


'The Bachelor' Season Premiere Recap: Brad Womack is Back!



 By Krissy Dolor

This season of ABC's *The Bachelor* has officially begun, and after last night's episode we can already tell it's going to be a doozy. Brad Womack has spent the past three years soul searching, trying to get his life back on track after his infamous decision to say goodbye to both Jenni Croft and DeAnna Pappas.

"I hit rock bottom," said Brad last night. "I was a broken man."

Brad opened up about his experience in therapy, and found the root of his phobias of commitment – his father's abandonment. And because of this, he said, "I don't know if I've let someone know the real me." Realizing that he's been a closed off-person, Brad has learned that in order for him to truly fall in love is to be vulnerable. And he to wants to prove to America – and most importantly, himself – that he can be a better person.

Regardless of what America thought about Brad before tonight's episode, it's apparent that he's back on *The Bachelor* for the right reasons. He sounded earnest whenever he spoke about trying to prove himself and teared up each time he mentioned his father. When he talked to *Bachelor* host Chris Harrison, Brad often tripped over his words, and seemed genuinely nervous to be back at the mansion again. Fidgety, playing with the back of his head, Brad looked visibly uncomfortable – and even more so when Jenni and DeAnna were brought out to

meet him.

This was the moment everyone was waiting for. To see Brad sweating, adjusting the collar of his suit as he stood up to greet those women must have been gratifying for them – and everyone at home. “Now I feel even more like an idiot,” Brad muttered as they walked out. In a word, the entire situation was awkward.

“It means the world that you made – that you *both* made the attempt to come back here,” Brad told them. “I failed miserably, and I’m so profoundly sorry.”

But he got through it. And so did Jenni and DeAnna (who both look fantastic!). While Jenni was hopeful for Brad, DeAnna was skeptical of the whole thing, and these two women encompassed the thoughts that everyone must be thinking: *Is Brad really ready for this?*

And that was exactly what the 30 bachelorettes were thinking as soon as they walked out of the limo to meet him. In fact, Chantal, who was the first woman out, said, “I have something for you,” and proceeded to slap Brad across the face. “This is for every woman in America!” Brad took it well, and Chantal’s bold move actually landed her the last rose of the night (kudos!).

While a few girls admitted to Brad that they really didn’t know anything about them (and Brad exhaled a sigh of relief each time he heard that), many of the women instantly had their guard up. Lacey looked stricken to see Brad (so no surprise that she didn’t receive a rose), but many, including Ashley S., simply wanted Brad to move forward with his life. In fact, Ashley S. received the first impression rose of the night, because she told Brad that she would be his friend no matter what, and friendship is the what he’s looking for in a wife. Will this be the love story that she’s hoping for? I’m not sure yet ... something about Ashley S. seems contrived.

There was a little cattiness between Renee (no rose) and Alli (rose), after Renee got a little crazy-eyed and repeatedly took Brad away from the other contestants, just to have him stolen back from her (the irony!). And Madison – this one was just plain weird with her fangs and seductive eyes, and I still can't get over the fact that Brad gave her the fourth rose of the night. But for the most part, the girls were gracious – at least, for now.

Southern belle Emily and Rockette Keltie are two of my favorites. And Michelle, as a mother and one of the older women on the show, is a definite contender. Based on the 20 women he picked, Brad is going for a mix of country charm with comforting accents, mature and assertive women who know what they want, and bright-eyed and giddy girls who ooze cute. But I have a feeling Brad will pick a southern gal who is closest to his upbringing as his wife. Not sure which category Madison and those fangs fall into, but I'm hoping she gets off the *Bachelor* train soon.

And there you have it! The scenes from the rest of the season look intense, and we can't wait to see next week's episode. Remember to visit us next week for more *Bachelor* coverage. Want more? Visit PopEater, but we're warning you – possible spoiler alert!