

NXT UK – January 2, 2020: They're Doing Something Very Right



IMG Credit: WWE

NXT UK

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Location: Bonus Arena, Hull, England

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Tom Phillips

We're back from a week off and it's time to hit the gas on the build towards Takeover: Blackpool II. Most of the card is either already set or all but set, meaning it's time to firm everything up. That is where NXT shines so hopefully they can do the same thing over in England. Let's get to it.

Sid Scala and Johnny Saint confirm Tyler Bate vs. Jordan Devlin and Trent Seven vs. Eddie Dennis for Takeover. Nothing wrong with keeping these announcements quick.

Opening sequence.

Dave Mastiff vs. Kona Reeves

Before the match, Reeves rants about how unfair it was when the fans threw him off against Trent Seven a few weeks back. The jet lag messed up his nutrition and his sleep so he wasn't ready! Then there's Mastiff, who

used to be undefeated around here. Now he gets to go home and tell his family that he was defeated by the Finest.

They go to the floor almost immediately and Reeves' dive is pulled out of the air. He's fine enough to slip out and send Mastiff's knees into the steps a few times in a row. Reeves ties him in the ring skirt for more shots to the head before taking it back inside. A DDT gets two on Mastiff and a big boot connects for the same. Mastiff is right back with a suplex into the corner and Into The Void is good for the pin at 3:18.

Rating: C-. Mastiff gets another win and I got to see Reeves getting crushed so I'm rather pleased with the whole thing. Mastiff is someone who surprises me quite a bit most of the times he's in the ring and this was no exception. He only hit two moves here but Into The Void is a good finisher and something they have built up as a winning move so they've got a little something there.

Here's Toni Storm for a chat. Kay Lee Ray took her to a very dark place and it made her snap on someone she considers a friend. Therefore, she would like to talk to Piper Niven right now. Cue Piper in person and Storm says she hasn't been cool to Piper lately. Before they get past this though, Toni needs a favor. She's going to need Piper to step aside from the title match so she can deal with Ray on her own. Then after Toni gets the title back, Piper can get the first title shot.

That doesn't seem to be happening as Piper says she's gone through a lot to get here and Toni has had her shot. Toni grabs her but Piper nails a headbutt, only to immediately regret it. Referees break it up so here's Ray to laugh at the brawl, sending Toni after Piper again. It's a good idea to give Toni and Piper a reason to fight because it makes things more of a triple threat, which you don't get very often.

Takeover rundown.

Kassius Ohno vs. Ligero

We get a production gaffe as the recap video says this is fallout from "earlier this year". Ohno grabs the arm to start but Ligero flips out in a hurry. A forearm puts Ohno down and he shouts that HE'S TRYING TO

WRESTLE! Back up and Ligerro starts kicking at the leg, including a dropkick to the thigh. Ohno misses a flip splash attempt and gets anklescissored out to the floor early on.

Ligerro throws him back in but gets caught with a neckbreaker over the ropes to put him right back down. The Kassius Clutch goes on with Ohno demanding that Ligerro not make Ohno hit him. Ligerro slips out and hits a missile dropkick so Ohno goes for the mask, as he did in their previous match. That's broken up and Ligerro gets two off a sunset flip, only to have Ohno pull him down off the ropes. Another Kassius Clutch on the mat makes Ligerro tap at 6:55.

Rating: C. Just a match to get Ohno back on track here as he lost a big one to Tyler Bate and needed a correction. Ligerro is someone the fans are going to get behind every time and it's not like a loss really hurts him. It's good to have people like him around and I'm impressed that Ohno has had some staying power around here. Usually he loses and moves on but this could have some legs.

Post match Ohno says he's back to being the best in the UK because no one in the back knows anything about British wrestling. Tonight he beat Ligerro with wrestling instead of knocking him out because he is the greatest British wrestler alive.

Joseph Connors interrupts an A-Kid interview to say he is worthy of a spot on Takeover.

Dave Mastiff tells Kassius Ohno that if he wants a match with a British heavyweight, Ohno knows where to find him.

Ashton Smith/Oliver Carter vs. Outliers

Moss gets a running start to run Smith over as they're starting fast. Carter is right back up with a kick to the face, only to get caught with a running elbow to the face. Mack comes in for a big toss but a double dropkick puts him out on the floor. Some double forearms do it again and Smith and Carter clear the ring.

Back in and Mack gets more serious with some running elbows to Carter in

the corner. The aggressive Moss forearms Carter down in the corner but Carter fights out of a chinlock. That's enough for the hot tag to Smith so house can be cleaned, including some kicks to the faces. Moss shoulders Smith right back down, only to get small packaged to give Smith the pin at 5:52.

Rating: C. Another standard match here with Smith and Carter finally picking up a win. The Outliers are a team who look rather good but might not have enough to back it up in the ring. The tag division is pretty stacked around here and having two more teams like this is a good thing. That being said, finding roles for all of them to play could be rather tricky.

We get a rather awesome video on the Tag Team Title ladder match with all four teams talking about how important the titles are and how all four teams want to be the best. The clips of classic ladder matches make it even better.

Ilja Dragunov vs. Alexander Wolfe

No DQ with Gallus and Imperium barred from ringside. Dragunov comes to the ring but sneaks through the dark arena to attack Wolfe during his entrance in a smart move. The fight heads to ringside with Dragunov getting the better of it, only to have Wolfe post him. Dragunov is fine enough to hit a spinning chop into a backsplash, setting up a big ax handle out to the floor to knock Wolfe silly.

Wolfe is right back up to disarm Dragunov of a kendo stick so Dragunov says bring it on and goes for the stick, only to get kicked in the face. Some stick shots to the back have Dragunov screaming but he blocks the big shot to the head. Wolfe is back with a kendo stick legsweep into a backbreaker for two, followed by the stick going across the mouth. That's broken up as well and Dragunov starts striking away with the cane as well. Dragunov hits a heck of a shot to the chest on the floor, meaning it can be table time.

The table is set up in the corner and Dragunov kicks him down to the floor again. Wolfe is right back up with a chair shot though, setting up a Death Valley Driver onto the apron for the big knockdown shot. Dragunov

hits a quick enziguri and shakes his head as Wolfe goes for the chair. Said chair is put onto Wolfe's face in the corner for a Coast To Coast and a near fall, only to have Wolfe come back with a chair shot of his own.

Wolfe can't follow up though so Dragunov throws in a bunch of chairs of his own. That takes too long so Wolfe grabs a German suplex and a DDT onto the chair for two. A chair gets sent into Dragunov's throat but Dragunov gets up and says bring it. That's what Wolfe does, by slamming the chair around Dragunov's hand. Wolfe does it to the other hand as well but Dragunov is back with a clothesline and a running Death Valley Driver through the table. Torpedo Moscow finishes Wolfe at 14:52.

Rating: B+. They beat the fire out of each other here and this was the kind of match that shows Dragunov's incredibly high potential. He could be a top star around here in a heartbeat because of his insane facials alone but when you throw in his ability in the ring, the star power is even stronger. Heck of a match here and I had a great time with it.

Post match Fabian Aichner and Marcel Barthel come in for the beatdown. Walter approves from the stage but Joe Coffey runs out for a cheap shot on Walter before bailing from the numbers advantage.

Overall Rating: B. This show did what they needed to do to make me want to see how Takeover is looking. They only have a little time left to really hammer things down and that's what they did here. The main event was awesome and I want to see these people fight again. Now that the setup is going well, the payoff needs to work as well, and that very well may be the case. Check out the main event if you have the time.

Results

Dave Mastiff b. Kona Reeves – Into The Void

Kassius Ohno b. Ligerio – Kassius Clutch

Ashton Smith/Oliver Carter b. Outliers – Small package to Moss

Ilja Dragunov b. Alexander Wolfe – Torpedo Moscow

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