

NXT UK – April 7, 2022: Again. As Always.

NXT UK

Date: April 7, 2022

Location: BT Sports Studios, London, England

Commentators: Andy Shepherd, Nigel McGuinness

It's time for the big title fight as United Kingdom Champion Ilja Dragunov is defending the championship against Roderick Strong. It says a bit that NXT UK has to import challengers for Dragunov, but it isn't like there is anyone around to give Dragunov a run for his money at the moment. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at the title match and makes it feel like a big deal.

Opening sequence.

Primate vs. Wild Boar

The rest of Symbiosis is here and if Boar wins, he gets to face Eddie Dennis. They go straight to the slugout with Primate getting the better of things for all of a few seconds. Boar takes him down and stomps away before going after Dennis. T-Bone gets in the way and the distraction lets Primate take Boar down. That doesn't last long either though as Boar knocks him into the corner and hits the big reverse Cannonball. T-Bone offers another distraction though and Dennis gets in a chain shot to give Primate the pin at 3:36.

Rating: C. This was a storyline advancement match as Boar is going to need some help to fight off Symbiosis and get his hands on Dennis eventually. You don't have these two in there for a technical match so they didn't bother trying, which is how something like this should go. Not exactly a classic, but it did its thing well enough.

Post match Dennis wraps a collar around Boar's neck and whips him with the chain. Mark Andrews returns from injury though and runs in for the save with a chair.

This week, Sam Gradwell arrived at the Performance Center but found maggots in his bag. Gradwell blames Kenny Williams but has he checked with Bray Wyatt?

Die Familie is at their apartment and Charlie Dempsey is ready to make Wolfgang tap. Dempsey warns Teoman to be ready for his match with A-Kid but Teoman doesn't seem scared.

Dave Mastiff and Jack Starz are training together when Gallus comes in to get in their faces. A match seems to be set.

Wolfgang vs. Charlie Dempsey

Rohan Raja is here with Dempsey. Feeling out process to start with Dempsey grabbing a cravate. Wolfgang suplexes his way to freedom and starts working on an armbar to keep Dempsey down. That's countered with a choke and they slug it out with Dempsey's running shoulders not really working. Instead he goes after Wolfgang's leg to put Wolfgang back in trouble, setting up an armbar.

Make that an armbar with a leg crank, at least until Wolfgang punches his way to freedom. Back up and the uppercut it out until Wolfgang hits a top rope ax handle. Dempsey knees him down and goes for the leg again, setting up a knee to the back of the knee. That doesn't last long either as Wolfgang fights up and grabs a suplex. The spear is loaded up but the Eye of Teoman appears on the screen. That's enough of a distraction for Dempsey to grab a bridging butterfly suplex for the pin at 7:20.

Rating: C+. There is something so fun about seeing Dempsey tie people up and that is what he did again here. Wolfgang has come a good way too as I didn't think much of him when he started and now he is a perfectly competent singles guy here.

Gallus' issues continue, but the question is if they go heel again as a result. I'm not sure if one is better than the other, but I wouldn't be surprised.

Meiko Satomura is a champion without a championship but she'll remedy that next week.

Kenny Williams knows nothing about the maggots in Sam Gradwell's bag. Then he finds a note saying keep watching your back. Williams yells at whoever left the note, saying come out and they can do this right now.

Xia Brookside is happy to have won her match against Amale with a little help from her daddy and her new friend Eliza Alexander. Eliza is debuting next week and promises to batter someone.

Sid Scala has Moustache Mountain and Ashton Smith/Oliver Carter in his office and promises to settle things. In two weeks, it's a 2/3 falls match and the teams are down.

Wolfgang wants to know where the Coffey Brothers were. They say it won't happen again but Wolfgang is still annoyed.

United Kingdom Title: Roderick Strong vs. Ilja Dragunov

Dragunov is defending. They fight over a lockup to start until Strong takes him down into an armbar. With that broken up, Strong has to duck a spinning backfist to the head but Dragunov avoids a jumping knee. An exchange of chops fire each of them up even more, with Dragunov getting the better of things. Dragunov misses a running headbutt though and falls outside, allowing Strong to stomp away.

We hit the armbar back inside and Dragunov can't roll out of it. A shoulder breaker sets up another armbar but Dragunov is back up with some hard chops. Dragunov's charge is countered into a backbreaker (you knew that was coming) for two and the armbar goes on again. That's broken up as well and Dragunov

hits a running kick to the head. Strong has to kick his way out of a kneebar so Dragunov switches to a Brock Lock.

Another kick to the bad arm breaks that up though and they're both down. With the grappling not working, Dragunov rolls some German suplexes but the bad arm gives out, leaving them both down again. Back up and the threat of Torpedo Moscow sends Strong outside but he pulls Dragunov out with him.

The half nelson slam sends Dragunov into the steps for two back inside. A backbreaker onto the top turnbuckle rocks Dragunov again but he kicks out anyway. Some more forearms stagger Dragunov but he manages some jumping enziguris. Dragunov strikes away but Strong hits the jumping knee...which Dragunov shrugs off and hits Torpedo Moscow to retain at 14:39.

Rating: B. Of course this was good, as Dragunov is one of the most consistently interesting people around, but I could go for him having a match without focusing on his arm. I don't think Strong was meant to be a serious threat to the title here but they did a nice job of making you believe that Dragunov was in some trouble. At least until he shrugged off the jumping knee and hit his finisher for the win.

Replays and celebrations wrap us up.

Overall Rating: B-. Strong main event to go with some stuff being set up for the future. This was a slightly better than usual NXT UK, which continues to be nice and steady. That's all it needed to be and it worked out just fine again. They already have the next two title matches set up and I want to see how both matches go. Nice job. Again. As always.

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