

TV Review: 'The Celebrity Apprentice' Delivers Exactly What it Promises

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 13, 2010 - 6:53pm

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CHICAGO – Reality shows are comfort food to millions because they deliver exactly what viewers expect. You know precisely what you're getting out of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," "Bridezillas," or "The Bachelor". The names and faces may be different but the experience of each season is essentially the same. The same goes for "The Celebrity Apprentice" and if you garnered guilty pleasure thrills from last season, it's hard to believe that's going to change this year.



TV Rating: **3.0/5.0**

As Donald Trump's "The Apprentice" had begun to scrape the bottom of the barrel when it came to actually talented applicants, producer Mark Burnett realized that it was time to change the game and merge the concept with something more like what was making VH1 millions with their B- or C-list celebrity programs like "Rock of Love" or "The Surreal Life". It was an incredibly smart decision as anyone can tell you that watching celebrities screw up for charity is far more entertaining than watching no-name businessmen make baffling decisions in the pursuit of fattening their own pocketbook.



The Celebrity Apprentice

Photo credit: Mitch Haaseth/NBC

By now, the formula is simple: Mix a few actual celebrities with a few questionable ones and let Trump (and his children who are now essentially co-hosts of the program) blend his odd mix of both embarrassing them and making them seem far more important than they actually are. Stand-outs in past seasons included Joan Rivers, Melissa Rivers, Dennis Rodman, Andrew Dice Clay, and Gene Simmons.



The Celebrity Apprentice
Photo credit: Ali Goldstein/NBC

The fourteen celebrities for this season of "The Celebrity Apprentice" include Darryl Strawberry, Cyndi Lauper, Bret Michaels, Sharon Osbourne, Michael Johnson, Holly Robinson Peete, Goldberg (the wrestler, not the Whoopi), Carol Leifer, Sinbad, Summer Sanders, Maria Kanellis, Curtis Stone, Selita Ebanks, and, believe it or not, Illinois' own Rod Blagojevich whose designation as a "celebrity" seems as questionable as calling me one. If you look at that list and don't respond with a "who?!?!" to at least one name, you are far more in touch with the celebrity scene than most viewers.

And yet you would think that these were the biggest fourteen stars in the world based on their presentation on "The Celebrity Apprentice". And, really, that's the way it should be. These people are playing for charity and it's almost funny how Trump constantly pumps up their egos, as if it's a part of the contract to get on the show.

In the first episode, the teams divide by gender, give themselves team names, and are tasked with their first assignment - running a burger joint for charity. While the men look to Chef Curtis Stone to guide the way, the women focus more on star power to bring people in the door.

It's an entertaining opener that delivers what fans should expect but the biggest problem with "The Celebrity Apprentice" remains - there's absolutely no reason for this show to be two hours long. The pacing is horrible and if the program was an hour, I think it would actually be one of the better network reality shows. As it is, it feels bloated and dragged out way past the breaking point. Like most shows of this ilk, the best way is to watch it on DVR with a quick finger on the fast forward button.

With the world not about to run out of B-list attention hogs any time soon, it seems like "The Celebrity Apprentice" could still be on ten years from now. It's unlikely it will be much different than it is right now.

'The Celebrity Apprentice' premieres on NBC on Sunday, March 14th, 2010 at 8pm CST. It stars Donald Trump, Darryl Strawberry, Cyndi Lauper, Bret Michaels, Sharon Osbourne, Michael Johnson, Holly Robinson Peete, Goldberg, Carol Leifer, Sinbad, Summer Sanders, Maria Kanellis, Curtis Stone, Selita Ebanks, and Rod Blagojevich. It was created by Mark Burnett.



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [20]
Content Director
HollywoodChicago.com
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [19]

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