

NXT – January 2, 2024 (New Year's Evil): They Missed

NXT

Date: January 2, 2024

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Booker T.

It's New Year's Evil and that means we have a stacked show. In this case that means the NXT Title will be on the line as the injured Ilja Dragunov is defending against Trick Williams, plus the finals of the Breakout Tournament. We should be in for a big card tonight and NXT tends to do that well so let's get to it.

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

The opening video looks at the major matches and talks about how this is a new year, meaning new beginnings.

Women's Title: Lyra Valkyria vs. Blair Davenport

Valkyria is defending after Davenport won the Women's Iron Survivor Challenge. They fight over a lockup to start with neither being able to get very far. Valkyria grabs a cravate for little success, as Valkyria gets in a knockdown. A top rope double stomp and neckbreaker give Davenport two but Valkyria jawbreaks her way to freedom.

The high crossbody misses so Valkyria grabs a fisherman's suplex for two. Valkyria heads up top again but gets pulled down with a super Falcon Arrow for a nasty crash. They head outside, where Davenport's hard knee crashes into the announcers' table. Back in and Davenport misses another double stomp, setting up a Samoan driver to retain Valkyria's title at 8:24.

Rating: C+. This was a way to give Valkyria a nice title defense and clear out Davenport from the list of challengers. In that sense it worked well, even if this didn't quite feel like a major match following the Iron Survivor Challenge. Valkyria very well may be in for a showdown with Cora Jade and this should take care of one of the biggest roadblocks on the way there.

Post match cue Lola Vice to try to cash in her title shot but Tatum Paxley makes the save. Elektra Lopez comes in to go after Paxley and everything is broken up.

Ilja Dragunov is too banged up and the NXT Title match is off. Well that must be going somewhere.

No Quarter Catch Crew vs. LWO

Dragon Lee is out so Cruz del Toro and Joaquin Wilde are teaming with...Carlito. Del Toro runs the ropes to start and snaps off a headscissors to Gulak as the fans are more interested in Carlito. Wilde comes in to take down Gulak and Kemp, leaving Borne to come in as everything breaks down. The Crew is sent outside for a CRAZY high dive from Wilde (yeah he had a springboard but dang that was impressive).

Back in and Gulak blasts Wilde with a clothesline to take over, followed by Kemp coming in to work on the leg. Wilde is able to flip away though and the hot tag brings in Carlito to blow the roof off the place. Everything breaks down again and Kemp catches Carlito with a backbreaker for the delayed two. Wilde goes up top for a heck of a corkscrew dive, leaving Kemp to get Backstabbered. A Phoenix splash gives del Toro the pin at 8:32.

Rating: B-. This is a good example of "it was what it was", as the Carlito debut was designed to give the fans a big moment and that's exactly what happened. The Crew is little more than a bunch of midcard bullies and here we had someone standing up to them for a win. It even had that insane dive (look that up)

and it was an entertaining match throughout.

Trick Williams, with Carmelo Hayes, isn't happy over the title match being canceled but Grayson Waller, the original Iron Survivor, comes in. Hayes says Williams wants a fight tonight and puts up Williams' title shot against Waller, leaving him pleased and Williams annoyed.

Riley Osborne is writing an essay about what it would mean to become the next European star.

Roxanne Perez vs. Arianna Grace

They fight over arm control to start with Grace taking her down and offering a handshake. Back up and Perez gets in a crossbody but an O'Connor roll is blocked. A catapult sends Perez throat first into the middle rope but she has to fight out of a chinlock. Perez makes the fired up comeback and hits a running knee, followed by the right hands in the corner. Pop Rox finishes Grace at 5:10.

Rating: C. This didn't get much time but Grace isn't on Perez's level yet anyway, meaning there was only so much to get out of this one. Perez is in a bit of a weird place here as she is doing more building others up rather than going near the title scene. I'm not sure what is next for her but she needs something bigger. Grace continues to be good enough in her role, but the beauty queen deal doesn't seem to have the brightest future.

Post match Grace yells at her again so Perez snaps and grabs a crossface. Perez won't let go and the decision is reversed.

Ava announces that the men's Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic starts next week. Can we tone it down with the tournaments for a bit?

Video on Tiffany Stratton vs. Fallon Henley before their big fight tonight.

Blair Davenport is banged up when Nikkita Lyons comes in to say she wants revenge. A fight is broken up but a match seems likely.

Tiffany Stratton vs. Fallon Henley

The loser becomes the winner's servant or ranch hand. Henley starts fast and knocks Stratton into the corner. They go outside, with Henley hammering away even more, only to be sent shoulder first into the post. We take a break and come back with a double clothesline to put both of them down. A crucifix bomb gives Henley two but she has to avoid a Prettiest Moonsault Ever attempt. Instead they crash out to the floor, where Stratton grabs a chair. The referee takes that away and the distraction lets Henley hit the Shining Wizard for the pin at 9:04.

Rating: C+. They had the aggression showing here and the ending was enough of an upset that I was surprised by the result. Henley getting to humiliate Stratton should be a lot of fun and works better than the opposite, but that's the biggest win of Henley's career by a wide margin. It's a big upset and that made things more interesting in this case.

Baron Corbin interrupts Bron Breakker and pitches being a team in the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic. Breakker laughs him off but Corbin points out that no one else wants to be Breakker's partner. Breakker realizes they're both rather horrible people so sure why not.

Video on Oba Femi.

Cora Jade gets annoyed at Gigi Dolin sitting in her locker and they have to be held apart.

We get a sitdown interview with Ridge Holland, who talks about how this is his redemption story. His first run in NXT ended with his double leg injury so then he joined the Brawling Brutes on Smackdown. Then he got hurt again and had his twin

sons, only to come back here again and injure Ilja Dragunov. There was no malicious intent and he's not a monster who tries to hurt people. He knows how fast things can be taken away but he's still here to prove himself. Things end without controversy.

Breakout Tournament Finals: Oba Femi vs. Riley Osborne

In the back, Thea Hail gives Osborne a pep talk and is WAY too excited over a high five. Osborne kicks him in the head to start and we hit the front facelock. That earns Osborne a choke shove out to the floor as Thea Hail and Jacy Jayne come out to watch from the crowd. Femi drops Osborne again and we take a break.

Back with Osborne caught in a bearhug until Femi plants him with a Rock Bottom backbreaker. The bearhug goes right back on before Femi knocks him hard into the corner. Osborne avoids a charge into the post though and the pace gets to pick up. A headscissors into a corkscrew moonsault gives Osborne two but the shooting star press hits knees. Femi grabs a toss powerbomb into a pop up powerbomb for the pin and the tournament at 9:42.

Rating: C. Yeah I'd say that worked, as this was about getting Femi over as a new star. He ran through everyone in the tournament and won the whole thing in the end, which made him feel like a killer. Someone with that size and power should be fine for a long time and I'm curious to see where he goes from here. Osborne should be good to go for a nice while as well and they're both off to solid starts.

OTM is ready to win the Tag Team Titles next week because the champs are no longer hungry.

Kiana James and Izzy Dame are ready to be a perfect partnership.

Trick Williams yells at Carmelo Hayes for making a decision

about the Grayson Waller match. Hayes believes in him, but Williams is doing this one by himself.

Thea Hail and Jacy Jayne are upset over Riley Osborne's loss but Duke Hudson and Andre Chase come in to say they're ready for the Dusty Cup. Jayne cuts that off and says Chase needs to be focused on his debt so Osborne and Hudson will be in the tournament. Hail really approves.

Tatum Paxley is very happy that Lyra Valkyria is still Women's Champion but scares Valkyria as well.

Axiom and Nathan Frazer are going to be in the Dusty Cup together, but Frazer again screws up by insulting established teams. Edris Enofe and Malik Blade pop in to not be pleased.

The D'Angelo Family is ready for OTM and introduce the woman who has been doing business for them as Adrianna, shortened to The Riz. They go to their car but Joe Gacy is in the trunk. Apparently someone else was supposed to be in there but Gacy might have dealt with him.

Grayson Waller vs. Trick Williams

For an NXT Title shot. Waller knocks him into the corner to start and a suplex gets two. Williams is back up and knocks him to the floor, followed by going over the announcers' table. Back up and Waller hits a quick clothesline (Waller: "I just whooped you Trick.") and we take a break.

We take a break and come back with Waller dropping elbows to the back and grabbing a half crab. With that broken up, Waller talks more trash and gets hit in the mouth. The rolling Stunner is cut off by another shot to the face and they go to the corner. A middle rope Rock Bottom gives Williams two but Waller's rolling Downward Spiral gets two more. Williams grabs a jumping neckbreaker and here is Carmelo Hayes. Williams isn't pleased...but here is Kevin Owens to deck Waller. That's enough to set up Williams' flash knee for the pin at 13:06.

Rating: C+. So why was Owens there in the first place? Waller wasn't scheduled so why did Owens show up? Anyway, at least they didn't do anything crazy like get rid of Williams as #1 contender, which would have been incredibly frustrating after the build. I'm not sure when the title match is going to take place, but we might be waiting a bit if they're dragging things out. Beating Waller is fine, but that's not what they were building here and the switch hurt.

Overall Rating: C. This was quite the disappointment, as it was billed as a big deal but the men's title match didn't happen, the Women's Title match was just ok, the tournament final was fine and nothing really stood out. It felt like they punted this week and that's never a good thing on such an important event. Not an awful show, but a rather disappointing one given what it looked like it was supposed to be.

Results

Lyra Valkyria b. Blair Davenport – Samoan driver
LW0 b. No Quarter Catch Crew – Phoenix splash to Kemp
Arianna Grace b. Roxanne Perez via reversed decision
Fallon Henley b. Tiffany Stratton – Shining Wizard
Oba Femi b. Riley Osborne – Pop up powerbomb
Trick Williams b. Grayson Waller – Flash knee

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