

NXT – December 16, 2020: Now And The Future

NXT

Date: December 16, 2020

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph

We're on the way to New Year's Evil and that could go a variety of ways. Tonight we find out the new #1 contender to the NXT Title though as Pete Dunne faces Kyle O'Reilly. That could be a heck of a fight and that's what NXT is shooting for with the showdown. Other than that, the whole show could be all over the place. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Kushida/Leon Ruff vs. The Way

That would be Johnny Gargano/Austin Theory with Candice LeRae/Indi Hartwell. Kushida takes Theory to the mat and the frustration is on in a hurry. Ruff comes in so Theory runs him over with a clothesline and hands it off to Gargano to glare at Kushida. The delay lets Ruff take Gargano down and kick him in the head for two, only to have Gargano hit a gordbuster.

Theory comes back in so Kushida makes the save, with stereo dropkick sending Theory and Gargano to the floor. Ruff loads up a big flip dive but slips and falls flat on his back on the floor for a scary landing. Thankfully he seems to be ok as Theory sends Ruff face first into the apron. Back in and Ruff scores with a DDT for two but Gargano hits his slingshot spear. We take a break and come back with Ruff fighting out of a chinlock and enziguring Gargano, allowing the hot tag off to Kushida.

House is cleaned with Kushida kicking Gargano in the arm but

getting kicked in the head for his efforts. Ruff comes back in with a missile dropkick to Gargano and stereo running kicks in the corner give Ruff two. Theory is back in with the spinning torture rack powerbomb for two on Ruff and a double superkick is good for the same. Ruff hits his own superkick to send Gargano into the corner but Theory is back in with This Is The Way (where he picks Ruff up and flips him into a Downward Spiral) for the pin at 13:35.

Rating: B-. They did things the right way here with Gargano and Theory working well together and finishing Ruff in the end. Kushida continues to look strong and it wouldn't shock me to see him get the first shot at Gargano. That has been a logical place for him to go for the last several months so it would be nice to see them actually do something about it.

Dexter Lumis is watching from the balcony with an easel. Uh yeah.

Video on Toni Storm vs. Rhea Ripley, with Toni saying that all that matters is her time. She is ending this rivalry on her terms tonight.

Video on Legado del Fantasma.

Shotzi Blackheart is proud of her WarGames team and doesn't think much of Candice LeRae carrying a trophy that her husband got from a Little League banquet. She broke Candice's arm in the cage and tonight she's breaking Candice's best friend Indi Hartwell.

Tommaso Ciampa vs. Tyler Rust

Ciampa leaves a chair and shirt for Timothy Thatcher at ringside. Rust works on the wrist to start but gets taken down into a front facelock. Cue Thatcher to watch so Ciampa hits a running shot to the face to drop Rust again. Ciampa heads outside to yell at Thatcher and Rust runs Thatcher over by mistake. That's enough to get Thatcher ejected but Rust uses

the distraction to get in a shot on Ciampa as we take a break.

Back with Ciampa hitting a Samoan drop to get a breather and elbowing Rust in the face. Rust scores with an ax kick for two but can't get a cross armbreaker as Ciampa stacks him up. The hold goes on with the second attempt but Ciampa is out again and blasts Rust in the face. The arm is too banged up for the Fairy Tale Ending so Rust grabs a cravate and flips Ciampa forward for two. Rust slaps on a Rings of Saturn with his legs, meaning Ciampa has to use his own leg for the break. Ciampa unloads with chops in the ropes, followed by a running knee to the face. Willow's Bell is good for the pin at 12:24.

Rating: C+. Rust got to showcase himself here and that's the reason you put him in a spot like this. Ciampa is in the middle of his big feud with Thatcher and beating up Thatcher's glorified lackey is as good of an idea as you can have. If nothing else, Rust got a chance to showcase himself and that worked well. Nice stuff here, as both did what they were supposed to do.

Post match Ciampa picks up the Thatcher shirt but here's Thatcher to glare at him. The two are held back but Ciampa throws the shirt in Thatcher's face to make it worse.

Video on the Grizzled Young Veterans, who are back after eight months away. There are a lot of new teams around here and they are still the best around.

Video on Karrion Kross.

During the break, Malcolm Bivens came out to tell Rust that he is a star. Rust bumped fists with him and they left together.

Dexter Lumis has drawn the New Year's Evil logo.

Pete Dunne vs. Kyle O'Reilly

The winner gets the title shot against Finn Balor at New Year's Evil. Oney Lorcan and Danny Burch are here to start but

here's the Undisputed Era and the returning Breezango to take care of them, meaning it's one on one. Dunne and O'Reilly go straight to the slugging to start with Dunne not being able to get anywhere off the hammerlock. Instead Dunne takes him down and pulls on the leg but O'Reilly is out of that in a hurry.

O'Reilly sits on his stomach to strike away but the dragon screw legwhip is countered without much trouble. Back up and they run the ropes with Dunne hitting a clothesline to send O'Reilly to the floor. The moonsault off the apron misses O'Reilly but he misses a knee of his own. Dunne scores with a pump kick but O'Reilly slips out of an X Plex onto the apron. The slugout on the floor almost gives us a double countout with both of them diving back in at nine.

Back in and they slug it out with O'Reilly kicking him in the leg. Another kick puts Dunne on the floor again and we take a break. We come back with Dunne's Bitter End being countered into a guillotine choke. That's broken up and Dunne is back with the X Plex, allowing him to glare with his bloody mouth. Dunne starts in on the arm with the big stomp having O'Reilly in trouble. The cobra clutch with a leg trap has O'Reilly in pain to go with the trouble.

Back up and O'Reilly starts striking away, including the running elbow in the corner. Dunne tries to run the ropes in the corner but O'Reilly kicks him back down. O'Reilly goes up top with him but Dunne flips out of a German superplex attempt and kicks O'Reilly in the head. The dropkick in the corner connects and we take another break. Back with the two of them on the apron and pulling the other into the buckle over and over. That means a double knockdown until O'Reilly charges into a knee.

Dunne powerbombs him for two and cranks on the arm again. That's reversed into an ankle lock on Dunne which is reversed into the Kimura on O'Reilly's bad arm. O'Reilly tries a choke to escape but settles for a brainbuster to put Dunne down

again. A jumping knee sets up a belly to back fisherman's suplex for two more on Dunne. O'Reilly gets pulled into a triangle but slips out in a hurry to hammer away with forearms.

There's a kick to Dunne's head, followed by one to O'Reilly's head. A second to O'Reilly lets Dunne snap the fingers and they head to the apron. The Bitter End onto the apron is countered into a suplex to the floor and Dunne is in big trouble. O'Reilly drapes him over the bottom rope and a top rope knee to the back of the neck sends O'Reilly to the title match at 22:48.

Rating: A-. Well that was awesome and I don't think that's any surprise. Two talented people getting the time and having the chance to beat the heck out of each other. What else could you possibly need? What might be a bit surprising is having Dunne loses, as he seemed to be the perfect choice to get the title shot. That being said, O'Reilly vs. Balor was amazing the first time so letting them go at it again in a huge rematch works for me.

Rhea Ripley knows how to deal with Raquel Gonzalez because Gonzalez backed away last week. As for tonight, she's ending Toni Storm once and for all.

We go back to Xia Li/Boa (hey I didn't miss it this week) where the old man is ordering a very sweaty Li to attack Boa over and over. She hammers away as the bloody Boa begs them to stop. The old man says do it again as Li is in tears. Li unloads on Boa and they both go a bit stoic.

Indi Hartwell vs. Shotzi Blackheart

The rest of the Way is here with Hartwell. Blackheart is more serious to start here and hits an early dropkick before starting in on the limbs. The running reverse Cannonball in the corner mostly misses Hartwell, who elbows Shotzi down for two. Blackheart jumps over her in the corner though and

hammers away, meaning now the reverse Cannonball can connect. A running dropkick sends Hartwell to the floor but Candice gets on the apron for a distraction. Hartwell hits Shotzi with the trophy (and yes it breaks) for the DQ at 4:05.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here but the match was there for the sake of getting to the ending and likely the post match beatdown. Shotzi and some other people fighting the Way could go on for months and this worked just fine as a way to move things forward. The idea of Shotzi continuing the fight works well, even if it did mainly start with breaking a tank.

Post match the beatdown is on, including the Wicked Stepsister to Shotzi. Barrett is more worried about the trophy because he knows how to be a commentator.

Karrion Kross video.

Bronson Reed is back at New Year's Evil.

Karrion Kross vs. Desmond Troy

Scarlett is here as well. Total destruction with the Doomsday Saito setting up the Krossjacket choke to finish Troy at 1:05. That worked.

Post match Kross confirms his match against Damian Priest at New Year's Evil.

Isaiah Scott confirms that he gets frustrated when he loses to someone like Jake At....and he cuts himself off. The rematch is next week and the result will be different.

Scott leaves and here's Ever Rise to say last week was a handicap match so they have tried to have it stricken from the record. Therefore, the team is still on a winning streak. Martel: "You hear that Goldberg? WE'RE COMING FOR YOU!" And no they don't want a rematch.

Lumis is still drawing and now he is going to be the host of

New Year's Evil. Oh sweet goodness.

Finn Balor says New Year's Evil isn't Balor vs. O'Reilly II. It's Balor vs. O'Reilly The End.

We run down the New Year's Evil card, which certainly does look big.

Toni Storm vs. Rhea Ripley

They fight over the lockup to start with Storm slapping on a headlock for little avail. Ripley shoulders her down and they trade crucifixes on the mat. Back up and Storm hits some chops but Ripley is back with some of her own. A double chop to the back knocks Storm down but she slips out of an electric chair. Ripley pulls her to the apron but gets sent into the post and kicked in the face as we take a break. Back with Ripley fighting out of a chinlock but missing an elbow. A superkick connects with Storm though and Ripley knees her in the face.

The Riptide is broken up with some elbows to the face and Storm headbutts her down. Back up and they slug it out until Ripley gets two off a dropkick. The Prism Trap goes on but Storm rolls her into the ropes for the break. A German suplex gives Storm two and Ripley dropping Storm face first onto the turnbuckle gets the same. Ripley drops the leg for another two but here's Raquel Gonzalez. Ripley kicks Storm onto her but as the referee checks on Storm, Gonzalez sends Ripley shoulder first into the post. Storm Zero gives Storm the pin at 13:48.

Rating: B. This was a big match feel with both women working to make it feel like a fight. Ripley is already a major star and Storm kind of is, so getting the big win here makes her feel that much more important. Throw in the idea of Gonzalez fighting Ripley again and this was a heck of a packed match, as the women's division is getting crazy deep in a hurry.

Ripley isn't happy to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. Yeah what else are you expecting from a show like this? They had an excellent match in the middle, a rather good main event and a pretty good opener, while also setting up the big New Year's Evil card. This was a heck of a show though and one of the better things that NXT has done in a pretty long time, as they had good to great wrestling and set stuff up for the future. What more can you want?

Results

The Way b. Kushida/Leon Ruff – This Is The Way to Ruff

Tommaso Ciampa b. Tyler Rust – Willow's Bell

Kyle O'Reilly b. Pete Dunne – Top rope knee

Shotzi Blackheart b. Indi Hartwell via DQ when Hartwell used a trophy

Karrion Kross b. Desmond Troy – Krossjacket Choke

Toni Storm b. Rhea Ripley – Storm Zero

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