemed like they were really working with us but we still needed to break them up,” she said of her strategy with Lauren.

What fans might have forgotten about Jaime’s journey is that she thought the idol was real the entire time so she was factoring it into many of her decisions, strategies. When Jaime found out the idol wasn’t real she was stunned.

“I was in such shock that I was rewinding my entire game because you’re kind of strategizing with an idol thinking how you can leverage it in this vote and in this way...It was such a huge deal when Kane walked out of the door with it because my little bit of insurance and comfort I had, the confidence that it gave me. I had to kind of play a little bit differently because Kane left with that little bit of safety,” she said.

A good Survivor sport about it all Jaime kind of wishes she did use the phony idol at tribal because it would have made for great television.

“I wish I could have played that idol and had that iconic moment of Jeff (Probst) just tossing it in the fire. That would have been another funny moment to kind of laugh at and be a part of but it is definitely the idol that haunted me all season. It was a shocker to find out that it was fake,” she laughed.



That idol grew to mean more and more to Jaime throughout the game as she watched all of her Ratu allies like Matthew leave and then Brandon and Kane get voted out. The idol leaving with Kane was a massive blow to Jaime who was seeing her support system shrink. To make matters worse, when Jaime told the truth about what happened to it, nobody on Va Va believed her.

“I had multiple people coming up to me saying: ‘By the way, everybody still thinks that you do have the idol and that your story was kind of silly. They don’t believe you.’ So, I was having all of these individual conversations and that’s why I wanted to make it a big scene,” she said not really surprised that nobody took her story at face value because there was no way she could verify anything.

As a member of the jury Jaime had very specific criteria she was looking for in crowning a winner.

“The quality I’m looking for is someone that has a socially savvy game. Someone who was able to leverage their tools and resources to get them to the end in a really stealthy way. How did they manage their own threat level throughout the game but also can they articulate each move and their role in each move? So, I’m kind of listening for all of that at the final tribal,” she said.

Despite the ups and downs, the highs and lows of her Survivor journey Jaime wouldn’t trade her experience in the game and on the island for anything.

Jaime Lynn Ruiz Survivor 44 Exit Interview



“I am obsessively grateful for the opportunity to play this game that I love! It was hard to not be smiling all the time and realizing like I’m in my TV screen! I’m going to soak up every single moment for what it is because I’m walking through this dream and making things happen! I’m filled with gratitude about my entire experience. Making it to this moment of the game, to top six, it is such a huge feat! I can’t be mad at anything, really,” she said smiling.

Tune into the three-hour season finale of Survivor 44 next Wednesday, May 24 at 8 p.m. ET, on Global.

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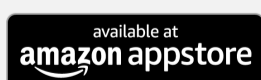
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