

NXT – December 9, 2020: Gotta Make Time

NXT

Date: December 9, 2020

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph

Takeover: WarGames has come and gone and that means it is time to start getting ready for New Year's Evil, which seems to be the next big television show. I'm not sure what that is going to entail but tonight we get to hear from Finn Balor for the first time in...well in two weeks actually but maybe he is ready to get back in the ring. Let's get to it.

[Here is Takeover if you need a recap.](#)

Long recap of Takeover.

Here's Finn Balor for the opening chat. The champ is back and while there are some people who love him, there are some people who hate him. If you want to get to know him, come see him in the ring. This brings out Pete Dunne (here we go), who says they're cut from the same cloth. It is going to be a matter of time before Dunne takes that title, but here's Kyle O'Reilly to say his invitation must have gotten lost in the mail.

Now Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater is tough but his team didn't win at Takeover. As for Balor, yeah he beat him, but O'Reilly took him to the limit and made him eat through a straw for two months. Let the vengeance consume you...but here's Damian Priest to cut them off as well. Priest things Balor vs. Priest is a marquee matchup that both of them want. Dunne says Priest is the one who couldn't even beat Leon Ruff. Priest thinks Dunne is the one Pat McAfee pays to keep his mouth shut.

O'Reilly asks when Priest last won a match and they all start bickering as Balor leaves. Balor says they need to learn some manners because they interrupted him before he could make his announcement. He's going to be defending the title on January 6, but William Regal gets to decide who gets that Finn rub. Cue Scarlett, but Balor cuts her off. He knows she's going to say tick tock, but tell Karrion Kross that when he's ready, Finn is ready. Balor leaves so Priest that if Kross is back and looking for a fight, all he has to do is step to him like a man.

The best thing about this: you could believe any of the possible challengers could get the shot. Sure Dunne seems very likely, but you have four people who could be a threat not only to getting a shot at Balor, but at Balor himself. Give us a reason to be curious and things get a lot more interesting in a hurry.

Post break Pete Dunne is being interviewed by Killian Dain charges at him for revenge. Oney Lorcan, Danny Burch, Drake Maverick and referees have to hold them back.

Jake Atlas vs. Isaiah Scott

Scott takes him down by the arm to start and Atlas has to roll to the floor for a breather. That's fine with Scott, who kicks him in the face from the apron to put him in trouble again. Back in and the rolling Downward Spiral gets two on Atlas, with Scott being surprised by the kickout. Atlas is back with a suplex into a powerbomb for two but Scott around to set up the House Call. Scott can't get the JML Driver so he goes back to the arm. What looked to be a German suplex attempt is broken up and Scott grabs the arm again. This time it's la majistral, but Atlas reverses into a cradle for the pin at 4:26.

Rating: C. I'm surprised by the result, but that might be more about me being quite the Scott fan. Atlas needs to grow a bit

and while giving him some wins are going to help, there is still something lacking from his overall presentation. He isn't exactly impressive physically (though he's acceptable) and his stuff in the ring isn't quite eye popping. In a few words, he's about average and while he's far from bad, I could go for a bit more than that.

Post match Scott walks away from a handshake. He did have a bit of a heel touch in the match.

Tommaso Ciampa says no one is safe. It is time that he let the past die in the past and move forward. He wouldn't have it any other way, so tonight it's Cameron Grimes' time. Grimes is loud and confident but maybe it's just insecurity. That can often disguise itself as confidence and tonight we'll find out which is true.

Ever Rise vs. Grizzled Young Veterans vs. Imperium

Am I missing something with Ever Rise? The match certainly is as they go to the floor so the other four go after them to start the beatdown in a hurry. Back in and Aichner takes Gibson down, only to get his arm cranked a bit. Barthel comes in with an armdrag and stomp to Gibson but Ever Rise gets back up, allowing Gibson to get over for the tag to Drake. Barthel is taken outside for some quick double teaming but manages to keep Drake from tagging Gibson back in. Ever Rise is back in instead to take over on Drake, with Martel getting two off a double takedown.

Drake gets rid of Ever Rise and it's back to Gibson vs. Aichner again. Gibson drives Aichner into the corner for another tag to Drake, who spinwheel kicks Aichner. Martel clotheslines Drake down though and a double Snake Eyes into the corner gets two. Imperium is back in with the double dropkick in the corner to knock Parker out of the Tree of Woe. Barthel hits a middle rope moonsault for two on Drake and a middle rope DDT drops Drake again, only to have Parker steal

the near fall. That's enough Ever Rise though and it's the Ticket To Mayhem to drop Parker and give the Veterans the win at 7:07.

Rating: C+. I was rather surprised by this one as I never would have expected to like it so much. Ever Rise as the team trying to steal the win was a great little addition as they came closer more than once. The Veterans winning is a good idea and Imperium looked better than usual here. This was the surprise of the night and while it wasn't a classic, it was far stronger than I ever would have bet.

The participants in both WarGames matches talk about how brutal the whole thing was. This was different and everyone is different than when they went in. The biggest note out of this: Bobby Fish tore his tricep and has already had surgery. No word on how long he will be out.

Toni Storm says she turned on Shotzi Blackheart because she wants the Women's Title and that's all that matters, no matter what she has to do. Now Ember Moon is in her way and that's cool, because Toni is winning no matter what. Io Shirai comes in to say the title is the only thing that matters. Shirai has no problem with Toni, but she doesn't like her and therefore hits Storm in the face. They brawl into the arena with Storm throwing her into the ring but getting taken down anyway. Storm rolls away before the moonsault can launch but here's Ember Moon to toss her back in, with Shirai hitting said moonsault.

Tommaso Ciampa vs. Cameron Grimes

This could be interesting. Timothy Thatcher comes out to watch as Ciampa takes Grimes down by the arm to start. Grimes fights up and is immediately elbowed in the face for his efforts. That's enough for a trip to the floor, where Thatcher's staredown doesn't exactly work as Ciampa takes it back inside. A knee to Ciampa's ribs takes him down for two and we take a

break.

Back with Ciampa fighting out of a chinlock and grabbing a rollup for his own two. The clotheslines rock Grimes again and it's a running knee in the corner for two more. Grimes is back with a knee to the face and the flipping powerslam gets two more. Ciampa catches him on top with some chops though and shoves Grimes outside in a heap. Cue Tyler Rust (Thatcher's student) for a distraction though and Grimes gets in another shot. Not that it matters though as Ciampa gets him into the ropes and hits Willow's Bell for the pin at 10:52.

Rating: C. This is something that could be better on a larger stage and with a little bit of a story, but for not it was a perfectly fine ten minute TV match. Ciampa vs. Thatcher continuing could be fine but what matters most is that Grimes isn't running from Dexter Lumis any longer, as that wasn't helping anyone. Fine enough match here, as Ciampa continues to reestablish himself.

Post match Ciampa and Thatcher stare each other down again, with Thatcher claiming innocence on the interference. Ciampa leaves so Grimes yells at Thatcher, who twists Grimes' leg around to leave him laying.

Raquel Gonzalez is happy to have won WarGames on Sunday and to beat Io Shirai in particular. Now Dakota Kai is on the shelf, but tonight it's time to make Ember Moon regret that she returned to NXT.

Here are Johnny Gargano, Candice LeRae, Indi Hartwell and Austin Theory for a celebratory chat, complete with Gargano dancing. Gargano dubs the team The Way, with Johnny and Candice bragging about their wins on Sunday. Gargano: "THAT'S THE WAY!" Theory: "The Milky Way!" Sure there were some issues, with LeRae breaking his arm and Gargano needing stitches in his mouth, but now he is the first ever three time North American Champion.

Candice has now led her team to victory in WarGames two years in a row, so she must be Ms. WarGames. Gargano is so happy that he has a special present for her. Indi has to get the present, which is imported from Italy. It's....a trophy with Shotzi Blackheart's head on top! Candice says she definitely deserve it but she doesn't have a trophy for him.

That's cool with Gargano, who has his North American Title. He and Theory are so in sync (as demonstrated with some high fives WITHOUT EVEN LOOKING) that they'll be facing Damian Priest and Leon Ruff next week. Candice: "If you're not in the Way, then stay out of our way." Cue Priest to say he's coming for revenge but Karrion Kross jumps him from behind for the beatdown, including a powerbomb on the stage. Kross walks to the back and gets in a car with Scarlett waiting.

Tyler Rust is in the back when Malcolm Bivens comes up and wants to talk business. Rust leaves with him.

Pete Dunne vs. Killian Dain

Dain slugs him into the corner to start and tosses Dunne around, followed by the pump kick to the jaw. Dunne bails outside, where Dain hits another pump kick. Dain manages to posting but headbutts the post by mistake to put him down for the first time. Back in and Dunne pounds him down in the corner, setting up some kicks to the face for a bonus. A quick suplex gives Dain the breather so Dunne is right back with one of his own.

There's the stomp to the fingers and we take a break with Dain heading to the apron. Back with Dain fighting out of a chinlock and dropping down onto Dunne for the break. The release Rock Bottom into a slingshot hilo into a jackknife gives Dain two. Dunne is right back with a triangle choke, but Dain is right back with a sitout powerbomb for the break. Dain takes him up top for something like a fisherman's superplex for two more.

With Dunne rocked, Dain loads up the Vader Bomb but here are Oney Lorcan and Danny Burch for the save. Drake Maverick runs down to chase them off with a chair, only to get jumped from behind. Dain makes the real save but Dunne catches him with a kick on the way back in. The Bitter End finishes Dain at 13:35.

Rating: C+. Dain got a lot out of this, but at the same time there is only so much that you can do when he never actually wins anything. Granted Dain should not be beating Dunne and it seems that we are getting ready for Dain/Dunne vs. Lorcan/Burch for the Tag Team Titles, but Dain winning something could do him some good. He did look aggressive here though, as he should have.

The Way comes up to Leon Ruff in the back to mock him for Damian Priest being taken out. Kushida comes up to say he'll be Ruff's partner, which works for Ruff.

Raquel Gonzalez vs. Ember Moon

They stare each other down to start until Moon's early hurricanrana attempt is blocked. The middle rope Codebreaker gets blocked as well and Gonzalez starts yelling a lot. Gonzalez tosses her into the corner and then back out again as the power is on full display here. Moon can't get a wristlock but can kick Gonzalez in the face. Gonzalez doesn't seem to mind and knocks Moon down again for some elbow drops.

Moon fights out and hits a running Downward Spiral before knocking Gonzalez outside as we take a break. We come back with Gonzalez knocking her down again and working on the arm. Moon manages a hurricanrana into the corner, setting up the spinning snap suplex out of the corner. A tornado plants Gonzalez for two more but Moon can't quite follow up.

Gonzalez is knocked outside and there's the suicide dive to make it worse. That lasts all of a few seconds as Gonzalez pops up and lawn darts Moon face first into the post for...two.

A running knee gives Moon two but the Eclipse is pulled out of the air (cool). The powerbomb is countered into a victory roll for two but the second attempt plants Moon for the pin at 12:35.

Rating: C+. This was a great way to make Gonzalez look like a monster, as she not only absorbed everything Moon threw at her, but she just blocked the Eclipse, which was one of the best weapons the women's division has ever seen. They have to be gearing her up for the Shirai title shot either at Takeover or at New Year's Evil, and after something like this it would be hard not to. Just don't send someone flying head first into the post and have them keep going for a few more minutes. That shouldn't be complicated.

Post match Toni Storm comes out after Ember Moon but Rhea Ripley makes the save and the Ripley vs. Gonzalez standoff ensues. Gonzalez bails to the floor but keeps her eyes locked on Ripley to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Nothing on here was great, but they started setting up a lot of things for the next big show. There are some stories being set up for later with the wrestlers already starting to get ready for later. Given how fast things move around here anymore, they need to start faster and now I'm curious to see where a lot of these things go, which is a nice feeling to have so soon.

Results

Jake Atlas b. Isaiah Scott – Cradle

Grizzled Young Veterans b. Ever Rise and Imperium – Ticket to Mayhem to Parker

Tommaso Ciampa b. Cameron Grimes – Willow's Bell

Pete Dunne b. Killian Dain – Bitter End

Raquel Gonzalez b. Ember Moon – Powerbomb

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