

NXT – January 16, 2014: The Future Is Bright

NXT

Date: January 15, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Tom Phillips, Tensai

It's the first show of the new taping cycle so we're in for some fresh stories. If nothing else we'll get to find out who is Bo's next challenger, possibly at the live NXT special on the WWE Network. The only match for this week is Kofi challenging Alexander Rusev to a rematch after losing two weeks ago. Let's get to it.

Here's HHH to open things up. As most of us know, there's a new concept called the WWE Network launching on February 24. Also, on February 27, NXT is going to go live for the first time ever. I believe it's just a one time deal though.

Welcome Home.

Adrian Neville vs. Tyler Breeze

Fallout from the lumberjack match a month ago when Breeze cost Neville the title. Tyler grabs a headlock to start but Neville runs him over with a shoulder block to send Tyler to the floor. Neville teases a dive but backflips into the middle of the ring and waits on Breeze. Back in and Neville sends him face first into the buckle, drawing a NOT IN THE FACE chant. Instead Adrian kicks him in the chest, followed up by some loud chops. Neville heads to the apron but gets caught by a springboard dropkick as we take a break.

Back with Tyler holding Neville in a chinlock as Adrian fights up. Tyler

takes him down again but stops for a quick photo op. Neville uses the breather to snap off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker to get himself a breather. A spinning kick to the ribs sets up a running dropkick to the head for two as Breeze is in trouble. Neville loads up a springboard dropkick but Breeze dropkicks him out of the air for two of his own. Good stuff so far.

Prince Pretty is all ticked off now and pounds away on Adrian's face but misses the Beauty Shot. A high kick looks to set up a middle rope Phoenix Splash but Breeze rolls away at the last second. The Beauty Shot is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two as the fans aren't as into this as they should be. Breeze breaks up the Red Arrow by grabbing Adrian's foot and crotching him down, but Neville blocks a hurricanrana attempt, setting up the Red Arrow for the win at 9:20 shown of 12:50.

Rating: B-. I was digging this match as Breeze gets to show that he can go in the ring instead of just on the mic. Neville is a far more complete wrestler than his finisher would suggest. He'll be on the main roster someday in a Sin Cara level role and Breeze could be great as a comedy heel. Good signs for the future here.

CJ Parker vs. Jason Jordan

Jordan, usually a jobber, gets a full entrance. A quick German suplex gets two on Parker and Jordan keeps the grip to hold Parker on the mat. Parker sends him throat first into the ropes and hits the Third Eye (palm strike) for the pin at 1:07. It's a very telling sign when you can get the NXT fans to not care about you at all.

Bo Dallas vs. Mojo Rawley

Non-title. The much bigger Rawley tosses Dallas back into the corner and tells Dallas that he isn't hyped. It works so well that he does it again but Bo offers a nice smile. A shoulder block sends Bo to the floor and the smile is gone. Back in and Bo immediately bails to the floor. Dallas

has no idea what to do so he just pounds away on Mojo in the corner. Rawley runs him over again with a shoulder and splashes Dallas in the corner over and over. Dallas rolls to the floor again but Mojo pulls him back inside, only to miss a splash and let Bo roll him up with a handful of trunks for the pin at 3:49.

Rating: C-. Rawley looked like a train here until the very end. I'd have had Bo take the countout as Rawley could easily be a top challenger for the title in the near future. They're also used him far better here instead of having him get destroyed for the entire match before pulling off a fluke win. Also is you have to lose, at least lose to the champion.

Kofi Kingston vs. Alexander Rusev

Feeling out process to start and Kofi can't take him over with a headlock. Some kicks to the ribs have a better effect but Rusev just blasts him in the head to take over. Kofi scores with an elbow to the jaw but gets shoved out of the corner to give Rusev control again. Alexander sends him into the corner and works on the ribs before putting on a nerve hold.

Back up and more shots to the ribs have Kofi in trouble but he sidesteps a charging Bulgarian and sends him to the floor. Kofi misses a baseball slide but scores with a clothesline off the steps as we take a break. We come back with Kofi having a chinlock broken up but managing to avoid a charge. Kofi pounds away in the corner but Rusev counters into a powerbomb for two. The fans chant FEED ME MORE at Rusev before changing over to GOLDBERG.

Rusev drops some elbows and headbutts before going back to the nerve hold. Now the fans start doing the wave as Kofi fights back with chops and a dropkick, only to have his cross body caught in midair. Rusev, still holding Kofi, drives knees into the ribs before trying a Samoan drop but Kofi rolls him up for two. Kingston avoids a charge in the corner and kicks Rusev in the face, but his top rope cross body is caught

again, setting up the Samoan drop for two.

Kofi dodges another charge, though this time Rusev puts on the brakes because he actually learns during his matches. The SOS gets two and some hard kicks to the face have Rusev in more trouble. Rusev comes back with a clothesline but Kofi hits his jumping clothesline to take him down again. The Boom Drop connects and after a distraction from Lana, Trouble in Paradise is enough to pin Rusev at 12:09 shown of 15:39.

Rating: C+. While it's not as boring as the fans made it out to be, this was still an uninteresting match for the most part. Rusev losing is questionable as well as the matches here don't mean anything to the main roster so putting Alexander over wouldn't hurt anyone at all. Not bad but nothing inspiring at all.

Overall Rating: B-. Two good matches, a major announcement and nothing bad make for a good episode. The future is incredibly bright for WWE as the class of talent they have down in NXT is very strong. Rusev, Rawley and Neville will all be on the main roster at some point this year and they'll all do well, assuming the creative team doesn't screw them up.

Results

Adrian Neville b. Tyler Breeze – Red Arrow

CJ Parker b. Jason Jordan – Third Eye

Bo Dallas b. Mojo Rawley – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Kofi Kingston b. Alexander Rusev – Trouble in Paradise

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