

NXT – February 23, 2010 – The First Episode

Fell asleep so here's a replacement show
Since it might have been awhile, here are the Pro/Rookie combinations.

Wade Barrett – Chris Jericho
Daniel Bryan – The Miz
Skip Sheffield – William Regal
Darren Young – CM Punk
David Otunga – R-Truth
Heath Slater – Christian
Michael Tarver – Carlito
Justin Gabriel – Matt Hardy

NXT

Date: February 23, 2010

Location: Bradley Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

It's so weird seeing this theme song and these guys that are now champions as brand new stars. Also Sheffield's pro was supposed to be MVP but was changed to Regal at the last second for no apparent reason. How was this only eight months ago?

The rookies are in the back and Miz walks up to them, calling out Daniel Bryan. He talks about how Bryan is a star in the minor leagues and that you need to be prepared for everything. Miz sends him to the ring and says give the people a reason to watch. He's even going to let Bryan come out to his music. Oh and he needs to have a good catchphrase.

Striker is the host.

Bryan apologizes to the fans he has around the world, wishing his pro was Regal, his mentor. He starts talking about how NXT

is the next evolution of wrestling but here's Miz to interrupt him. Bryan tells Miz to watch what he says or he'll submit him right now. He says he was going to get on a reality show and act like an idiot but that's been taken already.

Miz wants a catchphrase for him so Bryan debuts tap or snap which fits perfectly for him at the end of the day. Miz slaps him and leaves, saying Bryan failed.

During the break Striker talks to Bryan who says he slaps harder than Miz.

Carlito/Michael Tarver vs. Heath Slater/Christian

We're told of Bryan vs. Jericho tonight. Oh yeah. It's THAT match. Carlito introduces us to Tarver who we get a profile on, which is the whole 1.9 seconds thing. He likes to punch a lot apparently. Slater's profile plays up the rock star concept. Slater gets a rollup on Carlito seconds in for two. He shows off a bit and plays to the crowd who doesn't seem to care.

No Christian yet as Carlito has Slater in a chinlock. Pro vs. Pro now as we hear about Christian qualifying for Money in the Bank. That's the Mania version and not the pay per view of the same name. Sunset flip gets two for Christian and here comes Tarver. Slater takes out Carlito and the Killswitch ends Tarver to give Christian the first win in the history of NXT.

Rating: C. Totally basic tag team match here with faces vs. heels. It wasn't anything great but considering what they had to work with here this was rather good. I liked Slater back in the day and this was no exception. He wasn't anything great but he always had energy out there and this worked fine. Decent tag match overall.

Punk and Truth are giving their rookies pep talks.

Darren Young vs. David Otunga

Young and Punk were the comedy team of this season and it worked ok at best I thought. Punk, still with hair, says he doesn't know why he's here and doesn't know who Young is. No profile on Young but Otunga talks about being better than everyone else as he's from Hollywood. He mentions being engaged to Jennifer Hudson.

He definitely had the talking ability and the charisma but just never could do it in the ring. The tear away pants are still a cool thing for Otunga. This is perhaps the fastest match in the history of the show as Otunga hits his weird spinebuster like slam to end it in less than forty seconds.

Raw recap which is of Batista beating the tar out of Cena in their match where if Cena won he got a world title shot at Mania. Wow that graphic of those two at Mania still looks awesome.

Jericho and Barrett come out with Barrett having the black coat with the flower in it. Jericho grabs the mic and says he wants Barrett to give him the introduction he deserves. Barrett sounds like a British Rocky to a degree. He sucks up to Jericho for a bit but Jericho actually cuts him off and introduces him instead.

Daniel Bryan vs. Chris Jericho

Jericho is World Heavyweight Champion here. In a weird error, Bryan's graphic lists him as being from Vegas but the announcer says he's from Washington. Odd indeed. Bryan can't get a handshake to start. Jericho slaps him and it's on. They trade dropkicks and we go back and forth a bit. Keep in mind the idea here is that this is Bryan's debut so you have to factor out that he's US Champion as this is being written.

Barrett cuts a quick promo here where he sucks up to Jericho a bit more but doesn't say what he's actually learning. Bryan throws some kicks and goes for the knee. Daniel controls here as Cole begins his indy bashing stuff and his war against the

internet. Bryan speeds it up and knocks Jericho to the floor.

And there's the highlight reel moment of the first season as Bryan DIVES through the ropes but Jericho catches him in a belly to belly to slam his back into the edge of the announce table which must hurt beyond belief. Back in the ring Bryan gets a leg lock and Jericho is in trouble. Codebreaker out of nowhere though and Bryan is down. Walls end it soon after.

Rating: B. All things considered, this was mind blowing. Factoring in that this was his mainstream debut, this can only be classified as a success. Solid match here either way and that counter spot was great. Seeing a guy like Bryan giving Jericho a legit scare here with a nice leg lock thrown in was something no one expected. This was great all things considered.

Post match Miz runs down and beats up Bryan.

Striker is with the other rookies and nothing of note happens.

A recap of the show takes us out.

Overall Rating: B. This was more or less the Daniel Bryan show but it worked very well. The concept became clear and you got three different types of matches with a squash, a decent tag match and a very solid main event. This worked very well and set the stage for the rest of the show. You really couldn't tell much about the competition in the early weeks but it would change quickly once some people left. Solid premiere though and it worked great.