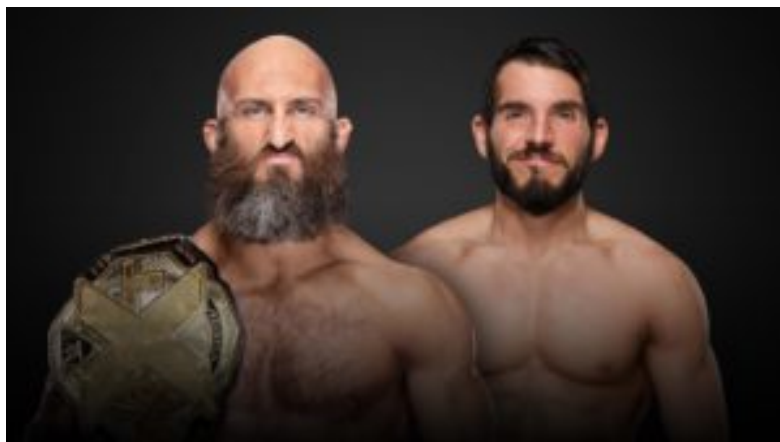


NXT Takeover: Brooklyn IV Preview



IMG Credit: WWE

You can tell it's serious when you get to part four. This show has become NXT's flagship event of the year, even beating the annual Wrestlemania weekend show. They've had to change the main event around due to an injury, but since NXT is the charmed/prepared promotion, they've managed to switch the match up into something that may work even better. Imagine that: a promotion actually having a backup plan and making it a good one. Let's get to it.

Women's Title: Shayna Baszler(c) vs. Kairi Sane

The more I think about this one, the less sure I am about anything. In theory, Baszler is holding onto the title for the sake of eventually dropping it to a fired up Dakota Kai. However, Kai hasn't exactly done much as of late and that part of the story seems to be over. Maybe they're going with the long game, but every week that goes by makes it seem less likely. So where do we go from here instead?

Well I think it's going on to find someone else to take the title from Baszler, because I don't see Sane doing it. Sane has defeated her before in a good match last year, but I don't

think she wins the rubber match. Baszler is awesome at the moment and whoever takes the title from her is going to get a heck of a rub. The thing is Sane is already over and doesn't need the title, though she does need something. I just don't think it happens here as Baszler retains the title.

Velveteen Dream vs. EC3

I know I've said this a lot, but Dream needs to win this match. The problem is, you can only say that so many times before it stops mattering. At least that's the case most of the time, but Dream has a special kind of charisma where his wins and losses almost don't matter. He's at the point where he's the gatekeeper to the higher levels of NXT and while that's a good spot to be in for the sake of security, you can only be there for so long without winning something of note.

That being said, I'll take him to win here in the upset. EC3 is still pretty new around NXT and that would make him the likely candidate to pick up the win, but I think Dream finally gets the big win (beating Kassius Ohno seven months ago doesn't count). You can easily make this a cheating win for Dream, who needs to do something to cut off all of the face reactions he's receiving. EC3 can bounce back and even win the rematch, but Dream has to get something and soon.

North American Title: Adam Cole(c) vs. Ricochet

It's kind of amazing how similar Ricochet and Dream are, especially when they're so different on the surface. It turns out that they're in a similar situation though as Ricochet needs a win as well, but it's not as bad as Dream's situation. Ricochet is clearly destined to be a big star on the roster (both developmental and main) but in a way it's the Andre the Giant syndrome: if you put the title on him, you have to take it off of him. Having him lose clean would be a bad idea but here, you have the option of the Undisputed Era helping Cole retain.

That's what I think happens here. Ricochet can have his day later on (and you know that's coming, perhaps against Tommaso Ciampa should he retain) but for now, Cole retains and loses to someone else in a few months. Just have the Undisputed Era help him (Bobby Fish doesn't have a match later in the night) and everything falls into place. This is the one that I'm the least sure about, but it's going to be a fun match regardless of the finish.

Tag Team Titles: Undisputed Era(c) vs. Moustache Mountain

Speaking of the Undisputed Era, they're defending in the match that is likely to blow the roof off of the Barclays Center. These two have had two rocking matches already and there's a great chance that they're going to do it again on the biggest stage they've had yet. They've already traded the titles so a title change is certainly a possibility.

That being said, I don't think it's going to be a reality. Moustache Mountain is a great team but they're going to be over no matter what they do. Undisputed Era is a team that is defined by the amount of gold that they have and keeping the North American and Tag Team Titles would be a great way to show that off. Throw in some cheating and everything will be fine, including a prodigy like Tyler Bate. The question here is how great can this match be and the answer, much to my delight, is likely quite.

NXT Title: Tommaso Ciampa(c) vs. Johnny Gargano

Last Man Standing and EGADS there are some possibilities here. This was originally going to be a triple threat match also including Aleister Black, but that left you with the pretty obvious ending of Ciampa retaining by pinning Black. Now though, you have SO MANY CHOICES. Do you have Gargano lose and join up with Ciampa? Do you have Gargano finally win the title to end the feud? Do you go to a double knockout and allow them to do the triple threat later? Does Candice LeRae turn on

Gargano and join Ciampa? Any of these is a very possible and rather interesting option.

I'm going with....Ciampa retaining but you again I'm not even remotely sure. There are too many ways to go to know something like this for sure and that's what makes this so much fun. The one thing I know for sure is that these guys are going to beat the living heck out of each other than that's what they specialize in doing. Throw in the possibility of it tying into whoever attacked Black and this is the most interesting thing on the show by a wide margin.

Overall Thoughts

This is another show where the card looks great and there isn't a single thing on there that makes me think it's going to be bad. NXT knows how to tear the freaking house down and I have no doubt that they're going to do it all over again here. This show should be a complete blast and if the previous Brooklyn events are any indications, we're in for a fun night all around.

Oh and no Matt Riddle. Just a hunch that is likely to be wrong.

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