

NXT – February 24, 2016: Maybe Next Time

NXT

Date: February 24, 2016

Location: CFE Arena, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

As has been the case recently, this is going to be about fallout from last week and the main event in particular. Last week, Samoa Joe and Sami Zayn went to a double pin in a match for the #1 contendership, meaning we don't have a challenger for Finn Balor. Odds are that won't be established tonight either but odds are we'll get a fun show out of it anyway. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

American Alpha vs. Blake and Murphy

Gable and Murphy get things going with Chad easily taking him down into a leg lock. The good guys start in on the arm as Corey talks about Chad being able to dribble a bowling ball. Blake comes in and is quickly ridden down to the mat. Some rapid fire dropkicks (and a Ricky Morton reference) has the bad guys in trouble as Chad waits in the middle. A double dropkick puts Blake on the floor and we take a break.

Back with Jordan staying on the arm and Gable doing the same. You don't often see the good guys in control this long. Blake's slam doesn't get him away from the armbar but the heels FINALLY get him into the corner to take over. We hit a chinlock on Gable for a bit before it's back to Blake for forearms to the head.

A double arm crank keeps things slow and the heels keep pulling Gable away from the hot tag. You can only do that so many times before it stops working though and the hot tag brings in Jordan for the series of suplexes. Murphy's dropkick is swatted away and the Grand Amplitude puts Blake away at 13:37. That's a long match for a non-main event in NXT.

Rating: C+. Nice match here even though it was a glorified squash until the ending. American Alpha is clearly the real deal and ready to give the titles some much needed energy. Blake and Murphy on the other hand have smacked their heads against the glass ceiling and I'm really not sure where they're supposed to go from here.

We look back at the ending to last week's show.

Regal says we'll be seeing Sami vs. Joe in a 2/3 falls match in two weeks. As for next week though, there's a new talent debuting.

Elias Samson song.

Christopher Girard vs. Apollo Crews

Girard is indy star Biff Busick in his NXT debut. Crews punches him into the corner to start and scores with a quick dropkick. Busick comes back with a running European uppercut (From an indy wrestler? You don't say.) and a chinlock, which he flips backwards to keep Crews in trouble. Another elbow to the face sets up another chinlock as this is starting to drag. Crews gets up with a spear and a running corner splash, followed by the toss into the helicopter bomb for the pin at 5:12.

Rating: D+. You shouldn't need two extended chinlocks in a five minute match. Girard has a really good look and a lot of intensity but the offense isn't exactly working so far. He seems similar to Tommaso Ciampa, which makes you wonder why they bothered signing two people who seem so much alike. Then again, you certainly can't tell how a career is going to go based off one match and it wasn't a disaster.

We look back at Carmella vs. Bayley from two weeks ago with Eva Marie and Nia Jax attacking until Asuka made the save.

Carmella and Bayley are ready for Eva and Nia tonight. They're friends now but Carmella wants another shot at the title. Bayley isn't worried about Asuka, even though she's going to be a threat down the line.

Tommaso Ciampa vs. Bull Dempsey

Bull takes 40 seconds to get his shirt off and we get some jumping jacks

before any contact. Ciampa wants a test of strength but is quickly run over, setting up a rolling backplash from Bull. Back up and Ciampa easily drops him with some hard shots and he rips at Bull's face. Ciampa starts cranking on the arm but misses a charge in the corner, allowing Bull to fire off the left hands. Not that it matters as a Fujiwara Armbar with Ciampa flipping over onto Bull's back is good for the submission at 4:18.

Rating: D+. I'm pretty sure this is it for Dempsey in NXT and it's not like he's going to be that missed. He's just a comedy jobber and you can put almost anyone into that spot. Ciampa was fine and it's nice to see him win a match instead of put up a good fight and then lose in the end.

Joe says the announcement means Sami has to suffer twice and that's just fine with him.

Sami sounds a bit nervous about the two out of three falls match but this is why he came back from the shoulder injury. He's ready though because his goal is to be the first ever two time NXT Champion.

Carmella/Bayley vs. Nia Jax/Eva Marie

Carmella starts with some Thesz Presses and left hands to Eva, followed by a double suplex to give Bayley a quick two. That means it's time for Nia to throw Bayley around and easily block a rollup attempt. Eva comes back in and is booed out of the arena, only to have Bayley take her down like the easy target that she is.

We take a break and come back with Carmella holding Eva in a headlock on the mat. Eva gets up and makes the tag off to Nia, who plants Carmella with a shoulder breaker. It's back to Eva for her grunting based offense, including a choke in the corner. Something like a cobra clutch from Nia keeps the villains in control and she swings Carmella around with ease.

Nia misses a charge and falls out to the floor though, allowing the hot tag to Bayley. The running elbows in the corner have Eva in trouble (like, more trouble than her trying to work a match) but Nia breaks up the cover off the Bayley to Belly. Carmella comes back in for her leg crossface with Nia making another save. Jax drops three straight legs on

Carmella, allowing Eva to get the pin at 11:34.

Rating: C-. Nothing to see here but I hope that doesn't mean we'll be seeing more of Nia and Eva as a one and a fourth headed monster. Carmella clearly wasn't going anywhere near the title for a long time so having her take the fall here makes the most sense. Eva is still doing well in this heel role but the heat isn't what it was before.

Regal and Balor are in the back with the boss talking about how Balor is approaching the longest reign in NXT Title history. Therefore, next week he'll be facing Neville. No word on if that's a title match or not.

Overall Rating: C. Not their strongest episode but it set up stuff for the next few weeks as well as helped to confirm a lot of what we're likely to see down in Dallas. This was your usual breezy episode of NXT and it's nice to not come into a show dreading how bad it might be on any given week.

Results

American Alpha b. Blake and Murphy – Grand Amplitude to Blake

Apollo Crews b. Christopher Girard – Helicopter Bomb

Tommaso Ciampa b. Bull Dempsey – Fujiwara Armbar

Eva Marie/Nia Jax b. Bayley/Carmella – Eva pinned Carmella after three legdrops from Jax

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