

NXT No Mercy 2023: Takeover Lite

No Mercy 2023

Date: September 30, 2023

Location: Mechanics Bank Arena, Bakersfield, California

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Booker T.

NXT is back on the road this week and the card is looking rather stacked. The two big matches this time around will see Becky Lynch defending the Women's Title against Tiffany Stratton in an Extreme Rules match, plus Ilja Dragunov challenging Carmelo Hayes for the NXT Title. That should be enough to make this work so let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Kelani Jordan vs. Blair Davenport

Davenport grabs a headlock to start but Jordan snaps off a hurricanrana into a dropkick. Back up and Davenport grabs a slam and we hit a reverse chinlock. A Boston crab sends Jordan over to the ropes but she's back up with the forearms to really wake up the crowd. Jordan grabs a springboard cutter for a double knockdown and an elbow puts Davenport down again. A sleeper has Davenport in more trouble but a ram into the corner breaks it up. Jordan's split legged moonsault hits raised knees, allowing Davenport to hit a middle rope double stomp to the back. Something close to a Falcon Arrow finishes for Davenport at 6:35.

Rating: C. This was a nice showcase for Jordan, but the only way she was going to pull this off was with Gigi Dolin interfering. Jordan is someone who has potential to go somewhere once she gets some experience and develops a bit but we're a long way from there. Davenport is still one of the bigger villains in the division, but she needs to get into a bigger feud sooner or later.

Post match Gigi Dolin runs in to go after Davenport.

The opening video sees someone putting a No Mercy cartridge into an N64 and a modernized version of the game's intro. We get a character select screen (Complete with a dig diggity dig, dig diggity dog!) and most of the matches are selected and shown on the match screens ala the original game. This was AMAZING.

Bron Breaker vs. Baron Corbin

Breaker comes out with a dog head costume on for something that might have sounded better on paper. Corbin on the other hand comes out on a motorcycle. Breaker hits the big running flip dive to the floor and the brawl is on before the bell. They fight into the crowd with Corbin getting the better of things until Breaker knocks him back to ringside.

We pause for Breaker to beat up some cameramen, allowing Corbin to get in a few shots of his own. Corbin's backslash hits the announcers' table by mistake though and they finally go inside. The bell rings and Breaker hammers away as we have no commentary for some reason. Corbin hits a middle rope clothesline and some forearms on the mat as they're going with the slugout. Breaker powers him into the corner though and runs the corner for the super hurricanrana.

The gorilla press powerslam gets two but Corbin tells him to bring it and hammers away. The Recliner sends Corbin over to the ropes and he's back with Deep Six for two. They slug it out again until Breaker hits a hard clothesline. The fight heads outside again and Corbin sends him through the announcers' table to quite the positive response. Breaker pops back up with a spear and they head back inside...where Mr. Stone pops up for a distraction. That's enough for Corbin to grab the End of Days for the pin at 9:35.

Rating: B. That was certainly an odd way to go, as I wouldn't have bet on Breaker losing here. Then again I wouldn't have

bet on Corbin being treated as a good guy pretty much ever in WWE. As for the match, this was about two big, strong people hitting each other really hard until one of them couldn't get up anymore. Granted it took some assistance for Corbin to put him away, but it was a heck of a fight.

Carmelo Hayes and Trick Williams want to leave with their own titles tonight.

North American Title: Dominik Mysterio vs. Trick Williams

Mysterio is defending and Dragon Lee is guest referee. A dropkick before the bell gives Mysterio a fast two so it's already time to yell at Lee. Williams follows him to the floor and throws him back inside as the fans want Mami. Back in and Mysterio kicks the rope for a low blow, followed by a dropkick to send Williams outside again. The chinlock doesn't last long back inside so Mysterio snaps Williams throat first across the top.

Williams fights up though and a double clothesline leaves them both down. Mysterio hits the 619 but a superkick hits Lee by mistake. A neckbreaker drops Williams as another referee runs in for the near fall. Back up and Mysterio hits the other referee as well, followed by a crossbody to take Williams outside. Williams gets posted but avoids the frog splash, setting up a knee to drive the belt into Mysterio's face. Lee counts the pin to give Williams the title at 9:40.

Rating: C+. This was one of those matches with all kinds of things going on, which will likely set up a rematch. What matters is giving Williams the big push as he has seemed to be ready for the chance. It's an interesting way to go and now we get to see what he can do with the chance. Good for them for trying something with someone new, though I'm surprised that Mysterio lost here instead of on Raw.

We look at the dinner to set up the four way Tag Team Title match.

Joe Gacy tells Ava that the Schism is done and now he has to find his own way.

Tag Team Titles: Tony D'Angelo/Stacks vs. Bronco Nima/Lucien Price vs. Creed Brothers vs. Humberto Carrillo/Angel Garza

D'Angelo and Stacks are defending and it's one fall to a finish. Scripts is here with Nima and Price, who come to the ring on a bicycle and tricycle. The champs have a bunch of the family here for the entrance and we're ready to go. They waste no time in going to the big brawl and commentary is already feeling sorry for the referee. Brutus hits the big dive to the floor to take some people out, only to get chopped back inside.

D'Angelo comes in and gets chopped by Garza and Carrillo but we pause as D'Angelo's knee gives out. It's off to Stacks for a running uppercut as D'Angelo is taken out. Stacks gets dropped by a high/low and a Gory Bomb/slingshot flipping cutter combination gives Carrillo two. Price comes in for a chinlock but Stacks fights up and gets over to Brutus for the tag. Brutus cleans house and ankle locks Garza as Julius suplexes everyone in sight.

Carrillo makes the save and we get the big staredown as D'Angelo comes back to the ring. The Creeds and the champs take the other four up top for a quadruple superplex and everyone is down again. Nima and Price are back up to clean house again and a power up powerslam gets two on D'Angelo. Garza and Carrillo are back in with some dropkicks but Brutus sends them to the floor for the springboard Brutus Ball. That leaves Price to get caught in Bada Boom Bada Bing to retain the titles at 12:05.

Rating: B-. This was fun as they had everyone get in there and go nuts at various times, with D'Angelo coming back in for the big moment later on making a cool moment. You also had the Creeds getting to show just how awesome they can be and it was

all over the place for about twelve minutes. It was a bit messy for the most part, but that's exactly how it should have gone.

We see the vignette from NXT of someone watching the Cincinnati Bengals and WCW, but he also watches various second generation wrestlers.

Carmelo Hayes is VERY proud of Trick Williams.

We recap Butch winning the Global Heritage Invitational to earn a Heritage Cup shot.

Heritage Cup: Butch vs. Noam Dar

Butch, with Tyler Bate, is challenging and Meta Four is here with Dar. Round one begins with the two of them going to the mat but neither can get much of an advantage. Back up and Dar doesn't seem overly confident, with Butch pulling him down by the arm to make it worse. Butch cranks on the fingers and arm until the round ends, but Dar gets in a cheap shot after the bell.

Round two begins with Dar going after the arm and firing off a kick to the chest. Butch isn't having that and scores with his own kicks in the corner. Another shot to the arm cuts Dar down again and Butch hits the ten forearms to the chest. The Meta Four offer a distraction though, allowing Oro Mensah to get in a cheap shot. Dar steals the pin and the fall at 2:30 of the round and 6:30 overall.

Round three begins with Dar hammering away but Butch backflips out of a German suplex attempt. Dar rolls to the floor so Butch moonsaults down onto him for the big crash. Back in and Dar kicks another moonsault out of the air but the Nova Roller misses. Butch hits the Bitter End for the pin to tie it up at 1:58 of the round and 9:10 overall.

Round four opens with Butch going after the arm and grabbing

the cross armbreaker. That's reversed into a triangle choke but Butch stacks it up for two and the break. Dar gets in another shot of his own, only to get pulled into Butch's triangle choke. The clock runs out though and Dar survives without tapping.

Round five begins with both of them banged up but Butch unloads with chops to take over. The Bitter End is broken up and Dar hits him in the face for two. Butch catches him up top with a superplex and another near fall. Dar heads to the apron and grabs a brainbuster for a heck of a near fall and the fans get back into it. Butch snaps the finger as the round ends.

Round six (the final round) begins with Butch striking away but Mensah offers a distraction. The Nova Roller gives Dar two as Bate goes after the Meta Four. Butch hits a Tyler Driver 97 for two of his own but Dar pulls him into the kneebar. That's reversed into the Bitter End for another near fall so the cross armbreaker goes on. Cue Gallus to go after Bate, allowing Joe Coffey to come in and hit Butch with All The Best For The Belles. Dar retains at 2:34 of the round and 18:51 overall.

Rating: B-. The action was good but egads we just spent a month on a tournament to find Dar, who has been champion for the better part of ever, a new challenger and never mind, as Dar retains anyway. He's good at what he does but it's ok to let him drop the title for a bit. The action was high quality as you would expect, but it's really hard to stay interested in Dar's title reign continuing.

We recap Ilja Dragunov vs. Carmelo Hayes for the NXT Title. Hayes retained over Dragunov at the Great American Bash but Trick Williams used a chair. Now Hayes needs to know he can win on his own.

NXT Title: Ilja Dragunov vs. Carmelo Hayes

Hayes is defending and has a special entrance with banners

falling, featuring the name of everyone he's beaten to retain the title. After the Big Match Intros, Dragunov sends him into the corner and strikes away to take over fast. Hayes gets in a few shots of his own but the springboard elbow misses. Instead Dragunov scores with the 61Line for the knockdown, setting up a backsplash for two.

Dragunov grabs a front facelock to keep Hayes in trouble, with a knee to the head knocking him silly again. The strike off goes to Dragunov but Hayes sends him into the corner and unloads with chops. Hayes knocks him down again but can't follow up, meaning it's time for a breather. Back up and they trade more strikes until Hayes nails a step up enziguri to drop Dragunov again.

A springboard bulldog (originally a DDT but Hayes changed it in mid-air after realizing it wasn't going to work for a nice save) gives Hayes two but Dragunov is back up with some rolling German suplexes. The Constantine Special misses for Dragunov and Hayes grabs a spinning faceplant for two. Hayes unloads with stomps to the head until Dragunov slips out and hits a running knee.

Dragunov scores with a powerbomb and loads up Coast To Coast. Hayes tries to Codebreaker him out of the air but leaves it a bit short, allowing Dragunov to Death Valley Driver him into the corner. Now the Coast To Coast can connect for two and an H Bomb gets two more.

The middle rope H Bomb gives Dragunov another near fall and he's stunned off the kickout. Torpedo Moscow cut off with a superkick to give Hayes a breather and they head to the apron. Hayes cutters him to the floor for the big crash and they head back inside, where Dragunov knocks him out of the air. A super H Bomb gives Dragunov the pin and the title at 21:07.

Rating: A-. This one pretty much blew their first match away and was two guys beating the fire out of each other. Dragunov

is the more rugged brawler who dominated Hayes to start but Hayes eventually got into it with the speed and athleticism. It was a heck of a match, probably Hayes' best ever, but it was time for Dragunov to get the big win.

Respect is shown post match.

Video on the Women's Breakout Tournament.

We recap Tiffany Stratton challenging Becky Lynch for the Women's Title. Lynch took the title from her but Stratton kept attacking the new champ. As a result, it's Extreme Rules for the title.

Women's Title: Becky Lynch vs. Tiffany Stratton

Lynch is defending and this is Extreme Rules. We get a look back at Lynch's NXT career before she comes out with a shopping cart of weapons. They fight into the crowd (featuring a heck of a No Mercy sign modeled after the N64 game with modern stars) with Lynch getting the better of things until a forearm to the face slows her down. Lynch hits her with some kind of a necklace (from a fan) and Stratton is knocked back down the steps.

They get back to ringside where Stratton kendo sticks her down to take over. A basement dropkick gets two for Stratton so she grabs the toolbox. Stratton whips out a rather large wrench before switching to a hammer. Both of them miss a big swing and the hammer falls out to the floor. Stratton grabs a sidewalk slam for two but Lynch sends her into the corner. The Bexploder lets Lynch go up top for a missile dropkick and Stratton rolls outside. That's fine with Lynch, who puts her in the shopping cart for a ram into the steps.

Back in and Lynch pours out a bunch of Barbies, with Stratton being dropped onto them for two. Stratton is back up with one heck of a trashcan lid shot to the head, followed by a non-lid shot to the ribs. A spinebuster onto the trashcan gives

Stratton two but she takes a long time throwing in a bunch of chairs. Lynch fights back but gets powerbombed onto the steps. That doesn't seem to matter very much as Lynch fights up and grabs a table, only to get knocked down again.

Stratton manages to lose Lynch as she sets up the table though, allowing Lynch to spray her with a fire extinguisher. Lynch whips out a barbed wire baseball bat but drops it before she can, uh, kill her. Stratton manages a hurricanrana and a double handspring elbow sends Lynch through the barricade.

With Lynch on the table, Stratton hits a Swanton to...actually not break the table in a nasty looking landing. Another Swanton connects for two back inside so Lynch rolls outside, only to miss a moonsault. The Manhandle Slam on the floor plants Stratton for two and Lynch is rather shocked. Stratton Regal rolls her onto the chairs but misses the Prettiest Moonsault Ever. The Manhandle Slam onto the chairs retains Lynch's title at 20:20.

Rating: A-. Well that was awesome, as they beat the absolute fire out of each other. Stratton is so far beyond what she should be able to do at this level of experience and it's not like losing to Lynch is some career killer. Lynch might not be what she was before but she can still more than bring it on the big stage. Great match here and one of Lynch's best in a long time.

Lynch knows she was in a war.

Carmelo Hayes apologizes to Trick Williams for not getting to be double champs. Williams hugs him to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. Those last two matches more than carried the show and made it more than worth a look. The opener was good too and the rest of the matches were good enough. This felt like it was following the old Takeover formula and while it wasn't quite up to that level, the two main events were both great and this was a heck of a show. NXT has absolutely

found itself and if they can keep that going, Halloween Havoc and Deadline should both be rather awesome.

Results

Blair Davenport b. Kelani Jordan – Falcon Arrow

Baron Corbin b. Bron Breaker – End Of Days

Trick Williams b. Dominik Mysterio – Jumping knee into the title belt to the face

Tony D'Angelo/Stacks b. Bronco Nima/Lucien Price, Creed Brothers and Humberto Carrillo/Angel Garza – Bada Boom Bada Bing to Price

Noam Dar b. Butch 2-1

Ilja Dragunov b. Carmelo Hayes – Super H Bomb

Becky Lynch b. Tiffany Stratton – Manhandle Slam onto a pile of chairs

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