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'American Idol' Beats American Idols

Rash Report: Fox Reality Competition Tops Real Deal in Vancouver

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MINNEAPOLIS (AdAge.com) -- Just one medal behind Germany, and with Lindsey Vonn set to become the nation's next golden girl, it seems nothing can stop American athletes.



Fox

'American Idol'

Except for "American Idol," that is.

As it did during the 2006 Turin Games, a two-hour "Idol" beat the idols on skates and snowboards, delivering a 9.1/22 rating and share in the ad-centric adult 18-49 demographic (based on Nielsen fast affiliate ratings, with final live-plus-same-day data due Thursday morning).

While off 12% from its season average, it's a remarkable rating, especially considering the ratings rebound for the Vancouver Games, which going into the night were up 25% in total viewers, according to NBC estimates.

The Olympics did deliver a second place 5.4/14 for NBC, which was just two-tenths below the commensurate Tuesday in 2006. But Tuesday was off a quarter in the demo compared to Monday's fast-affiliate ratings, and

just under half of Sunday's high of 11.2/31.

"Lost" also lost viewers compared to its season average, as the 4.5/10 shed 17% of its season average and 10% from last week. But combined with a "Lost" recap show at 8 p.m. (1.5/4) and "the forgotten" (1.7/5) at 10 p.m., ABC was third with an overall 2.6/7.

CBS (1.8/5) fell to fourth on a night it usually is first or second in (depending on "Idol"), as it wisely ran reruns in the face of "Idol" and given that its more august audience are more likely to be Olympic loyalists. ("NCIS," 2.3/6; "NCIS: Los Angeles," 1.8/4; "The Good Wife," 1.4/4)

Conversely, the CW's younger audience may be more loyal to "American Idol" than the American idols going for gold in Vancouver, so it's not surprising the network's repeats of "90210" and "Melrose Place" only posted a 0.4/1 each.

Network	8 PM	8:30 PM
ABC	Lost (R)	1.5/4
NBC	NCIS (R)	2.3/6
NBC	4:00-4:30	4.0/1
FOX	1.2/5	4.4/10
CBS	1.8/5	4.4/10

See how all the shows did in the ratings.

WHAT TO WATCH:

Wednesday: Olympics: "Fast girls" used to be a pejorative, but it's a compliment when applied to the women's downhill racers, which leads off NBC's coverage. Non-Olympics: More sports drama, but of the cinematic kind: Baseball movie "Bang the Drum Slowly," runs on TCM.

Thursday: Olympics: Blades of glory for men's figure skating and women's speed skating, which each have gold medal events. Non-Olympics: Think it looks cold up on top of Vancouver's Whistler Mountain? You ain't seen cold until you've watched "Fargo," which runs on My Network TV.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

NBC has to face "Idol" yet again, but this time it's only an hour-long show, which should help ratings recover.

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NOTE: All ratings based on adults 18-49. A share is a percentage of adults 18-49 who have their TV sets on at a given time. A rating is a percentage of all adults 18-49, whether or not their sets are turned on. For example, a 1.0 rating is 1% of the total U.S. adults 18-49 population with TVs. Ratings quoted in this column are based on live-plus-same-day unless otherwise noted. (Many ad deals have been negotiated on the basis of commercial-minute, live-plus-three-days viewing.)

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