

Eurovision 2012 - why we did so badly.

Sunday, 27 May 2012

As the person who helmed our last UK win 15 years ago with Katrina, I have certain opinions.

Was Englebert too old? Nope - the Russian grannies (much older) came second.

Is he less popular than assumed? Yes, it's a bad mistake to believe the hype; when I was running it, the BBC begged me to approach Elton and I refused. No benefit for the guy; if he won, he's no better off.

The problem is - you need a hit song. Elton hasn't had a hit for decades. Hump - not for centuries.

And it has to be an INSTANT hit; Hump's song was a very nice ballad that grew on me over the weeks. Viewers don't have weeks; they have seconds.

Is there an anti-UK bias? No. Bollocks. That's just another media created story (like "it's too expensive to host" - it makes the host country a fortune. I offered to fund our host year myself, in return for any profits. The BBC, who understood the reality, quickly refused and Birmingham benefited hugely.

Was he on too early? Yes, televoters tend to forget, but it's a small thing - Russia were on 6th and still came second; Sweden on half way through won with a landslide. Why? It's a smash.

When I took over I had one purpose - find a hit. I did - Love City Groove - but it only came 10th; that was because it had to be performed live and rap tracks didn't sound good live. So I got the rules changed for the next entry - Gina G - which I still feel was our strongest Eurovision entry ever. It only came 8th so I quit. But the BBC persuaded me to give it a last shot and I realised TV being visual needed a great performer. That combination, assisted by the start of phone votes (also my idea) won it for us.

I'm no longer happy with phone votes and would adapt the concept myself. But even so, in a fair contest, a hit will win and Loreen's smash roared through - making me Â£700 in the process.