

NXT – December 12, 2023: Looking To The Future

NXT

Date: December 12, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Booker T., Vic Joseph

We're done with Deadline and that means we have less than a month to go before New Year's Evil. Thanks to Blair Davenport and Trick Williams winning the Iron Survivor Challenges, their title shots are set for the first show of the year. Other than that, Dragon Lee is the new North American Champion and we could be in for a hot ending to the year. Let's get to it.

[Here is Deadline if you need a recap.](#)

Trick Williams and Carmelo Hayes arrive, with Williams bragging to reporters about how clutch he is. As he brags about getting ready for the NXT Title at New Year's Evil, Hayes walks inside by himself.

Long Deadline recap.

Carmelo Hayes has been attacked and is clutching his knee.

Here is Cora Jade to say that the sun finally emerged from the clouds on Saturday because she is finally bad. Everyone has been tweeting her every day and wanting her back, and even though they hated her back then, they love her now. Now she is all anyone is talking about but here is Lyra Valkyria to interrupt. She knows Jade hasn't changed in recent months but things around here have.

Valkyria isn't the woman Jade used to mess with because she is now the Women's Champion. Cue Blair Davenport to interrupt, saying she's the Iron Survivor and the time is ticking on

Valkyria's reign. Cue Nikkita Lyons to say she remembers what Davenport did in the parking lot and the fight is on. That sounds tag teamish for later tonight.

We recap Meta Four and Fallon Henley/Brooks Jensen/Josh Briggs getting in a fight at Deadline.

Dragon Lee says the North American Title win hasn't sunk in yet but it's incredible. Unfortunately it came after an injury to Wes Lee so Dragon wishes him a speedy recovery. Tonight, the title is on the line and he'll find out his challenger tonight.

Meta Four vs. Fallon Henley/Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen

Jakara Jackson is here with Meta Four. The villains jump them to start and Jensen might have hurt something early on. We settle down to Henley shoving Legend and trying a choke, which is powered into the corner. Everything breaks down and the villains clear the ring as we take a break.

Back with Dar grabbing a chinlock on Jensen, who fights up but gets hit in the knee, which was banged up during the break. Jensen manages to get in a clothesline and the tag brings in Henley as everything breaks down. The women crash out to the floor but here is Tiffany Stratton to go after Henley. They fight to the back as Briggs comes in to clean house, including the always stupid big boot that makes your opponent DDT his partner. A hard lariat gives Briggs the pin on Dar at 11:00.

Rating: C+. That should set up Briggs for a Heritage Cup shot, where he will likely lose because Dar must hold that thing until the end of time. Other than that, we should be in for a good fight between Stratton and Henley, who at least didn't take the fall here to keep Legend's build going. Nice six person tag here, as we're getting some fresh blood moving up the ladder a bit.

Carmelo Hayes' knee seems to be ok and he's medically cleared

to compete on Smackdown. He thinks he knows who it is and he'll call that person out in the ring. Trick Williams is ready to be at his side but first he has to take care of Ilja Dragunov. They'll each handle their own business and everything is cool.

We meet the Men's Breakout Tournament entrants....and here is Lexis King to jump Trey Bearhill with a chair.

Men's Breakout Tournament First Round: Myles Borne vs. Oba Femi

Borne tries to pick up the pace on the much stronger Femi and hits a dropkick to the back. Some stomping gives Borne two but Femi power up with a running elbow in the corner. A powerslam gives Borne two out of nowhere but Femi puts him down on the apron. Back in and a pop up powerbomb finishes for Femi at 3:36.

Rating: C. There wasn't much to this one but Femi had the power to make things interesting. He's already in the final four and putting him in the finals seems like a possibility. For now though, the powerhouse with the great look gets to move forward and that should be enough to generate a bit of interest for him.

Nikkita Lyons comes in to see Lyra Valkyria before their tag match tonight and as usual, no one talks like this. Lyons opens Valkyria's locker and finds a picture of Valkyria and Becky Lynch....with Tatum Paxley's face taped over Becky's. Seems to be news to Valkyria.

Tiffany Stratton is sick of Fallon Henley, who usually serves people like Stratton. Violence seems implied.

North American Title: Dragon Lee vs. ???

Lee is defending against....Tyler Bate. They shake hands to start until Bate takes him down with a headlock. Stereo

blocked kicks to the ribs and stereo dropkicks get them nowhere so it's a double clothesline to send us to a break. Back with Bate knocking him to the floor setting up a big dive. They get back inside where Lee hits a superkick to put him outside again, meaning it's a heck of a suicide dive.

Back in and the very extended airplane spin gives Bate two, followed by the rebound lariat for the same. Lee snaps off a rebound German suplex into the top rope double stomp but the powerbomb is countered. The Tyler Driver 97 is countered into a sunset flip to give Lee two, followed by Destino to retain at 10:50.

Rating: B-. That's a good way to get Lee's title reign going as Bate is someone who has enough of a reputation to give Lee a nice rub. Lee seems to be one of the next big things for WWE and it is smart to see him getting a few wins. They have a long way to go with him but at least they are off to a nice start.

Respect is shown post match.

Josh Briggs and Brooks Jensen are happy with their win but Fallon Henley wants to hurt Tiffany Stratton. Briggs thinks he's up for the Heritage Cup but Jensen says that's not Briggs' style. Eh he'll do it anyway.

Lexis King and Ava are outside Shawn Michaels' office where they talk about how everyone in the tournament wants to hurt him. That's cool with King, who is put into the tournament to replace Trey Bearhill. Works for him.

Dijak vs. Eddy Thorpe

The brawl is on in the aisle before the bell and they send each other into different things. The fight goes inside for the opening bell...and Dijak (who is bleeding from the side of the head) sends him into the corner so hard that the turnbuckle breaks. Dijak hits him with the turnbuckle for the

DQ at 53 seconds.

Post match the beatdown is on, with Dijak unloading on Thorpe's ribs.

We go to Chase U, where it's time to see how much money they have made. The bake sale and car wash brought in a little over \$300, with Duke Hudson pointing out how much the interest on the loan is on its own. Thea Hail is excited to see an upcoming match and is off to watch in the student section. With Hail and Jacy Jayne gone, Scrypts comes in with a briefcase and a proposition for Chase, who seems interested.

Cora Jade and Blair Davenport argue over who will win the Women's Title but they're ready to team together tonight.

Men's Breakout Tournament First Round: Keanu Carver vs. Riley Osborne

Osborne is part of Chase U and Thea Hail/Jacy Jayne are in the student section. Osborne takes him down to start and hits a standing moonsault for two, with Carver sending him lying. A heck of a clothesline drops Osborne and a fall away slam sends him flying. The chinlock doesn't last long and it's Osborne fighting up (Hail approves)...until a Pounce drops him hard. Osborne knocks him off the top though and a shooting star press gives him the pin at 3:24.

Rating: C. Osborne is someone who has shown quite a bit of potential on NXT LVL Up and it doesn't surprise me that he won here. Having Hail be interested in him makes things more interesting so they already have something for him. Nice enough match too, with Carver's Pounce looking great.

Drew Gulak and company interrupt Dragon Lee in the back and since Lee is going to defend the title every week, they accept. Lee can find out which one he'll face next week.

Thea Hail comes up to Riley Osborne and clearly has a thing

for him. Jacy Jayne tries to coach her but he's off to take a shower. Jayne isn't sure how well she did but here are Kiana James and Izzi Dame to mock Hail's lame efforts.

Nikkita Lyons/Lyra Valkyria vs. Cora Jade/Blair Davenport

Valkyria rolls Davenport up for two and it's off to Jade, who gets taken down with a headlock takeover. Lyons comes in and gets to power Davenport around but Jade gets away. Davenport gets in a takedown of her own and grabs the chinlock as we take a break. Back with Jade handing it off to Davenport, who gets kicked away without much trouble. Valkyria comes back in to clean house...but here is Tatum Paxley to stare at Valkyria. The distraction means a high crossbody misses before Valkyria and Jade get sent into each other. Davenport knees Valkyria down and Jade steals the pin at 8:27.

Rating: C-. This was kind of a mess and it really didn't work that well. Jade pinning Valkyria is fine, but Jade didn't exactly steal the show and Lyons, with her weird genie looking gear, looked completely out of place. This needed a bit more Davenport, who might not be great but is at least more polished. Not great here and the weakest thing on the show so far.

Post match Paxley shoves Lyons down and awkwardly holds Valkyria. So we have a new stalker?

Hank Walker and Tank Ledger run into Gallus and say they have more heart than Gallus put together. Walker and Ledger leave, with Joe Gacy popping up as a forklift driver to talk about heart. This, believe or not, was dumb.

Here's what's coming on future shows. Of note: Drew Gulak and company are dubbed the No Quarter Catch Crew.

Here is Trick Williams for a chat. He talks about how Deadline was a movement and he nominates the Men's Iron Survivor Challenge as the Match Of The Year. He's ready to come through

in the clutch again but here is NXT Champion Ilja Dragunov to interrupt. Dragunov praises him for snatching victory from the jaws of defeat and acknowledges Williams' momentum. Williams is ready to win the NXT Title in three weeks but Dragunov isn't so sure about that.

Dragunov is ready to do whatever it takes to retain the title but here is Carmelo Hayes to interrupt. Hayes says he knows who attacked Williams, because it's the same person who attacked him earlier tonight. Dragunov goes to leave but gets a not so fast from Hayes...who says Dragunov is the attacker. Dragunov denies the allegations and Williams would like some proof too. Hayes wants to know who got more out of splitting up the team and lays out how well it has gone for Dragunov.

That earns him another denial from Dragunov, who suggests that Hayes might not have been attacked in the first place. Dragunov says Williams needs to talk to Hayes, who gets a bit more aggressive while saying Dragunov doesn't deserve the title. Hayes goes to grab the title and winds up hitting Williams in the face. This is an interesting way to go as they're cranking up the drama on the way to a title match which could go either way. Nice job.

Overall Rating: B-. This was a different kind of show but once again they had a focus. This time, that focus was on building things for the future and giving us something new. In this case, we have the Breakout tournament, Williams as the new big challenge for the title, Briggs and Henley getting some new pushes and Lee seemingly being set up for a weekly title match. That's a nice way to get the ball rolling on the future, but now they need to actually make that happen, particularly at New Year's Evil. Good show here, at least from a building for the future show.

Results

Fallon Henley/Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen b. Meta Four – Lariat to Dar

Oba Femi b. Myles Borne – Pop up powerbomb
Dragon Lee b. Tyler Bate – Destino
Eddy Thorpe b. Dijak via DQ when Dijak used the turnbuckle
Riley Osborne b. Keanu Carver – Shooting star press
Cora Jade/Blair Davenport b. Nikkita Lyons/Lyra Valkyria –
Knee to Valkyria's head

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