

# NXT – November 11, 2015: The Groundwork

## NXT

Date: November 11, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We're on the road to London at the moment and the big story is Samoa Joe turning on Finn Balor last week after Balor's title defense against Apollo Crews. This likely sets up the main event at the next Takeover, though there's a chance Crews and Baron Corbin could be added in to make it a four way. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the end of last week's show.

Opening sequence.

### Tye Dillinger vs. Baron Corbin

Never mind as Apollo Crews hits the ring and destroys Corbin, sending him running off. Crews shouts at Corbin to come back but he's long gone.

The announcers preview the rest of the show.

### Bayley/Hype Bros vs. Blake and Murphy/Alexa Bliss

Ryder and Murphy get us going but it's off to Bliss a few seconds in. Bayley is more than happy to come in and, after Alexa takes off her bracelet, the champ takes her down with a headlock. Fans: "SHE AIN'T HYPED! BAYLEY'S HYPED!" Bayley sends her into the corner for a running elbow but the threat of a Bayley to Belly sends Bliss out to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Mojo clotheslining Blake and bringing in Ryder as Graves psychoanalyzes his colleagues. Ryder gets caught in the wrong corner and stomped down, followed by a backbreaker as the fans continue to chant what sounds like "HEY WE WANT SOME BAYLEY!" Murphy's reverse chinlock

doesn't get very far so he drives Zack back into the corner for a slingshot hilo from Blake.

Back up and Zack dives over for the tag to Mojo, in his neon green gear (Byron: "SLIMER IS ON THE LOOSE!"). Everything breaks down and Bliss gets knocked to the floor but she grabs the title and runs off. Bayley is ticked off so she Bayley to Bellys Murphy and chases Bliss off. Hyperdrive puts Murphy away at 12:11.

**Rating:** C. I don't usually get annoyed with the NXT fans but that HEY WE WANT SOME BAYLEY chant was driving me crazy here. The match itself was just a formula match but it sets up Bliss vs. Bayley for the new champ's first fresh title match. Good enough here but most importantly it got the job done, which is where NXT shines.

Ascension accepts Gable and Jordan's challenge.

Nia Jax runs into Eva Marie and they walk off together.

#### Deonna vs. Nia Jax

No Eva in sight. A quick Samoan drop plants Deonna early on and we're already in the slow squash. Jax throws her into the corner and plants her with a release spinebuster. A legdrop puts Deonna away at 1:49.

Clip of Dash Wilder/Scott Dawson beating the Vaudevillains in the Dusty Classic to set up tonight's title match.

William Regal underwent successful neck surgery. No word on how long he's out.

Bayley is looking for Bliss and finds her Women's Title. Nia Jax jumps her from behind and scares Bliss off for trying to get the title. Jax looks at the title and drops it next to Bayley before leaving.

#### Tag Team Titles: Vaudevillains vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Vaudevillains are defending. English and Dawson get things going but it's quickly off to Wilder with the champs taking over in the corner. Some kicks to the chest put Wilder down so it's off to Scott who gets caught

in an armbar. Wilder offers a distraction from the apron though and Dawson takes out the knee as we go to a break. Back with English's knee in trouble as Wilder cranks away. Dawson wraps it around the post because he wrestle like a modern day Anderson.

More shots to the leg set up a slingshot suplex (so he's an Anderson and Blanchard hybrid) for two. English's leg is wrapped around the post again but he pulls Dawson's face into the post, allowing for the hot tag to Gotch. Everything breaks down with Simon cleaning house, only to have English tag back in for no logical reason. Gotch is sent into the steps and English's knee is crushed the same was Cass' was a few weeks back. Wilder's reverse Figure Four gives us new champions at 12:00.

**Rating:** C+. This was an old school psychology driven match with the leg work being the story running throughout the whole thing. The Vaudevillains felt like transitional champions so this was a better idea than letting them hang around while the titles got weaker. Wilder and Dawson will have more opponents anyway and can lead to a showdown with Gable and Jordan.

The new champs can't believe it.

Bayley vs. Bliss for the title next week.

Here's Samoa Joe for his big explanation. When the Dusty Classic was announced, Finn Balor came to him and asked Joe to be his partner. They won that tournament and Joe wanted an NXT Title match. Now to Balor's credit, he agreed to the match but did nothing when Regal put him in the #1 contenders battle royal.

That lack of action drove Joe to do what he did last week because he doesn't deserve to wait for a title shot. The day he walked in to NXT he was owed a shot because he's Samoa Joe. This brings out Balor but the referees break it up. Joe says good choices and grabs the Koquina Clutch to choke Balor out. Joe holds up the title to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. This was a moving day show for NXT as they got a lot more stuff set up for down the road but it didn't really like anything big happened here, including a title change. The good thing about NXT

though is they're capable of taking something that doesn't feel huge and turning it into something bigger later. You can see most of the London show from here and it's going to be a fun night because NXT takes the time to set up their big shows instead of just throwing them together.

### Results

Bayley/Hype Bros b. Blake and Murphy/Alexa Bliss – Hyperdrive to Murphy

Nia Jax b. Deonna – Legdrop

Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder b. Vaudevillains – Reverse Figure Four to English

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# **NXT – November 4, 2015: NXT Is Really Neat**

## **NXT**

Date: November 4, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

It's a big show this week as Finn Balor is defending his NXT Title

against #1 contender Apollo Crews. NXT has spent the last few weeks building up Crews and giving us a person to care about but there aren't any real personal issues between the two other than the title itself. That could make for a good match but it might not be the most interesting. Let's get to it.

The opening video recaps Crews winning the battle royal and becoming #1 contender.

Opening sequence.

### Asuka vs. Cameron

This could be interesting. Fans: "ASUKA'S GONNA KILL YOU!" Cameron tries a slap to start but gets caught in a cross armbreaker for an early submission attempt. A running kick into the splits drops Asuka but she comes back with a hip attack and mocks Cameron's pose. Asuka grabs a Fujiwara armbar before just smashing Cameron in the face. Fans: "REST IN PEACE!" The Asuka Lock is good for the submission at 3:41.

**Rating:** D+. I kind of feel sorry for Cameron as she has a horrible character and there is no way she's going to be accepted no matter how good she gets in the ring. Some of the gymnastics and flexibility stuff worked for her here but the screeching makes people hate her more than anything. Asuka's path of destruction continues to be awesome and her facial expressions make the squashes that much more entertaining.

We recap Big Cass' leg injury from last week.

Dawson and Wilder laugh at Carmella for injuring her friends. They get their title shot next week and then they'll be the baddest guys in the room. Wilder even brings in a wheelchair as a gift for the Vaudevillains.

Chad Gable and Jason Jordan want to keep moving up the card and one day they'll be the world's greatest tag team. Jordan: "Whoa whoa whoa I told you about that." Their next idea is to wrestle the greatest tag team in NXT history. Gable: "We can't wrestle ourselves." This winds up being a challenge to the Ascension.

### Bull Dempsey vs. Angelo Dawkins

Dawkins has a Sawyer Fulton with him. The threat of a right hand makes Dawkins duck, allowing a knee lift to the head. Dawkins kicks him down and puts on a front facelock but Dempsey Bulls up. Bull punches one of the headbands off and a top rope seated senton gives Dempsey the pin at 2:53.

Fulton walks away from Dawkins post match.

The Vaudevillains are impressed with Dash and Dawson but they're ready to add their names to the pantheon of NXT greats. They sent the wheelchair rolling away. Simple promo here but it was fine.

Crews looks at the NXT Title.

Bayley has the Hype Bros as her partners against Alexa Bliss/Blake/Murphy for a six person tag next week.

#### Eva Marie vs. Marley

Marley is a blonde in half of a football jersey. Eva armdrags her down and dances to celebrate before starting on the arm. The fans debate if Eva is ratchet before she stops a comeback with a boot to the face. Fans: "WHAT WAS THAT???" Marley is on her hands and knees so Eva runs in for a very low downward spiral and the pin at 2:48. If that's her finisher, she's in an even worse place than I thought.

Dana Brooke and Emma respect Asuka but want to give her a better welcome to NXT. It's Emma's turn soon.

#### NXT Title: Apollo Crews vs. Finn Balor

Balor is defending and there's no Demon this time. We get a spotlight and a staredown for the big match intros. That's a really cool idea that I haven't seen before. Feeling out process to start with neither guy's headlock getting them anywhere. Back from a way too early break with Crews holding a headlock. Finn fights up and grabs a front facelock but Crews lifts him up into a delayed vertical suplex for two. Fans: "THAT'S TOO EASY!"

Off to something like a cobra clutch from the champ but Crews tries a

sunset flip. That's fine with Finn who rolls through and takes Apollo's face off with a basement dropkick. Crews kicks him back down and goes to the middle rope, only to take an enziguri to put him on the floor. Finn nails a BIG flip dive to take us to our second break. Back with Balor firing off some running chops in the corner, followed by a clothesline for two.

Crews shrugs it off again and hits a fall away slam into a Samoan drop for two more. The fans are still split as Apollo nails a jumping enziguri, only to get caught in the Sling Blade. There's the gorilla press but the moonsault hits knees. REVERSE BLOODY SUNDAY of all things gets two but the Coup de Grace misses. They trade kicks to the head and both guys are down until Baron Corbin runs in for the DQ at 15:09.

**Rating:** B. Give this a finish and it's a borderline classic. These guys beat each other up for fifteen minutes and the shots were getting bigger and bigger every time. I'm sure we'll see them fight again at some point and it's going to be one heck of a war whenever they do. Really good stuff here but the ending was the right call as you don't want either one losing.

Post match Corbin beats both guys down until Samoa Joe makes the save. Joe stars Corbin down but then takes Balor out to turn heel. Fans: "WHY JOE WHY?" A Muscle Buster lays Finn out and Joe holds up the title to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. Another week, another great use of an hour to advance a bunch of stories and give you a reason to come back next week. Balor needed a new top heel and Joe is going to be a great opponent when they probably fight in London. As usual, another good hour of wrestling TV this week as they set up matches and stories so smoothly that it's like one big, long story that just keeps going, which is so much better than the start and stop style that you get elsewhere.

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# **NXT – October 28, 2015: I'm Running Out Of Ways To Say This Show Is Good**

## **NXT**

Date: October 28, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

Things are still picking up around here and we have what should be a good featured match tonight with Samoa Joe vs. Tyler Breeze. Tyler eliminated Joe from the battle royal a few weeks back and has been laughing at Joe for costing him a shot at the title. Other than that we also get part two of Apollo Crews' sitdown interview which should set up a good title match against NXT Champion Finn Balor next week.

Opening sequence.

## **Emma vs. Shazza**

Two Australians here. Fans: "AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE! OY OY OY!" They stare at each other to start until Emma dropkicks her down against the ropes and stomps away. Dana: "BREAK HER!" After Emma has to kick out of a quick rollup we hit the neck crank on Shazza. Back up and Emma charges into some boots in the corner but Emma comes right back with the Emma Lock for the submission at 4:21.



**Rating:** D+. This was your traditional “here’s a new Diva now watch her get squashed” match and that’s fine all around. It’s a formula that works perfectly well in NXT so why mess with the plan? Building Emma back up before she gets squashed by Asuka is a fine move as it extends the feud for a few more weeks. That’s an area where NXT shines and it’s a shame so few companies can pull it off.

We look back at James Storm’s debut last week.

Storm quotes his old TNA to sum up his character and says he loved to hear the fans tell him he deserves to be here. If anyone has a problem with that, sorry about their luck.

Video on Finn Balor with fans talking about how cool he is and clips of his time in New Japan.

#### Tommaso Ciampa/Johnny Gargano vs. Jason Jordan/Chad Gable

The fans are behind Gable again and he starts with Ciampa. They fight over a test of strength with Gable not being able to break it with a monkey flip. The grip continues as they’re on the mat for a string of near falls. Gable finally takes over with an armbar and the fans are eating this guy up. Jordan comes in (Fans: “THIS IS WRESTLING!”) but can’t stop the tag off to Gargano who helps with some double team strikes to the face.

Gargano’s front facelock doesn’t go anywhere so Jordan picks him up and drives Johnny into the corner. It’s back to Gable and the fans are right back at their chanting. Chad’s armbreaker over the rope has Gargano in even more trouble but it’s quickly back to Ciampa who has even worse luck. The fans think this is awesome and are even happier when Gargano slingshots in with a spear for two on Gable as we take a break.

Back with the fans wanting the Gable to be saved but Ciampa puts a knee into Chad’s ribs. Ciampa and Gargano take turns on an abdominal stretch with Gargano adding a running dropkick to the back of the head. Gable finally comes back with a judo throw and makes the tag to Jordan for some dropkicks.

There go the straps (I didn't know we were in Memphis) and it's time for a bunch of suplexes (I didn't know Memphis was next to Pittsburgh). Everything breaks down and Gargano slingshots in with a DDT for two on Jordan. Jason slips out of a double suplex and brings in Chad for the Grand Amplitude for the pin on Ciampa at 14:53.

**Rating:** B. The length surprised me here but they barely stopped the whole time out there. I'm really glad they just turned Gable and Jordan face because the fans were going to cheer for someone like Chad no matter what he did. Really fun and long match here with a ton of energy that you don't usually see on TV.

Bayley loves the fact that she's the Women's Champion and has no idea why Alexa Bliss has so many problems with her.

Eva Marie is in front of the Moulin Rouge. She's coming back very soon though. Sweet goodness they're embracing this one full boar.

#### Nia Jax vs. Kay Lee Ray

Nia throws her into the corner to start, rag dolls her a bit and puts her in a Canadian backbreaker. That's actually not the submission though and Ray rolls Jax up for two. Kay tries a springboard though and gets caught in a spinebuster. A big legdrop (with an even bigger smile) give Jax the pin at 2:38. That smile runs in the family.

#### Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Dawson and Wilder jump them during the entrance and crush Cassady's leg against the video board. I knew those things were going to get someone hurt someday. They work over the leg as Enzo is down and that's how Cass will be written off TV for a legitimate leg injury. No match.

Alexa Bliss challenges Bayley to find a team for a six person tag at some point in the future.

It's time for part two of the Apollo Crews video. He can't believe he's here and that he wrestled in front of 16,000 people in Brooklyn on his birthday. Crews' sister can't believe he's been this successful because she sees him as her little brother. The battle royal was another way for

him to prove that he can hang with anyone in NXT and now he wants his chance at his friend's NXT Title.

### Samoa Joe vs. Tyler Breeze

Breeze bails to the floor to start and the threat of a stomping keeps him on the floor. Back in and Tyler gets in a few shots to the back and poses on the ropes. That's enough for Joe and he hammers away in the corner to send Tyler back outside. A suicide dive crushes Breeze and takes us to a break. Back with Joe hammering away with the usual including the corner enziguri.

Tyler grabs a quick backstabber for one and a dropkick gets two. A chinlock doesn't get Breeze anywhere as Joe fights up with his variety of strikes and the backsplash for two. The Rock Bottom out of the corner sets up the Muscle Buster but Tyler escapes into a rollup for two more. Breeze nails a quick Supermodel Kick for two and both guys are down. It's time to slug it out with Breeze trying an O'Connor Roll, only to get flipped into the Koquina Clutch (Normally I would ask if he had ever watched a TNA match but that's a very stupid question.) for the tap out at 12:08.

**Rating:** B-. As usual Breeze is good for a solid performance against anyone he gets in the ring with and is still an awesome gatekeeper to get into the NXT main event. This wasn't a classic or anything but for a quick match to further establish Joe as a player in NXT, this did everything it needed to.

Finn Balor is ready for Apollo Crews, who has beaten everyone he's fought. He hasn't fought Finn Balor though, and Crews isn't becoming champion next week.

**Overall Rating:** B. Another week and another efficient use of NXT's time. They did everything they needed to do this week and set up the non-Takeover big show next week with Crews getting his title shot. It's probably too early for him to have a major shot at Balor but it's still cool to see the champ in action. Good show here, as is definitely the standard for this promotion.

## Results

Emma b. Shazza – Emma Lock

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable b. Tommaso Ciampa/Johnny Gargano – Grand Amplitude to Ciampa

Nix Jax b. Kay Lee Ray – Legdrop

Samoa Joe b. Tyler Breeze – Koquina Clutch

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# **NXT – October 21, 2015: Weeks, Not Half Hours**

## **NXT**

Date: October 21, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We're in the fun times for NXT now as they're a long way off from starting the build to the next Takeover so we might have another big card in the middle, meaning it's time for some fun TV. Apollo Crews is the new

#1 contender to Finn Balor's NXT Title but tonight we've got a former TNA World Champion debuting. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the battle royal with Crews last eliminating Baron Corbin for the win. That was quite the star making performance but I still don't have much of a connection to him. That's the same thing I said about Finn Balor though and that turned out quite well.

Opening sequence.

### Asuka vs. Billie Kay

Kay now has a full entrance so there seems to be some plans for her. We also get a quick inset promo from Kay where she says she's been around the world and has some long legs. So Stacy with an accent. Fans: "YOU KILLED DANA!" Billie's early cheap shot doesn't work but she grabs a nice delayed vertical suplex for two. She goes after Asuka's arm but Asuka comes right back with the rapid fire offense. A forearm just ticks Asuka off and there's a cross armbreaker on Kay. Fans: "ARMBAR!" Kay makes the ropes so Asuka gives her a German suplex, followed by the Asuka Lock for the submission at 3:27.

**Rating:** C+. This was another efficient match as Asuka got to destroy someone else, but the important thing here is that we now have something to differentiate Billie. No it's not much, but she's Australian and has long legs. If nothing else it's more focus than she's got since she debuted so they're going somewhere with her. It's a start and that's something everyone needs.

The announcers rave about Asuka.

Video on Baron Corbin.

Tyler Breeze says that Samoa Joe doesn't get to win the Dusty Classic and then just go on to be #1 contender. After last week, Breeze isn't #1 contender but Joe isn't either. If Joe has a problem with that, he can come find Breeze because Tyler would love to slice a few pieces of bacon off of Joe. In case you didn't get that, he's saying Joe is fat. I didn't know Tyler was a Steiner.

## Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Cassady says if you come see them this Halloween, you're knocking on the wrong door. Dawson (are he and Wilder officially called the Mechanics or not? I know they're often called that but has that ever been used in NXT?) takes out Breeze's leg to start and we get into an old school Anderson series of tags as they work over the leg. Dawson grabs a leg lock and Enzo is in big trouble early on. Cass finally breaks it up with a kick to the head and Enzo grabs a small package to pin Dawson at 2:24.

Enzo and Colin take a beating post match.

Video on Rhyno.

Breast cancer is bad.

Eva Marie is still in Paris. The NXT fans probably don't understand French culture but she's got a present for us: herself.

## Danny Burch vs. James Storm

The fans seem genuinely shocked by this one. The announcers actually mention Storm's cup of coffee in the dying days of WCW and treat him like a huge deal. Fans: "YOU BELONG HERE!" Storm looks the same as he did in NXT and is good here. Burch pounds him down in the corner and cranks on the neck, only to have Storm come back with some clotheslines and an enziguri in the corner.

A running neckbreaker (Storm: "GOODNIGHT!") sets up a new move where he looks like he's loading up a White Noise but spins Burch around into something like a Russian legsweep for the pin at 1:52. Apparently it's called the Eight Second Ride. I've heard worse names and this was a good debut.

Storm does his catchphrase.

Apollo Crews vs. Finn Balor is in two weeks.

Video on Crews where he talks about growing up all over the world and watching wrestling with his dad. Ultimate Warrior got his attention and

he thought he'd like to do it. Crews starts crying when he talks about convincing his mom to buy a toy belt they couldn't afford. Some clips from Evolve wraps up part one. This helped lay a groundwork for Crews and that's more than he's had so far.

Nia Jax is still here and is back next week.

### Alexa Bliss vs. Peyton Royce

Bliss grabs a headlock to start and steps on Royce's back when Peyton drops to the mat. It's off to an armbar from Alexa as the announcers bicker like morons. The fans chant for Peyton so Alexa pounds her down and moonsaults into double knees to the ribs. The Sparkle Splash gives Alexa the pin at 3:15.

**Rating:** D. Bliss isn't much in the ring but she can look intimidating with Blake and Murphy behind her. I don't think anyone is going to buy her as a real threat to Bayley but she can be a good hill for Bayley to climb. Well as good as a 5'1 hill can actually be. Royce could be fine with some more time and a character.

Post match Bliss says she was made to be Women's Champion.

Joe vs. Breeze next week.

### Rhyno vs. Baron Corbin

They immediately brawl to start and fight to the floor for all of five seconds. Back in and Rhyno gets the better of it and punches him up against the ropes, sending Baron out to the floor for a breather. Rhyno follows him out but gets sent into the post as we take a break. Back with Baron slowly stomping away and putting on a chinlock to slow things down even more.

Rhyno fights up and they head outside again with Corbin being sent into the steps. Back in and a quick suplex gets two for Rhyno, followed by the spinebuster for the same. The Gore connects for a surprising two (good) and the fans want one more. Rhyno proves that listening to the fans is a bad idea as he charges into the End of Days for the pin at 12:29.

**Rating:** C-. This was fine for a low level TV main event but it's still nothing I need to see again. Corbin has been doing the same thing for so long now and he needs a story other than "Corbin vs. power guy". Rhyno is a nice win for Baron, but find something new for him to do already.

Joe says desperation is a very funny thing. Tyler Breeze is the epitome of a desperate man but Joe knocked him out. Then he had the nerve to call Joe out. That desperation is going to get him hurt, so Tyler needs to put in his highlights and make sure his hair is nice and pretty, because Joe is coming for him. When is the last time you saw a show ending with a preview for next week like that? That's a nice old school change of pace.

**Overall Rating:** B. An hour of story advancement, acceptable wrestling (mostly) and an old school hype promo to end the show. This continues to be my favorite show of the week and they keep polishing it more and more every time. They've even set up a few weeks worth of big matches to keep you coming back. Yeah notice that WWE: they set them up for future shows, not the next half hour.

### Results

Asuka b. Billie Kay – Asuka Lock

Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore b. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder – Small package to Dawson

James Storm b. Danny Burch – Eight Second Ride

Alexa Bliss b. Peyton Royce – Sparkle Splash

Baron Corbin b. Rhyno – End of Days

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# NXT – October 14, 2015: One For Less Than The Price Of Five

## NXT

Date: October 14, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We're past Takeover: Respect now and the question is who comes after Finn Balor's NXT Title next. In theory it's Samoa Joe, who teamed with Balor to win the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic last week. Other than that we're going to find out who is next to go after Bayley now that Sasha Banks is likely gone. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Takeover: Respect. What an awesome show.

Opening sequence.

Here's Bayley to get things going but she has to stop for a MATCH OF THE YEAR chant. Last week's show was amazing from top to bottom, especially the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic because Dusty had such an impact on this place. The main event was her dream come true because it took the Divas Revolution to a whole new level. That's true. Not only did they have stupid tagline and Twitter hashtags, some of them might have even been trending. You know that means they've made it.

They want women's wrestling to be respected but here are Alexa Bliss with Blake and Murphy to interrupt. The fans actually give Alexa the WHAT treatment and I really hope that doesn't become a thing down here. Bliss talks about how awesome Bayley is and how proud she should be of what she

accomplished. The future for the women of NXT has no limit and she's happy to share it with Bayley.

Bliss takes the title and says they won't be sharing this. She didn't write letters to herself when she was ten, but she wants the title too. Bayley isn't worthy of being champion and it's going to be a lot easier when Bliss takes it from her. For real. Well at least it's not Eva Marie.

Last week, Regal congratulated Balor and Joe on winning the tournament. Joe gets right to the point: he's undefeated since he arrived and would like a title shot. Balor would love to give him a shot but Regal says it's not that simple and makes a battle royal for the #1 contendership. Joe isn't happy but Regal isn't budging.

Tye Dillinger, Apollo Crews and Rhyno all say they'll win the battle royal.

Breast cancer is bad.

#### Vaudevillains vs. Angelo Dawkins/Sawyer Fulton

Non-title. English spins around to take over on Dawkins' arm as Graves goes on about how weird the Vaudevillains are. A Fulton distraction lets Angelo get in a shot to the face and it's off to Sawyer for some big shots in the corner. Angelo talks some loud trash as Fulton hooks a quick chinlock. A missed charge in the corner allows for the tag off to Gotch, who the fans find manly. Gotch suplexes Dawkins down and knocks off one of his headbands (don't worry he has a second), setting up the Whirling Dervish to pin Dawkins at 3:14.

**Rating:** D+. Nothing match here but it was little more than a way to remind the fans that Vaudevillains are in fact a thing. They haven't gotten a lot of focus lately but I have a feeling that Gable and Jordan will be more than enough of a challenge for them going forward. The Mechanics, who beat them in the Dusty Classic, are going to be around too.

Speaking of which, the Mechanics bring up the tournament match and think it means they're the #1 contenders. However, they've been dealt the cards

of Enzo and Cass, who will learn their lesson soon enough.

Clip of Asuka destroying Dana Brooke.

Dana was getting looked at when Asuka came up to laugh at her. She stared Emma down as well with that creepy smile. I like Asuka more and more every time as she's almost eery at times.

### Evie vs. Nia Jax

Nia Jax has some size to her, looking to be about the same level as Havok. The fans do the Baron Corbin counting and Nia shoves Evie into the corner. We hit an early bearhug followed by a splash in the corner. Fans: "JUST STAY DOWN!" Evie fires off some kicks but a release Rock Bottom ends her at 2:12. So we have Bayley, Asuka, Nia, Bliss, Brooke/Emma and the new jobbers who could easily be elevated. The division is already being rebuilt and it's already looking good.

Package on the praise for the Iron Man match.

Tyler Breeze and Baron Corbin say they'll win.

Eva Marie is in Paris for some me time.

### Battle Royal

Tommaso Ciampa, Johnny Gargano, Tye Dillinger, Colin Cassady, Enzo Amore, Danny Burch, Elias Sampson, Mojo Rawley, Blake, Murphy, Rhyno, Tyler Breeze, Scott Dawson, Dash Wilder, Bull Dempsey, Baron Corbin, Apollo Crews, Samoa Joe, Zack Ryder, Steve Cutler, Riddick Moss

I think that's everyone but I can't find a complete list anywhere. Only Rhyno, Corbin and Joe get entrances. A group of guys go after Joe to start and they get him to the apron but he punches his way back to safety. Everyone brawls with everyone as there's too much to call early on. Gargano hides in the corner and ties himself around the ropes. Steve Cutler is the first elimination after three minutes.

Burch and Sampson are put out as well with Gargano following them. All four were put out by Crews in quite the display. Back from a break with

no one having been eliminated during the break. Enzo and Blake have to save themselves but both stay in. Cass throws Moss out but the Mechanics get rid of him, only to have Enzo dump both of them at once. Dillinger eliminates Enzo but gets beaten up and tossed by Dempsey. Rhino saves Corbin and eliminates Bull to get us down to ten.

We've got Ciampa, Ryder, Breeze, Joe, Crews, Blake, Murphy, Corbin, Rawley and Rhino still left. Corbin dumps Rawley as the fans are behind Breeze. Things start to slow down and Breeze has to survive a double team from Blake and Murphy. Corbin eliminates Ryder and then turns on Rhino to get rid of him as well. We take another break and come back with Blake, Murphy, Crews, Joe, Corbin and Breeze as Ciampa was put out during the break.

Joe dumps out Blake and Murphy at the same time before blocking the Supermodel Kick and erupting on Breeze. A running boot eliminates Tyler and it's down to three. Corbin throws Joe to the apron and Breeze pulls him out to get us down to Crews vs. Corbin. Fans: "THANK YOU TYLER!" That's a very interesting result.

They drive each other into the corner and the fans are entirely behind Crews. A spinebuster plants Apollo but Corbin gets frustrated when Crews stays on the apron. Apollo starts his comeback but the moonsault hits knees. Crews comes back with a series of kicks to the head though and a clothesline eliminates Corbin for the win at 23:12.

**Rating:** C+. Battle royals are always tricky to grade but this was more than entertaining enough. They flew through some of the eliminations here but the result is a good way to give us a new #1 contender and challenger for the title. There are only so many ways to run a battle royal and this was about as good as it was going to get.

**Overall Rating:** B+. In 58 minutes, we have a new #1 contender to the Women's Title, Tag Team Titles and NXT Title, as well as a new feud between Joe and Breeze and an awesome debut for Nia Jax. As usual, NXT knows how to use its time better than any other wrestling show I've ever seen as they got everything accomplished in less than an hour with almost no time wasted. Another really good show this week and it flew by. Why

can't WWE do in five hours what NXT can do in one?

## Results

Vaudevillains b. Angelo Dawkins/Sawyer Fulton – Whirling Dervish to Dawkins

Nia Jax b. Evie – Release Rock Bottom

Apollo Crews won a battle royal last eliminating Baron Corbin

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# Blue Pants Done With NXT

<http://411mania.com/wrestling/wwe-news-eva-marie-misses-nxt-shows-to-film-total-divas-blue-pants-leaving-nxt-and-more/>

I can accept this. She's great at popping the crowd but why should she take a spot that could go to others who are actually signed to the company?

Update: On Twitter, Leva said "don't believe everything you read." There might be more to this so maybe we get the Big

Cass intro again.

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# Reviewing the Review: NXT Takeover: Respect

I don't know why I don't do these for every Takeover since they're NXT pay per views. This felt like a show that was thrown together for the sake of having another Takeover on the calendar, but this is NXT where you can actually have faith in your wrestling product for a change. Let's get to it.

We're going to do this one a little differently as there are four matches that matter so let's get the filler out of the way first.

Asuka squashed Dana Brooke in her debut. This was exactly what it needed to be as Asuka destroyed Brooke like she was nothing and even got in a few shots on Emma for good measure. I'm not sure what Brooke and Emma do now but it's pretty clear that Asuka needs to be pushed as something important. Save for Nia Jax, there's really no one left to challenge Bayley so it almost has to be Asuka.

As bad as the reason is, I'm hoping that Eva injuring Carmella at that house show might show WWE that she's just not ready to compete at this level. With Asuka right there and whatever Jax has (she's an Anoa'i so you know she's got a good Samoan drop), Eva really would stick out even worse than she did before. Anyway this was an awesome debut for Asuka as she showed a bunch of striking and submission abilities as well as some awesome presence. What more can you ask for in less than six minutes?

Apollo Crews beat Tyler Breeze in the featured non-main event level match. This was a match where I really didn't know who was going to win going in, but it became pretty clear that Crews is a major deal in NXT. I'm not sure what they're going to do with Breeze, but NXT is the kind of

place where they can rebuild you after some losses. Breeze has earned the fans' and my respect already by taking what should have been a nothing comedy gimmick and turned it into one of the most consistent characters on the roster.

Breeze could become one heck of a face who wins with last minute superkicks but right now he's great as a gatekeeper heel who has good matches against anyone. Crews still needs a character but the same could be said of Finn Balor back in June and he turned out fine. I like that powerbomb better than the standing moonsault as you can only get so far on a move like that. It doesn't seem like someone kicking out of it would mean that much, but the powerbomb is an upgrade.

That leaves us with just the tournament and main event to go so let's look at the three tag matches in a row.

First up we had Finn Balor/Samoa Joe vs. the Mechanics. This was an old school work the body part, which makes perfect sense given that the Mechanics are basically Anderson tribute wrestlers. Balor tweaked his knee during the match which seemed to be the most logical idea going forward into the finals. That being said, Balor and Joe won anyway after a Muscle Buster into the Coup de Grace which hurt the knee even worse. This was old fashioned tag team work and amazingly enough it still worked just fine despite people saying that those old styles don't work anymore.

In the surprise of the night (at least going on) Rhyno/Baron Corbin beat Jason Jordan/Chad Gable. I was really stunned when Corbin pinned Jordan, but the more I think about how huge of a reaction Gable received the more sense it makes. You really don't want to divide the audience with something like Balor vs. Jordan and miss the reaction that you want with Finn. Gable is something really special and could be a big deal going forward in NXT.

As for the match, they changed up the formula here and went with a fast paced tag match with a ton of saves. This is another one of the many things that I love about NXT: they know how mix up a card and not be repetitive. That's one of the things that drives me crazy about WWE. How many times do you see the same finish or the same kind of match either on

the same card or in a row? Stop doing the same stuff and mix it up a little.

That takes us to the final which was the most disappointing match of the night. Balor/Joe won the tournament in a good enough match over Rhyno/Corbin, but Balor's knee injury never went anywhere. Yeah the heels worked it over for a good chunk of the match but the injury never went anywhere. I kept waiting on the injury to cost Balor something and it just never came. I'm assuming it sets up Balor vs. Joe in the future and the match wasn't bad but it didn't do anything for me.

The Rhodes Family presented the winners with a trophy. Nothing came of this but it was a nice moment.

Oh and no Dusty Finish? Really? Not once in the whole thing?

And then there's the main event. Sweet goodness how awesome are Bayley and Sasha together? This was one of the best put together matches I've seen in years as every single thing set up the next move. I'm having trouble picking the first thing to rave about in this. We'll start with Sasha torturing Izzy.

This is one of the most inspired ideas I've seen in a long time as they took something so basic and simple as a major fan and turned it into a plot device. It's thinking outside the box, which would probably get them protested on Raw because a bunch of stupid groups who claim they're doing the best thing for children don't understand the concept that kids can handle being sad if something good happens in the end.

Bayley wound up winning and Izzy was happy, but instead of experiencing joy, there are people out there who would rather kids never have any problems in their lives because that's how things will work in the real world right? I'll cut myself off there and stick with using Izzy was awesome and made the match.

Another awesome moment was Bayley stomping on Sasha's head to make her tap in a callback to Sasha stomping on Bayley's hand in Brooklyn in a failed attempt to make her give up. It makes Bayley look like the tougher of the two and the one who deserves to be champion for never quitting in



the end.

I can't praise this match enough and somehow it's just a step behind their classic in Brooklyn. This is in the running for feud of the year and this is their second great match in six weeks. Those aren't numbers you see very often and it more than lived up to the hype as the first time two women main evented a pay per view.

This show more than exceeded expectations and was carried by the wrestling instead of the storytelling, though the main event delivered on both. For a show that felt like it was there for the sake of having a show and to give a tournament a big stage, this worked incredibly well and I had a blast watching it. As usual, NXT doesn't know how to fail at a major show. London should be outstanding, as almost everything they put on is.

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**NXT Takeover: Respect: B-A-Y-L-E-Y V-S. S-A-S-H-A B-A-N-K-**

# S

## **NXT Takeover: Respect**

Date: October 7, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

This is one of the weaker looking Takeovers on paper as it's only been about six weeks since the last special. However, there are four major matches taking place tonight with a thirty minute women's Iron Man match for the Women's Title and the final three matches in the inaugural Dusty Classic Tag Team Tournament. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about Bayley having the title but now it's about earning respect.

### Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Semi-Finals: Finn Balor/Samoa Joe vs. Mechanics

There's no stage this time but just the screen and a flat aisle. Balor gets knocked outside to start so Joe pounds on Wilder. Dawson pulls his partner out of the way of a corner charge though and the villains take over. Balor finally gets back on the apron as his partner is getting beaten down but an enziguri allows for the tag to the champ. A pair of kicks put the Mechanics on the floor and Balor unleashes the big flip dive to get the crowd even more fired up.

Wilder saves Dawson from the Coup de Grace and Dawson chop blocks Balor to put the champ in trouble. The Mechanics start taking turns working on the knee, including wrapping it around the post and a half crab from Dawson. Balor avoids an elbow drop but Wilder takes Joe off the apron to keep Balor in trouble. This is classic tag team formula stuff so far and it still works. Wilder doesn't have as much luck though as Balor dives over and makes the tag to Joe for some house cleaning. There's the Muscle Buster to Wilder and Balor adds the Coup de Grace for the pin at 9:08 but Balor wrenched his knee again.

**Rating:** B. This is what NXT does best: simple, basic storytelling that

accomplishes everything they needed to take care of. Balor's knee is messed up going into the finals and you had a good match to get to the point. They didn't just do a three minute match to set up the long final but rather took their time and gave us something entertaining in the less important match. Well done, as usual.

Clips of NXT at the Louder than Life festival in Louisville.

### Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic: Semi-Finals: Chad Gable/Jason Jordan vs. Baron Corbin/Rhyno

Corbin throws Jordan around with ease so for some reason Baron tags out to Rhyno. A quick suplex gets two on Rhyno and Gable gets the same off a slingshot sunset flip. The fans are entirely behind Gable here (complete with a Gable chant to the tune of Kurt Angle's old music) as he starts on Rhyno's arm. Jordan comes in to do the same and a double northern lights suplex gets two on Rhyno.

Rhyno tries to throw Gable over the top but Chad grabs the armbars over the ropes to put him in even more trouble. Corbin gets in a few shots on the floor so Rhyno can take over with a chinlock. It's off to Corbin for a chinlock of his own (fans: "SAVE THE GABLES!") before Rhyno misses a top rope splash.

Gable crawls over and makes the tag and it's Jordan coming in to speed things up. Everything breaks down with Jordan cleaning house but he has to save Gable after the End of Days knocks him silly. Gable O'Connor rolls Corbin out of the corner into a German suplex (awesome) but Rhyno makes the save. There's a Gore to Jordan and the second End of Days puts Gable away at 10:27.

**Rating:** B. I liked this one a lot with all the insanity at the end but the ending is a big surprise. I really would have bet on Gable/Jordan winning the whole thing and then they don't even make it to the finals? It's not the worst idea in the world but it was the last thing I was expecting. Maybe they don't want to see Gable getting cheered on the same level as Balor but I'm still surprised at the ending.

Kevin Nash is here.

Video of Asuka.

### Asuka vs. Dana Brooke

Brooke has Emma with her. Asuka comes to the ring with a long robe and a white mask for a cool visual. Dana has no interest in a handshake and they fight over a wristlock with Asuka moving at twice Dana's speed. A slap to the face takes the taste out of Asuka's mouth but she just smiles at Dana. Asuka comes back with a quick striking rush and Dana's pose followed by a Fujiwara Armbar.

Emma finally helps her partner with a distraction and the handstand choke has Asuka in some trouble. Asuka comes right back with a snap German suplex and a cross armbreaker followed by a cross face chickenwing. There's a spinning elbow to knock Emma off the apron. Fans: "ASUKA CITY!" Dana is almost done and gets caught in another cross face chickenwing with a bodyscissors (the Asuka Lock) for the tap at 5:30.

**Rating:** B-. Well that worked. Asuka picked Dana apart and destroyed her in very short order with every bit of offense you could want to see in five minutes. This was a great debut for Asuka who looks like a killer and blows away everyone else in the division at the moment. Now as long as they keep it going this way instead of going with Eva Marie, everything will be fine.

Asuka takes Dana down again and stares at Emma post match.

Breast cancer is bad.

We look at Balor injuring his knee again.

Nia Jax finally arrives next week.

### Apollo Crews vs. Tyler Breeze

Crews powers him up against the ropes to start and knocks Tyler to the floor like he's nothing. A delayed vertical suplex gets two for Crews but Breeze leverages him out to the floor to take over again. Back in and Breeze starts in on the back with some knees and a chinlock with a knee in the spine. A sideways Backstabber gets two and sets up a Sharpshooter

of all things from Breeze.

Apollo makes the ropes and nails a jumping clothesline, followed by a BIG kick to the face to knock Tyler silly. The back gives out though and Breeze Supermodel Kicks him for two. Tyler dives into a powerslam for two and there's the gorilla press but Breeze gets the knees up to block the standing moonsault. Breeze gets all fired up with forearms but Apollo kicks him square in the jaw. Crews loads up a belly to back suplex but spins him around into a powerbomb for the pin at 9:47.

**Rating:** C+. I like the idea of having Crews do something other than the standing moonsault for a finisher as that's only going to take him so far. It's also really nice to see him face some adversity and overcome it for a change because it makes him easier to get behind instead of just someone to marvel over.

Hideo Itami is here.

We look back at tonight's first two tournament matches.

#### Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Finals: Finn Balor/Samoa Joe vs. Baron Corbin/Rhyno

Balor is limping to the ring. Finn and Rhyno get things going and Corey immediately declares this as a dumb idea. Rhyno shoves the champ around with ease and it's off to Corbin for some feeling out. The knee starts to go out though so it's off to Joe for the rapid fire strikes in the corner. Off to Rhyno who has some more luck with a knee to the ribs before Corbin comes in again to a chorus of booing.

A big boot gets two on Joe but he comes back with the enziguri in the corner. Joe tags off to Balor who uses Corbin as a launching pad into a dropkick to Rhyno. The knee seems fine at first but it gives out again when he charges into the corner. That's fine with Balor though as he nails an enziguri, only to have Rhyno drill him in the knee again to take over. Balor's comeback is stopped with a Boss Man Slam for two but he comes back again with a Sling Blade out of nowhere.

The second hot tag brings in Joe to take over on Rhyno with the Rock

Bottom out of the corner and an STO to Corbin. A Gore gets two on Rhyno with Balor making the save, only to damage the knee again in the process. Another Gore is countered by a kick to the face and it's the Muscle Buster into the Coup de Grace for the pin and the tournament at 11:09.

**Rating:** B-. No Dusty Finish? Other than that disappointment, I can't find much to complain about here. The first two matches were better and the knee didn't really play into the finish, but I'm sure this leads to Joe vs. Balor in some way. Rhyno and Corbin weren't an option for winning the whole thing save for Balor and Joe imploding but at least they were an impressive looking opponent in the final. Also well done to have Rhyno take the fall instead of Corbin.

The Rhodes Family (with Stardust out of character) present Balor and Joe with the trophy. Cody talks about his dad being the oak of NXT and how his dad was beamed into homes around the world for over forty years. Tonight, we are all part of the Rhodes family. Dusty's theme music plays with nothing from Joe or Balor.

Stephanie (of course), Charlotte, Becky Lynch and Lita are in the front row.

We recap Bayley taking the title in Brooklyn and Sasha wanting a rematch. The result is tonight's 30 minute Iron Man match for the title. We also see some more of Bayley training in an awesome montage.

#### Women's Title: Bayley vs. Sasha Banks

Bayley is defending and this is an Iron Man match, meaning the most falls (pin, submission, countout or disqualification) in thirty minutes wins. We get the entrances following the girls to the ring, thankfully with no talking from the announcers. Bayley has a cape and Iron Man colors, meaning my life is complete. Fans: "WOMEN'S WRESTLING!"

They stare each other down and there's no contact until a little over a minute in. A lockup gets us to Sasha holding a headlock, followed by some rollups for two. Bayley gets some rollups of her own for two each and a pinfall reversal sequence gives us even more near falls. Sasha gets in the first big move with a dropkick to knock the champ into the corner but

Bayley comes back with a Japanese armdrag to drop Sasha on her head for two. That looked bad but Sasha seems to be ok.

We're five minutes in and Sasha sends her into the corner with a top rope wristdrag. Both finishers are blocked and Sasha chills in the corner. Sasha suckers her in and pulls the hair to get a quick two but it ticks Bayley off. Some hard elbows and a clothesline put Sasha on the floor. Bayley keeps the pressure on with a dropkick under the bottom rope (ala Sami Zayn) and a bulldog back inside for two. Both of them nearly crush the referee in the corner but Sasha uses this to her advantage and pokes Bayley in the eye for the first fall at 8:32.

Bayley rams her face first into the buckle over and over but gets sent into them herself. Both of them are banged up as we're ten minutes in. The double knees in the corner are countered into something like Snake Eyes and the Bayley to Belly ties it up at 10:55. Sasha bails to the floor so Bayley tries the sliding kick again. Banks catches her coming in this time though (I love psychology) and slams Bayley into the steps, right in front of her family and Izzy in a nice touch. Sasha throws her into the steps two more times and makes sure to talk trash to the family. Bayley kicks out at two and the fans are chanting for Izzy.

The champ is thrown to the floor and bangs her knee on the landing. Sasha whips her into the video board and it's a countout to give Sasha a 2-1 lead at 14:12. Banks steals Izzy's headband and throws it at her, making Izzy cry to get the fans entirely on Bayley's side. Bayley beats the count back in at fifteen minutes to go but Banks starts right in on her back. Sasha is brimming with confidence as she slaps on a Liantamer and stomps on the bad hand for old times' sake. Bayley makes the rope and grabs a fluke rollup to tie us up at 2-2 with 12:38 to go.

The double knees in the corner miss again and Bayley makes the comeback with ax handles to the face followed by an awkward looking spinning facebuster for two. The middle rope back elbow gets the same and Bayley's hair is almost down. Bayley puts her in the Tree of Woe for a running springboard elbow as we have ten minutes left.

Banks crotches her on top and now the double knees hit (great job of

building that move up) for two. Bayley kicks her to the floor as the fans think it's better than Raw (time for Vince and Dunn to crush this show then). Now Bayley starts working on Sasha's hand and the fans want Izzy to slap Banks. The arm gets snapped across the middle rope and Sasha falls out to the floor again.

Bayley starts setting up the steps and Izzy looks like she's about to cry again. Sasha's hand is slammed into the steps again and a clothesline off the steps puts her on the floor. She's still able to kick Bayley into the steps though and the champ is in trouble again. Sasha's suicide dive is caught and a Bayley to Belly on the floor knocks her silly. Somehow that only gets two back inside and we've got five minutes to go.

Bayley puts her on the middle rope and a running super Bayley to Belly gets....two as the cover sent Sasha's feet into the ropes. Three minutes left and they're both spent. Bayley loads up the reverse hurricanrana but Sasha lands on her feet and hits a Bayley to Belly of her own. There's the Bank Statement and Sasha spins her away from the ropes. She can't get the full hold on though due to the hand injury from earlier.

Sasha kicks away from the ropes and gets a better version on with a minute left. Bayley reaches up and bends the hand back for the break before slamming the bad hand into the mat to get out. Sasha hooks the backbreaker to set up another Bank Statement but Bayley rolls through into an armbar while cranking on the hand with ten seconds left. Bayley KICKS HER IN THE HEAD until Sasha taps with three seconds left to retain Bayley's title at 30:00 by a score of 3-2.

**Rating:** A. It's not as good as the Brooklyn match (I underrated that one horribly. If that wasn't an A+, nothing is.) but my goodness they were feeling the drama and storytelling here. The back work from Banks worked perfectly but it made sense that Bayley didn't give up because of Sasha's hand injury. Bayley got WAY more aggressive than she ever has before here and it felt like a battle instead of just a match. Really good stuff here and I had a blast with it.

Bayley looks drained as the roster comes out to the entrance to help Sasha up. HHH presents Bayley with a bouquet and she soaks in the cheers.



Bayley and Sasha smile at each other to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** A. I'm still trying to catch my breath about five minutes after the show ended. This was AWESOME with the main event stealing the show all over again. Those two are something special and they know they are. The rest of the show was all really good stuff too with the worst match probably being Asuka putting on a show against Brooke. I had a blast tonight and it blew away my expectations, as these things almost always do.

### Results

Finn Balor/Samoa Joe b. Mechanics – Coup de Grace to Wilder

Rhyno/Baron Corbin b. Chad Gable/Jason Jorda – End of Days to Gable

Asuka b. Dana Brooke – Asuka Lock

Apollo Crews b. Tyler Breeze – Spinning powerbomb

Finn Balor/Samoa Joe b. Baron Corbin/Rhyno – Coup de Grace to Rhyno

Bayley b. Sasha Banks 3-2

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# NXT – September 30, 2015: Go Home If You Will

## NXT

Date: September 30, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

This is the go home show for next week's Takeover: Respect show and the main story tonight is finding out the final four in the Dusty Classic. The semifinals and finals are next week, meaning most of the card is already set. I'm sure we'll also get the hard sell for Bayley vs. Sasha II. Let's get to it.

We open with an update on the tournament. Here are the updated brackets:

Rhyno/Baron Corbin

Chad Gable/Jason Jordan

Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Finn Balor/Samoa Joe or Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady

Opening sequence.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Quarter-Finals: Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Finn Balor/Samoa Joe

Enzo and Cass are classic guys and if you're not a fan of Dusty Rhodes, you must be S-A-W-F-T! Balor now has a slightly altered entrance, a leather jacket and the BALOR CLUB sign for his tron video. Joe and Cass get things going and they slug it out onto the floor, only to have Enzo nail a suicide dive. Balor adds in a flip dive and we take a very early break. Back with Enzo hitting a middle rope DDT on the champ.

The hot (?) tag brings in Cass for some splashes to Joe and big boots to both guys. A big running elbow gets two on Joe and Cass plants him with a

Boss Man Slam. The Rocket Launcher connects but Joe rolls over and lifts Enzo to the top for the Muscle Buster. Finn adds the Coup de Grace to advance at 7:12.

**Rating:** C-. Well that was short. Balor and Joe winning is the better choice as it's going to make for a bigger impact when they either win the whole thing and fight over who earned the win or screw up and split as a result. Either way it's a good idea for a story and a good way to set up what should be a really fun title match down the line.

Tomasso Ciampa and Johnny Gargano are disappointed by their loss but tonight it's about moving forward against Apollo Crews. Tyler Breeze comes in and says he'd love to fight Ciampa later tonight.

Video on Asuka.

#### Johnny Gargano vs. Apollo Crews

Gargano flips out of a fireman's carry to start and puts on something like an Anaconda Vice/Tarantula combo for a few moments. Four moments of course because he has until five. Crews dropkicks him out to the floor but Gargano comes back in with a slingshot spear through the ropes for two. Cool move. Some kicks get two more for Johnny but Crews shrugs them off and hits the gorilla press and standing moonsault for the pin at 4:05.

**Rating:** C. Crews is gathering up wins and it's nice to see him beating people other than just jobbers. His match with Breeze should be a really good test for him as Breeze is known for putting on good matches in the big moments and both guys need a win on a big stage like this. Good enough match here and a good launching pad for Crews going into Takeover.

Regal brings Dana Brooke and Emma into his office to announce Dana vs. Asuka next week. Brooke is thrilled until Regal shows them an Asuka highlight reel. Emma: "Good luck with that."

Nia Jax video.

#### Dana Brooke/Emma vs. Peyton Royce/Billie Kay

Peyton grabs some quick rollups for two each on Dana as the fans chant for the jobbers. It's off to Billie vs. Emma with Kay getting two off a delayed suplex. Dana calls Kay a billy goat and the villains take over in the corner. Both of them put on a bodyscissors to keep Kay in trouble but she finally gets over for the tag to Peyton. Things go a bit better for Royce with a dropkick getting two on Dana but Emma grabs her leg, setting up the sitout Death Valley Driver for the pin on Peyton at 6:48. That move needs a name.

**Rating:** D+. This was pretty dull stuff but at least Brooke gets to look dominant before she gets destroyed by Asuka next week. Dana plays a good heel and the alliance with Emma works well enough. The bodyscissors dragged a lot of the life out of this one though and it could have been a good big shorter.

Chad Gable/Jason Jordan say they're the favorites going into their match next week. Then it's on to the finals where they probably won't be facing Dawson/Wilder. That brings in Dawson/Wilder for some serious bickering.

#### Tommaso Ciampa vs. Tyler Breeze

Ciampa's video mostly says Johnny Gargano. Feeling out process to start as they trade rollups for no counts. Breeze winds up riding Ciampa like a short horse until Ciampa hits a running knee in the corner. Tyler comes right back with a neckbreaker and a front facelock as things slow down again. Ciampa fights up again and lifts Breeze up for a hanging downward spiral, only to block a rollup attempt that Breeze wasn't trying.. These two are really not clicking so far. Tyler dropkicks him out of the air for two and hooks a Killswitch for the pin at 7:49.

**Rating:** D+. I wasn't liking this one for the most part as they seemed like they were on different pages. Breeze has worked well with almost anyone he's been out there with and I'm not the biggest Ciampa fan in the world. It was no secret that Breeze was going to win here but unlike Crews, he didn't make it into a very entertaining match.

Baron Corbin and Rhyno say they'll win the tournament.

We run down the Takeover card.

A long recap of Bayley winning the Women's Title and the build to the Iron Woman rematch ends the show. Good stuff here with Bayley studying Iron Man matches and training to go half an hour.

**Overall Rating:** C+. The wrestling wasn't great here but they did a really good job of setting up next week's show. This was quite the go home show, which is something you often get around here. Next week's Takeover definitely feels like one of the lower level specials they've had but I could see the wrestling really making up for a lot of the lack of stories. Good enough this week as they made me want to see next week's big show.

### Results

Samoa Joe/Finn Balor b. Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore – Coup de Grace to Amore

Apollo Crews b. Johnny Gargano – Standing moonsault

Dana Brooke/Emma b. Peyton Royce/Billie Kay – Sitout Death Valley Driver to Royce

Tyler Breeze b. Tommaso Ciampa – Killswitch

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# NXT – September 23, 2015: Ladies Night

## NXT

Date: September 23, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

It's another night in the Dusty Classic as we're moving towards Takeover: Respect with the semi-finals and finals of the tournament as well as a thirty minute Iron Woman match for the Women's Title. Tonight is likely to be about the tournament and filling in the rest of the card for the show on October 7. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Eva Marie vs. Carmella

Oh this one could hurt. Carmella shoulders her into the corner to start and throws Eva to the floor so we can get a Moonwalk inside. Back in and Eva's suplex is booted out of the building as the announcers talk about Eva not being accepted for her improvements. A big boot drops Carmella for two (fans: "THAT'S A KICKOUT!") and we hit a bow and arrow hold. Fans: "ALL BOTCH EVERYTHING!" Carmella fights back and starts dancing around like Enzo before ramming Emma into the buckle for two. Eva comes back by throwing Carmella to the floor for a big crash and a countout win at 5:10.

**Rating:** D. So here's the thing: the story makes sense and yeah Eva is going to get a ton of heat when she probably takes the title from Bayley, but a lot of people, myself included, are going to get annoyed at sacrificing everything the women in NXT have built up for the sake of pushing someone because she's occasionally on a reality show that doesn't even draw a million people a week. Yeah that match that sold the Brooklyn show and was all successful and good, but now let's get rid of it for a woman getting on the job training to be the next Nikki Bella. That's life in WWE and it's something we just have to live with.

Nia Jax is still coming. Nothing has changed since Takeover.

Recap of the announcement of the Iron Woman match.

### Tyler Breeze vs. Bull Dempsey

Their tag team was a failure and Bull is getting in better shape. Tyler uses the referee as a shield to start and is thrown around like a doll. Bull messes with the hair to really get under Breeze's skin, causing Tyler to send him out to the floor. Unlike Carmella though, Bull is able to get back in off a whip to the floor. Must be the Bull Fit. Fans: "BULL FIT WORKS!"

Back from a break with Tyler ripping at Bull's face before opting for a regular headlock. Graves: "Now going down into the trapezius. I learned my anatomy from Gorilla Monsoon." Bull throws him off and gets all fired up as Breeze punches him. Some left jabs drop Breeze but he's able to roll to the ropes before Bull can drop the headbutt. Bull goes up again for some reason, only to have Tyler pull him off for the pin with his feet on the ropes at 10:19.

**Rating:** C. Bull Fit is a nice idea but Breeze winning here was the right idea. Breeze has the potential to really go somewhere in NXT and winning matches and feuds like this are a good sign for him. Dempsey needs to drop some more weight but the fans are getting into the gimmick which is the most important sign.

Clips of the Texas tour.

William Regal brings out Japanese star Kana, whose Titantron video says Asuka. Regal pronounces the new name as "Aska" and asks if there's anything she'd like to say. Asuka says she's happy to be here and wants to be NXT Women's Champion. They sign the contract but here are Dana Brooke and Emma to interrupt. Regal chides them for their rudeness and it gets even worse as they mock Asuka's English. They're the ones who ran Charlotte and Becky Lynch off so Asuka better play nice. A dejected Asuka starts to leave but the fans chant her name. Asuka turns back and smiles before slowly leaving.

Tyler Breeze doesn't have much to say about his match with Apollo Crews at Takeover. Crews comes up and is far more excited about the match than Tyler is.

Feature on the Dusty Classic. Here are the updated brackets:

Samoa Joe/Finn Balor vs. Colin Cassidy/Enzo Amore

Dash/Dawson

Hype Bros vs. Chad Gable/Jason Jordan

Baron Corbin/Rhyno

The Hype Bros and Gable/Jordan are both ready for next week.

Tag Team Titles: Vaudevillains vs. Blake and Murphy

Vaudevillains are defending in the rematch from Takeover: Brooklyn. Gotch shoulders Blake down for two to start and here's Blue Pants to chase Alexa into the ring for a brawl. Both of them head to the back and English slaps a chinlock on Blake. Blake comes right back with a headlock of his own but Aiden armdrags both challengers down with ease. Murphy back suplexes English onto the apron and we take a break.

Back with English still in trouble off a kick to the face and a chinlock from Blake. Murphy's chinlock keeps the match slow until English comes back with a hard slap to the face. Gotch and Blake come in with Simon's screwy offense taking over. Everything breaks down and Blake gets his knees up to stop Aiden's middle rope senton. English gets two off a rollup and sends Murphy to the floor, allowing Simon to come back in for the Whirling Dervish to retain at 12:17.

**Rating:** C-. That was certainly chinlocky. It was much more boring than bad though as there was almost no chance of the titles changing back here. I'm assuming the winners of the tournament, likely Gable/Jordan, are the next challengers, which makes more sense than anything else.

Enzo and Big Cass are thankful for everything Dusty did for them and want to win the tournament in his honor. They respect Balor and Joe as well,



but respect goes out the window next week.

Balor and Joe say Cass and Enzo might be the realest guys in the room but they're the toughest guys on the block and you can't teach that.

**Overall Rating:** C. Not the worst show in the world here but it was much more about setting stuff up for later shows. The tournament is mostly set up now and we have a good chunk of Takeover set with the Iron Woman match guaranteed to take up thirty minutes and the tournament matches filling in most of the rest of the card. Fun enough show here but it was much more of a building episode than anything else.

### Results

Eva Marie b. Carmella via countout

Tyler Breeze b. Bull Dempsey – Pin with feet on the ropes

Vaudevillains b. Blake and Murphy – Whirling Dervish to Blake

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