

NXT – May 25, 2016: A Surprise You Would Expect

NXT

Date: May 25, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're two weeks out from Takeover and after last week, most of the card is set. The big story is the announcement of the first ever steel cage match around these parts as NXT Champion Samoa Joe is defending against former champion Finn Balor. Other than that it looks like we'll be getting Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Austin Aries as well. Let's get to it.

William Regal tells us that Bayley is injured and unable to face Asuka for the Women's Title. Therefore tonight there will be a triple threat for the #1 contendership between Nia Jax, Alexa Bliss and Carmella.

Opening sequence.

Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa vs. TM61

TM61 is the recently signed The Mighty Don't Kneel, comprised of Shane Thorn and Nick Miller. In a quick pre-match inset promo, TM61 says they're here for the titles because they're mighty and don't kneel. Miller and Ciampa hit the mat to start before it's off to Thorn, who gyrates and sticks his chest out as he walks around. Gargano gets pulled down in the corner for a double wishbone as things settle down a bit. Johnny crawls through Nick's legs for the hot tag, only to have Ciampa eat a double elbow to the jaw. TM61 actually stands tall as we go to a break.

Back with Miller holding Ciampa in a headlock until an elbow to the jaw allows Gargano to get the tag and spear Miller through the ropes. Thorn comes in but gets caught in something like an Anaconda Vice with Gargano using his legs as a crucifix. Ciampa is back in and elbows Thorn again, only to eat a dropkick for the tag off to Miller. Nick comes in and

starts cleaning house, capped off by a delayed backdrop into a neckbreaker from Thorn. Gargano dives onto Miller, leaving Thorn to take the knee to the head/superkick combo for the pin at 13:13.

Rating: B. This was a different kind of tag match with all four working hard and far less of a formula as all four are faces for a change. TM61 looked very polished here and should be ready for a big push once they get in a few wins over teams like the Hype Bros and the Revival. Really solid, long match here and that's how you debut a team like this.

Gargano and Ciampa applaud TM61.

Video on Samoa Joe winning the title and his new found aggression.

Bayley is upset that she can't compete when Nia Jax comes in to say that she's broken Bayley, who will never be the same again. Carmella runs in to defend her friend but Nia laughs it off. Alexa Bliss comes in and gets the same treatment.

Andrade "Cien" Almas takes off his mask while watching old lucha libre.

Here's Austin Aries with something to say. Aries is tired of hearing people talk about how someone is the best. You're only the best until someone better comes along, so he's always called himself great. But how do you define greatness? Maybe by proving your talent over ten years? Or by having great matches everywhere you go? Or by being a champion in every promotion you've ever been? See, he's done all those things but he's tired of being overlooked. The fans chant for Nakamura but Aries wants a shot at the winner of the cage match. There go the lights and here comes Nakamura.

Shinsuke starts in Japanese then corrects himself because Aries doesn't understand. Nakamura: "You don't speak Japanese?" Aries: "I don't understand you." Nakamura: "Yeah me either." Shinsuke says the title isn't coming to greatness because it's coming to the King of Strong Style. Cue Regal, which draws a TAKEOVER chant. The match is made though nothing is mentioned about being #1 contender.

American Alpha is ready for the Revival because there's more to wrestling

than punching people in the face. It doesn't matter if it's in Dallas or at Full Sail, they'll be ready, willing and Gable.

No Way Jose vs. Jonathan Ortangun

Jose dances out of a waistlock to start and it's already time for an airplane spin, which goes both ways for a little extra fun. A clothesline in the corner just annoys Jose and things get serious, including an atomic drop and the baseball punch. The cobra clutch slam gives Jose the pin at 3:21.

Rating: D+. Jose is fun but he's basically a new version of Adam Rose. If they keep him in that style of a character everything will be fine, but given WWE's track record with characters like him, I really wouldn't give him a great chance long term. The dancing is fun though and he serves his purpose just fine.

Jose dances with the announcers post match.

Video on Finn Balor, who wants the title back.

Asuka doesn't care who she faces at Takeover because she will defeat them.

Carmella vs. Nia Jax vs. Alexa Bliss

For the #1 contendership at Takeover. Bayley hugs Carmella before her entrance. Nia has a new entrance where the camera cuts to an extreme closeup of her eyes before she starts walking. Bliss bails to the floor to start so Carmella, the fan favorite, tries and fails at a headlock. Alexa's attempt at coming in off the top goes horribly as Nia is waiting on her and it's time for a break.

Back with Carmella headscissoring Nia into the post, which brings Alexa back in to slam Carmella's head off the mat for two. Bliss yells a lot and knocks Nia outside, followed by a Vader Bomb for two. The backflip into the knees to the chest get two on Carmella and Bliss drives two knees into Nia for good measure. The Sparkle Splash gets two on Jax with Bliss making the save. Nia has had enough of this being in trouble and gets up to shove both of them down like they're nothing.

The blondes send a charging Nia out to the floor but Carmella's dive is easily caught by the monster. Bliss makes the save though and it's Carmella diving onto Nia again with a lot more success this time. Back in and Carmella snapmares Bliss into the corner for the Bronco Buster. The leg crossface brings Nia back in for the save, only to have Carmella get two off a middle rope Thesz press. Graves actually says he's never seen that before. Nia breaks up the Bronco Buster though and drops the leg on Carmella for the pin at 12:30.

Rating: B. This was MUCH better than I was expecting as you can really see the long strides that Carmella has made in her abilities. She's certainly the most complete performer of these three as you have Bliss and Jax as more role players (Bliss as the calculating one who steals shots where she can and Jax as the monster), which are fine for both of them. This was a lot of fun though and a far better match than I would have thought.

Post match Asuka comes out to stare Nia down. The champ comes down to the ring and Nia threatens to drop her where she stands to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. In less than an hour, NXT has hyped up the two matches already set for Takeover and added two more, including a title match. This upcoming show doesn't have the best buzz around it, but if there's one thing NXT is great at it's making you believe that something is a lot better than it probably should be. This show did a great job of building that show and making me want to see it, which is exactly what they were shooting for here.

Results

Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa b. TM61 – Running knee/superkick to Thorn

No Way Jose b. Jonathan Ortagun – Cobra clutch slam

Nia Jax b. Carmella and Alexa Bliss – Legdrop to Carmella

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on NXT: The Full Sail Years Volume II at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01FWZZ2UA>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>