

NXT – January 25, 2011 – The Fink is Here!

NXT

Date: January 25, 2011

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Todd Grisham

I was a political science major in college so I'm having to stop watching the State of the Union Address for this show. I hope you people are happy. It'll be on in the background so if you get random political ramblings I apologize. Anyway on with NXT. This is the eighth week in the season and we're down to the final four. The show should get a lot more entertaining now as other than arguably Curtis, everyone is at least mostly interesting. Let's get to it.

Theme song opens us up. I can't believe this show has been on almost a year now.

Striker is in the ring with the rookies. There are two challenges tonight, one of which is a fatal fourway. The winner gets the opportunity to switch their rookies if they choose to. Before we start though we have a violation of rules and it involves Bateman. We see a clip of Bateman as a ninja, slipping the answers to the Know Your Pro challenge to Bryan. Nice to see them addressing this...I think. Bateman gets penalized for this challenge. Bryan: "That was the Ultimate Warrior! Not Bateman!"

The first challenge is called Outthink The Fink. There are trivia questions in envelopes that have been thought up by Fink. They have thirty seconds but Bateman gets twenty as a penalty. Here's the Fink! He always makes things seem more special. Fink is uh, kind of chunky here. If anyone beats Fink, they get an extra two points. Fink picks the first

envelope and the question is: "93,173 was the attendance at what show?" Ah ok it's rapid fire trivia questions and it's most in 30 seconds. Fink gets 2 right but can't get the third out in time. Striker asks questions very slowly. He also got Taker's first Streak victime.

Curtis goes second with the category of WWE Titles and gets very specific questions about individual PPVs. He only got one, which was who is the youngest WWE Champion in history. I knew some of them but they went way too in depth such as who did Edge beat at this PPV.

Bateman gets Firsts and gets one, which was who did Edge beat for his first singles title (Jarrett).

Saxton gets Potpourri and gets that HHH put a bounty on Goldberg and that's it. He didn't know the team that Orton and Edge formed.

Going last is Clay and his category is the Royal Rumble. He says that Cena returned at the Royal Rumble called Summerslam. That's not a typo either. Clay gets one, which was who won the first Rumble. So it's a four way tie? Does anyone get the two points? No one gets the extra two points for beating Fink.

The fatal fourway is elimination. SWEET!

They plug the Top 10 Rumble moments on WWE.com which is an absurd list. Shawn winning from #1 is the top moment but Rey winning from #2 at almost twice the time is like 5th. Cena's return, which should be the top moment, was #6.

Daniel Bryan vs. Ted DiBiase

Before the match we get a clip of the Gail Kim moment last night which had me rolling. I'm a bit sick of this match at

this point. Bryan starts by slipping behind him and Ziggler continues his shouting during these matches. That's always kind of funny as he's a funny guy. They speed it up a bit but Bryan takes it to the mat with an armbar. Josh starts talking to Maryse and gets her autograph.

More arm work and he adds a leg lock at the same time. He's like a doctor out there with his submission precision. They go to a test of strength which Ted throws a kick in to get control and he gets the hold down onto the mat. LeBell Lock can't go on. Bryan controls as we take a break.

Back with DiBiase hammering him down in the corner. Bryan misses a charge and it's control back to DiBiase. Neckbreaker by DiBiase as this is dragging a bit. Truth and Ziggler start dueling chants in kind of a funny bit. They hit the floor as this match is getting a good deal of time. Ziggler keeps cracking jokes about Bateman cheating. All DiBiase here as he rams Bryan into the steps and wants a count out.

Bryan beats the count and gets stomped on. Ziggler makes jokes about being a Vegan while DiBiase gets a two count. We hit the chinlock and Truth starts the "When I say Daniel you say Bryan" chant. That lasts for three full names. Bryan does his backflip out of the corner to take over. This would be a lot more interesting if there was any doubt about the ending.

Big kick by Bryan puts DiBiase down and a flying dropkick off the top gets two. This match has gotten over 10 minutes, probably making it the longest match this season. Bryan gets a rollup for two twice and make it three times. Dream Street is reversed and a sitout chokebomb gets two for DiBiase. Bryan comes out of the corner and almost walks into a spinebuster. He reverses into a guillotine but can't get the LeBell Lock.

DiBiase gets sent to the floor and Bryan charges but runs into

an elbow. Ted sets for Dream Street and actually hits it....for the pin??? DiBiase just got a totally clean pin on the United States Champion on NXT at 12:30. I lay corrected on what I said about the ending being in doubt. I'm really quite surprised by that and it makes the match a lot better actually.

Rating: B. This match got time and it wasn't bad. It was until the ending, but the ending actually changed my outlook on the match. I can't stand matches where it's a waste of time and a guaranteed win. Instead having this be competitive and the person that dominated win it (in a legit shock to me) helped tremendously. I had it at a C+ before the ending if that tells you anything.

Rumble by the Numbers promo again which is still interesting indeed.

Maryse, Ted and Clay are talking about how DiBiase finally won. If anyone else wins, Ted says they'll want him. Clay admits he's flawed but DiBiase says he's still the best choice. Clay says he'll win for DiBiase tonight. He leaves and Maryse speaks more French which Ted still doesn't understand.

Package on Miz vs. Orton for the Rumble.

Brodus Clay vs. Byron Saxton vs. Johnny Curtis vs. Derrick Bateman

This is the second week in a row where I couldn't remember Curtis' name. That's not good when I've watched every episode of this show. This is elimination rules, no tagging, winner has the option of changing their pro. Everyone goes after Bateman for some reason instead of Brodus. He is thrown into a suplex from Brodus and is pinned in less than a minute.

Now they both go after Brodus as I scratch my head trying to figure that out. They manage to get a suplex on him but Curtis tries to steal a rollup on Saxton which gets two. Brodus is collecting himself on the floor so the others are in the ring. Curtis takes out Brodus with a dive, leaving Saxton in the ring as we take a break.

Don't try this at home. These are good PSAs for lack of a better term to run.

Back with Brodus nailing Saxton with a clothesline. Curtis is down on the floor and lets Saxton get beaten down like an intelligent person would. Saxton gets something close to a Stunner to take Brodus down for two. Curtis tries to come in off the top but gets caught. He knocks Saxton down and gets a double guillotine legdrop to put out Saxton at 4:30. We're down to Clay and Curtis.

Clay is reeling and Curtis adds a European Uppercut to send him back on his heels. Brodus is like wait I'm huge and splashes Curtis in the corner. Off to the nerve hold which is my least favorite rest hold of all time. Curtis fights out of it and rams some shoulders into the corner. Josh has picked Rey to win the Rumble apparently. Johnny goes up but jumps into the Tongan Death Grip Slam to end it at 7:20.

Rating: C+. This was quick and I think that was the right idea. These guys aren't very good in the ring so they kept this short. Putting Bateman out that fast was kind of awkward but maybe that was due to an injury or something. This was ok and probably about as good as it was going to get.

Post match Clay says his pro is rich and is likely going to dominate in the Rumble. The one thing his pro isn't is Ted DiBiase, as he's switching to Alberto Del Rio. The Death Grip Slam puts DiBiase down to almost dead silence. Del Rio comes out and shakes hands with DiBiase to end this show kind of early at about 10:45.

Overall Rating: B. This show went by way faster than most do and I think that's due to more wrestling. There wasn't some goofy competition as the trivia thing I guess shows what the guys know about the company's history. If nothing else it was cool to see Fink. This was by far the best episode of the season and it was cool to see these guys in ring at the same time for once. This was a wrestling heavy show and it worked much better because of it. Good stuff here.

Results

Outthink the Fink Ended in a Four Way Tie

Ted DiBiase b. Daniel Bryan – Dream Street

Brodus Clay b. Johnny Curtis, Derrick Bateman and Byron Saxton – Tongan Death Grip Slam to Curtis

NXT – January 18, 2011 – Ricardo Rodriguez In Action!

NXT

Date: January 18, 2011

Location: BOK Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Commentators: Todd Grisham, Josh Matthews

It's elimination week and it's breaking loose in Tulsa! Sorry I always wanted to say that. No I didn't actually but it sounded good and I have nothing to fill in this introduction with. I'd assume Rat Boy goes home tonight because Brodus is awesome, Bateman got a segment on Raw last night, Saxton is kind of funny and the company has decided that this Johnny Curtis guy is awesome or something because he's as bland as

anyone has been in decades so he's THE guy this season. Anyway let's get to it.

Sadly enough I had to look on Wiki for the names of everyone in this season. That's how unmemorable they've been.

We recap the season so far which isn't anything special. Somehow the double date from last week is the highlight I think. We also see Novak getting sent home. I've been watching and reviewing the first season of this show recently, and this isn't holding up to put it mildly.

Striker brings out the rookies as is his custom. My boredom is sinking in slowly this week. As is my anger due to a bad connection to watch this show. Since it's finally elimination week, WE NEED TO HAVE ANOTHER CHALLENGE! Sweet goodness just throw the guys out already! Bateman is the only one with points and the winner gets four points, meaning that the lead he has IS TOTALLY POINTLESS. Yeah I'm in a bad mood tonight if you can't tell.

This is How Well Do You Know Your Pro. A question is asked and you have to match it up. The first is "When I first saw my rookie, I thought he was "blank"". Curtis thinks Truth said impressive but he said cool. Saxton thinks Dolph said...hang on we have to wait for the booing for Dolph's name. Saxton says tan, Dolph says Carlton from Fresh Prince! Ok that made me feel better.

Bryan gets a pop for his answer. Bateman says Bryan thought of Tulsa, Oklahoma...AND HE'S RIGHT??? Only on this season. O'Brian says strange, Alberto says raw. ARE YOU KIDDING ME??? He's said the same thing THE ENTIRE SHOW and now he changes it up? Wow I want his bludgeoned. Striker says he'd see Rat Boy at the hotel that night. O....k then. Brodus says large, DiBiase says out of shape. One point for Bateman and everyone else loses.

Next question is what other profession would you have after wrestling/if you weren't in wrestling. Saxton says singer, Ziggler says anchor for Lifetime. Bateman says Steve Blackman...AND HE'S RIGHT AGAIN! Ok this is getting funny. O'Brian says circus worker, Alberto says his employee. Nice job of keeping character there. Brodus and DiBiase both say bodyguard. Curtis is forgotten and I laugh a lot. Curtis says commentator, Truth says actor/dancer. It's 2 for Bateman, 1 for Clay, 0 for everyone else.

Topic three is biggest area of improvement. Brodus and DiBiase agree on listening. O'Brian says listening, Del Rio says looks. Bateman says chicks and America and they're 3-3. This is cracking me up for some reason. Dolph thinks it's rigged. Striker: YOU THINK? Saxton says being more like Dolph, Ziggler says more Dream Journal entries. Curtis says getting noticed, Truth says confidence. Bateman is Immune and I need to breathe from laughing at that. It was stupid but that was the point.

Byron Saxton vs. Chris Masters

We get a clip of Masters and Saxton talking earlier in the day. Masters says he didn't teach him everything he knew. Ziggler is in a hat which is a weird look for him. If he ever goes insane and bails it can be used as a talking point on a DVD that buries him. Masters overpowers him to start as you would expect. Ziggler gets in Masters' face to give Saxton the advantage.

Saxton gets a jawbreaker of some kind for two. Saxton gets some basic offense in and Ziggler shouts in "STAY DOWN MASTERS BECAUSE YOU REALLY SUCK!" I don't know if it's my low expectations for this show but it's cracking me up tonight. Masters gets a shot to break the momentum and here he comes (to save the day! Save the day!) Saxton is being all

aggressive here but charges one too many times and the Masterlock ends it at 4:40. Ziggler shakes the ropes like the Warrior, furthering my theory.

Rating: C-. This was more or less nothing but Saxton looked pretty good for the most part. It wasn't a good match for the most part as it was really basic but Masters continues to be pretty good like he has since this recent push of his. Saxton needed a match like this as he looked decent in it actually.

Brodus comes into DiBiase's locker room and goes off on him about costing him so much stuff. DiBiase says shut up and listen. Brodus says he will and leaves. Maryse says something in French to tick DiBiase off.

Ted DiBiase/Brodus Clay vs. Derrick Bateman/Daniel Bryan

Maryse has been texting all night. I doubt that'll mean much but whatever. Josh says neither Bateman or Bryan has ever won a match on NXT. Is that true? I can't think of a win for Bryan off the top of my head. I think the winner here is pretty clear. Oh wait this is a tag match! Ok that makes more sense now. Todd: What would the tag team championships look like around Bateman and Bryan's waists? Josh: They would look like two belts around their waists. Nice line.

Bryan plays Ricky Morton for a bit here as both guys get two. We talk about the Rumble almost non-stop here and Josh says he'll make his prediction next week. Todd says that'll get them a good rating. Are they competing with reruns of the Dirt Sheet? Josh points out there are no ratings and Todd has nothing. Nerve hold by Clay and Dolph grabs a mic and shouts TAP OUT!

Brodus gets the Tongan Death Grip but DiBiase tags himself in. Bryan manages to get the tag and Bateman cleans some rooms. DiBiase gets Bateman down and wants to tag out. Clay

is like screw you dude and drops to the floor. Naturally Bateman gets a rollup on DiBiase for the pin at 4:35

Rating: C-. Bit better here but not much either way. I think the ending was pretty clear here and the eventual clash between Brodus and DiBiase is coming which is a good thing. Either way, not terrible here but it was predictable nothing great at all. Bateman needed a win though so that's taken care of.

O'Brian finds some cheese on the floor and eats it. And there's a trail of it too. Oh sweet goodness I hate this guy. At the end is Ricardo with some kind of spray. Alberto comes in and is very ticked off. He apparently has match making power and makes Ricardo vs. O'Brian tonight. It was rat spray. This is really happening people.

Raw ReBound talks about a shift in power. Wait a minute. Punk hurt Cena, Cena talked, Nexus beat down Cena again. When did the power shift away from Nexus and Punk?

Curtis is nervous and Truth says relax. Pointless doesn't begin to describe this.

Ricardo Rodriguez vs. Conor O'Brian

Ricardo is in a bath robe and trips getting into the ring. He does his own entrance which is kind of funny. Ricardo is in big black trunks and is a little chubby. Ladies and gentlemen we are in a comedy match. It's weird to see O'Brian being the best wrestler in a match. Buckle is pulled off and it's all O'Brian.

You know that rat spray going into his eyes seems to be agreeing with him. O'Brian goes into the buckle head first, Rodriguez gets a "splash" and pins him at 1:45. Sweet mercy I have seen it all now. You know except for Trish Stratus

catching trains that fall out of orangutan's kneecaps when they're stealing apples from a Persian fruit vender on Mars but I think you get the point. No rating due to the time.

Elimination time and Striker has to repeat some stuff due to technical difficulties. I'd assume they couldn't hear him in the arena because we could. Bateman is immune and says Saxton should be gone. Rat Boy is gone!!! Thank goodness. He tries to say goodbye but Ricardo cuts him off. The Rat Boy chases him off. Conor comes back and says they all suck. He crawls under the ring for no apparent reason.

Overall Rating: C. Ok, this show is awful. But if you lower your expectations by about 1000 notches, you'll find some hilarious moments in this. The Bateman/Bryan stuff is great, Brodus is cool and RAT BOY IS GONE!!! The final four are definitely the best of the bunch so this could get ok now. It's still weak, but they're clearly having a good time with it and it's a great way to see the guys just joking around and having fun, which you don't often see. Bad show from a technical standpoint, fun show if you don't think, like at all.

NXT – January 11, 2011

NXT

Date: January 11, 2011

Location: Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex, Birmingham, Alabama

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Todd Grisham

It's the week between eliminations so this is likely going to be a contest heavy show. Novak is gone thank goodness, lowering the level of suck on this show dramatically.

Tonight's special feature is Daniel Bryan and Derrick Bateman on a double date with the Bella Twins. That should be...uh...interesting. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the trade with Saxton and Novak which is a good thing since Novak and Ziggler didn't work at all.

Theme song hits, get your reinforcements. Just not the Rat Boy as he sucks.

There's another elimination next week according to Striker. It's challenge time which is worth two points. This is the slingshot challenge. The pros in the ring are going to use a slingshot to launch t-shirts to the rookies on the stage, most caught and dropped into a bucket wins. Truth and Curtis go first and Truth launches them way too high so there are none caught.

Ziggler and Saxton are second and Ziggler also launches them way too high. Ah there's one. Saxton has a Best Buy themed shirt going on this week. It's just one which is the mark somehow.

Third is Bryan and Bateman. Bryan bounces them off the Titantron for some reason. They have to be caught in the air which makes this a bit more competitive and also a bit more idiotic. Bateman gets one and can't get the second in time. Ok maybe he does. Yeah that gives him the lead with two.

Clay is up next and Maryse is shooting. And the shirt fell, almost like going limp. That can't be something that happens often with her. Ted takes over and can't get anything either. It's a total of zero.

Finally is Rat Boy and Del Rio who has heat on him now, drawing a boo for his name. They get one and then catch a second at the buzzer but it wasn't in the bucket so Bateman wins with two, gaining two points.

Ricardo is on the phone in the back and we have subtitles for no apparent reason. He says he's responding to an ad, saying he has a problem with a huge rat that stinks. Oh dear. Why are we giving this guy an angle on top of everything else?

Conor O'Brian vs. Byron Saxton

Bit of a feeling out process to start here as it occurs to me that I don't remember a single one of O'Brian matches. Saxton gets a forearm in the corner to take over. I like how they have the pros up on the apron like partners here. It adds on the teamwork thing instead of having them be like managers. Since they're getting a tag title shot in the future that fits pretty well.

Chinlock by Saxton as he keeps him dominance going. Bulldog gets two and back to the rest hold. Conor tries to fight up but gets a knee to his back. This is kind of hit and miss to say the least. Saxton gets a clothesline for two which Ziggler thought would be three. He's certainly into these matches and does well with what he does. ANOTHER rest hold by Saxton as Conor has had very little going for him here. Mat slam out of the corner gets two again for Saxton. And never mind as there's a Rock Bottom for the pin for O'Brian at 6:25.

Rating: D. I HATE that kind of an ending as O'Brian got maybe two punches in and then hit a Rock Bottom to end it. What is the point in having someone hit one move like that as the extent of their offense. It makes the other guy look completely weak as his whole offense means nothing and a single shot can beat him. Can't stand that style at all.

Ricardo has to announce him as the winner and certainly isn't thrilled with it, hence the rat problem.

We get a clip from last night after Raw with Bateman and Bryan getting ready. Bateman has American flag pants on and goes on

about submission wrestling again. He likes to speak in initials and abbreviations for some reason. Bateman thinks the Bellas are both wildebeests for some reason. Both guys have sunflowers for the girls which Bateman is a bit confused about.

Should be noted that until now I had a phone call and was trying to do that and review at the same time. God bless headphones.

It's time for another challenge, in this case Superstar Password. It's an old game show with the idea being that one person has the password and has to give clues to the other guy to win. The rookie has to give the clues and it's the most in a set amount of time.

Curtis and Truth go first. You can't say the name or a nickname I guess. There isn't much to say here. They get two right.

Saxton and Ziggler go second and Saxton is still breathing hard from his match. They also get two.

Bateman messes up and says Kane to start. Then he starts flying through them with basic clues like you're supposed to play this game and they get three. We even get a Lanny Poffo reference.

Clay and DiBiase are next and Maryse keeps guessing designers. DiBiase is really bad at this while Clay gives good clues. Clay: Bigger than me, bald, in a movie, doesn't like Kane. DiBiase; John Cena? He FINALLY gets Big Show and that's it.

Conor and Alberto are fourth and Rat Boy messes up and wastes time. O'Brian wants to talk about how great Del Rio is. Bateman wins. This could have been great but they made it REALLY stupid. Bateman was the only guy that did this with any kind of intelligence.

Same Shawn video from last night. He certainly deserves it.

Ah ok the date was last night and we're getting clips of it. Ok that makes sense. It also explains why they were in dresses at ringside. They're at dinner here and Bateman has his foot on the table. Bateman: Brie, did you know that you share your name with my second type of cheese? The girls argue over text messages or something and Bateman texts Bryan pickup lines.

This looks like the smallest restaurant ever by the way. Bateman FREAKS because something got on his pants so he turns the table over, throws a bag of change at Bryan and leaves. Bryan for some reason goes after him and leaves the girls. This was odd to put it mildly but I'd be lying if I said Bateman wasn't kind of funny. Good segment overall.

Ted DiBiase vs. Johnny Curtis

Back and Matthews goes off about the date while pointing out very basic issues with it (why were they eating off paper plates?) and somehow we're talking about college football. Crowd is dead for the match by the way. Kind of a standoff to start us off here. They keep fighting over a lockup as Matthews is turning into the Cole of this season. BIG backdrop by Curtis gives him momentum.

Semi-snap suplex by Curtis. Slingshot legdrop misses though as we take a break. Back with DiBiase holding a chinlock on Curtis. The following clothesline takes down Curtis as we talk about who's leaving next week. The general consensus seems to be O'Brian and I can't say I disagree. All DiBiase here as he hammers away.

Total dominance by DiBiase who hooks on another chinlock. Big sitout spinebuster breaks any momentum that Curtis might have been trying to build up there. Running knee lift misses

though and here comes Curtis. Another following clothesline is almost countered into a backslide. Curtis gets two off a mat slam. With Maryse distracting, Clay gets a big forearm to Curtis. Truth takes Clay out and Curtis pins DiBiase with a rollup at 9:30 to end the show.

Rating: C+. This was better than you would expect. Curtis is so ridiculously boring that it's not even funny. I get that he's supposed to be the big star this season but he's just not clicking at all. The match was fairly good though for NXT standards and it worked well enough for a main event. Much better than the other match at least.

Overall Rating: C. This was a mixed bag which is a term I hate but it fits here. The date and the main event were both good but the first match and the slingshot thing were bad. The Password thing had potential but was so rushed that it was hard to classify as good. That's something that has potential to be kind of fun but it failed here. Anyway, decent enough show this week but nothing memorable at all. At least another guy goes home next week.

Results

Derrick Bateman won the Slingshot Challenge

Conor O'Brian b. Byron Saxton – Rock Bottom

Derrick Bateman won Superstar Password

Johnny Curtis b. Ted DiBiase – Rollup

NXT – January 4, 2011

NXT

Date: January 4, 2011

Location: Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, Arizona

Commentators: Todd Grisham, Josh Matthews

It's the first elimination week for this season which is the best thing that could have happened as the show is being dragged down by the awful guys they have on here. I can't imagine it's not O'Brian or Novak that is gone tonight. I fell asleep before the show came on so this is being written after the show and I had it spoiled for me by accident although I can't say I was stunned with the result. Let's get to it.

We open with a montage of the rookies interacting with their pros and how it's the first elimination tonight. Nothing we don't know in other words.

Wow these guys have been wild and young for awhile now. Shouldn't it be tamed and older by now?

Striker is on the stage with the rookies and announces that the winner will get a tag title show with their pro. Tonight there is a Pro's Challenge in the form of a battle royal. The winning pro will have the option of trading their pro if they so choose. Cool. Before we start though, Ricardo Rodriguez comes out and offers to take Alberto's spot for some reason. Ok then.

Battle Royal

Immediately Bryan picks Ricardo up and puts him in an airplane spin for a mind blowing 30 seconds. The other pros stand around and cheer Bryan on, saying how long can you do that for. Truth takes mercy on Ricardo and throws him out. It's DiBiase, Bryan, Masters, Zigler and Truth in there if you're

not familiar with the Pros. Ziggler puts out Bryan and shouts that Bryan has no idea how good that felt.

DiBiase gets a low bridge to put Truth out. Sorry for the lack of commentary here as it's hard to talk about battle royals. Masters tries to put DiBiase out so Ziggler comes up behind them and dumps both guys out to win at 3:50. Yeah it was rather short but I think that was the point.

Rating: C. Yeah there wasn't much to this at all so we'll just call it right in the middle. Ziggler more or less dominated this, getting rid of three of the five eliminations including the second biggest star in the match in Bryan. It was way too short to get a fair grade so the C isn't saying it was average but more along the lines of I have no idea if it was good or not.

Ziggler talks about how he never liked Novak and trades him for Saxton. That's certainly an upgrade. Then again the coat is more valuable than Novak so it's not like an upgrade is hard in this case. Novak vs. Saxton next.

Byron Saxton vs. Jacob Novak

Novak starts off all aggressive prompting a funny reaction from Ziggler who shouts WHY DIDN'T YOU DO THAT WHEN YOU WERE WITH ME? This is rather boring and the crowd certainly seems to agree with me on that point. Ziggler keeps screaming things at Saxton and is definitely the most entertaining part of the match. Novak is one of the least interesting characters I've seen in a very long time.

There's nothing interesting about him at all and his time on offense here is putting me to sleep, which is saying a lot as I slept for a long time earlier tonight. Saxton makes a comeback while Dolph tells Novak that he sucks. This match is setting records for clotheslines used. Saxton reverses a suplex into....uh....I'm not sure to call it. He hooked a Tazmission looking hold and rocked Novak forward and then

backwards into a mat slam with Saxton sitting out the other way. It was pretty stupid if you didn't get that but it ended this at approximately 5:40.

Rating: D-. Just boring beyond belief here and it took me a long time to sit through the nearly six minutes this received. Saxton would definitely be better suited as a mouthpiece or a backstage character as he doesn't have much to offer in the ring. Very bad match and dull beyond belief.

Curtis is talking to Truth about how they can work together as a wolf pack roaming through the Arizona desert. Truth doesn't know what Curtis is talking about and Curtis isn't sure either. Curtis vs. Clay is later.

Raw Rebound is about the cage match and doesn't mention the whole WORLD TITLE MATCH or anything like that. Not important at all.

We get a clip of the way too excited Bateman talking to Bryan. Bateman offers his advice on the love triangle with the Bellas because he was called Dr. Love in high school. Bryan: "No you weren't." Bateman: "Ok no I wasn't but I still know what I'm talking about." Funny stuff. There's a double date next week. Bateman says they're about chicks and AMERICA, as he pulls a random flag out from behind him. I'm liking this guy a bit more every week.

Ziggler and Saxton affirm their love for each other with Ziggler telling Saxton to stay away from Vickie which is no issue. There's a battle of the mic competition later. Apparently it's next.

Time for the Battle of the Mic. To update the immunity point standings:

Curtis: 5

Bateman: 3

Novak: 1

Saxton: 1

O'Brian: 0

Clay: 0

Good thing Clay has that thing called talent to get him through this safely. Naturally this is worth four points so that the previous weeks mean far less. Basically this is a talk-off. First up is Clay vs. Curtis. Clay talks about how funny it was to see Curtis go through that table last week at his hands. Curtis says it was funny that time when he hit Clay in the mouth, which hasn't happened. Curtis naturally pops him in the mouth. The crowd picks Curtis and Brodus is eliminated.

Bateman vs. Saxton is next. Bateman says that Saxton's voice destroyed ECW and says that Saxton is the lovechild of Carlton Banks and a shorter Carlton Banks. Saxton's reply is that no matter what, he's still better than Bateman. Both of these were really bad and Saxton is out.

Novak vs. O'Brian is next and I need a stiff drink. Novak talks about the rat thing and plays up the whole rat thing. O'Brian makes a bunch of stupid jokes but the delivery is definitely better. O'Brian wins this by a mile as he definitely should.

Round 2 is where you have to insult both guys. Curtis makes fun of Bateman's haircut. He says he likes rats so he has nothing to make fun of for O'Brian. Striker likes rats too.

Bateman says that Curtis looks like he belongs on To Catch a Predator. Conor is a lot like Conan, minus the talent.

O'Brian makes Your Mama jokes and somehow these are the funniest lines in the whole thing. O'Brian wins it and he actually should have. Curtis has the immunity points lead still though.

Johnny Curtis vs. Brodus Clay

Remember that Curtis hit Clay just a few minutes ago. Clay runs him over to start and the beating is on. Curtis gets him to the floor where DiBiase yells at the big man a bit. Brodus uses some of those supelxes to take over. I like this guy pretty well I think and he's definitely the most interesting guy on this season as I've said before. Clay keeps using basic power and we hit a nerve hold.

This is such a change in night and day as compared to the other one on one match as the fans are into this and there's an energy here that is very refreshing. Curtis fights his way up and takes out the knee and hits a spinwheel kick to take over. A top rope shot to the head gets two. For some reason he goes after DiBiase though and a Tongan Death Grip Slam (more or less a chokeslam) gets Brodus the clean pin at 3:32.

Rating: C+. Not a great match at all but the energy in it was really fun. Brodus is very fun to watch as he mixes things up very nicely out there. The Tongan Death Grip is a move I wouldn't mind seeing dusted off and who better than Clay to use it? Decent match and one of the more entertaining ones so far this season.

Post match Striker asks Clay what fuels him and he says it's because he's tired of being cast aside and is the marathon...whatever that means. Elimination is up next.

Curtis says that Clay should go home tonight. To the shock of absolutely no one, Novak is gone first. It's a crushing blow but he got to have this be a learning experience. Ziggler makes fun of him almost the whole time which is rather funny. The next elimination is in two weeks and the points are set to zero.

Ziggler makes fun of Masters again and does his pose thing. Since apparently hitting him in the back is too complex for Masters he tries the full nelson on him and the IC Champion escapes to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Better show than previous weeks by miles and miles, but the most important thing is that Novak is gone. Everyone else compared to him is a great save for maybe O'Brian so that's a nice break indeed. Aside from Novak's match there wasn't anything completely horrid here so this was overall a decent enough show. Two weeks can't get here soon enough to get rid of rat boy though, despite him showing some decent delivery here tonight.

NXT – December 28, 2010

NXT

Date: December 28, 2010

Location: Blue Cross Arena, Rochester, New York

Commentators: Todd Grisham, Josh Matthews

It's week four and after last week's rather disappointing show (which granted may have been due to there being three straight hours and NXT was the final one) this needs to be a bit better. The first elimination is next week which should help things along a bit. Show is starting now so let's get to it.

Johnny Curtis vs. Dolph Ziggler

Ah good I was thinking he was fighting Novak again. Truth is back after being in rather bad health recently. Dolph pounds him down in the corner. He has DZ on his tights now. Curtis tries to speed things up but runs into an elbow. Novak is getting too close to Vickie for Dolph's tastes.

Curtis fights back for a bit but runs into a neckbreaker. They're talking about the runtime of the show as it's apparent

that not a lot of people care about this show, including the announcers. Curtis hits a discus lariat to put down Ziggle and a backdrop has the champion in trouble. He goes for his guillotine legdrop which would have missed by two feet even if Ziggle hadn't rolled out of the way. Zig Zag ends this at 4:45.

Rating: C-. Not bad with Ziggle looking like he was rarely in trouble. They need to have a rookie win here eventually or these matches are rather pointless. Of course Curtis can't beat Ziggle yet. We know that, so do we really need a match to tell us that again? I'm not sure I get the logic here.

Ad for the Heenan DVD which might break my streak of not buying WWE releases.

Derrick Bateman vs. Conor O'Brien

Hey it's Rat Boy! My stream went out for a bit before the beginning of this so I'm not entirely sure on the time. Kofi is here in Bryan's place as he's at the house show scheduled for the same night as this broadcast. Granted no one but all of five people watch this show anyway so it's not like it matters. Bateman controls for the most part here. Swinging neckbreaker gets a very long two.

Grisham picks Saxton to win the competition. And never mind as a full nelson slam ends this with O'Brien getting the win after about 1:40 that I could see. Not enough to grade and I didn't see all of it anyway.

DiBiase and Maryse are talking about something involving spending \$20,000 in one store. Brodus says that DiBiase is everything Brodus wants to be. The argument continues as we go to what passes for a commercial here.

Time for the Power of the Punch challenge which I think you

remember. You hit the bag and high score wins. This is for two points and if you break the all time NXT record that Alex Riley set you get an extra point. Bateman gets 750 to start. Curtis hits 814 and the record is 819 apparently. Saxton hits 629 or something like that.

O'Brien says he's going to knock a hole in it like Swiss cheese. I hate this guy and he gets the lowest score so far. Novak does a bit better and hits 720. Ziggler rips into him a bit. Clay is up next and this could be hilarious. Fans are WAY into him actually. There must be something to the technique here as he gets under 640, giving Curtis the two immunity points.

Byron Saxton vs. Ted DiBiase

DiBiase outmaneuvers him to start and then the opposite happens immediately thereafter. Saxton and Clay are the best two out there with Bateman being third. After that though, the rest are all just there and that's the issue with this season. Even those three aren't guys I'd be particularly interested in seeing in WWE. Beautiful dropkick by DiBiase gets two.

Chinlock goes on and Grisham says this might be a tap out. Saxton fights out of it and gets a sunset flip for a very close two. They head to the floor with Saxton on his own out there now. Brodus teases running through him, Masters says don't do it, Clay does it anyway for the DQ at 6:45. Post match DiBiase yells at Clay and has Maryse slap him. Nothing from Clay though.

Rating: C-. Again not a bad match, but the ending to it left a good bit to be desired. I do not care about most of these guys for the most part and it seems that most of the other people I've heard from don't either. Not a bad match like I said, but still nothing worth sitting through at all.

Raw Recap which is about Cena vs. Punk/Nexus which is interesting but doesn't feel huge like it's supposed to I don't think.

Truth tells Curtis that the amount of wins doesn't matter. Curtis says that if Truth had been there for him he could have won. Truth: "And if a frog had wings he wouldn't hit his butt every time he hopped." Curtis: "I don't know what that means." Truth: "Neither do I." Ok then.

Talent show is up next. I sweat if O'Brien's thing is about rats or cheese....

Curtis and Bateman are the only ones that can earn immunity. Bateman is going to go first with poetry and it's a haiku called Cheap Pop. "Boy does it feel great, here in the Empire State, Rochester, New York", end Derrick Bateman's talent.

Curtis is going to dance and oh sweet goodness he has a streamer. Grisham wants to know if we're watching LOGO TV. If you're unfamiliar, LOGO is a network devoted to homosexual themed shows and movies. Vince isn't listening to this at all is he?

Saxton is going to read a fairy tale. Striker: "That's appropriate." Matthews goes on a rant that I'm not entirely sure if we're supposed to hear. The story runs down Clay and talks about apple cider. Do you people get what I go through for you all???

O'Brien tells some absolutely awful jokes.

Before Novak goes, Striker wants to know if we can just have Clay destroy everyone and be done with this.

Novak's talent: looking good. He basically does a photo shoot with a chair. I'm trying to picture Race or Flair or the Funks showing up during this.

Clay is going to make anyone from the back look Hood Cool.

And it's Michael Cole. Cole talks about how awful this city and show is, and somehow this is BY FAR the most interesting part of the show. He goes on random rants about vinegar and mascots and Kaval while Clay says random words in the background. Curtis wins if you're interested. After the contest Brodus is like screw this and beats everyone up to end it.

Overall Rating: D-. WOW. This actually might have been the biggest waste of an hour I have ever spent in my life. First and foremost, the wrestling is not bad. I want to make that very clear. That being said, this is so pathetically uninteresting that it's not even funny. They'll find some way to make sure Brodus, BY FAR the most interesting and best guy out there, doesn't win so that Curtis can be a "star" while no one cares about him at all.

I haven't been this uninterested in a show in I don't know how long. O'Brien, Novak, Curtis and arguable Bateman could not be more boring if their finishing move was watching paint dry long enough that the other guy died of old age first and they win by forfeit. Is this supposed to be entertaining? I get that it's supposed to be bad, but dang dude, give me SOMETHING to like about it. Clay helps, but if he's gone I don't know if I can sit through this again. Fine from a technical standpoint, but boring beyond belief in execution.

Results

Dolph Ziggler b. Johnny Curtis – Zig Zag

Conor O'Brien b. Derrick Bateman – Full Nelson Slam

Johnny Curtis won the Power of the Punch Challenge

Byron Saxton b. Ted DiBiase via DQ when Brodus Clay interfered

Johnny Curtis won the Talent Contest

NXT – December 21, 2010

NXT

Date: December 21, 2010

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Todd Grisham, Josh Matthews

It's week 3 here and I'm pretty sure we're live here for a change due to the whole confusing thing of Smackdown having to be live tonight due to Christmas Eve. Hopefully it's decent like the previous two weeks have been but they need to give the characters a chance to develop a bit as they haven't done that at all for the most part yet. Let's get to it.

This is starting IMMEDIATELY after Smackdown ended which is a bit of overkill indeed.

The opening video is about the obstacle course last week which wasn't as bad as I expected it to be.

Theme song is still good.

Here come the rookies as usual. Sorry if I'm a bit off tonight as this isn't something I want to be doing at the moment. The challenge is a wheelbarrow race and the Soaring Eagle will be inside it. I'm not sure if this is better or worse than Horny.

Curtis goes first and jumps the gun, prolonging the stupidity of this one. His time is 13 seconds. There's nothing to say about this stuff at all other than some weak jokes from the announcers. Grisham is whining like he has a piece of Cole stuck inside him.

Novak breaks the mark at 12.8.

Brodus gets 13.8 and drops the wheelbarrow, sending the Eagle sprawling to the floor.

O'Brian is next and sets the new mark at 12.7. This is REALLY boring if you can't get that.

Saxton wants to warm up and puts on a black glove to get a time of 12.5.

Bateman is last and ties it. Please...no.

We do it again and Bateman throws a flag on the ground that he got from...somewhere. Saxton doesn't CROSS THE LINE as that has to be a rib of some sort. Never mind he did as they keep saying it over and over. GET ON WITH THIS. Bateman goes again and wins this STUPID segment that went on way too long. He gets two points.

Novak vs. Curtis and a six person tag later.

Jacob Novak vs. Johnny Curtis

JTG is subbing for R-Truth here. Dolph yells at Novak as he sends Curtis to the floor. Dolph is in a tie so we talk about that more than anything else. We hit a chinlock as we talk about hitting on Vickie. This match is really, really dull. This whole season has had dull characters. Ziggler gets in a cheap shot to Curtis and Novak adds in a big boot to end it at 5:00. Vickie is watching and smiling.

Rating: D+. The match was fine from an in ring perspective, but WOW I could not care less about these two guys. Neither are interesting in the slightest and neither are the majority of these rookies. This wasn't a terrible match, but I could not wait to get to the end of it which is never a good thing at all.

Profile on Bateman who was on Heat once. He says he's Man-

Tastic and has the most charisma.

There's a Divas calendar. The PG is slowly slipping away actually. Just little things like that or a bit more swearing. It's barely noticeable but it's helping somewhat.

Profile on O'Brian who looks like a rat and was an outcast. Yes we get it he has a weird looking face. He says it's time for the Rattitude Era. I hate this guy already.

Bateman and Bryan are training more as Bateman reads the WWE Champion book which appears to be upside down to him. There's a trivia challenge tonight which should be fun.

Trivia challenge time but there's a twist. There will be a category named and you go down the line with each person naming something/someone that fits said category. First up is Undertaker Wrestlemania opponents. Shawn Michaels being mentioned gets the big hometown pop. They don't go on until people are eliminated, as in once 6 are named we move on to a new category.

Second up is King of the Ring winners. Owen Hart is mentioned on TV actually. Bateman goes with Billy Gunn. We go through this again due to no one being eliminated yet. Brodus Clay is the first one out as he thinks Diesel was King. New category is Wrestlemania host cities. Conor says Pee Wee Herman. That isn't a typo. Saxton reminds me of Token on the news anchors episode of South Park.

We stay with it as they're running low on cities. No one has said LA yet surprisingly. Curtis is out as he can't think of anything. New category is any WWE PPV in 2010. Saxton repeats Survivor Series and he's out. Final two are Bateman and Novak. Their category is WWE Champions. BATEMAN TRAINED FOR THIS! Hogan reference. Novak says Miz and gets buzzed for no apparent reason and we keep going. Novak freezes somehow and can't get Cena in time, giving Bateman the win.

We go to the back where Conor comes in to see Alberto as per his request. They get into a semi spat which goes nowhere. Conor wants some of the cheese Alberto is eating. HEY, MAYBE YOU SHOULD PUSH THE FACT THAT HE LOOKS LIKE A RAT MORE!!! YOU'RE BEING TOO SUBTLE!!!

Ted DiBiase/Maryse/Brodus Clay vs. Byron Saxton/Chris Masters/???

There's a guest/mystery Diva here to team with Masters and Saxton. And there's no real intrigue/suspense as it's Natalya. Gender vs. gender here as usual. Those who I'd prefer to see topless start us off. Natalya outsmarts her to start and the beating/screaming begins. Off to the rookies now and Saxton can't hurt Brodus. Clay sends him to the floor as we take a break.

Back with some not hot Saxton on DiBiase action. Masters comes in and it's pro vs. pro. Is Clay a face or a heel? I'm not sure. Masters hammers away on the fat man until Saxton comes back in. Clay gets a somewhat awkward looking cover for two. It's hard to describe but he looked odd laying down on Saxton. No one will tag in for Saxton as his bravado is costing him.

DiBiase gets a dropkick for no cover. Oh apparently Saxton wouldn't tag out so here's Masters. Powerslam gets two. Dream Street is countered and Masters gets a spinebuster. Brodus beats on Masters in the corner and Maryse adds a slap. Back to the girls and it's a catfight. The pros go outside to break them up and it's up to the rookies. Powerslam ends Saxton but a Vader Bomb misses and Saxton gets the pin. I forgot to check the clock but it ran about 12:00.

Rating: C-. Not a terrible match I guess and it worked ok as

it was supposed to. Getting a 12 minute match on NXT is a nice touch for a change and at least Brodus, one of the only decent rookies, was featured. This redeems Saxton a bit which I guess is your storyline advancement for the week. Decent enough match I guess.

Overall Rating: D+. Definitely the weakest show of the season so far but I think a lot of that can be attributed to having three straight hours of TV tonight which is WAY too much, especially with this being the stuff we ended on. The trivia stuff was ok but it would have been nice to have it be more actual trivia. The show wasn't horrible, but it's the weakest so far.

NXT – December 14, 2010

NXT

Date: December 14, 2010

Location: Cajundome, Lafayette, Louisiana

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Todd Grisham

It's week 2 of NXT and things are looking good so far. Last week was a good start so hopefully that continues here. I'd like to see more of their characters come out this time though which isn't something we got to see much of on the season premiere. It's weird to be getting ready for NXT and to have a positive outlook on it. Let's get to it.

We open as always, with Striker bringing out the rookies. We're opening with a karaoke challenge. I already don't like this. There are six envelopes with wrestlers' theme songs that they have to sing. O'Brian gets Sheamus and we FINALLY get the official words to Sheamus' song. Surprisingly it doesn't say

Lobster Head. His voice is all nasal and this is just awful.

Bateman gets Miz. He's not bad but the pacing is all off. He throws in a shoutout to the college football team which is smart.

Novak gets a pop as he comes up for some reason. He gets Dolph Ziggler, who happens to be his pro. Novak sounds really quite drunk. He more or less just says the words which might be the best course of action.

Clay, the white Viscera, goes third with Cody Rhodes' song...and doesn't do half bad. It's more talking but there was a little flair to it. Best so far.

Curtis gets Orton and gets down in the slither pose. I know nothing about music and I'm not sure if this worked or not. Imagine a guy trying to sing like James Hetfield without having talent and singing Orton's song and that's about it.

Saxton is last and draws Shawn Michaels whose name gets a bigger pop than anything else so far. He messes up one of the most famous lyrics in wrestling history. How is that possible? He does dance a bit which helps somewhat. Saxton wins which I guess is the best choice as he was definitely trying.

Masters/Saxton vs. DiBiase/Clay up next.

Profile on Novak who says he used to play every spots, including football. They had a motto on the team: DTD – Determined to Dominate. He says he's destined to dominate. That's a good line. Novak says he's the most like Jack Swagger on the roster and that you have to look out for #1, and that's him. Kind of a generic promo/character but he sold it quite well.

Chris Masters/Byron Saxton vs. Ted DiBiase/Brodus Clay

See I told you it was up next. You didn't think I'd lie to you did you? Josh talks about having dinner with Brodus recently

and that he's a fascinating person. He actually comes off as that which is good. The rookies start us off. Clay shoves him around with ease so here's Masters instead.

After a little back and forth stuff Ted comes in and we actually take a break on NXT. Back with Ted holding a chinlock on Masters. I like this Brodus guy. Masters fights out of the corner but walks into a dropkick from Ted for two. In a funny bit Masters brings in Saxton and in a Shawn Stasiak like moment he charges and is taken down immediately.

Clay hits a huge spinebuster but tags DiBiase back in. A kneedrop misses and Saxton is able to get out and it's pro on pro again. Another spinebuster, this time from Masters, hits DiBiase as does an accidentally shot from Clay. Masters calls for the Masterlock but Saxton gets a quick tag and walks into Dream Street to end it at approximately 7:00.

Rating: C-. Not a great match or anything but it did its job with Clay looking good for a big man and Saxton getting a bit of character development as being a headstrong guy that isn't as good as he thinks he is. This worked ok though and wasn't a bad match at all.

We go to the back where Bateman is warming up when Bryan comes in. He says that Bateman has a match tonight so Bryan is going to teach him a hold. It's a heel hook which Bryan demonstrates step by step (Hey kids! Pay attention as the United States Champion shows you a basic way to snap someone's ankle in three easy steps!) how to do it and tells Bateman to do it now. Bateman goes insane and shouts about how he's doing submission wrestling while Bryan is telling him what to do. In order to get Bateman to chill, Bryan KICKS HIM IN THE FACE! I told you that was the best solution to a lot of problems! Funny segment.

Obstacle Course time, but this time it's for TWO immunity points. Novak goes first and does relatively well until he

gets to the push-ups where he has to start over. He sets the time to beat at 37.9 seconds.

Saxton goes second and is a jerk to Striker. I guess he's not all bad. Saxton falls going over the hurdles and slams his head. He can't do push-ups either and goes over a minute.

O'Brian is third but messes up on the wall/hurdle as well. He can't do the balance beam that well and winds up getting 42.7.

Bateman is fourth and the referees are REALLY anal about these push-ups. Bateman manages to break the time at 35.7.

Curtis says he's feeling very gazelle-like and breaks the time but the referees say he messed up on the balance beam so it's a disqualification.

Brodus Clay is last and literally throws the walls out of his way. Naturally he's disqualified though.

Curtis gets another chance to a chorus of boos. He destroys the time at 31.4 seconds.

Profile on Curtis who talks about dabbling in a lot of stuff. He and a friend of his trained in a ring in the woods apparently and the friend was killed in a car wreck so he has dog tags on his tights because of it. That's a cool story.

Raw Rebounds wastes some time.

Jacob Novak hits on Vickie for some reason. Ziggler comes in and asks Vickie to leave. He's not happy and more or less says hands off. Is there a reason why Vickie is going to be a focal point of a storyline on this show in back to back seasons?

Ad for the 50 Greatest Superstars DVD which might be worth looking at.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Derrick Bateman

This should be short in theory. Alberto asks Ricardo to take

out Bateman. Del Rio dominates early on as you would expect him to. The fans aren't exactly thrilled by this match to put it mildly. Bateman makes a brief comeback and gets a modified neckbreaker. Think the Moonlight Drive that Morrison used back on ECW. Cross Armbreaker ends it in about 3:20. Not much more than a squash.

Rating: C. Really hard to grade this as it's barely a competitive match. They tend to have one of these a season and I'm not entirely sure I get the point to them. Del Rio has a major match on the PPV so why would we believe that Bateman stands a chance against him? Also, why not have a rookie against Bateman? Either way it wasn't bad but it was rather short.

Overall Rating: B. Another good episode this week as things continue to look up for this season. We got some character development, two challenges that went by pretty fast and two matches. That's pretty good for a little under an hour I'd say, especially considering a 3-4 minute Raw Recap plus commercials. I'm liking this 6 man set of rookies as it's definitely more workable. Nothing bad at all here and some decent stuff make this a solid outing for the second episode of the season. Good show.

NXT – December 7, 2010 (Season 4 Premiere)

NXT

Date: December 7, 2010

Location: Nutter Center, Dayton, Ohio

Commentators: Todd Grisham, Josh Matthews

Season Four of NXT debuts tonight with only six rookies this time. That might be a good thing indeed as having the full monty of eight is too many due to there being dead weight amongst them that takes too long to get rid of. This almost has to be better from a quality perspective than last season doesn't it? Anyway, let's get to it.

Wild and Young is back. Awesomeness all over again.

Striker brings out the Pros who bring out their rookies. There's no Cole this season???

R-Truth – Johnny Curtis

Ted DiBiase – Brodus Clay (He is a BIG old boy. Think a white Viscera)

Chris Masters – Byron Saxton

Dolph Ziggler – Jacob Novak

Daniel Bryan – Derrick Bateman

Alberto Del Rio – Conor O'Brian

Striker says the winner gets a championship match but says nothing about PPVs. Everyone is going to get to introduce themselves.

Curtis says he isn't going to ask people to cheer him. Instead he wants to give some shoutouts, one of which is to his gym teacher. A vote for Curtis is a vote for freedom apparently.

Clay says he's coming to this with lemon juice and razorblades. This was almost like a rap thing.

Saxton sounds like Token from the News Reporters episode of South Park. This is rather cheesy indeed.

Novak talks about board games, saying his favorite is Monopoly because you get to own your competition, which he's going to do this season. Not bad.

Bateman says he's from Ohio and that today will live in infamy

(it's December 7 if you didn't get the reference) and he's mantastic.

Conor does a weird voice to get our attention and says he looks like a rat. Apparently he's going to take the cheese or something like that. Wow indeed.

Alberto yells at him and says he's boring, just like Daniel Bryan. The obvious tag match is made.

We get a profile on Byron Saxton who is from a privileged background and has never had to really do anything. He's a good person apparently and we get a clip of him as a kid wrestling. He mentions being a conglomerate type of man, which I think was the stable he led in FCW.

Johnny Curtis vs. Jacob Novak

Fairly nice back and forth match so far. Both guys look decent out there which is why this show works so much better than something like Tough Enough did. Curtis gets a discus lariat for no cover. I'm sorry for the lack of play by play here but I'm trying to check out both guys instead. Novak misses a charge in the corner and Curtis goes up top. After misstepping a bit he hits a decent looking guillotine legdrop for the pin at about 3:05.

Rating: C-. Nothing that great here but it was fast paced and the finish was clean. This doesn't really tell us anything about either guy though as neither played to the crowd or showed anything unique at all. This was really just a match and nothing else. Nothing bad though.

Profile on Brodus Clay who comes from Pasadena and a broken home. He liked to be with his brother apparently. We hear about him being a bodyguard for Snoop Dog which is interesting I suppose. He's in business for himself now though.

It's already time for our first challenge, in this case

capture the flag. You have to run down, get a ladder that is set up at ringside, put it in the ring, climb up and get a flag then run back to the stage to win. Curtis goes first with a time of 28.6 seconds.

Conor (that's how the on screen graphic spells it) is second and gets a time of 28.2 to take over. This is just for an immunity point I think.

Clay is third and as expected he's strong but not quick. The time is past the mark to beat by the time he hits the floor to come back.

Saxton is fourth and says he'll just be himself. He has his own way of climbing a ladder? And he loses too due to intentionally taking his time. He tries to jump down which is illegal apparently. He gets a time of nearly a minute.

Novak is fifth and gets a good start at least. It pays off too as he gets 26.9 to take the lead.

Bateman is last and gets cheered by Bryan. He has a chance at it but just barely misses it.

Back with the Raw Rebound to what I thought was an excellent show.

Ted and Maryse talk to Clay. Maryse won't shut up and Ted yells a bit.

Saxton is getting ready and Masters comes up and they have a bromance moment. Masters wants to give him some workout tips and Saxton says he has it covered.

Daniel Bryan/Derrick Bateman vs. Alberto Del Rio/Conor O'Brian

No intro for the heels. The rookies start us off with O'Brian being rather aggressive. Off to Alberto who beats on Bateman a bit also. No Bryan yet other than trying to get in once Alberto hits him but to no avail. Bateman gets an airplane

spin of all things to make the hot tag to Bryan.

Bryan adds an airplane spin of his own as we all channel our inner Gorilla Monsoons. We actually take a break on an NXT match to see Gene Okerlund pitch us old school apparel. Back with Bryan working on the arm of O'Brian. I guess he doesn't like the O' part. The pros are in now.

The announcers try to make small talk by saying Alberto's last name means the River. It actually means of or from the river but who cares about being correct? Ziggler of all people says something on a mic but I'm not sure what it was. According to a guy that was at the show he was yelling that he doesn't suck to the crowd and didn't realize his mic was partially on or something. Works as well as anything I guess.

Bateman gets a running neckbreaker for two on Del Rio as Bryan hits a huge dive to the floor to take out O'Brian. Being alone with Del Rio isn't a good thing as the cross armbreaker ends this a few seconds later at approximately 10:00 (assuming the commercials were in real time for this).

Rating: C+. Not bad at all here with a decent tag match. Bryan is someone that I wasn't huge on when he got to the company but he's been nothing but impressive since. This was another decent match for him but the focus was more on the rookies here which is a good thing. Nothing great or anything but for what it was supposed to be, this was perfectly acceptable.

Overall Rating: B-. Nothing great or anything here overall but like the last match it did exactly what it was supposed to do. We saw a little bit from everyone and got four of them in the ring with vignettes from the other two. The rookies look kind of weak this season but the show at least looks ok. Pretty good start.