

NXT – May 16, 2023: Please Don't Be Normal

NXT

Date: May 16, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Booker T.

Tournament time continues around here as we have more from the Women's Title tournament, likely including the rest of the first round. Other than that, we are less than two weeks away from Battleground and there are a few more matches that need to be set. Throw in some more build towards Bron Breaker vs. Carmelo Hayes II and we should be in for a big night. Let's get to it.

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

Women's Title Tournament First Round: Cora Jade vs. Fallon Henley

Henley takes her down to start and slides to the floor for a right hand. Back in and Jade starts in on the leg, including crushing it on the ropes for one. Jade hits a running dropkick in the ropes as we see the locker room watching (with Duke Hudson grading papers on the side). Henley fights up but her knee is too banged up, allowing Jade to roll outside. Back in and a shot to the knee takes Henley down, allowing Jade to hit the double arm DDT for the pin at 5:07.

Rating: C. There wasn't much time for this one but they managed to get in a quick story with the knee injury. I like Henley but there was no way she should have gone over here, as Jade has been treated as a much bigger deal for a long time now. What we got here worked well enough, but there just wasn't enough time to really develop it.

Thea Hail and Kiana James argue a lot and a match is ready for later. Duke Hudson has to approve Hail for the match, and gives his ok without looking up.

The Dyad jumps Wes Lee and Tyler Bate. Joe Gacy says their relationship is based on lies and will fall apart. Can Gacy fall apart instead?

Carmelo Hayes and Trick Williams arrive in a very nice car and we follow them from the parking lot to the arena. Hayes said Williams defended his honor last week but after the match, Bron Breakker wanted to deliver a message. The tape on his ribs says message received, but Breakker needs to realize that this isn't the same Hayes. They're in his yard at Battleground and in his yard, they bite instead of bark.

They want him out here to fight right now, but get Drew Gulak and Charlie Dempsey (who they passed on the way into the arena) instead. They don't like being disrespected and the WILLY WONKA chants don't help things. The challenge is on and we seem to have a main event for later.

Ilja Dragunov interrupts Dijak and they promise to hurt each other.

Dani Palmer was attack at a live event by a masked woman (presumably the same woman who has been attacking various women for months).

Creed Brothers vs. Dyad

Julius and Fowler start things off with Julius powering him over. It's off to Brutus with a top rope ax handle before both Dyads get passed around in a delayed vertical suplex. Fowler even gets passed back to Julius before finally being dropped for two. Reid comes back in and manages a Koji Clutch, with Fowler stomping away for a bonus. Julius finally spinebusters him down and we take a break.

Back with Julius fighting out of trouble again and diving over to Brutus (even as Fowler has Julius' leg). Brutus knocks Fowler over hard for two before suplexing him/rolling up Reid at the same time for two each. A double clothesline leaves Fowler and Brutus down so Julius and Reid hit stereo 450s. The two of them slug it out until Reid reverses a powerbomb into a DDT. Ava goes after Ivy Nile on the floor and gets choked out, setting up the sliding forearm to finish Reid at 14:11.

Rating: B. It's rather fascinating how much Joe Gacy's presence makes my soul feel like it's dying while Dyad can be a heck of a team when they can just get in the ring and do their thing. Other than that, Julius continues to feel like a stud and someone who could be a breakout star on his own at any time. This was a heck of an athletic display here and it made for a very enjoyable match, which I wasn't quite expecting.

Tony D'Angelo and Stacks were at dinner when Stacks had to go make a phone call. While he was gone, some cops arrived to take D'Angelo in for questioning about various criminal acts. Stacks comes back in, is told what happened, and makes another call as he leaves.

The Creeds want Gallus for the Tag Team Titles at Battleground.

Here is Noam Dar for a live Supernova Sessions. Dar says that his guest will not take the Heritage Cup from him and brings out Dragon Lee. Dar talks about training, but Lee says he has been trained since he was 14, including to be trained to respect his opponent. Lee wants the Heritage Cup but Dar mocks the idea of Lee even understanding the rules. Nathan Frazer comes out to say everyone wants to see Lee win the cup, so Lee issues the challenge for Battleground. Frazer says if Dar loses, maybe Alicia Fox will be interested. Oh and he can fight Dar next week in a regular match.

Dijak appears to have kidnapped and tortured Ilja Dragunov, who says he hasn't had close to enough.

Jacy Jayne is annoyed about not getting to face Gigi Dolin in the tournament. She'll have to beat up Roxanne Perez to blow off some steam instead.

Trick Williams/Carmelo Hayes vs. Charlie Dempsey/Drew Gulak

Williams takes Dempsey down to start and it's quickly off to Hayes for some armdrags to Gulak. A keylock has Hayes in trouble and it's off to Dempsey to get taken down by the arm. Dempsey goes for a Boston crab but gets flipped away without much effort. Williams it back in with a jumping clothesline but gets taken down by the leg to put him in trouble. Dempsey can't get a half crab as Williams kicks him in the head. There's the tag off to Hayes to clean house as everything breaks down. A spinning kick to the face sets up Nothing But Net to give Hayes the pin on Dempsey at 6:33.

Rating: C+. Just a quick one here with Williams and Hayes showing that they are still fine after getting wrecked by Bron Breaker. I'm still a bit surprised by having Dempsey take the fall rather than Gulak, as Dempsey would seem to have quite the future ahead of him. Either way, this was about getting Williams and Hayes back up and it worked well enough.

Post match Hayes and Williams call out Bron Breaker again. Cue Breaker on the screen, and he's at the barber shop.

Duke Hudson doesn't remember giving Thea Hail permission to have a match but let's go anyway.

Noam Dar runs into Jakara Jackson and Lash Legend. The latter talks about all of the talk shows around here and brings up Lashing Out. Please, I beg of you, ANYTHING but bringing that thing back.

Thea Hail vs. Kiana James

Duke Hudson, still grading papers, is here too. Hail rolls her up for two to start but gets elbowed in the face for her efforts. James is sent outside though and a dive finally gets Hudson's attention. Back in and the waistlock goes on but Hail fights up and makes the comeback. Some suplexes set up a headbutt to James' ribs, followed by a high crossbody for two. James shrugs it off and hits the 401K for the pin at 4:48.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to do anything and was mainly just there for James to get a win. Hail continues to be stuck in one place and little more than a piece in whatever is going on with Duke Hudson and Andre Chase. I could have gone with Hail getting in more offense here or even winning, but that doesn't seem to be her thing most of the time.

Tank Ledger and Hank Walker run into Josh Briggs and Brooks Jensen. Last week's match made them closer, so Ledger wants to fight Walker next week. Walker eventually agrees.

Tyler Bate is hurt after the Schism attack, so Wes Lee is ready to go address this in the ring.

Video on Dabba-Kato, who isn't happy with not being Drafted. Now he wants a title match.

Edris Enofe, Axiom, Malik Blade and Eddy Thorpe have varying degrees of worry about Kato.

Here is a ticked off Wes Lee for a chat. He's sick of Joe Gacy and Schism, so if Gacy wants his title shot, come get it. Gacy, with Ava (still holding her neck) pops up on the platform to say he wants the North American Title. Ava says Tyler Bate is just using Lee so here is Bate in person. Bate says he wants a receipt on Gacy...and the title. Gacy mocks the idea and is told to shut up. Lee says let's just make it a triple threat.

Roxanne Perez is ready to get the Women's Title back and looks at pictures of everything that she has done so far. She still

wants to get up to the main roster, but we'll see how she gets there.

Von Wagner gets made at Javier Bernal for annoying Mr. Stone, who can't believe Wagner stood up for him. Stone knows there is a superstar inside him...but is he ready to talk about the baby picture. Wagner: "Nice try." WHY DOES STONE CARE ABOUT THE PICTURE SO MUCH???

Women's Title Tournament First Round: Jacy Jayne vs. Roxanne Perez

Perez goes for the arm to start and grabs a sunset flip for two. The armbar continues but Jayne knocks her off the apron and we take a break. Back with Jayne grabbing a chinlock with a knee in the back to keep Perez in trouble. Perez fights up and hits a dropkick to the floor, setting up the suicide dive. A pump kick into a Russian legsweep gives Perez two but Jayne superkicks her into a discus forearm. Back up and Perez kicks her in the ribs, setting up Pop Rox for the pin at 9:06.

Rating: C+. As tends to be the case with tournaments, this one didn't have a ton of drama given that the winner would face Tiffany Stratton. Perez is still incredibly smooth in the ring given her limited experience and it is quite impressive to see. Jayne is going to have to deal with Gigi Dolin at some point anyway, so Perez moving on to bigger things is the way to go.

Post match Tiffany Stratton comes out to stare at Perez. Cue Gigi Dolin to jump Jayne until they have to be held apart.

Dijak is still torturing Ilja Dragunov and insists that he will break him. Dragunov is still standing. Dijak seems to take this as a challenge.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Here are Carmelo Hayes and Trick Williams to call out Bron

Breaker again. Cue Breaker, flanked by security, to mock both of them for the beatings he has given them. Hayes is ready to fight but Breaker says this is more about humiliating Hayes in his hometown at Battleground. Breaker insults Boston sports teams so Hayes flips onto the security. Williams brawls with security as Hayes and Breaker get inside, where Hayes hits him low and gets in a belt shot (with the camera angle showing the belt not coming close) to end the show. Hayes had to get in something on Breaker after so many weeks of beatdowns.

Overall Rating: C. This was a weird show, as the action did have its moments (the Dyad vs. Creeds was rather good) and some stuff was set up for Battleground, but that doesn't mean it worked altogether. The focus on people like Gacy and Noam Dar doesn't exactly bode well around here and it made me want the show to end a lot faster than I usually do. The roster is still being shifted around after the Draft, but hopefully these weaker shows aren't the new norm. NXT is better than this and while the show wasn't bad, it had some really, really rough spots this week.

Results

Cora Jade b. Fallon Henley – Double arm DDT

Creed Brothers b. Dyad – Sliding forearm to Reid

Trick Williams/Carmelo Hayes b. Charlie Dempsey/Drew Gulak – Nothing But Net to Dempsey

Kiana James b. Thea Hail – 401K

Roxanne Perez b. Jacy Jayne – Pop Rox

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