

Knife's Final Speech

So here I am, finally at the Final in an ORG! First off, I want to thank both the hosts and players who made SBVV the fun experience it was! Now let's get down to business. Please bear with me as this is my first ORG final speech I've ever had to write!

Coming into this game I knew people might feel some type of way about me after having just played SBBB4. I did fairly well in it, and was worried about people not wanting to see me do well again in another Sandbox ORG. But I knew I needed to redeem myself, if not in SBBB, then in SBVV! One thing I learned from SBBB4 that I figured would help me was that most Sandbox players don't play the same way Survivor Lobby players play, so I knew what to expect in terms of dynamics and activity more than most might. Also this was only my second Survivor ORG, and having played 2 Big Brother ORGs in between I knew I was going to be a little rusty and that strategies I used in those BB ORGs might not work in Survivor. I knew I couldn't plan too far ahead so my pregame plan was to make as many social connections as possible, especially with those people I had never met before, gain a majority, and then rinse and repeat once swap came. I would have to adapt my merge gameplay based on what happened up to that point.

OG Niutao

When I saw who was in this game, I became both excited and terrified. Many of the familiar faces I saw were great players. And many of those great players ended up being on OG Niutao with me. I saw that as a big early advantage in this game, especially after we won the first immunity! But then just as I felt like we had a shot to roll through the Pre Swap portion of this game, reality hit, and I ended up on the worst tribe when we became the first tribe to lose 2 people and go from 6 to 4, both coming one week after the other. I had been in this situation before when I played Cyprus, and knew that if things didn't turn around come the swap, that I'd be dead premerge. I did my best to build up relationships with every member of my tribe, with FDP, Yan, and Ginga leading the pack of people I could see myself working with long term. I survived the 2 votes we went through by using those relationships to form a loose majority, and we got out jinga, and then Ginga because of his amazing afk-ness. Ray had voted in the minority on the first vote, so if a swap wasn't coming next, I felt comfortable enough that the remaining 3 of us would take him out and I'd be safe.

Post Swap Niutao 2.0

It looked like we had a fairly strong group of people when I saw who was on Niutao 2.0. I had never met half of them before so I went to work on building relationships that I hoped would see me safe. Especially since I had no one I could rely on from my old tribe as the lone OG Niutao on the tribe, and knew that falling back on old relationships for the first vote would be a big factor. My first impressions from the tribe were that I liked Saurabh, Sean, and Roxy the most, and that I wanted to work with the old Funafutis over the old Vaitupus, even if the 3 of them seemed like the stronger group between the 2. But as the swap moved along, with us week

after week winning and never having to test our strategies with tribals, there seemed to be a lull in strategy talk. The only person during this entire time who really approached me about strategy was Saurabh. Because of the lack of talk from Funafuti, I became even more concerned about that first tribal we'd go to, especially when it was revealed to me that old Funafuti was planning on voting me out at the first tribal. I was really still on the fence before that point about which side to work with if they stuck to Green vs Red, but that pushed me over to the old Vaitupus. It was at this point that I discussed a F2 deal with Saurabh and an alliance with him and Sakin. I felt more comfortable with her over Bob and his afk-ness. It proved to be a defining move in this game for me, forming our International Alliance, as they ended up taking me to the F3 because of it. I knew I couldn't ever really trust anyone until a vote showed the proof of that trust, especially since I was still in a vulnerable position as the lone OG Niutao. Ultimately, I knew the best way to survive tribal was just to never go. So I did my best in challenges to ensure that would never happen. And it never did. I went from the worst tribe in the game, to suddenly being on the best one. I had gone through an early crucible and came out the other side and was reaping the rewards!

And speaking of rewards, I found the Niutao Idol. Having been the only one on Niutao prior to the swap, I had 2 crucial clues that told me that the Survivor I was looking for was a Female from an Odd first season. I never fully shared both clues with anyone, hoping to give myself a better shot at finding the idol than my tribemates. And when people started to share their guesses with me towards the end of the Swap, I told them I had guessed all the people I hadn't, and vice versa, so that they would keep guessing people I already knew didn't have it, and that I would have less people guessing the ones that it really might be. This proved to be a winning strategy when I found the idol on my last possible guess of the premerge!

Sleepy Merge zzz

When the merge came, I was glad to see that FDP had survived. Matt was also someone I hoped wanted to work with me, and I thought that since he was the lone person from his tribe at the swap, I had the in of similar circumstance. I was glad to hear that they were working together and that FDP still wanted to work with me and we ultimately made a F2, which was something I had wanted to do preswap, but feared to because of how much of the game lay ahead. I was concerned about his position in the game though considering the tribes were 7-3 right before the merge hit. The first vote looming called into questions many things for me and how the rest of the game would go. Was there going to be a Pagonging? Was everyone going to revert to Red vs Green? Me and FDP discussed these things and whether Red or Green would be the best one to work with for our games. By this point I had 2 alliances of 3, with a F2 in both of them. I liked my chances so far, and I liked them even more after Roxy and Sean went home.

The first merge vote was wild to say the least. At first I heard no one's name, and then like a dam being broken, I heard almost everyone's name. But the one name that I didn't like hearing was my own. I was told that like before, the old Funafuti members were planning on finally voting me out with this first opportunity. I heard Roxy's names come to the forefront as the one

spreading it, mostly as a backup in case Saurabh won immunity over Sean, and I decided to retaliate by spreading her name. Not only would it be good to get out someone who saw me as a threat, but I also saw the old Funafuti as bigger threats comparatively. Overall the 4 of them seemed like more challenge threats to me than the 4 OG Vaitupu. Not only that, but I didn't want Matt to get sucked back into an alliance with people who had no intention of keeping me in this game. Also Bob was spreading Matt's name, and since we were allied, he couldn't be the Red that was going home that day. I knew I had a slim chance of gaining the votes to oust Roxy since she was a very good social player, so I played my idol. People were telling me at the literal last minute that they were switching and voting with me instead of for me, but that didn't make me feel any safer. If anything it added to my paranoia. So playing my idol at the merge vote, when I was the clear target, with an uncertain number of votes on my side, seemed like a no brainer to me. Of course people might say I wasted it, but hey, I'm still here without having it the entire merge. If anything, suspicion of me still having it could've impacted my game in a different way and caused me to not end up in the Final. So I have no regrets about playing it there.

The Sean vote was also anything but straightforward. At first it seemed like a clear division of the votes we going on Bob and Logan, mostly due to Bob's inactivity and telling everyone that's who he was voting. But then Sean's many F3 and F2 deals came to light. Yes he had asked me for one. And Saurabh. And probably everyone else. So that left a bad taste in most of our mouths, and me, FDP, Saurabh, and Sakin used the split vote to our advantage to vote him out. This was perfect for me because this is the point where I started to make the case for FDP to the other 2 that he would continue to vote with us just to be safe. I put forward the idea that we could use him as a vote and then cut him later, hoping that I could keep the people loyal to me safe.

My plan at this point was to do my best to get those 4 other people and myself to the F5. But at the same time, I knew full well that at some point they would turn on each other, and I would have to pick a side. I just hoped that it would be later rather than sooner. The hammer dropped when Sakin and Saurabh decided that me, FDP, and Matt were too close, and they blindsided me to vote out Matt.

After the blindside and seeing all of OG Vaitupu vote together to get out Matt, and seeing Logan's vote on me, I knew I very badly needed to be safe for the next tribal to curb any momentum or thoughts that anyone might be having about getting me out of this game, and thankfully I won immunity. Yes, getting Logan out had me worried about being left with only the 4 Greens that voted out one of my allies and the 1 left from that alliance, but Logan wouldn't even talk to me that week. I knew I had to roll the dice and go along to get along to survive, and have faith that my International Alliance would hold up through the back half of the merge.

The next week they did it again. Saurabh and Sakin voted out my closest ally in this game and told me they were doing the opposite. It was a blow to have happen earlier than I wanted it to be, yet still more unsurprising than when it happened to Matt. My days of playing the middle of 2

alliances were finally over. As I said before, I knew one side would emerge victorious, and my goal was to still be there, and still be trusted when it did.

At Final 5, that trust and social game I had been playing showed up in full effect when Saurabh played his idol on me. Sure it was unnecessary since we voted in the majority together, but it was something I wasn't sure I could get him to do until he actually went through with it. And it felt like a victory in the end because I knew he had been working close with Bob. And it was plain on Bob's face that both the number of votes and idol were things he was not expecting to have happen. The baabaa vote that followed seemed more like a formality at that point, with baabaa even voting herself out. That F5 vote was the moment I knew I was making it to the end.

As far as my decision to take Saurabh over Sakin is concerned, I felt as if Sakin was my biggest threat in this game, and someone who I underestimated very early on. Not only did she prove me wrong through her physical game, but I barely ever heard her name come up as a potential vote when she wasn't safe. And even though Saurabh was someone who I had previously discussed going to F2 with early on, comparatively Sakin's gameplay made the argument that in the end she was definitely the stronger of the 2. And it made it clear cut in my mind why I should not take her to the F2.

It was also apparent to me this whole game that Saurabh and Sakin were a pair and mostly played similar games. They were on the same tribe the entire game, and were the only 2 people who voted with each other on every single vote right up to the end. Keeping me around as a shield early on was smart. Everyone and their mother's wanted to get me out this game. And there were still plenty of opportunities that followed in the back half of the merge to do it. I felt like the smart thing to do from F6 on would have been to cut me, who had clearly been a strong physical player up to that point with 2 clear allies already on the jury, and take either Bob or baabaa to the F3, where they would have both had a better shot at winning. But they didn't. They allowed me to reach the Final Immunity challenge, which I crushed might I add, and break apart their duo.

TL;DR

I played a game that showed strengths in all 3 aspects of Survivor - strategic, social, and physical gameplay. I started out on the worst tribe, to doing work on the best tribe to keep myself safe, and then navigated the merge by playing within 2 alliances, one more public and one more private, all the while being targeted by most of the people left in the game, and winning 4 individual challenges along the way. The social connections I made early on ensured me a path to the Final Immunity, which I decidedly won, getting me to the Final Tribal Council and chance at being the Sole Survivor!

I hope this has shown some insight into how I played this game, and I welcome the jury's questions and hope to give the best answers I can! Good luck with your decision and thank you!