

Is 'Survivor' losing to the competition?

Does 'Survivor' (8 p.m., CBS) still matter? It certainly attracts a large audience, but does it resonate? Does it inspire passion and conversation anymore?



Kevin McDonough

As anyone within screaming distance of a TV commercial already knows, one of the players on 'Panama: Exile Island' has already begun to freak out and wants to go home. Been there. Done that.

And last week, the first losing 'tribe' ditched a provider of fire, fresh water and fish simply because she was forthright and loud. Meanwhile, they saved a self-proclaimed couch potato with a leaf phobia who admits to having never slept outdoors before.

Have the fans taken over the island? So far the tribes don't even get one of those absurd, nonsensical summer-camp names. In fact, they've been broken down by consumer demographics into four quartets composed of older men and older women, younger men and younger women.

Have the marketing people taken over the island? Seriously, what's next? Let's cut to the chase and work product placements into the tribe identities. How about pitting Tylenol against Advil? Bufferin vs. Excedrin? Leave a downscale section of the island for the store-brand, generic crowd.

And while this reality show has become just a tad self-referential, its comedy-and-drama competition has stolen pages from the 'Survivor' playbook. The desert-island sandbox has been occasionally animated by eccentric characters, but only some 'Survivor' seasons deliver. Others have been duds.

Why wait for the next Hatch, Hawk, Rupert or Johnny Fairplay to arrive when you know Hurley is always going to show up on 'Lost,' and at least every other '24' features awkward moments between Edgar and Chloe?

These characters might not have won big money on 'Survivor,' but they would have made the game more interesting. 'An Ocean Away' (8 p.m., Military) chronicles a family's 30-year effort to retrieve the remains of a soldier killed near Khe Sahn, South Vietnam, in 1968.

Tonight's other highlights

- Tom Bergeron hosts 'Dancing with the Stars' (8 p.m., ABC, TV-PG).
Kiss me on the bus on 'Everybody Hates Chris' (8 p.m., UPN, TV-PG, D, L, V).
'This Old House' (8 p.m., WFYI, WTU) visits the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, D.C., home to Duke Ellington in his youth.

A victim of medical experiments expires on 'CSI' (9 p.m., CBS, TV-14, V).

Earl finds love but is stalked by trouble on 'My Name is Earl' (9 p.m., NBC, TV-14).

Tragedy and reflection on 'The O.C.' (9 p.m., Fox, TV-14).

With Michael away in New York, the staff reverts to a grade school-style Valentine's Day on 'The Office' (9:30 p.m., NBC, TV-14).

An ideal wife may have harbored secrets on 'Without a Trace' (10 p.m., CBS, TV-PG, V).

It takes three to triangulate on 'ER' (10 p.m., NBC, TV-14).

Cult choice

Grant Show's character discovers that a mother-in-law (Joanna Kerns) can be murder in the 1997 TV drama 'Mother Knows Best' (7 p.m., Lifetime).

Series notes

Taye Diggs guest stars on 'Will & Grace' (8 p.m., NBC, TV-14) ... On back-to-back episodes of 'That '70s Show' (Fox, TV-14), improvisational programming (8 p.m.), send in the clowns (8:30 p.m.) ... Lois in peril on 'Smallville' (8 p.m., WB, TV-14, L, V).

Cupid works overtime on 'Love, Inc.' (8:30 p.m., UPN, TV-PG) ... Blowing through a windfall on 'Eve' (9 p.m., UPN, TV-PG) ... Parties on 'Beauty and the Geek' (9 p.m., WB, TV-PG) ... A broken resolution on 'Cuts' (9:30 p.m., UPN, TV-PG).

Late night

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Heidi Klum appear on 'Late Show With David Letterman' (11:35 p.m., CBS) ... Jay Leno hosts Michelle Williams and Rob Thomas on 'The Tonight Show' (11:35 p.m., NBC) ... Nick Cannon, Kathy Griffin and Damian Marley appear on 'Jimmy Kimmel Live' (12:05 a.m., ABC).

Nicollette Sheridan, Steve Coogan and Aimee Mann chat on 'Late Night With Conan O'Brien' (12:35 a.m., NBC) ... Craig Ferguson hosts Jean Reno and Frank Caliendo on 'The Late, Late Show' (12:37 a.m., CBS).

Kevin McDonough is a TV columnist for United Features Syndicate.

ACCENT ON PEOPLE

The Associated Press

Spears pictured driving SUV with baby on her lap

Blame it on love and the paparazzi. That's Britney Spears' explanation for why she was driving with her infant son on her lap rather than in his car seat.



SPEARS

Several photos published Tuesday showed Spears driving her SUV with her son, Sean Preston, perched on her lap rather than strapped into a car seat in the back seat.

Spears said she did it because of a "horrifying, frightful encounter with the paparazzi." The photos show Spears holding the wheel of the car with one hand and her 4-month-old baby in the other. A person is shown sitting in the passenger seat next to Spears.

"I was terrified that this time the physically aggressive paparazzi would put both me and my baby in danger," Spears said in a statement released late Monday. "I instinctively took measures to get my baby and me out of harm's way, but the paparazzi continued to stalk us," she

said. "I love my child and would do anything to protect him."

SCARBOROUGH, Maine

Glenn Close and former biotech exec marry

Glenn Close has married a former biotech business executive at his seaside estate.

Close, 58, and David Shaw, 54, wed Friday, according to the Scarborough, Maine town clerk's office.

The actress is a five-time Oscar nominee whose films include "Dangerous Liaisons," "Fatal Attraction," "The Natural" and "The Big Chill."

Close has been married twice before, to Cabot Wade from 1969-71, and to James Marlas from 1984-87. Both marriages ended in divorce.

Shaw is the founder and former head of Idexx Laboratories Inc., a publicly traded biotech company in Westbrook with more than \$600 million in annual revenues.



CLOSE

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Breakfast at Tiffany's

Sponsored by: Franklin College

Admission: \$5 adults, \$4 seniors, \$3 children under 12

Canary Creek Cinemas 8. Showtimes for Thursday and Friday. Movies include: When a Stranger Calls, Walk the Line, Brokeback Mountain, Big Mama's House 2, Underworld, Hoodwinked, Glory Road, The Chronicles of Narnia, Curious George, Final Destination 3, Fire Wall, Pink Panther.

THURSDAY EVENING FEBRUARY 9, 2006. TV schedule grid with channels (WTTV, WRV, WISH, WTHR, WFYI, WNDY, WTU, WHMB, WCL, WXN, WIPX, WTBU, A&E, AMC, AP, BET, BRAVO, CNBC, CMT, CNN, COM, DISC, E!, ESPN, ESPN2, FAM, FNC, FOOD, FOXMV, FOXSM, FX, HALL, HGTV, HIST, LIFE, MSNBC, MTV, NICK, OXY, SCIFI, SPIKE, TBS, TCM, TLC, TNT, TOON, TVL, USA, VH1, WE, WGN, DISN, ENC, HBO, SHOW, MAX, TMC, STARZ) and program titles.

Actress trying to adjust to success of '24' CALENDAR

By Terry Morrow

SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

Even an insecure Mary Lynn Rajskub can't deny that this is her year, but she's not ready yet to seize the day.

"I'm socially awkward. I'm a little too into my own head," says the 34-year-old actress. "There's a whole new level of insecurities a person can have with success."

Nonetheless, she has made CTU administrative assistant Chloe O'Brian a fan favorite on the Fox series "24," and now she's trying to parlay that success into feature films. Starting Friday, she can be seen in the action flick "Firewalk," in which she plays a loyal assistant to Harrison Ford's character.

With a hit TV series, a movie and standup-comedy dates around the country, Rajskub (pronounced "race-cub") has been working for more than a decade to get to where she is.

"I can no longer deny that I am a working actress. ... I used to be able to say to myself that this was just (a phase). I have to question my own level of investment in all this," says Rajskub.

Rajskub lived in a suburb of Detroit until she was 21, when she moved to San Francisco to attend art school and be a performance artist. Once there, she



AP PHOTO

Mary Lynn Rajskub stars on "24" as Chloe O'Brian.

started doing comedy.

She says she found work as "the quirky oddball who was really nobody's girlfriend." Her resume include HBO's "The Larry Sanders Show" and NBC's "Veronica's Closet."

Rajskub auditioned for "24." It was the first time she landed something dramatic, but she almost didn't go to the audition.

Producers on "24" had seen Rajskub's work elsewhere, and she says they remembered her when she auditioned. "That's the only reason I got this part," she says.

Chloe is an unconventional character for an action series.

She's flippant, dry and usually just a step away from the thick of the action. Five seasons into the show's run, Chloe is the sort of cult favorite who commands a loyal following on the Internet.

Fans write their own stories of romance between Chloe and Jack (played by Kiefer Sutherland). On the series, such a development has never occurred. The message boards light up whenever Chloe gets to do something more than comment on the action around her.

This season, Rajskub has had a chance to expand upon Chloe and get her out of the dark confines of the CTU offices.

"I don't take myself seriously sometimes as an actress. I tend not to take a lot of things too seriously," she says. "The question for me next is: 'What am I going to do next?'"

"I always thought acting was a fluke for me. I got used to saying to myself: 'OK. So you got that part. It doesn't mean anything. You'll be waiting tables tomorrow.' I can't say that anymore and believe it."

Today Meetings

Women's Big Book Meeting, noon, 50 N. Home Ave., Franklin
50 Plus of Greater Whiteland, 1 to 3 p.m., New Whiteland Town Hall, 401 Mooreland Drive, euehre

Woodmen Club, 6 p.m., Calvary Lutheran Church, Shelby Street, Greenwood. Information: 888-6146

Edinburgh Lions Club, 6:30 p.m., Lions Club building, South Walnut Street

National Osteoporosis Foundation Southside Support Group, 6:30 p.m., Greenwood Public Library, 310 S. Meridian St.

Xi Zeta Sigma chapter, 7 p.m.

Sertoma Club of Greenwood, 6:45 p.m., Southern Dunes clubhouse, State Road 37 and Wicker Road

American Sewing Guild, 7 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 401 S. State St., salad pitch-in, fair show and tell

Family Alcohol and Drug Education, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Tara Treatment Center, 6231 U.S. 31 South, Franklin.

Greenwood Community Band, 7 p.m., Greenwood Community High School band room

Send Your Sweetheart a Singing Valentine by a Barbershop Quartet! Office, Home, Class, Etc. Delivery date Tues. Feb. 14. Includes a rose, photo, Valentine card and more! Starting at \$35. Singing Telephone Greetings \$20. PHONE NOW! Order Deadline: 2/10/06. Franklin/Whiteland/Greenwood/South Indy: 317-888-6709. Columbus Area: 812-376-9349. Email: valentines@chordlighters.org or www.singingvalentines.com. THE CHORDLIGHTERS

SHOWPLACE 16. Movies with Magic. 1-800-FANDANGO 1598. 1-465 AT US HWY 31 SOUTH - INDIANAPOLIS. Showtimes for February 08-09. Movies include: When a Stranger Calls, Annakpolis, Big Momma's House 2, The Matador, Nanny McPhee, The New World, Underworld: Evolution, Brokeback Mountain, Glory Road, Hoodwinked, Last Holiday, Fun with Dick & Jane, The Chronicles of Narnia, Walk the Line.

AMC. Experience the Difference. Madline price for all shows until 6 p.m. Advanced Ticketing available at MovieWatcher.com OR (317) 884-1780. R-Rating requires ID. GREENWOOD PARK 14. Madison Ave and Fry Road. Showtimes for February 9. Movies include: When a Stranger Calls, Annakpolis, Big Momma's House 2, The Matador, Nanny McPhee, The New World, Underworld: Evolution, Brokeback Mountain, Glory Road, Hoodwinked, Last Holiday, Fun with Dick & Jane, The Chronicles of Narnia, Walk the Line.