

Takeover: WarGames II Preview

How has Takeover never been to California before? Somehow this is the twenty second edition of Takeover ever and they've never been to California. Anyway this should be one of the better ones with some very storyline driven matches with some great action involved. Normally I would say you can't tell what's coming on a show...but I think you know what you're going to get with a Takeover. Let's get to it.

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

We'll start with a title match because on a four match card, you have two title matches, a grudge match and the show's namesake match. This is one of the longest running feuds in NXT history and, which I would have said their match at Evolution was the blowoff, we're here with a 2/3 falls match as Sane cashes in her rematch clause. My guess is this is the final, final, FINAL match in the feud, though if it's not, it's not the worst thing in the world as the matches have been pretty good.

I'm going with Sane getting the title back for a few reasons, starting with the idea that Sane has far more heel challengers to come after the title than Baszler. You have Bianca Belair and Lacey Evans, among a few others for some fresh matches. Baszler on the other hand really doesn't have much else to do in NXT and would make a good choice for a promotion. Like, say, as the final member of the Smackdown women's team at Survivor Series.

NXT Title: Tommaso Ciampa(c) vs. Velveteen Dream

What does it say that this is arguably the third biggest match on the show? It's also the second match to come from the Aleister Black attack, which we'll get to soon enough. Dream accused Ciampa of attacking Black and somehow got a title match out of it. The key to this whole thing has been turning

Dream into a star, which has been taking place over the last several months. He's become one of the hottest stars in NXT because the fans want to see him win. Throw in some off the charts charisma and it's no surprise that Dream is as awesome as he's become.

I'll go with Ciampa retaining though, as there's very little reason to believe that Johnny Gargano isn't going to be involved in Ciampa losing the title. Dream is going to come close and probably even hit the Purple Rainmaker, but he's not taking the title. At the end of the day, they've set up the Gargano vs. Ciampa feud for way too long to have Dream get in the middle of it now. Ciampa retains after a heck of a fight.

Aleister Black vs. Johnny Gargano

On any other show, this would be the headliner. Gargano's heel turn has been a work of art as he was revealed as Black's attacker, all in the name of destroying Ciampa once and for all. That promo with him walking along the path where Black was attacked was excellent and came off like one of the best things NXT has done in a long time (and that's covering a lot of ground. Black has reason to want to take Gargano apart and he can start by kicking his head off.

That being said, Gargano should win here with some kind of nefarious means. They can set up a rematch down the line in what should be one of Black's last matches in NXT. He's ready for the main roster and after wrapping things up with Gargano, he should head there. Gargano's heel turn is way too hot to have him lose his first big match so it makes a lot more sense to have him win here, likely after some form of cheating. As long as we get more Gargano promo greatness, everything will be fine.

WarGames: Undisputed Era vs. Ricochet/Pete Dunne/War Raiders

And we wrap it up with this. Last year's match was kind of an awesome mess with the trios version, but now it seems that

we're back to the regular formula. These four have been feuding for months and while the faces have been having issues for a long time, this is the kind of match where you can put those differences aside and have a great come together moment. Or you can fight each other and let the other four man team take you apart in even shorter order.

I'm really not sure on this one as you could go either way but I'll take Ricochet and company. A win over one of them could set up the War Raiders for a Tag Team Title shot down the line or set up a Ricochet vs. Dunne showdown over who got the win. The Undisputed Era won last year and it wouldn't be shocking to see them win again, but I'll take the makeshift team to send the fans home happy (though they would likely be happy either way).

Overall Thoughts

I've said this a few times but it's still true: the amount of mileage NXT has gotten out of Black's real life injury is astounding. Half of this card, including the NXT Title match, which doesn't even have Black involved, has spun off of the Black story. The whole thing fell into their lap but they've managed to turn it into something interesting. This card looks great and is going to fly by while also being a lot of fun. WarGames itself will be enough to carry the show but if we get three great matches to go along with the main event, I guess I can just force myself.

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