

## 11.4.24 Inside J!

[00:00:00] From the Alex Trebek stage at Sony Picture Studios. This

is Inside

Jeopardy.

**Sarah:** Hello, and welcome back to Inside Jeopardy, your exclusive and official podcast destination for all things happening in the world of Jeopardy. I'm Sarah Voss, and we have a special surprise for our listeners. That's right. He's back in the pod, Buzzy Cohen.

**Buzzy:** Another Buzzy Cohen comeback story. Happy to be here. The pod has evolved. It's like, I feel like I'm seeing a new generation of Pokemon of the pod.

**Sarah:** Oh, Pokemon pod. That's, I don't know if that's what we were going for, but I'll take it. Yeah, we missed you.

**Buzzy:** I've been missing you too. And when you say the world of Jeopardy, the world of Jeopardy is getting bigger and bigger.

And bigger.

**Sarah:** Are you feeling that?

**Buzzy:** I am. Yeah. Yes. I mean, there's celebrity, there's syndicated, there's pop culture, there's masters. It's maybe the universe of Jeopardy! is a better way to describe it.

**Sarah:** Yes. I think I did the [00:01:00] math recently and between the episodes of pop culture, if you count Celebrity Jeopardy!

Those are our episodes. You count those as two.

**Buzzy:** Okay.

**Sarah:** Plus all of the weeks we've done of syndication. In the last three months alone, we've recorded 139 episodes of Jeopardy! That

**Buzzy:** is more than some. Television shows have in their entire run.

**Sarah:** Yes, most shows in their entire run. In their

**Buzzy:** entire run. Don't

**Sarah:** get up to 139.

We've done it in three months.

**Buzzy:** That's incredible. So

**Sarah:** when I look in the mirror and I wonder why am I

**Buzzy:** so

**Sarah:** tired, I just have to remind myself we've made a lot of jeopardy.

**Buzzy:** A lot of jeopardy. And we love it. We thank you for that.

**Sarah:** Well, and we thank you for your contributions in 40 of those episodes. That's right.

culture. Yeah.

**Buzzy:** What a fun surprise. What was that like

**Sarah:** for you?

**Buzzy:** It was incredible. I mean, I learned so much. You think, you know, you've watched the show your whole life, you've played it, you've hosted it, and yet there's still so much more to learn. Pretty steep learning curve, as you can imagine. I remember I was talking to Mark Gaberman, and he's like, yeah, I've been here for 26 years.

I think I'm [00:02:00] the fifth in seniority. And it's like, okay, got it. So, There's a reason that you guys can just kind of like live the Jeopardy style, but once I kind of got the hang of it It was so much fun.

**Sarah:** What would you say? You know, just as all of us. Oh, you know, you write a clue You put of this. Okay, I could do this.

What would you say is the most surprising or challenging thing you ran into about actually trying to craft those

**Buzzy:** clues? Great question. You want to put so much into the clue because you're so excited about this fact that you found. And, uh, brevity is the soul of a Jeopardy clue. And those head writers, like, they'll look at it and they're like, Zoop, zoop, zoop, and

**Sarah:** just took out my meat and potatoes.

Yeah, but they just

**Buzzy:** but somehow it's all still there. So that is a real they're very gifted at that.

**Sarah:** That's one of the things I try to express whenever we record with celebrities. I'm like, I know. This is just 8 to 12 seconds of words, but each of these clues is [00:03:00] beautifully, perfectly crafted. It's a little story, and so you really have to bring each word to life, because each word is chosen with such intention.

Because just like what you're saying, you can only put in a few, so they really have to all be intentionally selected.

**Buzzy:** Very, very tricky. The other thing I learned is that a Jeopardy! clue is not a sentence.

**Sarah:** cannot be

**Buzzy:** and therefore does not have a period

**Sarah:** no and and often that's another thing I have to tell because we'll come across like a Semicolon yeah, and I'll be like okay when you're delivering this clue I want you to think of it like a period but we can't actually put a period in a jeopardy clue So I want you to take a breath give a new thought but from a punctuation standpoint Not a sentence, not a period.

**Buzzy:** Yeah, but I had a lot of fun, too, bringing some of the youth correspondent aspect. And, uh, I know some of the producers, including podcast producer Alexa, caught some of those little, um, Easter eggs I put in for the youth. Buzzy on the

**Sarah:** youth beat.

**Buzzy:** [00:04:00] Exactly. There were a couple exclamation points that did not follow the style guide, but fans of a certain singer will recognize them.

**Sarah:** Ooh, I think we know who she is. Hi, it's me. Uh, well, you also had to join us today because Yes. Hashtag Deathly Double. We're coming off of Halloween. And we could not make this decision without you. I mean, Deathly Double, you birthed the death of Deathly Double. I mean,

**Buzzy:** what a, I mean, it's very hard to leave your mark on an institution like Jeopardy.

But between the belt and the Deathly Doubles, I think I've had more than my fair share. So yeah, no, this is a lot of fun and I appreciate you guys bringing me back for this.

**Sarah:** So, what Was your conclusion who won this year?

**Buzzy:** This is interesting. This is my second time crowning this person as a winner.

**Sarah:** Oh, a two time champion in the hashtag deathly double.

**Buzzy:** Not at death, not at the deathly double

**Sarah:** oh two time champion,

**Buzzy:** Sam Kavanaugh. Ooh. Did [00:05:00] a beautiful costume where he dressed up as a goat. He had a shearling uh, coat over a jeopardy shirt. A jeopardy hat with Rams horns, and he was Ken Jennings. The Jeopardy goat

**Sarah:** and really the commitment to the costume.

**Buzzy:** And previously I hosted his tournament of champions, which he won.

So that is the other time that I was able to crown him a champion. Did

**Sarah:** not remember Sam Kavanaugh winning a hashtag double before. But now,

**Buzzy:** now you get it. It's two different arenas.

**Sarah:** So, he's really good luck with Buzzy Cohen.

**Buzzy:** I know, it feels like he should start paying me or something. But anyway, congrats Sam, that was a really fun costume.

I hope you all can check it out. And, uh, you'll be getting a photograph of Ken Jennings signed by yours truly.

**Sarah:** Did you not give him one of those in the Tournament of Champions? No. No. Just a belt.

**Buzzy:** No, just a, just a belt.

**Sarah:** I had great intentions to post our picture from last year of Alan and Barbie and Ken.

Yes. I couldn't find it.

**Buzzy:** Huh.

**Sarah:** It's like lost in my inbox somewhere. I'll find it. From the photographer. So maybe I can post it. [00:06:00] A delayed posting, but we were not able to obviously put it up last year because the strike. Yes. It was a, it was a good one. It was a good one. I had a

**Buzzy:** lot of fun. Yeah. Uh, how was your Halloween?

**Sarah:** It was great. Um, Peter Pan this year. I saw it. I loved it. Michael made fun of me, um, endlessly last week for forcing my family to dress up. And yet, they like this. Now I will say my 11 year old, she only did it for about 30 minutes. Okay. And then she popped over to be with her friends, and they were, um, they didn't even trick or treat.

I was still, like, holding on. I was like a ghost till I was 16, I think, so I could still trick or treat, but no one would know how old I was. My

**Buzzy:** 10 year old did trick or treat, but she also had a sleepover, which involved the sixth sense.

**Sarah:** Just like a real

**Buzzy:** She loved it. Yeah, so I'm trying to figure out where to go next.

Maybe some Hitchcock.

**Sarah:** Okay.

**Buzzy:** You know, I feel like that's kind of like that tense sort of weird, I don't know, trying to figure out, because I don't want to go like gory scary.

**Sarah:** How about Gremlins?

**Buzzy:** Gremlins is fun.

**Sarah:** That's a, that, we did [00:07:00] that one. That didn't like terrify anyone too, too badly. My 11 year old is very terrified of anything though, so her sleepover.

On Halloween night, did not include any scary movies. No, I think it was like just popcorn and candy. I don't even know if any, I don't think she wanted to entertain doing any movies because she might be the kid who was afraid of the scary movie. But regardless, we had a lovely time and, you know, this might have been the last family costume.

I don't know, hold out, you can do it. I hope, I will hold out, hope. Uh, we also got into the Halloween spirit on social media with the Is it real? Or is it cake?

**Buzzy:** That's, that's right. Did you catch that? Oh, I did. Just a knife wielding hand roaming the Jeopardy stage. The knife

**Sarah:** wielding hand of Laura Matthews from our social and digital team.

You know, she crafted this idea, big fan of the show. The Is It Cake show. And, you know, she's like, I'm going to bring a knife, and we're going to cut into all these things, and then we're going to pretend to cut into Ken. And I'm like, great, let me run it by Ken. [00:08:00] He's like, okay, sure. He's always up for these things.

So he, you know, cowered in terror as the knife came yielding at him. And then, I think what drew the most attention was when they actually cut into the cake

that looked like the image of Ken afraid of the cake. It was a sheet cake. And Laura cut it like a pie. It Like a wedge of pie and I don't know I mean usually I'm right on with Laura's ideas But I'm not sure about the pie cut well into the sheet cake

**Buzzy:** Maybe she was going for that classic cake slice where it's like a wedge of a round cake, right

**Sarah:** in a rectangle shape In a sheet cake.

Yeah, I don't know. I didn't get a piece of the cake Which is probably what I'm most upset about Laura

**Buzzy:** if you're listening Get back to us. Yeah,

**Sarah:** we want to know.

**Buzzy:** Yeah.

**Sarah:** Call of Duty Black Ops 6.

**Buzzy:** Finally!

**Sarah:** Did you see this at all?

**Buzzy:** I've been, I've been waiting. Is this the crossover? You know, I sat out the first five knowing, knowing that number six was going to be the one for me.

**Sarah:** Yeah, well it was released on October 25th, and the [00:09:00] team from Activision came to us. They have an actor that's doing the campaign for them of The Replacer, and his name is Peter Stormare. He's been in lots of movies. He is. He's lovely in person, but kind of terrifying in the

**Buzzy:** character. You've

**Sarah:** seen him on, you know, people magazine.

They've had him as the sexiest man alive. Like he's popping up all of these places replacing. So they thought, what kind of a crossover would it be? If all of a sudden Peter or I'm sorry, the replacer is on the Alex Trebek stage. Maybe we should just play right now so people can take a listen.

Yeah. Our final Jeopardy category today is Wild Kingdom.

Our contestants have made their way What's going on? What happened to Tanya? Well, Tanya is busy playing Call of Duty Black Ops 6. So I am the Tanya now. I guess. All right. Well, the category's Wild Kingdom. Here's the clue. What? That's easy. Often found in urban environments, this mischievous bird is notorious for its clever thievery.[00:10:00]

30 seconds, players, good luck.

**Buzzy:** Aaaaaaaahhhhhh Easies

**Sam:** Ready!

Hurry up!

Voila! Uh, okay, we'll begin here with Tanya. What was your response? Nice. What? That's not exactly the kind of bird we're looking for. You're so wrong, Ken. No. That is the right answer. You're arguing? No, that's incorrect. What was the wager? Check these out. You wagered, you don't have a million dollars, you can't do that.

Wait, get back to your podium. Are you defeating me? Get back there. Ken, do you want to hear a secret? What? No. You're replaced. [00:11:00] Wait, I'm the host. I'm the host. I'm the host now. I'm done. I don't care what you guys do. I'm out of here. You're on your own. Let's see if the trap door is working.

Nope, he's not. Okay, last questions. Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, I know the answer.

**Sarah:** So, he was great, you know, the first thing when they said, we want to draw a middle finger. And, you know, obviously the clue referred to a type of bird. And Ken saying, oh, that was not the bird we were looking for. And then they blurred out the middle finger. They actually brought in artists to come behind the podium and sketch.

Of Middle Finger quickly, not during the Final Jeopardy music, but like ahead of time so we could record it. They brought in extras to be the other contestants. Ken was game, we did a few different takes, you know, basically, and then you saw Peter being like, No Ken, you're replaced! I'm, I'm the host now! And Ken's like, [00:12:00] Whatever!

It was a really fun thing and, you know, not what you would expect to see with Jeopardy, but I think expect the unexpected. Totally. You know, this wasn't real gameplay. We weren't doing anything to the material, but it was so unexpected to see Ken Jennings and The Replacer talking about Call of Duty Black Ops 6.

**Buzzy:** I want to know what the professional artists thought of the stylus writing implement. Yes. Did they have comments?

**Sarah:** They were challenged because also, if you stop writing for a few seconds, it automatically centers your work and thinks you're finished. So, we have to tell them, don't stop drawing, just keep going.

Yeah, keep going with the stylist. They did an alternate where they also drew Nuketown, which is

**Buzzy:** Sure, of course, yeah, Nuketown from Call of Duty 6. You know, Nuketown,

**Sarah:** absolutely, Black Ops 6, Call of Duty, uh, so they drew Nuketown as well, and it's not easy to draw an entire town on a little square with a Wide stylus, although you [00:13:00] can change the thickness

**Buzzy:** really

**Sarah:** of the stylus So we did do a more narrow finer a little finer tip for this for this artwork Yeah, well, I'm

**Buzzy:** glad to know that I like a professional is also challenged by that stylist Yes, so many I mean better men than and women than me have fallen victim to the Jeopardy stylus.

Yes

**Sarah:** Well, I hope this doesn't give anyone any idea don't get

**Buzzy:** any ideas

**Sarah:** Buzzy, you're joining us on an exciting day, because it is, in J P T, Jeopardy production time, we're about to record our first week of Second Chance. That's happening, so that means we are actually going to reveal the field of 18 contestants right here.

So

**Buzzy:** exciting.

**Sarah:** Right now. A little smaller field than last year. Sure. It's going to be two full weeks, 18 contestants, each of the nine will play in a quarterfinal game. And then the winners will advance to a two day total point of fair.

**Buzzy:** Love to hear it. The

**Sarah:** winner of each of the two weeks will then play in our Champions Wild Card, which this year, Buzzy, we're going [00:14:00] back old school, old style.

**Buzzy:** Tell me.

**Sarah:** Two weeks, 15 players, four wild cards among non winners.

**Buzzy:** I never thought I would hear about a wild card again.

**Sarah:** I know. Well, it's just, I only snuck it in for this one tournament, which I can call it a tournament because there's only one of them, uh, for champions wild cards. So it's back. That's exciting.

In limited, uh, limited edition. I thought you'd appreciate that. You know, I

**Buzzy:** go back and forth. I like the play to win, but I also see the value of a little gamesmanship with the wild cards. It keeps it exciting.

**Sarah:** Yeah. It's going to be a very exciting postseason. All right. Here we go. As you probably can imagine, Buzzy, this was really hard this year.

Oh my

**Buzzy:** God.

**Sarah:** And so many factors went into selecting these players. I mean, how

**Buzzy:** many times have I heard on this podcast, could be a contender for second chance.

**Sarah:** And that ended up kind of. Hurting myself and others because so often people We're disappointed who didn't get the call because I said things like that.

So I have apologized on previous pods [00:15:00] and let everyone know. I wish everyone could make it, but these 18 did. I'm going to reveal these in the order in which they played. Yes. So it's not alphabetical. It's not ranked in any way. This is just when they appeared. So first off we have Ferdinand Percenty. Back in April, he aired 22 correct responses, Corey at 16, 200, and he went up against Amy Hummel, five game champion.

So, really quite impressive. He was dominating. He nearly had a runaway against Amy, and then in final, she was correct, he wasn't, but certainly, Second chance material. Can't wait to welcome him back. Next up, we have Steve Miller. His game aired back at the end of May 18. Correct responses. This was the game that America Kirti four game champion lost.

Steve nearly beat him. It was a tough game and he is coming back for second chance. Next up, we have Josh Moss. He aired back in late May as [00:16:00] well. 19 correct responses. A 14, 600 Coriat. Oh, he went up against, I don't know if you remember her, Adriana Harmeier. 15 wins. Josh and Adriana were really battling for the lead until late in the game.

Adriana narrowly secured a lead heading into final. But this was a great game for Josh and earned him a second chance. Next up we have Enzo Cunanan. You saw him play back in mid June. 17 correct responses. 14, 800. Coriat also went up against Adriana Harmeier. Enzo actually ended double Jeopardy! in second place right behind Adriana.

They were both correct in final and Adriana just sneaked in with the win, having that lead going into final. Next up, Caitlin Tarr. We saw her back in mid June as well. 21 correct responses, a 15, 000 choreat, and once again, one of the people who went up against the ever [00:17:00] impressive Adriana Harmeier. This was Adriana's 13th win.

Caitlin led entering final. This was the first time in Adriana's run that she did not have the lead heading into final. All three players had over 10, 000 in this game. So it was a competition between all three of them. Adriana, the only one to come up with the correct response and she gets the win. But Caitlin gets the second chance.

Next up, Colleen Matthews, another June contestant, 16 correct responses, 14, 600 on the Coriat and another. Adriana Harmeyer Challenger. You had to think

we were going to see a lot of them in second chance. This was Adriana's 15th and final win. Colleen had a brief lead late, but Adriana took the lead back on the second to last clue.

They were both correct in final, but because of that small lead by Adriana, she gets the win. Next up, we have Tekla Sauter, and she's kind of our Jessica Stevens of this year's [00:18:00] Second Chance Buzzy. She went up against Adriana Harmeier, 15 game champion, Andrew Basile, who would then defeat both of them in that game, but go on to win seven games.

So the fact that she was up against such strong competition, she still came up with 13 correct responses. That's one of these things we try to identify it. It's not just about the stats. It's also about within that game. What kind of stats are you able to put up against strong challengers?

Sure.

**Sarah:** Yeah. So excited to see not that the competition will be strong here for Tecla as well, but excited to see her in second chance.

Next we have John Quill, Garrick Reynolds. Played with us in June, 16 correct responses, 11, 400 Coriat. This was Drew Basile's second win, and Drew had a strong lead, but Bob, the other challenger, and John Quill both stayed in contention. John Quill had over 10, 000 after Double Jeopardy. It was a triple stumper in final, and so Drew was able to win because of a [00:19:00] minimal wager.

But John Quill really put up a fight against Drew. Next up, Josh Haidt, another June contender. I think June was a big month for Second Chance.

18

**Sarah:** correct responses, 13, 400 Coriat. Another Drew Basile challenger. This was the tiebreaker game of the season. It was a strong game from Drew, but then Josh got back into contention on the second to last clue of the game.

Drew got the last clue correct to have exactly double Josh's score. Josh goes all in, in final, then they are tied. And then we went to a sudden death tiebreaker and drew, got it, Doppler effect. So we got to see what happens. Got to get

**Buzzy:** a second chance on that. That's pretty crazy. You

**Sarah:** make it to the tiebreaker.

Chances are. Against a

**Buzzy:** seven day chance. Yeah.

**Sarah:** Chances are you get a second chance. Uh, we also have Mike Ferguson. He played in July, 16 correct responses, 13, 000 Coriat. He went up against Isaac Hirsch, a nine [00:20:00] game champion. This was Isaac's eighth game. Eighth win, and it was just kind of back and forth between Isaac and Mike.

And Isaac and Mike, Isaac secured the lead heading into final. They were both correct, but because Isaac had that small lead, he got the win. And Mike's coming back for a second chance. Next up we have Lindsey Denninger. She also played back in July. 20 correct responses for Lindsey. Nilesh was her opponent.

He was, of course, a three game strong champion. Lindsey was actually in the lead in Double Jeopardy! But she lost out on a 3, 000 daily double. Nilesh really caught fire. Entered final with the lead. They were both incorrect in final, but Nilesh had that minimal wager and secured the win. Next up, it's Will Yancey, you will remember him because, Buzzy, what was his line?

**Buzzy:** I think he said something, it's, it's hotter than two rats humping in a wool sock.

**Sarah:** Oh, and so, no, that is not why we're asking him back. Although I hope he says something like that again. But we're asking him back because he had 21 [00:21:00] correct responses in a 14, 400 Coriat. Can't wait to see him back in second chance.

All right. Our next second chance contender is Drew Goins. This is someone everyone had on their list for second chance. 22 correct responses, a 15, 200 Coriat. He was going up against David Erb who got his third and final win in this game. Drew was dominating until David found the last daily double and won.

wagered 10, 000 on it. So then he got the lead. Drew continued to battle, but David was able to secure the lead heading into final. That was the difference. But we're going to see Drew back in second chance. Alex Mishev is up next. We saw him in September. 18 correct responses, a 16, 000 Also a challenger for David Erb.

This was actually the game that David lost. Maddie Carwile went on to win. So Alex was going [00:22:00] up against two Jeopardy! champions, and we're looking forward to seeing him in second chance. Scott Chang competed with us in October, 18 correct responses. He was going up against four game champion, Ryan Manton.

This was Ryan's third win. Scott had a strong lead against him, but Ryan scored 5,000 on the last daily double. To take the lead. They were both correct, but Ryan made the right wager to win by a dollar. So Scott, you didn't win, but you're coming back for second chance. Next up, Gino Montoya. He competed with us in October.

20 correct responses, a 17,400 Coriat. Went up against Mark Fitzpatrick, a five game champion. This was Mark's third win. Gino actually led for most of the game, but then Mark found both of the daily doubles in double jeopardy. Hard to do anything when someone does that. He had the lead heading into final and he got the win.

We're going to see Zoe Grobman back. We saw Zoe [00:23:00] compete in mid October. 17 correct responses for Zoe. She went up against two champions. She had Eamon Campbell. And Rishabh, whoop a la potty, this was Eamon's losing game, it was Rishabh's winning game. So again, one of these things where you're up against two champions, to put up the stats that she did, proves that she is a champion.

For second chance and our final second chancer, we're gonna talk about him in our highlights from last week because he actually competed on Friday's game. Sam Cameron just competed on November 1st. He gets the last spot. He went up against Greg Jolan who had a second win on Friday. But really what sealed the deal for Sam Cameron of all our second Chancers.

19 correct responses, but an 18,000 quarry at the highest of any of our contenders for second chance. So we're excited to see all 18 of these players back. You're not going to see them until late December, but they're hitting the Alex Trebek [00:24:00] stage. What

**Buzzy:** a field today.

**Sarah:** Right? Exciting

**Buzzy:** stuff. Yeah.

**Sarah:** And now a quick word from our sponsor.

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He appeared to be running away with it, but Heather Ryan managed to stay in contention heading into final. In final, they were both correct, but Ian secured the win by just one dollar.

**Buzzy:** I will say, with someone like Will Wallace, Ian may have taken the game, but he can never take Will's freedom.

**Sarah:** Ah. It's a

**Buzzy:** Braveheart reference.

See,

**Sarah:** this is what we need Buzzy on the pod for. One thing I do want to point out about this game was in the category Complete the Rhyming Phrase, there was the rhyming phrase, Men seldom make passes at, and the response was, who is, girls who wear glasses. I think many people out there thought that the Jeopardy writers

**Buzzy:** Thought this?

**Sarah:** Wrote this, or thought this. But in fact, Dorothy Parker wrote this about a hundred years ago in a 1926 book. We were just, you know, Simply filling the category. Complete the rhyming phrase. I saw even People Magazine picked up on this.

**Buzzy:** Jeopardy

**Sarah:** host [00:26:00] apologizes for insensitive remark in the name.

**Buzzy:** Can I tell you, someone came up to me in a coffee shop.

Yes, a coffee shop and was like, what was this going on with the glasses, making fun of a glass, and I was like, What are you talking about? Yes. Was it wild? I just, we gotta read more.

**Sarah:** Yes. And, and Ken in the moment was like, Oh, gosh. Whoa, that's harsh to Heather. Because he was just being a host in the moment.

Having

**Buzzy:** a little fun.

**Sarah:** But I really think that people out there are convinced the Jeopardy writers pinned this because they think men seldom wear pants as a man. I don't know. I don't know. Bizarre. It, uh, sometimes the clickbait, it's too much.

**Buzzy:** Yep.

**Sarah:** My husband sent it to me from the New York Post. I said, it's clickbait.

He said, but it's the Post. I said, stop. Exactly. Just stop. Just stop. All right, well, Will leaves us as a four game champion, two runaways, nearly 80, 000 in total winnings, averaging 17 correct responses. Most impressive, though, only two incorrect responses per game. [00:27:00] So that's a really good correct response rate.

I did have a chance to catch up with Will after his run came to an end. Let's take a listen. Will Wallace, you are a four game Jeopardy champion. How does that sound to you?

Completely unbelievable. But I'm really starting to sink in a little bit, I think.

**Sarah:** Well, after the first win, I remember you telling Ken, like, just to hear Johnny Gilbert say, whose cash winnings total one time was the dream, and then it just kept going.

Yeah, I set that as my apex. Like, I was like, you know, wildest dreams. Maybe I win one game and that'll be enough to hear, you know, whose cash winnings

total a thousand dollars. And, uh, you know, by the fourth time I heard it, uh, it was sort of unreal. Um, I was like, that's me? Um, and I was still having like, uh, weird moments at coffee this morning where, you know, 6.

30, having a cup of coffee, and I spaced out completely and just sort of, you know, thousand yards stare into the distance. Um, so it's, it's, it's still sinking in.

**Sarah:** Well, [00:28:00] and I think for anyone, we always tell Johnny how much that means to people even to hear your name, let alone that you're a jeopardy champion.

It's an epic voice. I mean, I'm really looking forward to hearing that.

**Sarah:** I don't blame you. Obviously, with four wins, we know we're going to see you back on the Alex Trebek stage, whether that's Champions Wild Card or Tournament of Champions, if it is the latter, what would that mean for you to compete in the TOC?

I haven't thought that far ahead, but, you know, I'm thinking to, to back to watching, you know, Austin Rogers and Buzzy Cohen and Colby and all these folks that I saw play. And, um, the idea that I could be on that same, uh, stage, um, is deeply intimidating. Um, but very exciting.

**Sarah:** What's been the best part of this experience so far?

Uh, honestly, it's just been such a wonderful experience interacting with the crew and, um, with everybody who makes the show run, uh, and with the contestants. Um, [00:29:00] there's a, a great deal of camaraderie, uh, in the green room, uh, with the people who, who are playing. So it's impossible to feel bad about losing, you know, when it's like, oh, but, But they're so cool and they're so good.

And every single person I've interacted with this week has been delightful.

**Sarah:** I completely agree about our Jeopardy! crew and obviously our wonderful community of contestants. Tell me about your Jeopardy! journey. How long did it take you to get here to the Alex Trebek

stage? I took the college test in 2002 maybe?

2003? Somewhere back in there and it was back when you actually had to go like audition in person. There was a big call and there are a bunch of people

there and you had to play a version of the game in person. And I did, I did pretty well and they never called me back. Um, and so, you know, okay, cool. You know, maybe some other day.

And then I watched the show off and on for years and I never really entertained being a contestant again. And then I had a couple of people in my life who, um, you know, I'd watched a lot of Jeopardy with who were like, You should really go take the test, you know, you might you might get lucky [00:30:00] and so I did um last summer and Was shocked, um that I did so well and that I ended up getting a call So yeah, take the test apparently it happens to people These are the

**Sarah:** stories I love to hear because so many people just like you have been watching for years They don't necessarily think they have what it takes and here you are a four game Jeopardy!

champion. So yeah, take the anytime test.

Yeah, no, absolutely. And you just said four game champion again, and that still is like just

**Sarah:** well, mind blown. It is real. Congratulations on a great run, and we will see you back here on the stage for whatever your next competition will be.

Thank you so much. I look forward to it.

**Sarah:** You heard it from Will.

Take the test. Take

**Sarah:** the test. Okay. On Tuesday, we had challenger John Liu, who despite losing 5, 400 on a True Daily Double, managed to take a narrow lead heading into final and was correct for the win. This was a [00:31:00] real lesson for people watching Jeopardy. He did forget to phrase his response in the form of a question in the Jeopardy round.

Of course, we're more lenient in that round. We will give you a reminder. We won't mark you incorrect. But it was in double jeopardy that he made that true daily double. And you could see Ken pausing. I mean, in the instructions, it's like, yeah, give a death stare. It's kind of how we say it so that you can really try to give the contestant an idea.

Do it. There's something you're doing wrong. Try to fix it. And it just. Didn't occur to John in time, but he gets a win. So that's pretty impressive.

**Buzzy:** Take it. Great. Come back.

**Sarah:** Not impressive about this game. 21 triple stumpers. This was a painful one. This was a painful one. Um, you know, lots of people commenting on how difficult the board was.

And even Ken himself in the post game chat said that he too thought it was difficult, but boy, you don't like to see that many unanswered. That is

**Buzzy:** a tricky thing. Something we'll talk about when we. Get into pop culture, but [00:32:00] like gauging difficulty of material. Yeah, the writers are excellent at this, but sometimes you just like things that seem easy to you are not so easy to the contestants.

**Sarah:** Yes. And had we had three different contestants, it could have played so, so, so different. All right. Well, John returned for game two on Wednesday, going up against a tough competitor in Joseph Carlstein. It was a close game, but Joseph had the lead heading into final. Both he and John were correct. And Joseph became our new champion.

**Buzzy:** Now, I know last week you all talked about nobody wearing a suit and tie all week. Joseph breaks the streak, I believe.

**Sarah:** Joseph. Bringing it back. Buzzy, of course, in suit and tie today. I feel I feel a change is in the air. I like it. Moving on to Thursday, this was a great game by all three players, but Greg Jolin, with the help of 28 correct responses, took the lead heading into final and went on to win the game.

This was our Halloween episode. It also was Greg's 40th birthday.

**Buzzy:** [00:33:00] Aw, happy birthday, Greg. What a great present.

**Sarah:** Right? What a great present. Let's hear how Greg was feeling after the win.

Well, that was fun to watch. You were all playing great. You were A real turning point moment for you there when you got that Nebraska.

Daily double Joseph. It was looking a little bit bleak. Alicia, you were right there in the mix too. Yeah, uh, I'm, I'm pretty happy with, uh, with how I managed to come back and double Jeopardy. I was kind of worried at the end of a regular Jeopardy, but, uh, getting that daily double, I think really helped boost my confidence.

Well, you did very well today. If Greg had not Thought of the armadillo, and there's no armadillos in New Hampshire, Greg, right? It's that moment too. I have a terrible poker face, and when I heard she was right with armadillo, and I knew I wanted to just have to stand stony. And also, sorry, tangent. This happens to be going to air on my 40th birthday, so that's a pretty good birthday present.

Hey, congratulations! Happy birthday! I mean this in the nicest possible way, Greg, but you kind of have Guy Bourne on Halloween vibes. Right? Like, he kind of has the look. I [00:34:00] was telling people in the back room that with my hair back like this and this grey suit I look like, uh, The henchman in the in an action movie, not like a heavy, but like the other guy, you are now a jeopardy champion with a pretty nice payday today.

24, 001. Congratulations. Happy Halloween. We'll see you tomorrow.

**Sarah:** Happy

birthday.

**Sarah:** Well, Greg closed out the week still on his 40th birthday, because of course we play five games in a day with another impressive win. 23 correct responses, two daily doubles. He was the only player correct in final. And he heads into the weekend as a jeopardy champion.

**Buzzy:** I got to say, this is one of those weeks where sometimes it feels like, Oh, we're jumping around champions so much, but it's kind of fun that, you know, like we, we have had these long stretches sometimes of a, of a champion four or five, whatever days, it's kind of fun to have like a classic jeopardy one or two day champs in one week.

Yes.

**Sarah:** And all of them have been champions where I think you. Assume they're going to go on runs and then it just proves how [00:35:00] challenging and how great the field is. Sam Cameron, of course, heading into second

chance. So he did go to Reddit to share about his experience saying everyone I met that day was just the best.

It was honestly the most positive part of the experience. Just getting to interact with so many brilliant, passionate people. I especially wanted to shout out my green room buddy for most of the day and fellow long hair club member, Greg. He was a real cool dude and the kind of person that I feel I'd be IRL, that's in real life if you don't know, friends with if we lived closer.

I'm excited to watch his winning streak hopefully continue. Thanks for reading. Good luck to anyone who gets the chance to appear in the future. I know it was a dream come true for me. And then someone replied, I know people say this about every game, but I really hope you get selected for Second Chance.

I think you had really good stats, and the game just turned on the wagering clues. Well, guess what? Whoever you are out there that commented that, He is headed to second chance. Ken caught up with the players after the game.  
[00:36:00] Let's take a listen.

Well, there were some crazy swings in that game. I loved the big daily double wager.

Sam? I have not seen Stranger Things, unfortunately. As it turned out, if it makes you feel any better, you know, Greg knowing Mutiny on the Bounty made it a little bit moot ney on the bounty. Uh, rendered it moot ney. How, uh, did you come up with that, Greg? Studied Oscar winners for coming on the show. It wasn't from the history is from Oscar winners.

You just knew 1935 Approximately and it was a historical event. So I knew it was an early one So it kind of fit the time frame you were writing right away and I thought I wonder if this guy went through best picture Yes, I don't know if I was more impressed by anything in that game than to a Tara Like how did you recognize that?

Childhood love, you know, old like science books about reptiles and amphibians. That was, that's going back to like five year old Sam. So you were not looking at moths your whole childhood. I mean, I can do both. There's room in my heart for more than one, you know. What if a tuatara ate a moth? Who are you rooting for there?

You know what, I'm gonna I'm going to root for the Tuatara on this one, you know? [00:37:00] Just because they never come up in the spelling bee game on

the New York Times. Oh yeah, it's not a legal word, right? I feel like I try Tuatara all the time. You guys are with me. Oh yeah. I am one word away from Queen Bee today in my dressing room.

I have a seven letter word left and it's driving me nuts. I got to Genius just before we could turn off our phones. Ah, congratulations. Because you knew you'd have less time today. Yep, yep. Because you're playing a slightly less important contest. Yeah, you know, yeah, no, my streak is much more important.

Well, you are all Jeopardy! winners. Look at that cash in front of you. Congratulations. But in a more accurate way, Greg. Well done. We'll see you back here on Monday. Good job.

**Sarah:** Buzzy, I'm sure you've been enjoying this segment. I do, you know I do. Who doesn't love a double T? But wait, there's more. Sam! Sam! is in fact doing his civic duty this morning.

We should have mentioned that early on in the pod. That's why he's not with us. He's at jury duty as we speak, but he did manage to record one of his best [00:38:00] segments before he went into jury duty. Let's hear from Sam in this week's, but wait, there's more.

**Sam:** Well, I'm sorry, I can't be with you. I'm hermetically sealed in a mayonnaise jar and placed on the porch of Funkin Wagnalls.

And that's a Johnny Carson reference. Okay, so this week's clue came from Thursday's game. In the category Rap Genres, bring it.

Rap Genres 2000. In 2024, this star of the country rap genre appeared on Beyonce's Cowboy Carter and had a number one country hit with a bar song, Topsy. Greg, who is Buzi? It is

**Sam:** ah Buzi.

That's the stage name of Collins Chie. A Virginia man whose Nigerian last name was apparently too hard for his high school football coach to handle. So that guy wrote Buzi on his helmet and the name stuck Buzi went on to have that big number one country hit that can named and I know what you might be thinking.

Did I know Shazi further response? Yes. Unless you want me [00:39:00] to tell you the truth, in which case the answer is no. I had never heard of him. But, first of all, I enjoyed his hit song, and second, he incorporates hip hop, rock, and other influences, and you have to love it when an artist draws inspiration from other genres.

Now, African American contribution to country music goes way back, of course, but even so, it was big news when Beyoncé dropped her Cowboy Carter album in March of 2024. There are lots of big names on that album, which combines country, R& B, opera, blues, and more. One of the songs that Shaboosie sings on was co written by Pharrell and Jay Z, and other performers on that album besides Queen B and Shaboosie include Willie Nelson, Post Malone, and a host of other stars, and listed as producers are names like Miley Cyrus, Paul McCartney, and Pharrell.

So, if anyone out there knows what a producer actually does, drop me a line.

**Sarah:** Well, thanks, Sam. Who knows what we producers do? I do know that I love the song Topsy. I'm always singing it in the car and my younger daughter is always asking why whiskey is so popular [00:40:00] because it's in all of these songs right now and she's like, Mom, what's whiskey and why does everyone sing about it?

I said, I don't know. I don't care for it. I also love Beyonce's album and with all of those incredible names associated with it, you can see why it's so successful. And I also loved this clue. It came from none other than writer Marcus Brown, and he actually told us that the category rap genres came from a recycled clue.

You know, they recycle clues, and he had written a category, New New Orleans Music, back in 2023. He had one leftover clue about Big Freedia and the bounce music genre, and he realized he could fill a whole category of clues about different Rap genres. So it was originally just going to be about southern rap genres, but then he expanded it to include other ones from all over the country.

And while he was writing this clue, he actually thought that it was going to be hard for the contestants. Yeah. But by the time the clue was ready to tape, Shaboosie had a number one hit. [00:41:00] hit song. That's the kind of stuff you like to know.

**Buzzy:** Yes.

**Sarah:** But wait, there's more. Thanks for that, Sam.

**Buzzy:** Thanks, Sam.

**Sarah:** Good luck at jury duty.

We hope you make it back. We're hoping maybe he gets released today. Yeah. And he can fly down here and be with us for the rest of Second Chance. We'll see. It's now time, Buzzy, for this week's host chat. An audience member asked Ken, if SNL brought back Celebrity Jeopardy? Who would you want to play you?

Oh, that's a good question.

I mean, she'd have to come back, but I think Kate McKinnon could do it. I think somebody online said, uh, what's his name? Jack McBrayer. But, uh, also not a cast member. But that doesn't matter anymore, right? It's just whoever now. That's how Saturday Night Live works.

**Sarah:** Buzzy, how about you? Who's playing Buzzy?

Well, you know, having

**Buzzy:** met Colin Jost for pop culture, I think he could do a good me, but I know he's usually just as weekend update. So maybe Kyle Mooney. I don't know if you're a Kyle Mooney fan, but kind of a another scrawny, dark [00:42:00] haired, nerdy guy. He

**Sarah:** can play so many different characters and I think he could play you.

Yeah. Alright, I'm going Chloe Fineman. Oh,

**Buzzy:** that's perfect. Just because I love her

**Sarah:** and I would love to hear what her version of my voice would be. I know.

**Buzzy:** Yeah, there's really no honor greater than being parodied on SNL.

**Sarah:** And Alex felt the same way when Will Ferrell used to parody him. Well, Buzzy, thank you for joining us.

Oh, what a pleasure. Thanks for having me. Believe it or not, we've brought it to the end. We've brought it home. The end of today's show. Too soon. We gotta go get ready for Second Chance. I've got a pre production meeting, but we will see everyone back here inside Jeopardy for more fun next week. See you [00:43:00] [00:44:00] [00:45:00] then.