

NXT – March 22, 2017: They Needed This

NXT

Date: March 22, 2017

Location: University Area CDC Gymnasium, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness, Tom Phillips

The main roster isn't the only place where we're getting ready for a major show. There are only two episodes of NXT left before Takeover: Orlando and that means we need to hammer out the rest of the card. While the three title matches are set, you need a lot more than that to make a full show. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Tye Dillinger/No Way Jose/Roderick Strong vs. Sanity.

Opening sequence.

Oney Lorcan vs. Andrade Cien Almas

This is over Lorcan standing up to Almas for bullying Hoho Lun last week. Lorcan shoves him down to start and Almas takes an early break on the floor. Back in and Almas loses a strike off, sending him right back outside. A chase goes badly for Almas too as he can't get anything going so far.

Finally he's able to send Lorcan head first into the corner before a running slap to the face makes Oney even madder. Lorcan pops back up and knocks him to the floor, only to dive off the steps and into a slam. We come back from a break with Lorcan going hard into the buckle so Andrade can do that cocky grin of his. We hit the chinlock to trigger Lorcan's comeback, which includes a rather hard clothesline. A running Blockbuster is good for two but the half and half suplex is easily blocked.

One heck of a running European uppercut sends Almas outside and a big flip dive takes him down again. Four straight running charges in the corner set up the half and half for a VERY close two, which is

pretty much going to do it for Oney's chances. Almas avoids a dive off the top and cartwheels into a kick to the back of the head, followed by a clothesline to turn Oney inside out for two. The announcers are selling the heck out of these shots and the kickouts. The running double knees in the corner knock Lorcan silly though and the hammerlock DDT puts him away at 13:52.

Rating: B+. I was late to the party on Almas but he's REALLY grown on me in recent weeks and I'm starting to see the star power that everyone said he had. Maybe it's the change in look or the hard heel turn but I'm really digging him of late and this match made him look like a star instead of a goon with a smile. Check this one out and keep Lorcan in mind as well since he more than carried his part of the match.

DIY has gone around the world and they're ready to show that all they need is a chance. They got one here in NXT and didn't get along with the Revival from the day they got here. That led them to Takeover: Toronto and the greatest night of their lives but here comes the Authors of Pain to cue their dreams off again. DIY is a state of mind though and it's all about everyone who has been there for them over the years. They'll have their moment. This was a really solid promo from people you don't expect to hear them from.

Alistir Black video.

We look back at Ember Moon Eclipsing Billie Kay onto the injured list (if that was a work, Kay is a better actress than I thought).

Asuka vs. Priscilla Zumiga

Non-title. There's a good chance I heard the jobber's name but I'm pretty sure she's better known as Angel Rose. The bell rings and Asuka asks for a mic. She says this is for Ember Moon and takes Priscilla's head off with a kick. Zumiga makes the mistake of hitting Asuka and gets kicked in the head again. That's only good for two though as Asuka pulls up before the three. More hard strikes (Watson: "She might be trying to send a message to Moon!" Phillips: "You think?") set up the Asuka Lock for the submission at 2:56.

Post match Asuka screams in Japanese before saying “no Eclipse”. They’re doing a great job of selling the idea that Ember has one big shot but otherwise she probably can’t hang with Asuka. That makes sense and is a great way to get the title off Asuka if she’s moving up.

The Revival says their name isn’t just a slogan. They’ve studied the best and of course they’re better than the best, including Arn and Tully, the Midnight Express and the Hart Foundation. They might not do a bunch of flips but they’re going to wind up on top of all their opponents. In Orlando, it’s their fate to become the greatest team of all time and that’s what they’re going to do.

Next week it’s Akum vs. Wilder vs. Gargano to preview the triple threat title match.

Long video on Bobby Roode vs. Shinsuke Nakamura. The idea is that it started last year when Nakamura made his debut and Roode showed up in the crowd, which was supposed to take the focus away from the in-ring action (not really but it’s fine for a plot point). Then Roode built himself up and surprised the champ by going after his knee. Nakamura went surfing and is ready for his rematch because he knows how to handle Roode.

No Way Jose, Tye Dillinger and Roderick Strong are ready for Sanity because they have a fair numbers game for once.

Heavy Machinery is coming next week.

Last week, Kassius Ohno said he didn’t expect to start off his second NXT run with a loss. Cue Elias Samson to sing about Ohno never being a champion and doesn’t belong here. Ohno doesn’t take kindly to this and Samson leaves.

Almas is ready to face Black in his debut at Takeover.

Sanity vs. No Way Jose/Tye Dillinger/Roderick Strong

Sanity is pulled outside to start and the brawl is on until Dillinger works on Wolfe’s knee with a series of stomps. Wolfe and Dain are sent outside for a big dive from Strong and we take a break. Back with Jose catching Wolfe in a side slam and stopping

Young with a raised elbow in the corner. Dain finally takes over on Jose and the double teaming begins, only to have Jose roll over and make the hot tag to Strong. They're certainly moving here.

Everything breaks down though and the match is thrown out at 11:03.

Rating: C. Nice brawl here but you had to expect this one to go on to Takeover. This story has been well done since the beginning and the thrown together trio more than held their own against Sanity. I'm actually not sure who wins in the blowoff match and that's a very good thing to have coming up.

The brawl keeps going after the bell with Dillinger stomping on Young until Nikki Cross jumps on his back. Cue the debuting Heidi Lovelace (not named on screen but the fans call her Ruby, as in her NXT name Ruby Riot) to take care of Cross, allowing the three guys to take out Dain to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. Now that's more like it! This was exactly the kind of strong push that NXT needed as we head towards Takeover, which was kind of lacking on the way there. All four announced matches got some time tonight (including Black vs. Almas, the latter of whom had a great match to build him up for the loss) and you can pencil in the eight person tag as well. Really solid stuff tonight and I want to see Takeover.

Results

Andrade Cien Almas b. Oney Lorcan – Hammerlock DDT

Asuka b. Priscilla Zumiga – Asuka Lock

Sanity vs. Tye Dillinger/Roderick Strong/No Way Jose went to a double DQ when all six brawled

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