

NXT – March 24, 2021: The NXT Special

NXT

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Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph, Beth Phoenix

We are two weeks away from Takeover and that means it is time for NXT to do what it does best by hammering home the big push towards the special. This time around that means we are going to be seeing William Regal dealing with Adam Cole and Kyle O'Reilly for getting into a fight earlier in the week. I think you know where this is going. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Karrion Cross attacking Finn Balor, his partner last week, and setting up their Takeover main event for Balor's title.

Adam Cole came to work today, flanked by security.

Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez vs. Zoey Stark/Io Shirai

Gonzalez shoves Stark away to start and says this is her house. The armbar goes on to keep Gonzalez in control until Stark flips her way to freedom. Stark works on her own armbar and hits a running kick in the corner, followed by a knee to the face. Gonzalez isn't having that and blasts her with a clothesline and hands it off to Kai, who is dropped onto Stark for two.

Stark takes her down for some right hands to the head though and Shirai comes in for the first time. Kai's pump kick misses and Shirai stomps her down in the corner, setting up the slingshot double knees to the chest. Gonzalez's distraction

lets Kai roll her up a few times, only for Shirai to show her how it's done with her own near fall. It's back to Stark for a running uppercut in the corner but Kai pulls her down by the hair. Gonzalez comes back in but gets kneed in the chest in a hurry. Kai tags herself in for a reverse powerbomb/enziguri combination for two.

We take a break and come back with the double tag bringing Kai and Shirai, one of whom cleans house (I'll let you guess which). There's a pair of 619s to the villains and a missile dropkick puts Kai down. Stark adds a springboard dropkick of his own, followed by Stark's slingshot dive onto Gonzalez. Stark posts her as well but misses a 450 back inside. Instead, Gonzalez powerbombs her down, knocks Shirai off the apron and hits another powerbomb for the pin at 11:50.

Rating: C. They accomplished a few things here, including making Gonzalez look like a killer. Shirai is going to be in trouble she she has to defend the title and that is a good thing for Takeover. Stark continues to look very good in the ring just by rubbing elbows with stars but she is going to have to win something at some point.

Post match Gonzalez and Shirai pull themselves up for the staredown. Kai offers a distraction though and Gonzalez lays her out with a big boot. The powerbomb onto the announcers' table leaves Shirai laying.

We look at Adam Cole coming to Kyle O'Reilly's Brazilian jiu jitsu training center and getting in a fight. William Regal has promised punishment.

O'Reilly arrives with security and Roderick Strong tells him to take out Col. O'Reilly doesn't seem to want the help or advice. Strong looks sad and says O'Reilly and Cole can both go to h***.

LA Knight isn't worried about Bronson Reed tonight because Reed made a mistake last week.

Jordan Devlin knows tonight's match is huge because it involves someone who has been a top star in Japan, England and America and is universally respected. That is quite the star, and tonight he is facing Kushida! Devlin likes Kushida, but he is going down tonight.

Bronson Reed vs. LA Knight

Reed shoves him around to start and then sends Knight flying with a backdrop. A powerslam sets up the chinlock on Knight and there's an elbow to the face to take him down again. The chinlock keeps Knight in trouble before Reed switches to a double arm crank. Make that a waistlock but Knight fights up and makes it over to the apron. There's a neck snap to slow Reed down and Knight stomps away.

Knight's rhythmic pointing takes us to a break and we come back with Reed fighting out of a chinlock. That's broken up so Knight stomps him down into the corner and slowly hammers away. A missed charge into the corner lets Knight hit a jumping neckbreaker for two more. Reed fights up again and shrugs off a kick to the face, meaning it's time to run Knight over again. The chokeslam plants Knight again but he's up in time to break up the Tsunami. Reed shoves him off though and finishes with the Tsunami at 12:09.

Rating: C-. It's interesting that they are having Knight lose so soon, but more important than that is Reed, who is looking like a heck of a monster face. That Tsunami is one of the best looking splashes I've seen in a long time and I'm curious to see where Reed can go from here. He needs a big win, but giving him this kind of a squash is a good sign for his future.

We look at Danny Burch's injury, causing the Tag Team Titles to be vacated. As a result, MSK, the Grizzled Young Veterans and Legado del Fantasma will face off for the vacant titles at Takeover.

Video on Walter, who is a monster and coming to NXT, at least for the time being. Other wrestlers talk about how worried they are because of him.

Oney Lorcan vs. Karrion Kross

Kross has Scarlett with him and Lorcan goes straight at him to start. Lorcan gets in a few shots to the face and they head outside, with Kross driving him into the barricade. Back in and Kross kicks him outside again, this time for a suplex on the floor. They head back in again with Lorcan's chops earning him...a third trip out to the floor, just in case the first two didn't connect.

Lorcan manages to dropkick him into the corner but Kross explodes out of the corner with a clothesline for two. We take a break and come back with Kross firing off shoulders in the corner. A cross armbreaker doesn't get Lorcan anywhere as Kross breaks out and hits a t-bone suplex out of the corner.

The neck crank goes on as Kross talks about being glad Danny Burch was hurt last week. Lorcan gets fired up and avoids a charge to send Kross shoulder first into the post. A DDT on the arm has Kross panicking a bit so Lorcan wins a slugout by taking out the leg. The Blockbuster misses though and Kross kicks him in the face. The Doomsday Saito into the running elbow to the back of the head finishes Lorcan at 9:17.

Rating: C+. This was the perfectly logical match to have and as usual, Lorcan's offense can work on anyone while still looking good. That is what we had here and Kross survives anyway, as he also gets a boost on the way to Takeover. I'm really not sure what they are going to do with Kross, but I am starting to get the praise.

Post match Kross says he would like to take a moment to address the actions of Finn Balor. Last week, Balor's actions included malice. Kross promises pain because there is no stopping what is next, which is him. Cue Finn Balor, who says

Kross showed him his weakness last week. Balor says Kross fight with emotions last week and that makes him sloppy and vulnerable. At Takeover, Balor is going to exploit those weaknesses and walk out NXT Champion because Balor can't control himself and will drown without emotions. The staredown is on.

William Regal announces his plans for the North American Title match at Takeover. Next week there will be a twelve person battle royal with the final six remaining going on to a gauntlet eliminator match at Takeover Night One. The winner of that will move on to get the shot at Gargano on Night Two.

Kushida has accepted Jordan Devlin's challenge for tonight.

Yesterday, Drake Maverick got on Imperium's nerves and got a match with Walter as a result.

Walter vs. Drake Maverick

Non-title and Walter hits a powerbomb into the half crab for the immediate stoppage at 27 seconds.

Post match Imperium poses but here is Tommaso Ciampa to interrupt. Ciampa isn't wasting time and challenges him to a UK Title match at Takeover. The brawl is on and Walter takes Ciampa's necklace, which incenses him. One heck of a chop leaves Ciampa laying and Walter accepts the challenge.

Pete Dunne is ready to dominate the locker room and wants the North American Title.

Jessi Kamea is injured so Robert Stone pays off Mercedes Martinez to take her place. Mercedes agrees but wants the other half after the match. Stone agrees, but after Mercedes leaves, admits he has no more money. Oh dear.

A panicked Johnny Gargano goes to see William Regal and recaps the NXT Title situation for Takeover. Regal tells him to chill.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Shotzi Blackheart/Ember Moon vs. Mercedes Martinez/Aaliyah

Martinez and Aaliyah are challenging and have Robert Stone in their corner. Martinez throws Moon around to start but she snaps off a headscissors. Blackheart gets in the figure four necklock over the rope but Stone gets up on the apron to throw a quick fit. That's enough for Martinez to get in a clothesline on Shotzi, followed by a fireman's carry gutbuster.

Aaliyah comes in and even kicks Moon off of the apron without much trouble. It's back to Martinez, who is quickly send into the corner, allowing the hot tag. House is cleaned in a hurry and a powerbomb gets two on Aaliyah. Blackheart plants Martinez with a tornado DDT and the Eclipse finishes Aaliyah at 4:02.

Rating: C-. I'm not sure what you were expecting here but it was only so good. This was mainly there to give the new champs their first defense. It wasn't exactly a great match and the Eclipse at the end didn't look great, but they kept it moving and didn't try to stretch out into some unnecessary drama.

Cameron Grimes comes in to see Roderick Strong and suggests they restart the Undisputed Era. Strong hits him in the face.

Ember Moon and Shotzi Blackheart are proud of their win when the Way comes in. The challenge is issued and accepted.

Takeover rundown.

Jordan Devlin vs. Kushida

Non-title. Devlin takes him down in a hurry and hits a standing moonsault for an early two. That's fine with Kushida, who hiptosses him into a basement dropkick before starting in on the arm. Kushida cranks on it with his feet and then his arms before sliding between Devlin's legs to the floor, Devlin is

waiting with an Asai moonsault (that was as crisp and well timed of a sequence as I have seen in a good while). We take a break and come back with Devlin holding a chinlock but getting caught with a jawbreaker. Kushida hits him in the face and bulldogs the arm down but the Hoverboard Lock is countered into a cradle for two.

Devlin nails his slingshot cutter, though he is still badly favoring the arm. Said arm gives out on the Devlin Slide attempt so Kushida goes up top. Devlin catches him with forearms but here is Legado del Fantasma for the distraction. Kushida gets in a kick to the head and superplexes him into the cross armbreaker. Legado pulls Devlin to the floor, which isn't enough for a DQ. Devlin dives back in and sends Kushida into Legado, setting up a bridging O'Connor roll (meaning no need to use the bad arm) to pin Kushida at 9:26.

Rating: C+. Is it any surprise that these two could have a good match together? This was a rather nice display from both as Kushida took apart the arm but Devlin is on another level at the moment and took out the cruiserweight legend. I'm really not sure where they go with the unification match, but Devlin winning would not surprise me as he seems to have a lot more upward potential.

Post match Kushida goes after Legado and takes down Wilde and Mendoza. Santos Escobar gets in the ring for the staredown with Devlin...and we have a Shawn Michaels. He slides a ladder in the ring and points, leaving both guys to hold up their titles.

Adam Cole runs into Shawn as he leaves and glaring ensues. I'd be down for that.

We get the big showdown between Adam Cole and Kyle O'Reilly, with William Regal in charge and a lot of security. Regal rants about everything that has gone on between the two of them, even down to having the police involved. He has a

contract for the two of them to be in an unsanctioned match in the co-main event for Night Two of Takeover so he would like them to sign in peace.

Cole takes the pen but has a story first. He asks Regal to imagine he was blind but then one day could see everything. That is what you call a revelation and Cole had one of those when he saw O'Reilly joining forces with Finn Balor. He thought O'Reilly had lost his mind but then it all came clear.

O'Reilly is just a lapdog on the sidelines but that is not Adam Cole. He is nothing like O'Reilly, who has lost sight of what the Undisputed Era was about. The team was about being the best and that is Cole. Does O'Reilly think he would be here without Cole? There is no team without Cole because he had the title run and sold the shirts and without him, O'Reilly is nothing. Everyone but O'Reilly knows that Cole wins at Takeover so Cole signs.

O'Reilly says they have known each other for a long time and didn't care who they stepped over on their way to the top. Then O'Reilly grew up and started taking some accountability for his actions. There are no more sneak attacks or 4-1 beatdowns and since then, the team became better. They became stars but only one of them became a better person. Cole is the same a***** who came here three and a half years ago and that makes O'Reilly believe the Undisputed Era meant nothing. He wants to believe they can be cool again but now he won't hesitate to put Cole down for good.

Cole used his friends to get to the top and O'Reilly is not surprised. No one is going to be surprised.....LOOK ME IN THE EYES....when O'Reilly beats Cole into a pulp. O'Reilly goes to sign, with Cole calling it a death warrant. The contract is signed and the table it turned over but they are held apart to end the show. Awesome promos from both guys with both of them making sense and selling how much they want to hurt the other.

Overall Rating: B. They hit the gas on the build towards Takeover here and that is the kind of show where NXT tends to shine. There are a lot of things to cover on the way there with a pair of shows but this one did a nice job of setting things up in a hurry. Next week will be the big hard sell for the shows, but they did a rather nice job here of making me want to see Takeover. Well done, as this was right in NXT's wheelhouse.

Results

Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez b. Io Shirai/Zoey Stark – Powerbomb to Stark

Bronson Reed b. LA Knight – Tsunami

Karrion Kross b. Oney Lorcan – Running elbow to the back of the head

Walter b. Drake Maverick via referee stoppage

Shotzi Blackheart/Ember Moon b. Mercedes Martinez/Aaliyah – Eclipse to Aaliyah

Jordan Devlin b. Kushida – Bridging O'Connor roll

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