

NXT – November 2, 2016: The Hot Tag To Toronto

NXT

Date: November 2, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Tom Phillips

We're down to three shows before heading north to Toronto and that means it's time to start hammering out the rest of the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic. The quarterfinals begin tonight and we'll need to get down to the finals in the next three weeks. Some of the matches have been taped at house shows so it might be time to take a field trip. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

We're going straight to San Jose, California for the first quarterfinal match.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Quarterfinals: Roderick Strong/Austin Aries vs. TM61

So here's the thing: Austin Aries has a fractured orbital bone and is unable to compete so Austin suggests we have a singles match to determine who advances (assuming that's not made really obvious by the stipulations). Regal comes out to say that's cool with him and TM61 agrees.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Quarterfinals: Roderick Strong vs. Shane Thorn

At least I don't have to remember which is which. Shane does a very complicated spin out of a wristlock before kicking Strong in the face. A standing moonsault gets two but Strong's first backbreaker puts Thorn down on the top turnbuckle as we take a break. Back with Thorn hitting a good looking dropkick to put both guys down. We hit an Australian uppercut train until another backbreaker gives Strong two. He really can

hit those things from everywhere and he makes them look different enough to keep it fresh.

Strong tries a superplex but gets knocked down for Alberto Del Rio's top rope double stomp (Fans: "SI SI SI!"). A Falcon Arrow gets two on Strong, followed by a sitout powerbomb to bring Aries up to the apron. Strong kicks Miller down but walks into a small package to send TM61 to the final four at 10:45.

Rating: B-. This was just about all it needed to be with Thorn sending the team on, as you kind of had to know they would given Aries' injury. Strong continues to look good and this is more of a storyline loss than anything else. TM61 making a strong run in this tournament would do a lot for them as they haven't really set themselves apart yet so this could be their big moment.

Samoa Joe and Shinsuke Nakamura will sign the contract next week.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Quarterfinals: DIY vs. Revival

Non-title. Actually hang on a second as Scott Dawson is on crutches. Dawson has hurt everything in his knee and it would cripple a normal man (Dawson: "Like you two.") but a little rest will make a man like him just fine. Therefore, the Revival is sitting this one out and DIY can have a pass to the next round. I like this much better than A, wasting another edition of a great series and B, having either team lose a match. No match.

Gargano and Ciampa are ready for whoever they face next.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Quarterfinals: Rich Swann/No Way Jose vs. Authors of Pain

Back to San Jose. Akum and Jose start things off with No Way being driven straight into the corner. Some dancing sends the bull charging through the ropes and a big right hand actually staggers him a bit. Swann comes in for an assisted hurricanrana which really just annoys Akum. Instead it's off to Razar but Swann keeps the speed up with a dropkick to stagger him. For some reason Rich decides to dive onto both Authors at the same

time but it takes Jose diving onto all three to put them down.

Back in and the beating begins with Akum throwing Rich into the corner for a running splash from Razar. Paul Ellering even gets in a little choking of his own on the bottom rope like the good old school manager he is. A spinning kick to Razar's face gives Rich a breather and an enziguri to Akum allows the hot tag to Jose (BIG pop for that). A TKO drops Akum for two but Razar sends Swann into the steps. The lack of a partner means Jose gets caught in the Last Chapter for the pin at 8:06.

Rating: C. The more I see of the Authors, the more I like them. They don't need to be anything more than a pair of big guys who can beat the heck out of people. More importantly though, they get in just enough trouble to make you believe they could be in danger before taking someone's head off. That leaves the opening of the right team being able to outlast them and then beat them, which makes them more interesting.

Video on Mickie James.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Quarterfinals: Sanity vs. TJ Perkins vs. Kota Ibushi

Wolfe and Ibushi start things off with a headlock slowing Kota down so much that it's off to TJ for the always broken up first kneebar. Fulton comes in and gets kneebarred as well with Wolfe's save not working. Back from a break with the cruiserweights starting up their dives until TJ gets pulled out of the air. A slam sends him onto Wolfe's knees and it's off to the chinlock.

That's switched up to a bearhug to keep Perkins in trouble for a big longer. A shot to the face allows the tag to Kota and it's time for the kicks. The Gold Star Bomb gets two on Wolfe but Eric Young and Nikki Cross get the referee's attention. A suplex/powerslam combo puts Kota away at 12:15.

Rating: C-. This didn't do much for me but I'm starting to dig Sanity a lot more than I ever expected to. Kota wasn't likely going to get very far in this thing due to his lack of a contract but at least the Full Sail fans got a nice treat by seeing him live. I like the idea of regular

teams going forward though and that's what we have for the semifinals.

The final four:

Sanity

TM61

DIY

Authors of Pain

Overall Rating: C+. The wrestling was fine here and they moved through an entire round of the tournament in one night with some smart booking decisions. The rest of Toronto's card is mostly set so it's ok to dedicate a full show to one concept like this. I'm looking forward to the final four and that's a big step forward for a tournament that hadn't taken much shape yet.

Results

Shane Thorn b. Roderick Strong – Small package

Authors of Pain b. Rich Swann/No Way Jose – Last Chapter to Jose

Sanity b. Kota Ibushi/TJ Perkins – Suplex/powerslam combination to Ibushi

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