

# NXT UK – July 29, 2021: This Is Bad?

## NXT UK

Date: July 29, 2021

Location: BT Studios, London, England

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Andy Shepherd

We're coming up on Ilja Dragunov vs. Walter II for the United Kingdom Title...but it's going to take place in Florida on the regular NXT Takeover. Well so much for that. Instead, we'll have to get read for the Iron Man match between Jordan Devlin and A-Kid. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

### Jordan Devlin vs. Tristan Archer

Devlin takes him down by the arm to start without much effort and the cranking begins. Back up and Archer reverses into a wristlock of his own so Devlin nails a dropkick. Archer tries to knee away but gets hit in the face to drop him without much trouble. A belly to back backbreaker plants Archer again and Devlin grabs the chinlock with a knee in the back. We hit the neck crank for a bit until Archer fights up again. Devlin gets dropped for a running backsplash but Archer's back is banged up. That's enough for Devlin, who snaps off the Devlin Slide for the pin at 5:32.

**Rating:** C. They packed in a bit of a story into a five and a half minute match, which is quite the little trick. Archer has looked good in his limited appearances so far and I could see him doing something more in the future. Devlin continues to be one of the bigger stars around here and I'm still expecting him to become a main eventer at some point in the future.

Post match, Devlin says he has heard about a thirty minute Iron Man match against A-Kid. That's cool with Devlin, but he has warned Johnny Saint that it will be the end of A-Kid's career. Cue A-Kid on his crutches, which Devlin kicks away while issuing threats. A-Kid hits him anyway and cleans house, including some dropkicks. With Devlin on the floor, A-Kid says Devlin failed to get rid of him and next week, he'll have thirty minutes to fail again.

Video on Jinny vs. Aoife Valkyrie.

We get the announcement that Ilja Dragunov will face Walter at Takeover on August 22. Walter is ready to destroy Dragunov for the greater good.

Meiko Satomura comes in to the women's locker room and says she wants a challenge. Satomura then stands back while everyone else argues and smiles at all of them.

### Aoife Valkyrie vs. Jinny

Joseph Conners is here with Jinny. Valkyrie works on the arm to start and Jinny can't snapmare her way out of it. A kick to the head staggers Valkyrie, who is right back up with a running sunset flip for two. Conners offers a quick distraction though and Jinny gets in a shot from behind to take over. A shoulder takes Valkyrie down again but she sweeps the leg. Back up and Conners offers another distraction, allowing Jinny to snap the arm.

It's off to the double arm crank until Valkyrie flips forward and kicks her way to freedom. Something like a surfboard takes Valkyrie down again and Jinny kicks her in the back to make it worse. That's broken up and Valkyrie strikes away, including some kicks to the head. There's a spinning kick to the face for two so Valkyrie goes up for the ax kick. Conners gets up for another distraction though, meaning Valkyrie has to settle for an enziguri. ANOTHER Conners distraction lets Jinny get in a shot from behind though and a rolling kick to the head

finishes Valkyrie at 4:59.

**Rating:** C-. I wasn't exactly feeling Conners having to interfere that many times but it isn't like there is much of a reason to believe that Jinny is going to be a real threat to Valkyrie otherwise. That is Jinny's biggest problem by a wide margin: she is a great character and can talk, but she is only so much inside the ring. She did fine enough here, but there is a gap between this and the top of the division.

Video on Joe Coffey vs. Rampage Brown, who are geared up for a hard hitting hoss fight.

A-Kid is ready to make history again when he wins next week's Iron Man match.

#### Aleah James vs. Stevie Turner

They go technical to start with a wristlock not working, though Turner's headlock doesn't either. James ducks underneath a clothesline, but Turner stomps her down into the corner without much effort. There's a facewash against the ropes but Turner misses a running boot and gets rolled up for two. James is back up with a running forearm and a dropkick, setting up a crossbody for two more. A missed charge rocks James so Turner hits a running clothesline, only to bounce off the ropes into a Downward Spiral to put James away at 4:28.

**Rating:** C. Turner is growing on me and James looked fairly smooth out there. I'm curious to see where Turner can go, but I don't know if it is going to work out that well with her futuristic deal. It works fairly well, but I'm not sure if it is going to be good enough to get her into the title picture.

Jack Starz and Dave Mastiff train in the ring, with Starz having some issues with the size.

#### Symbiosis vs. Moustache Mountain

Eddie Dennis is in Symbiosis' corner. Symbiosis jumps Bate and

Seven during their WAY too choreographed entrance (it wasn't hard to get in a cheap shot) and we start in a hurry. That's fine with Bate, who busts out some nunchucks to clear the ring before the bell. Back in and T-Bone hammers Seven into the corner but Seven is back with a crossbody. A slam puts T-Bone down and it's off to Bate for some driving shoulders. Seven comes back in and gets caught in a fast hot shot.

There's a whip into the corner to keep Seven in trouble, followed by a catapult into a right hand to make it worse. A double stomp gives T-Bone two, followed by a backbreaker for the same. Seven fights up and hits Primate in the ribs, setting up a quick DDT for the hot tag to Bate.

Everything breaks down with Bate hitting Primate in the face and getting two off the running shooting star press. There's the airplane spin with T-Bone attempting a save, only to have Bate throw Primate at him. The Tyler Driver 97 gets two on Primate with Primate making a save. T-Bone powerslams Bate down and takes out Seven, allowing Primate to hit his top rope head butt for two.

Bate chokes Primate on the apron but Eddie Dennis pulls him into the Severn Bridge into the barricade (egads). Back in and Bate manages a double clothesline to get him out of trouble, allowing Seven to make a blind tag. Bate dives onto Dennis and T-Bone, leaving Seven to hit the Seven Star Lariat for two on Primate. The top rope knee/Burning Hammer combination finishes Primate at 10:56.

**Rating:** B-. The ending was the right call as you don't want to have Moustache Mountain losing unless it's a big change. Symbiosis made the better team sweat a bit here with some of those near falls at the end being pretty hot. Other than that, this was a good showcase for both teams and a nice main event for a lower level TV show.

Pretty Deadly comes out for the staredown with Moustache

Mountain to end the show. They had to get there at some point.

**Overall Rating:** C. While it wasn't bad by any means, this show was pretty flat without much of anything that you need to see. The main event was by far the biggest thing this week and the ending has me interested in the title showdown, but there wasn't much else worth mentioning. That is going to happen from time to time but NXT UK has enough of a reputation to be fine for a single off week.

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# 205 Live – July 23, 2021: Fans Are Back! Just Not Around Here!

## 205 Live

Date: July 23, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

We are officially in the FANS ARE BACK period but it isn't going to matter given this show's location. I'm never sure what to expect around here anymore but it's nice to have the show staying at a short pace. That's the best thing that you can have with a show like this, but maybe things can pick up a bit. Let's get to it.

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

### Asher Hale vs. Guru Raaj

Rematch from last week where Raaj stole a win. Feeling out process to start with Hale going after the leg without much success. Raaj crank on the arm and grabs a rollup to send Hale outside. Back in and Hale starts on the arm as the 205 chants begin. Raaj fights up and hits a dropkick, followed by a headlock takeover. Hale gets up so Raaj clotheslines him out to the floor but comes up favoring his wrist. The delay lets Hale sweep the leg and tie his legs around Raaj's head for a twist.

Back in and we hit something like an Indian Deathlock with Hale sitting on the back for a bit. That is switched into a Muta Lock until Hale has to let it go. That needs to get more wins. Some kicks to various limbs has Raaj in more trouble but he finally explodes to send Hale into the corner. A series of shoulders in the corner set up a dropkick for two on Hale. Raaj can't get the backslide he used to win last week so Hale grabs a flipping neckbreaker. A leg trap brainbuster finishes Raaj at 8:25.

**Rating:** C. Hale continues to look a bit more polished than the rest of the newcomers around here, while Raaj....I'm not exactly sure what he does actually. Nothing really makes him stand out, which is a bit of a problem. It is something that can be fixed without much trouble as he can do the in-ring stuff, but nothing really makes him stand out.

### Ari Sterling vs. Jake Atlas

Feeling out process to start with Atlas' waistlock not getting him very far. They trade armdrags to little avail so Atlas cartwheels his way out of a hurricanrana. An exchange of rollups gets two each until Sterling gets in a kick to the head to take over. That lasts all of two seconds as Atlas hits his own kick for his own two. A bodyscissors has Sterling in some quickly escaped trouble so Atlas switches to a waistlock.

That doesn't last long, mainly because it's just a waistlock, so Atlas knees him in the ribs for two instead. It's back to the bodyscissors but Sterling fights up again and hits the flipping ax kick for two. Atlas pops up and pulls him into a half crab, which doesn't last long either. Sterling grabs a Downward Spiral and nails a running kick to the face. Back up and a fall away slam gives Atlas two but Sterling catches him on top. The 450 is cut off though and Atlas grabs the cartwheel DDT for the pin at 9:37.

**Rating:** C. Atlas is a much better fit here than on NXT, as he doesn't have the personality to hang on the bigger show. The in-ring stuff is fine enough though and he'll be fine around here. Sterling was better here as well, if nothing else because we got to see him doing something other than selling his leg and then making an easy comeback.

Respect is shown post match.

**Overall Rating:** C. Two decent matches with little in the way of storyline advancement, and we'll probably get Hale vs. Raaj III soon. That being said, neither match was bad and you're in and out in less than twenty seven minutes. It's virtually impossible to get overly annoyed at a show like that and this worked out fine enough. If they actually had a story or something to fight over it would be even better, but this was a throwaway edition if there ever was one.

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# Monday Night Raw – February 26, 2007: I Want To See It

## Monday Night Raw

Date: February 26, 2007

Location: Save Mart Center, Fresno, California

Attendance: 8,700

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're rapidly approaching Wrestlemania and this time around we have more from Donald Trump. This week, Trump gets to pick his representative to face Umaga in the Battle of the Billionaires, which is going to be the show's real main event. Other than that, we have the continuing saga of Shawn Michaels trying to keep John Cena safe until Wrestlemania. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of the Battle of the Billionaires, leading to Trump returning tonight.

Tag Team Titles: John Cena/Shawn Michaels vs. Rated-RKO



Cena and Michaels are defending....or at least they should be. Instead, Rated-RKO pops up on screen to say they aren't ready to compete right now. Instead, they'll have this match later tonight.

Randy Orton says that Shawn got robbed at the Oscars last night, because he managed to say that he had Cena's back until Wrestlemania. Cena needs to watch his back because Shawn is a liar. We see a video history of Shawn turning on his partners, which really has happened a lot. Back in the arena, Cena isn't sure what to think as Edge calls Shawn a liar. Having your back and stabbing you in the back are two different things. See you later tonight. Staring ensues, with Shawn saying "you can trust me." Right.

Mick Foley has a new book: the Hardcore Diaries, complete with a lot of celebrities.

### Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Jeff Hardy vs. Shelton Benjamin

Shelton doesn't get an entrance but we do get an explanation of Money in the Bank, plus Big Match Intros. Benjamin takes him to the mat without much effort to start but Hardy is back up with a few kicks to the ribs. Hardy gets taken down again though and Benjamin hammers away, setting up the quickly broken chinlock. A few more shots send Benjamin outside, meaning Hardy can run the barricade to hit the clothesline. The Whisper in the Wind connects but it's too early for the Swanton, with Benjamin jumping up for a belly to belly superplex into the big crash.

We take a break and come back with Benjamin holding a chinlock with a bodyscissors. Hardy fights up but gets backdropped right down for a fast two. Another chinlock goes on until Hardy fights up again, this time sending Benjamin to the apron. Benjamin slips off a springboard and lands HARD, allowing Hardy to grab a quick two. The Stinger Splash hits

buckle and it's a Twist of Fate into the Swanton to give Hardy the fast pin.

**Rating:** C. The botch just before the ending is what is going to be remembered here, as there is no way around something like that. Benjamin fell and landed on his face, thankfully without some kind of an injury. Hardy going to Money in the Bank makes a lot more sense here as Benjamin is just a tag guy at the moment.

Post match, Vince McMahon pops up on screen to sarcastically congratulate Jeff for winning. Jeff didn't win last week when he faced Umaga though, just like whoever Donald Trump picks at Wrestlemania won't do. We get some of the HILARIOUS shots of Trump in various stages of baldness, which Vince promises we will see at Wrestlemania.

Video on Ashley's Playboy shoot.

Melina rants and raves about Ashley and Mick Foley getting all of this attention. Next week she has to face Mickie James in a Falls Count Anywhere match and tonight she has to face Maria. Johnny Nitro: "SHUT UP!" Nitro goes on a rant about how he isn't going to Wrestlemania and has nothing, but he doesn't have time to listen to her right now.

### Johnny Nitro vs. Super Crazy

Nitro jumps him before the bell and the beating is on outside. Crazy is sent hard into the steps, setting up a faceplant on the floor. That's enough for Nitro, who walks away still furious.

### Melina vs. Maria

Non-title and Melina has the paparazzi, which Nitro was lacking. Melina takes her down by the hair to start and it's already in catfight territory. Back up and Maria misses a dropkick as Melina holds onto the rope. Choking ensues on said

ropes, with Lawler saying Maria can teach you some new positions. The camel clutch doesn't last long on Maria, who fights up and knocks her into the corner. The Bronco Buster is blocked with a kick to the ribs though, allowing Melina to grab a rollup for the pin.

**Rating:** D. This was as good as it was going to get between these two as Melina is still getting the hang of this and Maria was never exactly good in the first place. The idea here was to get Melina in the ring and show that she could do something other than beating Mickie James. It wasn't a good match, but what else were you expecting under these circumstances?

Wrestlemania is in thirty four days.

Here is Vince McMahon to find out Donald Trump's Wrestlemania pick. Vince recaps the Battle of the Billionaires concept and explains why Trump is here. He isn't sure what he wants more: Trump being bald or giving Trump a billionaire b\*\*\*\* slap. Before we get to that though, we see a clip of Umaga destroying Rey Mysterio on Smackdown, just to eliminate Rey from the list of options.

Vince brings out Umaga and Armando Alejandro Estrada before explaining that Trump made his career on outdoing someone else. This might include building a skyscraper or marrying a good looking woman, causing Trump to get divorced and marry a better looking one. If Trump says he's winning at Wrestlemania, Vince will turn him into a bald faced liar.

Trump pops up on screen to say he is impressed by Umaga (dang he pronounced it right), but Umaga is an animal. You tame animals, and Trump will do that by finding someone or something superior. Therefore, here is the man responsible for Trump shaving Vince's head at Wrestlemania: Bobby Lashley. Cue Lashley, with Vince demanding that security get out here right now. Umaga hits him in the face and the brawl is on, with

security not being able to hold them apart for very long. This was a hot angle and the fight looked great.

It's time for the Masterlock Challenge with...Great Khali answering. Oh dear. Chris Masters isn't sure what to do as Khali sits in the chair, as he can't get his arms around Khali's shoulders. Cue Kane though and the violence is on, with a bunch of chair shots getting rid of Khali and Masters. This was short and to the point as we seem to have our Wrestlemania monster fight.

Vince McMahon is rating at Coach about Trump when he gets a phone call. Someone on the Board of Directors has an idea: a guest referee for the Battle of the Billionaires. Coach thinks that would be unfair but Vince isn't so sure. Either way, he isn't winding up bald.

Jerry Lawler is announced for the Hall of Fame. Lawler seems touched by the announcement and we get the Hall of Fame video, including some pretty sweet Memphis footage.

We recap the opening sequence, including the Shawn betrayal montage again.

### Carlito vs. Kenny Dykstra

Torrie Wilson is here with Carlito and we're joined in progress with Dykstra holding a chinlock. With a few moments to kill, we see Dykstra calling Carlito Flair's flunkie during the break to set Carlito off. Carlito fights back and hits the springboard spinning Swanton but Dykstra pokes him in the eye. A flapjack gives Carlito two anyway but another springboard misses. Dykstra sends him right first into the apron for two and some shoulders to the ribs make it worse.

We hit the seated abdominal stretch, followed by a knee to the ribs to cut off Carlito's comeback. Now it's the standing abdominal stretch, including the notable lack of toe hooking. As a result, Carlito sends him to the apron and hits the

springboard back elbow back inside. A hurricanrana is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two on Carlito but Dykstra misses a charge into the corner. Carlito Backstabs him for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. As usual, Carlito isn't exactly thrilling but the rib stuff was fine for a midcard Raw match. They didn't need to do anything more than this as the idea was for Carlito to get a win. Granted I'm not sure how much it means to beat Dykstra, but it is better than losing week after week.

Ric Flair comes out to applaud Carlito.

Vince McMahon is still annoyed and is going to ECW to make Bobby Lashley's life a nightmare.

Tag Team Titles: John Cena/Shawn Michaels vs. Rated-RKO

Cena and Michaels are defending and Shawn keeps his eye on Cena during the entrances. Shawn and Edge start things off with Shawn working on the arm. That's enough for Edge so Orton comes in and gets pummeled in the corner by Orton. Cena gets taken into the wrong corner though and the villains take over. Edge forearms him down without much trouble and it's back to Orton for the right hands to the head.

Some choking in the corner sets up more right hands as the offense hasn't exactly taken off yet. Cena's release fisherman's suplex gets him a breather though and it's off to Shawn to pick up the pace. The top rope elbow hits Orton and it's an atomic drop to put Edge on the floor. Shawn tries Sweet Chin Music but Orton ducks, meaning Cena has to catch the boot instead.

We take a break and come back with Edge cranking on Shawn's arms. The comeback is cut off by the Edgecution and it's back to Orton to stomp away. The chinlock goes on for a bit, followed by the backbreaker for two. It's back to Edge for the sleeper, which is broken up like any common sleeper. Shawn

gets over for the tag to Cena as everything breaks down, with Shawn being sent outside. The spear is countered into the AA but Orton comes in with one of the belts. Shawn takes it away and hits Edge, only to throw it back to Orton. Edge sees Orton holding it and walks off, leaving Orton to get superkicked into the AA for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. They were in a bit of an interesting place here as I could have seen it going either way. Cena and Michaels dropping the titles to let them focus on their Wrestlemania match would have made sense, but so does Michaels continuing to guard Cena. I like the way they went, and now it seems they have a way to wrap up Rated-RKO. The team doesn't need to be around any longer anyway so it isn't some great loss.

The long staredown between Cena and Michaels ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. They're doing a good job of making me want to see Wrestlemania and that is more than I would have bet on coming into the season. Almost all of the matches are already set and that does not leave much to do other than push everything across the finish line. This show did a nice job of doing just that, and I want to see the show more than I ever would have bet on leading up to it. Another pretty good show here, but another good step towards Wrestlemania.

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## New Column: Two For AEW

This could be the biggest week they have ever had.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/kbs-review-two-aew/>

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# Dynamite – July 28, 2021 (Fight For The Fallen): On National TV

## Dynamite

Date: July 28, 2021

Location: Bojangles Coliseum, Charlotte, North Carolina

Commentators: Excalibur, Jim Ross, Tony Schiavone

It's another huge show with Fight For The Fallen. The card is stacked again, including the IWGP US Title, the ten man elimination match, and the mainstream debut of Nick Gage. The latter is going to get the most attention for the sake of freak show appeal, which may or may not be a disaster. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Commentary runs down the card.

We get a video on what it means to be a cowboy, which seems to mean being loyal to your friends and ready to fight.

## Elite vs. Dark Order/Hangman Page

After hearing about how serious this is and seeing how Omega and company looked scared of facing Page, the Elite has a full on Space Jam theme, complete with music, basketballs and Elite Squad jerseys. It does seem to be a sponsored deal though, which makes things a bit better. At least they're getting paid for turning another big match into a joke of some kind. Anderson and Page start but everything breaks down in a hurry,

with a superplex from the top taking down the pile on the floor.

Back in and the Good Brothers get caught in the corner until a Stunner/running clothesline combination gets two on Anderson. A rollup with trunks gets rid of Alex Reynolds at 3:53. The rest of the Dark Order and Page surround Anderson and a quick Fatality evens things up at 4:50. We take a break and come back with Grayson enziguring Gallows with Omega having to make a save. A bunch of people go outside and Grayson tries a skytwister press to take everyone down, though they didn't exactly catch him. Gallows kicks Grayson over the barricade but gets taken down as both guys are counted out at 11:15.

Back in and Uno's Downward Spiral gets two on Omega but the Swanton only hits knees. The V Trigger into the One Winged Angel gets rid of Uno at 12:30, leaving us with Page/Silver vs. Omega/Young Bucks. Silver spears Matt and hammers away until Matt pokes him in the eye. A bulldog plants Silver again and a leg lariat drops him as well as we take a break. Back with Silver getting to clean house until Omega is back in to take him down.

Silver is sent outside as the basketball goal is loaded up. The Indytaker, with a missed dunk, plants Silver on the floor and the academic pin gets rid of him at 19:05. Page is left on his own and Omega takes off the jersey to make it serious. They slug it out until a V Trigger into a pair of superkicks rocks Page. There's the Snapdragon into a triple superkick for two. Page gets draped in the ropes for the 450 but he is back with a double clothesline to the Bucks.

The moonsault onto the floor takes out all of the Elite and Nick is grabbing his knee. Back in and the Buckshot Lariat is broken up, as is the Indytaker. A double Buckshot Lariat gets rid of Matt at 23:58 so Omega grabs the belt. That's countered into the Deadeye for two but Nick grabs the leg so Omega can get in the belt shot...for two. A pair of V Triggers get two



and the One Winged Angel finishes Page at 25:37.

**Rating:** B. I love the Survivor Series and it was so nice to have something on the line in one of these things for a change. The action was good and there was little reason for the Elite to have trouble against the Dark Order. The end result is not likely to be permanent and that's fine, as Page can still get the shot and the title at All Out somehow. Good match, and if AEW can make some money off of the Space Jam deal, so be it.

Pac isn't worried about the Lucha Bros not being here so here are Chavo Guerrero, Andrade and the interpreter to say the Bros are coming in a limo. Chavo explains the idea of a limo and Andrade says (I think) that they better be ready to fight.

Taz introduces Ricky Starks for his FTW Championship Celebration. A band plays Starks to the ring, where he talks about how worthless Brian Cage has been. Cage never even checked on him when he had a broken neck because Cage is a selfish guy. Starks is a star, which Cage didn't figure out in seventeen years. Cue Cage to beat up the band and chase Starks off.

Hiroshi Tanahashi wants to be the IWGP US Champion and is challenging the winner of tonight's match. That's a big cameo.

#### Santana/Ortiz vs. FTR

This should be great with Konnan and Tully Blanchard at ringside. Ortiz and Wheeler feel each other out to start until it's off to Santana and Harwood for the slugout. A few Amigos give Santana two and everything breaks down, with a powerbomb/neckbreaker combination dropping Harwood. We take a break and come back with Ortiz getting the tag to clean house, including a powerbomb to Harwood out of the corner.

An O'Connor roll gets two on Harwood but the kickout sends Ortiz onto Wheeler on the floor. Back in and a powerbomb into

a frog splash gets two on Harwood. A forearm just angers Santana, who snaps off a German suplex. Everything breaks down and Wheeler springboard tornado DDTs Ortiz. Santana powerbombs Harwood for two and they're both down.

Back up and Harwood superplexes Ortiz, who reverses the landing into a small package for two. As the cover goes down, you can see Wheeler grabbing his arm and walking towards the back, which does not seem to be a good sign. Harwood is back up with a kick to the ribs and the brainbuster to finish Ortiz at 11:05. That felt really sudden and the injury might be a reason.

**Rating:** B-. This was the good, hard hitting match that you would expect with the arm injury likely cutting things short. Fair enough if that's the case and hopefully it is a bad cut instead of a major injury. What we got here was good and I can't blame them a bit for having a sudden ending if someone got hurt. Just bad luck and hopefully Wheeler is ok.

Post match Harwood goes over to check on Wheeler, who is surrounded by medics and is bleeding from the arm.

Britt Baker knows Nyla Rose is tough but she made Rose tap out last week with a broken wrist. She's awesome, because she's Britt Baker DMD.

Tony Schiavone announces that the second Rampage (August 20) will take place in the United Center in Chicago for the First Dance. Fans: "CM PUNK!"

Darby Allin says he'll be in Chicago. He has heard people talking about being the greatest, and you can prove that in AEW. Come prove that you are the....best in the world.

IWGP US Title: Hikuleo vs. Lance Archer

Hikuleo is challenging and has his father, Haku, in his corner. Archer hammers away on the taller Hikuleo but gets

clotheslined out to the floor. We take a break and come back with Archer in trouble after Haku used the Tongan Death Grip during the break. Archer fights back with the Old School moonsault to rock Hikuleo again. A top rope superplex connects for two, setting up the Blackout to retain at 7:14.

**Rating:** C-. This didn't have time to go anywhere but it was more about the spectacle than anything else. Haku was a fine legend appearance and it was nice to have them show the Tongan Death Grip...eventually. Archer vs. Tanahashi (confirmed to be in Japan rather than here) will be good and this was a nice way to set that up.

Cody Rhodes is in the back for an interview but Malakai Black jumps him from behind. They fight into the arena with Black kicking him in the face. Some other wrestlers come out to check on him but Black kicks Fuego del Sol out as well.

Miro is ready for next week's open challenge for the TNT Title, but no one is going to be taking the title from him. He is blessed with this title and a double joined wife, so come get it.

#### Hardy Family Office vs. Christian Cage/Luchasaurus/Jungle Boy

That would be Angelico/Private Party for the Office, the rest of whom is at ringside along with Marko Stunt. Boy and Angelico start things off with Angelico sending him outside. Hardy hits him in the face, so Christian and Stunt chase Hardy to the back. That leaves it 3-2 so Boy brings in Luchasaurus to clean house. Private Party flips out of a double chokeslam but Christian is back...and gets kicked outside. Boy dives onto Angelico and Kassidy, leaving Quen to get chokeslammed. Christian's frog splash is good for the pin at 4:41.

**Rating:** C-. Not much to this one, as the Christian vs. Hardy feud isn't doing anything for me. I'll take bringing in other people to spice it up a bit though, especially if that doesn't involve Stunt in the ring. It's quite the downgrade for Boy

after his World Title feud, but Christian is looking better week to week.

Post match, the Blade sneaks in to deck Christian with the brass knuckles.

### Julia Hart vs. Thunder Rosa

Big reaction for Rosa in her first match as an official member of the roster. Rosa takes her down with ease to start but Hart pops up to wave at the fans. That earns her another takedown, meaning Hart needs a rope break. A running clothesline knocks Hart down in the corner and the slingshot knees make it worse. Rosa misses a charge but is fine enough to grab a kneebar. Hart makes the rope again so it's a Fire Thunder Driver to give Rosa the pin at 4:02.

**Rating:** D+. This was a squash and not the most interesting one. Hart is very, very green but she plays the cheerleader well. Rosa getting to maul someone that innocent and sweet is a good idea and made her look like a monster all over again. Not a competitive match or anything, but it didn't need to be.

Jon Moxley talks about how everything changed when he lost the IWGP US Title last week. No one seems to be caring about him anymore, but no matter because he wants Hiroshi Tanahashi. Moxley will be waiting on the other side of the Forbidden Door.

### Nick Gage vs. Chris Jericho

No rules and Jericho is the Painmaker. MJF, with popcorn, joins commentary. Gage wastes no time in cutting Jericho's arm open with the pizza cutter and the slugout is on. A spinebuster puts Jericho down and they head outside to slug it out. Back in and Gage hits a superplex, followed by a Falcon Arrow for two. Jericho gets the Walls out of nowhere so Gage grabs the rope...which has no effect so he has to crawl out of the ring to escape instead.

They go outside with Gage grabbing the light tubes but Jericho has Floyd the baseball bat. Jericho bats him down but Gage hits a chokebreaker. The pizza cutter is out again and Jericho's head is carved up. We take a break and come back with Gage bridging a pane of glass between two chairs. The Vader Bomb takes too long though and Jericho hurricanranas him through the glass for two instead.

The Codebreaker is countered into a spinebuster onto the glass and Jericho screams a lot. Back to back light tube shots have Jericho in trouble and it's time to stab Jericho in the head with the broken tubes. Gage grabs another one, but Jericho hits him with the mist. Tubes to the head rock Gage and the Judas Effect gives Jericho the pin at 12:45.

**Rating:** D. Your tastes may vary here (and I'm sure they will) but deathmatches are not my thing. Hey look he's using light tubes! Well now he's using MORE light tubes! I'm a bit conflicted here though, because on one hand, the light tubes are stupid. On the other hand, my dad worked in a light bulb factory for 45 years so.....this kind of thing paid for me to go to college so I have to feel a bit guilty about part of it. The match was still bad though so it makes up for a bit of the trouble.

Post match MJF says that the next labor is going to involve Jericho hitting a move off the top. We see a clip of Jericho and MJF arguing in 2019, with Juventud Guerrera being referenced. Next week it's Jericho vs. Guerrera, in Guerrera's first appearance on TNT in fifteen years. Not exactly, but math isn't AEW's deal. They didn't say it, but I'm guessing Jericho has to hit a 450?

**Overall Rating:** B. The best thing I can say about this show is it flew by. Dynamite is not a boring show and even the main event felt fast. There is something very positive to be said about seeing that it is 9:15 and wondering where the show has gone. Stories were advanced, the opener was good and we're

done with Gage (in theory). What more can you ask for in two hours? Other than less Gage and a healthy Wheeler of course.

### Results

Elite b. Hangman Page/Dark Order last eliminating Page

FTR b. Santana/Ortiz – Brainbuster to Ortiz

Lance Archer b. Hikuleo – Black Out

Christian Cage/Luchasaurus/Jungle Boy b. Hardy Family Office – Frog splash to Quen

Thunder Rosa b. Julia Hart – Fire Thunder Driver

Chris Jericho b. Nick Gage – Judas Effect

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# **Summerslam Count-Up – Summerslam 1997 (Original):**

# Great, Now He's Mad

## Summerslam 1997

Date: August 3, 1997

Location: Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Attendance: 20,213

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Vince McMahon, Jim Ross

Well, it's another year but this time we've had some solid changes. Actually, no we haven't come to think of it. Austin is still his usual self, but in this case he's going after the IC Title from Owen. Yes, this is the infamous piledriver match. Other than that, it's the time just barely before the Attitude Era. We're not quite there yet but we can see it staring us right in the face.

Montreal was three months away and Taker vs. Shawn would be established at the end of the show. This would of course lead to the first ever HIAC match. Other than that, there's a lot of the same stuff from last year s we've only kind of slightly evolved since Summerslam 1996. This is more of a transitional show, but it still had its moments. Let's get to it.

We get a great opening video about how life isn't fair for Bret, Taker and Shawn, all of whom are involved in the main event tonight with Bret vs. Taker and Shawn as referee. The tagline of the show is Hart and Soul, which is kind of cool I think. This is all fallout from the EPIC Canada vs. USA war that happened over the summer. This would wind up causing Montreal, which I'm sure you know the story of.

## HHH vs. Mankind

In a cage. This is the blowoff for a feud that's been going on for months. They met in the KOTR finals with HHH winning but they kept feuding forever. HHH is using Ode To Joy which is one of my all time favorite heel themes. This match is just after Canadian Stampede where they brawled all over the arena. It's escape only which means it's much better than matches where you can win by pinfall, which I've always thought was a cheap way out.

For some reason the governor will be there later. Yeah I don't care either. How odd is it to have a cage match as the opening to a show? I like it though as it prevents the mind numbing delay of having to put the stupid thing up which is about ten minutes in its own right. Mankind dominates the early part but Chyna keeps interfering, mainly by reaching through and choking Mankind.

Oh and at this time, Austin and Dude Love are tag champions, but Mankind isn't. That's what's great about this character. It's not three different gimmicks. It's one guy playing three different gimmicks if that makes sense. They never hid that Foley was all three guys. They wallowed in it. That's something you simply don't see and in this case I think it certainly worked. It made him see even more insane than he already was, if that's possible.

JR says that it's a no DQ cage match. In the words of Jack Nicholson from A Few Good Men, is there any other kind? The only noticeable spot for the opening part of the match is a suplex from the top of the cage that's not hyped up enough by the announcers and wasn't nearly as good as Hogan and Bossman from 89. They're going old school here with the big blue bars that need to come back.

Chyna keeps choking and cheating like there's no tomorrow which is what she's supposed to do I guess. It's weird seeing these two as midcarders. We get a Dominic Denucci shoutout. How can you top that? Kowalski would have beaten him though, so that's not really fair. This is a really physical match as they are just beating the living tar out of each other with some sweet as well as sick shots. Both guys climb the ropes but HHH gets caught in them.

For some reason Mankind goes for the door and in an absolutely sick shot, Chyna slams the door on his head. Foley said this was one of the most painful spots he ever did in his career, and when it's Mick freaking Foley that says it, that's a painful spot. Chyna beats up the referee and since it's no DQ, what can really be done? Chyna finally gets nailed to a HUGE pop from the crowd.

We then get the ending as Foley hits a double arm DDT onto the chair to



knock HHH out. He climbs out and is a step away from winning as Chyna is trying to drag HHH out. However, the fans are losing it so Foley pulls the mask off and climbs back up. Chyna, for no apparent reason, stops pulling him and goes to the floor. In the truly famous spot of the match, Foley pulls his shirt open to reveal the Dude Love heard and dives off with the elbow.

Now as he's climbing again, Chyna starts pulling HHH out but Mankind gets to the floor first to blow the roof off the place in a cool moment. He collapses on the floor but soon his foot starts to tap. Then the music kicks on. He starts dancing. Dude Love has returned, despite holding a title at the moment. This was a cool moment and another example of why the idea behind Foley was so genius it's hard to comprehend.

**Rating:** A. This is an awesome old school 80s style cage match and it was great. With the manager trying to cheat every 3 minutes, the face ultimately triumphing, the big spot at the end and the fans response, this was awesome. All kinds of sick shots in there but it never went far enough that it wasn't believable, which is what makes a match like this great. Foley should have won and he did, which makes it even better. Excellent match here and I loved every bit of it.

Todd is with the governor of New Jersey. This doesn't go well, like, at all.

Tiger Ali Singh is here. This was a gimmick that just sucked. Imagine Khali plus Million Dollar Man plus Hassan, then add in a lot more suck. You get Singh.

### Brian Pillman vs. Goldust

This is a weird feud to put it mildly. The basic idea is this: Goldust doesn't like Pillman because he's implying that he and Marlena had a relationship prior to her meeting Dustin and perhaps after she met him. For no reason at all, if Pillman loses, he has to wear a dress until he wins something. This is standard pre-Attitude Era stuff.

There's really not a lot to say here. BAD botch on a sunset flip by Goldust. He more or less crawls over Brian's back instead of clearing it.

The commentary is all about the Pillman/Terri angle, which was fine but kind of generic. The sad thing is Pillman would be gone just months after this so we never got to the end of the angle. Eventually Terri blasts him with the loaded purse to get the pin.

**Rating:** D. This was just boring, plain and simple. The botch didn't help things either. It was predictable and fairly stupid, so how can I grade it highly?

### Legion of Doom vs. Godwinns

This is stemming from a botched Domsday Device where Hawk nearly broke Henry's neck. Godwin just slammed head first into the mat and cranked his neck nearly in half. It was one of the sickest things I've ever seen. Anyway, WWF of course decided to play it up in a real feud, because a near death experience is good for one thing: making money off of it, naturally. Anyway, this is a standard late 90s LOD tag match: not very good.

This is another case of a team (the Godwinns) just completely failing as heels. They're supposed to be fun characters but as heels they're not menacing, but creepy. Anyway, this is even more standard stuff than the last match. I think that's the issue that LOD had: they had no substance at all in the latter half of their career. This match is a prime example. They don't really do anything other than just look intimidating.

Another major issue for them was their lack of involvement in the tag title picture. They were used more to put young teams over, which is fine, but the hype is a bit too much for me, although I could see how some would think it works. LOD wins with a spike piledriver, and after about 10 minutes, I'm just bored pretty badly.

**Rating:** C-. Again, just a bunch of meh here. It's bland and dull for the second match in a row and nothing makes me think this should have been on PPV. LOD and the Godwinns were too similar to make this work. Nothing at all here and it was just barely watchable.

For some reason, we have a million dollar giveaway or something like that. It's really not clear what the point of this is, other than to have

Sable and Sunny looking GREAT. This is a lot like million dollar mania, yet more stupid as the first 3 callers don't answer.

The people pick a number from 1-100 for a key to open a coffin with a million dollars inside. This takes up 8 freaking minutes, which could have been used for, oh I don't know, A FREAKING WRESTLING MATCH??? Is there a point to having it in a coffin that I'm just missing?

#### European Title: British Bulldog vs. Ken Shamrock

For some reason that I just don't get, if Bulldog loses the match he not only loses the title but has to eat dog food. This is even more fallout from America vs. Canada. We hear about a show called One Night Only which was a British PPV where the ending just ticked me off as Shawn took the Title from Bulldog and proceeded to do absolutely nothing with it before handing it to HHH, all because he just didn't want Bulldog to have it anymore.

Big brawl to start as Shamrock is all kinds of pissed off due to being force fed dog food on Raw. Ankle lock goes on almost immediately but rope is grabbed. This starts off with mainly all Shamrock but a boot in the corner gets the Englishman in control. This is a rather ugly match to put it mildly.

Bulldog takes over while we get a long chinlock. Instead though we see about 15 seconds of the crowd and random people which serve no point at all. Shamrock grabs something off the announcers' table and blasts Bulldog in the head with it for the DQ.

**Rating:** D-. It wasn't the worst match I've ever seen but it couldn't have been much worse. Shamrock and Bulldog had this horrible clash of styles going on here and it made for a very uninteresting match here. At least it was short though at about seven minutes.

The post match insanity is by far more important here as it makes Shamrock look like a freaking psycho, which is what he needed to be all along. He half kills a ton of referees, making him look like a monster. He got the push that he needed because of stuff like this. Oh and he choked Bulldog out.

## Los Boricuas vs. Disciples of Apocalypse

Oh great why did I put up the Euro match? This is the gang wars period of the WWF, which NO ONE wanted to see. The original idea was to have three groups: the Nation, the Boricuas and the DOA and have them randomly fight each other. While that sounds ok in theory, the Boricuas had one guy anyone had ever heard of in Savio Vega. Go check their wiki pages and see what I mean. The other three have one major career accomplishment: being in Los Boricuas.

As for the DOA, they were ok as well, but they were just a generic biker team fighting a bunch of tiny guys and always losing. The Nation you already know. The problem here was simple: there was no story. Why are these teams fighting? We're never told. They're just feuding, but we don't know why or over what. There were never any promos or anything like that.

It's just fighting for the sake of fighting which NEVER WORKS. This is an 8 man tag, so at least we don't have to worry about multiple matches. At first the Nation was in this feud too, but they eventually dropped out when they realized they had actual careers. The biggest issue with this feud though: the DOA NEVER WON. It was always an upset for the Boricuas, which makes even less sense as if they're dominating, how can it be an upset?

What are you expecting here though? It's an eight minute match followed by a run in from the Nation which is accompanied by Ahmed who botches the Plunge on Chainz on the floor, leading to him getting pinned. I forgot Ahmed's horrible heel turn that lasted all of five minutes. He joined the Nation and of course was injured within a month. He was even supposed to get the title shot at Canadian Stampede but that didn't happen, as he couldn't stay healthy for more than 10 minutes.

**Rating:** D. My goodness what was the point to this feud? It made no sense, no one liked it, and it was boring beyond belief. Just a waste of time for guys like Crush and Brian Lee that were good workers, stuck with this stupid gimmick.

We get the recap for the showdown between Austin and Owen. This is based

off one thing: Owen pinned Austin (which was a big deal) at Canadian Stampede. Hart was the IC Champion, yet him getting a pin was a big deal. That either makes no sense, or shows you how big Austin was. I think it's a bit of both.

Since Hart beat Austin, naturally it means Austin should get a title match. Umm, right? Oh if Austin loses he has to kiss up to Owen, literally. Well let's get to it, as this is far more famous for one spot than for anything else, as you likely already know.

#### Intercontinental Title: Owen Hart vs. Steve Austin

On the way to the ring, Michael Cole, a newcomer at this point, tries to talk to Austin by calling him Mr. Stone Cold. It's what you'd expect, but Cole is always a tool, now and forevermore. The pop for Austin is huge, as you can see he is the undisputed future. Owen goes for the knee while Austin is up on the ropes and the start is very fast. The crowd being white hot helps a lot here, as this is a heated feud already and they're both looking great early.

Austin works the arm here and actually does it really well. It's weird seeing him use technical stuff, but he's doing it quite well here. Before the neck injury he was a completely different worker, but after it he found something that worked perfectly for him, so while obviously it's not good that he hurt his neck, it turned out as well as possible for him. I know I'm doing more play by play for this one, but this is followed by a pair of spots that I really like.

Owen comes up from a wrist lock and does that series of flips that he's always used to counter it, which I've never understood. At the end of that all he does is grab the other guy's wrist. Does he need the flips or am I missing something here? Anyway, he does all those, and Austin just pokes him in the eye to get control back. It's one motion, almost like what Piper would do.

After that he goes to a hammerlock and Owen grabs his head and jumps into the air to try to flip Austin over. Steve just stands there and lets Owen slam into the mat. I love those as they're so simple yet so effective, which is a lot of what Austin's offense was based on if you think about

it. His main offense was kick, punch, jump on people (Thesz Press) and Stunner, which is grab them and sit down. That's really not a lot when you think about it.

Anyway, moving on. Owen works on the fingers and hand, which against a guy whose main offense is throwing punches makes a ton of sense. Austin even busts out a powerbomb for a counter, which isn't something that I've ever seen him use. It's always fun to see guys throw new stuff like that from nowhere. It keeps things exciting. Owen hits a neckbreaker which is frightening foreshadowing.

I think he's selling the move, but I think it's more legit than work here, which explains a lot about the upcoming move. German suplex and Austin's neck is hurt even more. My guess is he initially got hurt in one of these moves but of course the big one was the piledriver of course. Vince tries to figure out why he's one of the most popular wrestlers today but he just doesn't get it. That amuses me for some reason, as they lay the ground just slightly for Austin vs. McMahon.

And there it is. Austin is dropped on his head, changing his career forever. This really was scary as it was entirely possible that he never could wrestle again from that injury. That's a very scary thought to say the least. Completely apart from his health issues, this meant a ton as far as the WWF went.

Austin's injury and Vince not allowing him to work because of it was one of the earliest issues that the pair had, as Austin and the fans wanted to see him get in the ring but Vince said for the safety of Austin, he couldn't allow that to happen. This is a case where real life and wrestling mix, which usually makes for better angles and promos. It's easy to convey an emotion in front of a camera when that's how you really do feel.

As for the match itself, I have to give credit to Owen here as he handles this as well as he can. You can see him setting for a cover and I guess Austin says that he's hurt to him or something, as Owen looks down at him for a second and then gets up and plays to the crowd to buy Austin some time. There was no way Austin could have kicked out there and you

certainly couldn't fault him if he got pinned.

About thirty seconds later Vince gets that something is wrong after clearly being upset at first. After that he calms down and says that Austin must be hurt. JR I think handles it better by not really ignoring the injury but taking the focus off of it and talking about the Canadian and American fans chanting at each other.

I could see this going either way but I'd rather use Ross' method here, as it keeps the story going on the chance that Austin is able to fix himself and that it was just temporary, which there's no way to tell the extent of the injury this quickly.

Either way, it was handled well I think. We then get the worst roll up of all time as Owen sells like a god to try to make it look like he's in trouble, but Austin is more or less just laying there with Owen's legs in the air as it was the absolute best he could do at the time. The referee fast counts as well as he can to give Austin the title as he just collapses afterwards.

This is one of the scariest things I've ever seen as he can't even walk on his own. The referees have to carry him out, but not before he throws the belt over his head and gets another massive pop. You can tell just by the look on his face that he's completely gone.

**Rating:** B. The match itself was actually really good I thought. They went back and forth and due to the finish they had, it's obvious that Austin was going to get the title in what I'm assuming would have been just a standard Austin finish which would have worked just fine.

I'm certainly not going to hold the ending against them as there was nothing they could have done about it. These two had great chemistry together and it showed here. Excellent match that could have bordered on classic and been famous rather than infamous.

We get a recap of Bret vs. Taker, which more or less is Canada vs. America again. Shawn is referee as you know.

WWF Title: Bret Hart vs. Undertaker

Bret wants the Canadian National Anthem to be played. His heel stuff was just masterful to say the least. Shawn's pop is big to say the least as he is the referee like I've said many times now. He and Bret are forever linked together and that's obvious even now, which is saying a lot considering their biggest moment would be about three months later. Oh yeah Taker is here too.

Another massive pop for the WWF Champion as the crowd is red hot tonight, despite the show kind of sucking. The explosion when the lights come on draws one of the loudest short pops I've ever heard. Apparently there's a ton of stipulations here, with the main one being if Bret doesn't win the title he can't wrestle in America again, so the ending is pretty clear. There's also one on Shawn, but it's not made clear.

Bret jumps Taker and hits him with his own belt before the match starts, because he's a real Canadian. For the most part, the opening here is just a brawl. That's fine as both guys can certainly fight, and this is no exception. Shawn is trying to call it fair, but you know something is coming later on. This is a long match though as there's 30 minutes to go and we're just started.

We get a report that Austin has no feeling in his hands and has been taken to a hospital. As you may know, it wasn't a good diagnosis. For the most part, Taker is dominating. Of course, just as I type that Bret starts his comeback as Taker is called a redwood for the second time in about 5 minutes. Ross' line of Bret having visions of sharpshooters dancing in his head made me laugh.

Bret gets a figure four as we touch on Taker never losing by submission. As this hold is on, Paul Bearer comes out. Apparently he's been saying Taker's brother is still alive. Yeah nothing is ever going to come from that angle. After escaping, Taker goes outside and drills Bearer but Bret takes over again because of it. We get the Heartbreaker, which is the figure four on the post.

I still don't get how that's really a big additional help but whatever. Owen and Pillman hit ringside for no apparent reason other than being nefarious. "They're not offering moral support. They don't have any



morals.” That was kind of clever and kind of crap. After a good long time HBK gets rid of them, but in doing so he misses the cover following a chokeslam.

Somehow of course Hart pops back up and gets the second rope elbow, just after a double bird to the fans. I love how a heel turn can make whatever you preached for a year mean nothing at all. Always loved that quick legdrop that Bret uses from time to time. Bret goes for the sharpshooter as Shawn looks in very close. I guess he’s taking notes on how to put it on properly for later on or something.

Oh come on I had to make one joke. Taker with a sweet over the top rope from the apron chokeslam. This has been a very solid match, but I’d have preferred no Shawn. He’s not hurting things as he’s been consistent and he had to be there for the ending, but I’d have preferred a standard match here. Ross says that we’re seeing Vintage Hart. Oddly enough, Cole was a relative rookie at this point. I guess he also took good notes.

Finally we get the sharpshooter, and after it’s been on for a little while, Taker just launches Bret with nothing leg strength. Isn’t it amazing how after one person (Austin) broke the unbreakable hold, it happens more and more? That always makes me chuckle for some reason. Bret counters a tombstone and puts the Sharpshooter on again, but this time he uses the post. However, the post isn’t even touching Taker’s leg or back, making the use of the post, say it with me, COMPLETELY POINTLESS!

Seriously, it’s not even touching him and because it’s there, Bret can’t put any torque on the hold. Isn’t the point of the hold to raise up the legs while the torso stays still to put pressure on the knees and back? With this it’s like Taker is just lying on his stomach with his legs crossed like he’s in Terms of Endearment. Now how’s that for a bad image? To get out of it, Taker kicks him off with ease, since there’s NO PRESSURE ON HIS LEGS.

Of course Bret lands on HBK, and Michaels assumes that Bret just jumped on him, since of course Bret would just jump on him and let go of a hold. Bret slams Taker with a chair as Shawn is trying to get his knee to work, and since it’s Shawn’s knee, you know that’s nothing but legit. I mean

it's not like he'd fake a knee injury for a match involving Hart. That would be just a waste of everyone's time and effort, so why would Shawn fake a knee injury in an angle involving him and Bret Hart?

Such a thing would obviously be impossible. Anyway, Shawn comes back in and asks Bret about the chair. As this is happening, Taker gets up and is standing behind Bret. Shawn is standing there arguing with Bret and pulls back the chair. Now let's pause for a second here. Shawn is looking at Bret. Bret and Shawn are arguing. Bret is considered to be one of the smartest wrestlers of all time. Shawn pulls back the chair.

Was Shawn supposed to think that Bret was just going to stand there and get hit in the head with a chair? Oh and don't worry about the big demon behind Bret. He'll just move. You get the point don't you? Yeah, that ends Taker's title reign as Shawn is completely disgusted that he had to do that, since obviously there was nothing more intelligent that he could have done in this case.

The fans are going nuts as Bret is pelted with garbage while Taker leaves to go get him a piece of HBK. Insert your own Becca joke here. For no apparent reason, this is the upset of the year or something. Why? Bret is a former what, 3-4 time champion? Is it that far out of the realm of possibility that he could beat the Undertaker for the belt? We go to replays as Bret is joined by the Hart Foundation and the party is on.

They're still talking about how this is shocking. WHY IS IT SHOCKING??? Pillman runs up and kisses the belt as we go off the air, which is sad as he would be dead in two months or so.

**Rating:** A. VERY good match. They hammered each other the whole time, and as I've said countless times, the key to a great match is not knowing who the winner would be. While it was clear given the stipulation about Bret that he would win, I actually forgot about that. That's the sign of a good match in my eyes. Absolutely great match here and something that you should go out of your way to see.

**Overall Rating:** B. This was a very hard grade for me to come up with. The show could be called good but some could call it awful. As you can see, I liked it more than I didn't like it. This is very hit or miss. The best

summary I can give you: the parts that are good are good and the parts that are bad are bad. The cage match is excellent and to me the best match on the card, but I'm a fan of the older style.

The main event is solid as these two have great chemistry together and brought it hard here. I'm fine with the ending as it set up one of the great blood feuds of all time. The rest of the card is at least ok. The IC match is more infamous than famous but it certainly holds up. To sum up in one word, Summerslam 97 is passable.

It's got enough good here to make it above average, but not by much. Too much filler in a row and the million dollar thing was just a waste of time. Overall, it's certainly not bad, but it could have been better.

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# Slammiversary 2021: Their Sweet Spot

**Slammiversary 2021**

Date: July 17, 2021

Location: Skyway Studios, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Matt Striker, D'Lo Brown

This show has become the highlight of the Impact Wrestling calendar as I have had a better time with it than Bound For Glory for a long time now. With some luck, that can continue this time around as the show is pretty well stacked. We have the main event of World Champion Kenny Omega defending against Sami Callihan in a No DQ match, plus a few mystery spots to be filled. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Knockouts Tag Team Titles: Fire N Flava vs. Rosemary/Havok

Fire N Flava are defending and commentary talks about how nice it is to have fans back. Havok misses a charge at Steelz to start but is right back with a swinging sitout Rock Bottom for two. Hogan comes in to slap Havok in the face and shout a lot, which goes as well as you might expect. It's off to Rosemary for a t-bone suplex into the Upside Down, much to the fans' delight.

Hogan sends Rosemary outside and dances a lot as Striker laughs about knowing one of the debuting wrestlers. Back in and Rosemary finally runs Steelz over to hammer away, only to be taken down for more dancing. Hogan hits a running shoulder in the corner as commentary reminds us that the pay per view starts in about seven minutes. In other words, don't worry about the chance that this match is going long.

Rosemary avoids a charge and brings in Havok to clean house. Steelz's running hurricanrana is countered with a buckle bomb but Havok misses a charge into the post. That lets Hogan hit a running kick to the face, leaving Steelz to dive onto Rosemary and Decay at ringside. Rosemary comes back in to distract Hogan, allowing Havok to get back up. The choke doesn't work on Havok, who pulls Hogan into the Tombstone for the pin and the titles at 8:10.

**Rating:** C. Perfectly watchable opener here and nothing more than that. What matters here is getting the titles off of Fire N Flava, who have held them quite a while already. Rosemary and Havok might not be the long term solution as champions but it is nice to see someone new getting a shot. Good way to get the crowd warmed up too so well done.

The opening video features Sami Callihan looking off as we see clips of the company's history. I know Impact is kind of a joke in wrestling, but they do have a rather deep history, including Sami winning the World Title. He wants it back tonight.

X-Division Title: Chris Bey vs. Ace Austin vs. Josh Alexander vs. Trey Miguel vs. Petey Williams vs. Rohit Raju

Alexander is defending in Ultimate X, with commentary saying that wrestling skill has little importance here. It's a big brawl to start (as it should be) with Bey going for the belt early and getting caught just as fast. Alexander is left alone so Austin comes back in and gets German suplexed. Raju goes up top and jumps for the belt, only to crash down. Bey comes in and hits a big running flip dive back to the floor. Williams follows with the slingshot hurricanrana and Miguel hits some kind of a running DDT.

Raju and Austin go up at the same time until Austin gets shoved down onto the pile for the huge moonsault crash. That leaves Raju to bust out a grappling hook and climbs up, taking WAY longer than it would have had he just gone as usual. Williams makes the save, sending Striker into a more complicated than necessary metaphor about Williams being the foundation of the division. After Williams clears Raju out, here is Bey to take Williams down as well. Bey and Miguel wind up going for the belt at the same time, though Miguel is a lot further away.

An attempt at a hurricanrana doesn't quite work so Miguel kind

of spears Bey down instead to drop everyone. A Tower of Doom is loaded up but they have to stop to prevent Raju from pulling the title down with a hook. Everyone else is down so Raju grabs a chair and tries the hook again, only to get dropkicked down by Miguel. Williams comes back in for a Sharpshooter on Miguel, with Raju adding a Crossface for the tap. That means nothing so Alexander goes up, only to get caught hanging upside down with the belt behind him.

Therefore, Bey is fed up to him for an ankle lock as Alexander is still hanging from the X. It makes no sense but DANG that is an awesome visual. At the same time, Bey chokes Austin, who headlocks Williams, who still has Miguel in the Sharpshooter. Raju lets go and chairs Alexander down to get everyone a needed breather. Austin goes up and tries for the belt but slips a bit, allowing Bey to dive off the top with a cutter to put them both down again. Williams is back up with the Canadian Destroyer on Raju and a running version drops Miguel.

That lets Williams go up but Bey Bey get son Alexander's shoulder to cut him off...and gets planed with another Canadian Destroyer. Well that worked. Alexander isn't having any of this Destroyer stuff and gives Williams the C4 to knock him silly. Raju breaks up Alexander and Miguel's slugout, meaning it's a Downward Spiral to plant Miguel off of Alexander's shoulders. That lets Raju go up but Miguel makes the save and takes him down.

Alexander superplexes Miguel down though, meaning he and Bey can go up at the same time. They wind up hanging upside and pull the belt down at the same time, only to have Austin springboard in and...completely crash without grabbing the title. The distraction lets Alexander knock Bey down and retain at 15:46.

**Rating:** B+. Yeah this was pretty awesome with everyone trying something and a bunch of insane spots. The match isn't supposed to have much of a story or flow to it and that's

perfectly fine. This is the company's version of the ladder match and they nailed it here, though I have no idea who takes the title from Alexander at this point. Whoever does is going to let him move up to the main event scene though, as there is nothing left for him to do.

We run down the card, which still does not feel necessary at a pay per view.

Don Callis rants about how unfair it is for Kenny Omega to be put in a No DQ World Title match. Callis goes on about how Omega is great enough to beat Sami Callihan and how he has been around for everything Omega has done. He'll be here tonight for the One Winged Angel that beats Callihan and then his work here will be done.

We recap Matt Cardona and a mystery partner vs. Brian Myers/Tenille Dashwood. This is really Cardona vs. Myers with the women being added to prevent it from being another singles match.

Matt Cardona/??? vs. Brian Myers/Tenille Dashwood

Oh of course it's Chelsea Green, which they didn't actually try to hide in the first place. Sam Beale and Kaleb With A K are here with Myers Dashwood. Green is still in the arm cast but she's going anyway. It's a brawl before the bell until we settle down to the guys starting fast. A faceplant staggers Myers and Cardona clotheslines him to the floor. Cardona misses the dropkick through the ropes but clotheslines Kaleb With A K and Beale anyway.

That lets Myers grab a Downward Spiral onto the ramp to knock Cardona silly though and the villains take over. Back in and Dashwood adds some choking, allowing Beale to get in a right hand from the floor. We pause for a heel photo op and Myers slaps on the quickly broken chinlock. Instead Cardona reverses the suplex into the neckbreaker, only to have Dashwood break up a potential tag.

The Roster Cut is cut off by a spear though and it's off to Green to beat up Dashwood. Green has to stop to slap Myers though and gets neckbreakered over the middle rope. Dashwood tries to hit Cardona low....but hurts her arm because she he is wearing a cup. Said cup goes onto Myers' face, allowing Green to hit her own Canadian Destroyer. Cardona flip dives onto the guys, leaving Green to hit Dashwood low for a change. A jumping Unprettier gives Green the pin at 5:57.

**Rating:** D+. Not much to this one, though it wasn't like the surprise was really supposed to be a surprise. Impact all but flat out said it was going to be Green and she was the only option that would have made sense here. Green is going to be a fine addition to the division, especially if she is going to be working for Ring of Honor at the same time.

We recap W. Morrissey vs. Eddie Edwards. Morrissey is a monster who hurt Edwards' partner Satoshi Kojima and Edwards is the heart of the company who is standing up to him. That needed a full recap video?

### W. Morrissey vs. Eddie Edwards

Eddie isn't about to be shoved down by a much bigger Morrissey so the slugout is on. A fall away slam sends Edwards flying and it's already time to choke on the ropes. One heck of a big boot puts Edwards on the floor but he counters another big boot and sends the leg into the post. Back in and Eddie hits a Stunner over the ropes, only to have Morrissey send him hard into the barricade. A reverse curb stomp plants Eddie back inside and there are some forearms to the chest in the ropes.

Eddie manages a suplex and starts chopping away in the corner. They head outside, where Morrissey catches a suicide dive, setting up a chokeslam onto the apron. Morrissey takes him up the ramp but gets backdropped, setting up the Boston Knee Party to rock Morrissey again. Back inside and Morrissey is fine enough to hit a release F5. Morrissey takes him up top



for a superplex but gets reversed into a sunset bomb.

Eddie finally has an opening and catches Morrissey with a running knee, plus the Blue Thunder Bomb for two more.

Morrissey is back with a kick to the chest for two but a jackknife rollup gives Eddie another two. A missed charge sends Morrissey outside, where he unlaces his boot, allowing him to pull out a chain. One shot to the head rocks Eddie and a powerbomb gives Morrissey the pin at 11:01.

**Rating:** B-. I'm not surprised that this was good but I'm surprised that Morrissey is working well as a monster. Morrissey did not have the best reputation coming into Impact and it is nice to see him far exceeding what was expected of him. He really is feeling it at the moment and this is a good sign for his future. Beating a former World Champion makes anyone look better and it certainly does with Morrissey.

Moose talks about making mistakes which cost you in the end. It might be driving a hundred miles an hour without your seat belt on or going all in with a bad hand, or it might be asking to face him on the big stage. Chris Sabin made a mistake and tonight he faces the consequences.

We get a vignette for the Drama King, which is the former nickname of Aiden English.

A fan has won a contest to be here and is excited for the rest of the show, but here are Shera and Madman Fulton to interrupt. Cue Scott D'Amore to say normally he would be upset by this, but let's have a match instead.

#### FinJuice vs. Shera/Madman Fulton

We start fast with Robinson hammering away on Shera. A hard clothesline drops Robinson but Fulton tags himself in. Arguing ensues and it's a double flapjack to drop Fulton. Shera is sent outside so an assisted Stunner can put Fulton down for the pin at 1:18. Well that was quick.

We recap Moose vs. Chris Sabin. Moose is a bully who wants to show that he is the big star but Sabin is standing up to him.

### Moose vs. Chris Sabin

Sabin starts fast to start and strikes away but gets caught with a running elbow in the corner. That doesn't seem to make much of a difference as he is right back with some dragon screw legwhips. Moose's leg is slammed into the apron but he is fine enough to catch Sabin on top. Sabin snaps off another dragon screw legwhip and the Figure Four makes the leg even worse. A grab of the throat gets Moose out and he is right back with Snake Eyes for a breather.

Moose tosses him outside with ease and he sits Sabin on the apron for some loud chops (egads). The third chop is teased but Moose flips off the crowd instead. That wakes Sabin up but Moose knocks him right back down and takes it back inside. Moose rips at Sabin's face so Sabin bites his way to freedom in a smart move. The fall away slam cuts Sabin back down but he avoids the middle rope moonsault.

Sabin sends him outside for a drive into the barricade and the tornado DDT connects for two back inside. With nothing else working, Sabin goes up top, only to have Moose run the ropes for a super fall away slam with a floatover to land on top of Sabin. They head outside again with Sabin charging into an apron bomb, followed by some swings into the barricade to knock him silly. That's good for nine but Sabin is right back in with a victory roll for the surprise pin at 11:58.

**Rating:** B. Now this was about all you could ask for. They knew the story they were telling coming in and then had good execution on the rest of the stuff. They didn't need to do anything complicated here as Moose is a monster and Sabin was fighting from underneath. The match was well put together and both guys were feeling it. Rather well done.

We recap the pre-show title change.

Rosemary is VERY happy with the title win and says Decay is family. Some things fade away, but eventually, all things decay. DECAY! DECAY! DECAY! I think we got it after the second DECAY.

We recap the Tag Team Title match. Violent By Design have the titles and everyone else wants them, meaning it's a bunch of four way brawls to set up the title match.

Tag Team Titles: Violent By Design vs. Rich Swann/Willie Mack vs. Good Brothers vs. Fallah Bahh/???

Violent By Design (Joe Doering/Rhino) are defending and Bahh's mystery partner is...No Way, minus the Jose but with the Conga Line (mainly made up of Swinger's Palace). Swann and No Way start things off and, after a quick show of respect, they shout a lot. Anderson isn't having this and tags himself in to run No Way over. Bahh comes in to run Anderson over and drop No Way down onto him for a bonus.

Mack and Swann take No Way's place for a double back elbow. That doesn't make much of a difference as Anderson takes Swann into the corner so Gallows can come in and hammer away. The big boot gets two and we're already in the chinlock. An elbow drop gets two and Anderson comes back in to mock the fans (which must be nice after such a long time). Gallows hits a fall away slam into the corner and more posing ensues.

The beating continues as Anderson grabs a quickly broken chinlock. It's already back to Gallows, who knocks Bahh and Mack off the apron but misses an elbow. An enziguri puts Anderson down and Swann reluctantly brings No Way back in. House is cleaned, including a lifting Downward Spiral for two on Anderson. The spinebuster cuts that off though and it's Doering making the save, even wisely dragging Anderson to the corner for the tag.

The slugout with Gallows is on (again) but everyone else comes in to make it a big brawl. Swann is left alone to kick Bahh in

the head but Doering comes back in to clothesline No Way for two. It's back to Rhino but Anderson hits a quick Gun Stun, setting up the Magic Killer to give the Brothers the pin and the titles at 10:34.

**Rating:** C. You can only get so much out of a match with this many people and so little time. Throw in the debut of No Way being its own thing and the limits are even harder. The Good Brothers winning the titles might not be the most pleasant thing, but it does make the most sense. Violent By Design was fine, Swann and Mack will get the titles eventually, and No Way and Bahh were thrown together. The Good Brothers are a main event team and they should be champions as a result.

We recap Deonna Purrazzo's reign of amazingness. She has run through everyone in front of her and that means she needs a fresh challenger. It's mystery opponent time.

An Invicta FC (MMA) champion is here.

Knockouts Title: Deonna Purrazzo vs. ???

Purrazzo is defending against....Thunder Rosa, who is a heck of a surprise. We get the THUNDER ROSA/VIRTUOSSA dueling chants to start and they lock up hard to no avail. The technical exchange on the mat doesn't work either and we have our second standoff. Both try armdrags and glare at the other for daring to go for it. Rosa counters a Gory Stretch into a sunset flip for two and Purrazzo isn't pleased.

Two more quick near falls have Purrazzo backed into the corner, where she sends Rosa to the apron. Purrazzo comes back with Divorce Court to put the arm in trouble, but Rosa's feet are fine enough to hit a middle rope missile dropkick. A running dropkick in the corner sets up a butterfly suplex for two on Purrazzo, who pulls her into a quickly broken Fujiwara armbar. Purrazzo grabs it again but has to settle for a quick suplex instead.

Rosa comes back with an AA for a delayed two, followed by a top rope double stomp to the back (EGADS) for the same. They slug it out and trade kicks to the head until Purrazzo grabs a victory roll for two. Back up and Purrazzo knocks her down again, setting up the Queen's Gambit (cradle piledriver) to retain at 10:47.

**Rating:** C+. This felt like it was becoming a great match but it didn't get the chance to go that far. What we got worked but there is a good chance that this was a one off for Rosa. It was smart to get one of the biggest available names for Purrazzo rather than going with what would have felt like a predictable (yet good) Mickie James match. Nice stuff here, but it could have been better with more time.

Post match Mickie James is back to a big WELCOME BACK chant (and Striker saying "THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING YOU HAVE DONE FOR PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING" because he has to be a pest every time). Purrazzo says this is her division, but Mickie invites her to NWA Empower (their version of Evolution). Purrazzo: "Why don't you do everyone a favor and grab your trash bag and go home?" Mickie kicks her in the head to send Purrazzo running.

Bound For Glory is October 23 in Las Vegas, featuring wrestlers from New Japan, AAA and more.

We get a long video on Kenny Omega defending the World Title against Sami Callihan. Omega is the evil champion but Callihan is taking away the rules, which scares Omega and Don Callis. Impact is sick of Callis and Omega and are allowing the crazy Callihan to have a shot. Callihan is ready to make this a violent fight and the match is No DQ.

Impact Wrestling World Title: Kenny Omega vs. Sami Callihan

Omega, with Don Callis, is defending and it is No DQ. Callis lists off Omega's greatness, including saying he is the King of the Deathmatch and better than Terry Funk. Callihan jumps

Omega to start and hits the Cactus Special for an early two. As Callis joins commentary, Callihan sends in a bunch of chairs but Omega blocks a fork to the head. Omega's sunset flip is blocked and Callihan busts out a pizza cutter to slice Omega open.

Another rake across the head makes it even worse and a Death Valley Driver sends Omega outside. Callihan follows but gets caught with a trashcan to the head, allowing Omega to grab some weapons of his own. More shots put Callihan down and the moonsault with a trashcan onto the leg keeps him in trouble. The chair is wedged in the corner so Omega loads up....the One Winged Angel, which is countered into a rollup. The kickout sends Callihan head first into the chair though and he's busted open too.

Omega grabs a fork to stab the head, as well as the inside of the mouth. They head outside with Callihan chopping the post, meaning Omega can load up the table. The Snapdragon off the apron is broken up, as is the piledriver from the apron. Instead, Callihan piledrives him through the table and throws in a piece of plywood. A trashcan to the head rocks Omega again and a side slam onto the top of the open can makes it worse.

Callihan sends him hard through the board in the corner for two and it's time for a chair wrapped in barbed wire (Callis: "Never would have happened when I ran this place!"). Omega manages a V Trigger though and another one gets two. A bunch of stuff is piled up in the middle of the ring and Omega hits a superplex through all of it. Another V Trigger sets up a failed One Winged Angel attempt and Callihan Tombstones him onto the barbed wire chair for two.

Omega rolls outside and throws salt in Callihan's eyes, causing Callihan to take the referee out. The blind Callihan gets belt shot and piledriven but there is no referee. Cue the Good Brothers but Eddie Edwards and Chris Sabin cut them

off. Callihan hits a package piledriver for two so it's time for the bag of thumbtacks. Callis gets up for a distraction so Omega can throw tacks in Callihan's eyes. Another V Trigger connects, followed by another V Trigger with tacks on the knee. Omega puts the tacks in Callihan's mouth for another V Trigger and the One Winged Angel onto the tacks retains the title at 27:33.

**Rating:** B. I'm never sure what to give something like this but the violence was good, as it was supposed to be. The match didn't feel like the nearly half an hour it got, but the V Triggers and the easy kickoff off the Tombstone onto the chair were a bit much. I liked what we got and while there wasn't much drama, I'm not sure how much there could be in something like this.

Post match the lights go out and we've got New Japan's Jay White (Bullet Club leader) to stare down Omega. Striker: "Social media is exploding right now!" Omega and the Good Brothers throw up Too Sweet as FinJuice runs out...and the show ends. White would beat down David Finlay and leave to end the night.

**Overall Rating:** B+. I tend to say this every time but it tends to be the case every time: Impact is at its best when it focuses on the in-ring product instead of everything else going on. This has been the case for a long time now and it is not a bad thing. They can make this stuff work well as they did here and they have some momentum going forward into the new TV cycle. Keep this up and they might be able to get somewhere, though I have no reason to believe it will last. Heck of a show here and worth a look if you have the chance.

### Results

Josh Alexander won Ultimate X – Alexander pulled down the title

Matt Cardona/Chelsea Green b. Brian Myers/Tenille Dashwood –

Unprettier to Dashwood

W. Morrissey b. Eddie Edwards – Powerbomb

FinJuice b. Shera/Madman Fulton – Assisted Stunner to Fulton

Chris Sabin b. Moose – Victory roll

Good Brothers b. Fallah Bahh/No Way, Rich Swann/Willie Mack  
and Violent By Design – Magic Killer to Rhino

Deonna Purrazzo b. Thunder Rosa – Queen's Gambit

Kenny Omega b. Sami Callihan – One Winged Angel onto  
thumbtacks

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at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

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# Ring Of Honor TV – July 21, 2021: The Best Show Going Today

Ring of Honor

Date: July 21, 2021

Location: UMBC Event Center, Baltimore, Maryland



Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

We continue the post Best In The World stretch and for once I'm actually caught up on the show. I'm not sure if we are going to be in the actual fallout period just yet, but it is nice to have the pay per view out of the way. This show could go in a lot of directions and that is not a bad thing. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Dalton Castle doesn't have time for an interview and leaves. After he is gone, the Foundation is ready for tonight's eight man tag. Actually hold on a second though, as Jonathan Gresham has a banged up knee. Joe Keys, who is helping look at Gresham's knee, gets the spot instead. Not quite thinking, Keys slaps the bad knee on the way out.

Brian Johnson is our host this week because Quinn McKay is in action. He begrudgingly runs down the card (while mocking the Foundation and Gresham as much as possible). Johnson doesn't like Quinn McKay either, though he does think something of Mandy Leon.

Rey Horus vs. Fred Yehi

Horus goes for the hammerlock to start but Yehi pulls the leg to take him down into a standoff. Back up and Horus misses a dropkick, allowing Yehi to try the Koji Clutch, sending Horus bailing. Horus: "It's too early for that." We take a break and come back with Yehi missing a charge into the corner, allowing Horus to grab a middle rope armdrag to send Yehi outside. The big dive drops Yehi again in a spot that needed fans. Back in and Horus hits a high crossbody for two, followed by a spinning clothesline.

Yehi small packages him for two, with Horus' shoulder WAY off

the mat at around one. Horus sends him into the corner though and a twisting splash (Yehi: "Oh shoot!") gets two. Yehi's boot to the ribs is cut off so he twists Horus' head for a pretty unique counter. A spinning backfist into a shot to the back of the head sets up the Koji Clutch to make Horus...get over to a rope. Yehi t-bone suplexes him into the corner but Horus runs the corner into a super victory roll for the pin at 9:53.

**Rating:** B-. These two had some good chemistry and I was having a good time with what they did. Horus can move as well as anyone and Yehi is right there with the technical stuff to balance it out. This is one of the areas where Ring of Honor shines: putting two people in a match and letting them have a bit of time to showcase themselves. Nice stuff here and I liked it more than I would have bet on.

Mandy Leon gets off the phone for an interview. She can't believe that she has to talk about Quinn McKay, because Mandy is a grown woman who doesn't need friendships or validation. That makes her different than McKay, who is always trying to prove that she is a good person. McKay talked about the Allure for year and then lost her chance to beat Angelina Love. That's enough on McKay, and here is Love to agree.

Quinn McKay blames her loss to Angelina Love on inexperience and Mandy Leon. This is her last chance to make it into the Women's Title tournament and she is tired of being told she will never be a wrestler. Yeah she has been an interviewer for two years, but she and Mandy Leon both started in the Ring of Honor Dojo. They were both backstage interviewers and they both lost their first match, just like McKay. But Leon won't mention that, because she would rather be Love's lapdog.

That's the narrative Leon wants to spin but McKay knows what is under the hair and malice. Leon has a fighting spirit and they have both fought hard to be respected. McKay sees her as a glimmer of what she could be, and this is about who Leon is

now vs. who she could be. Come back to the good side and give McKay a fair shot. This was a pretty emotional promo and McKay made it work far better than I would have expected. Not bad.

### Mandy Leon vs. Quinn McKay

Angelina Love is with Leon, McKay is in the title tournament if she wins and Maria Kanellis-Bennett is on commentary. McKay actually offers a handshake, using the Genius left hand version. Leon punches her in the face though and knocks her down, allowing Leon to grab a mic and talk down to her a bit. A clothesline gives McKay a breather though and Leon is knocked out to the apron. That earns McKay another shot to the face though and choking on the ropes ensues.

McKay sweeps the legs though and hammers away, setting up a bodyscissors of all things. That's reversed in a bit of an awkward sequence until Leon counters a neckbreaker. Some hair takedowns send us to a break with McKay in trouble again. Back with McKay being sent to the apron, with Love pulling her out to the floor. Mandy snaps off a running knee to the floor before elbowing her in the face back inside. McKay manages a powerslam but can't cover so Love gives Leon a quick back rub.

A running seated Blockbuster sets up a trio of neckbreakers for two on Leon as McKay certainly has a target. With that not working, McKay grabs the Tangerine Dream (cobra clutch), drawing Love up for a distraction. That means the referee doesn't see the tap, which means McKay lets go to yell at said referee. Love slips in the brass knuckles and McKay lifts Leon up for a belly to back suplex, only to get knocked cold for the pin at 7:44.

**Rating:** C-. The women's division still isn't all that great but McKay is someone you could see as a plucky underdog face for a good while. She might not be the future, but at least can be a star for a little while. I don't believe for a second that this is the end of her chances at being in the

tournament, as Ring of Honor seems to be a lot smarter than that.

Maria thinks she should do something about this.

### Shane Taylor Promotions vs. Foundation/Joe Keys

This would be Shane Taylor/Soldiers of Savagery/O'Shay Edwards vs. Jay Lethal/Tracy Williams/Rhett Titus/Joe Keys. Before the match, Shane Taylor Promotions says the baddest just got better with Edwards joining up. On the other hand, Keys says he's ready to step up and show the Foundation what he can do. Edwards takes Keys into the ropes to start and adds a running splash in the corner. Another charge misses though and Keys gets in a few shots to the leg.

A backdrop sends Keys to the apron but he manages a high crossbody for a fast two. Taylor comes in for a high crossbody and tells the Foundation to get their rookie out of here. We take a break and come back with Taylor shoving Lethal, who says he is so sick of Taylor's mouth. A knee sends Lethal into the corner and Taylor's eyes are rather scary. Williams comes in to slug it out with Moses, who wants some more.

That's fine with Williams, who can't get very far by charging at the monster. A cross armbreaker over the ropes works a bit better, with Williams letting go at four. Titus comes in for an atomic drop/running clothesline combination and it's off to Lethal. Khan makes a save and gets shoved by Lethal, which has Coleman's attention. Another Khan distraction lets Moses run Lethal over and it's time for elbows in the corner.

It's back to Taylor to hammer on Lethal, who comes back with some forearms. One HARD shot sends Lethal outside though and this time Coleman is singing about how bad that was. We take another break and come back again with Khan having to cut off a hot tag attempt. The Lethal Combination allows the hot tag to Titus, meaning house can be cleaned. Edwards gets belly to belly suplexed into the corner and a top rope knee drop gets

two on Moses.

Keys comes back in and manages a heck of a German suplex to plant Moses for two more. Everything breaks down with the Foundation being sent outside, leaving Keys on his own. Keys manages to send Moses outside and tries to fight the other three, only to be taken down by a headbutt. Titus and Williams make the save and clothesline Taylor to the floor. Khan takes a double butterfly suplex (that's a new one) and Lethal dives onto Moses. Keys dropkicks Taylor down but gets caught in Edwards' Sky High for the pin at 16:54.

**Rating:** B. This was another one that was better than I was expecting as both sides worked out well. Keys was a nice surprise and held up well in a cameo role. At the same time, this was a great mini showcase for Edwards, who I'm very glad is finally getting a chance like this. Rather fun main event here and I'm glad to see Shane and pals get a big win.

**Overall Rating:** B. I'm not sure when it happened, but Ring of Honor might have become the best weekly wrestling show, at least for in-ring action. They still don't have much in the way of storyline advancement most weeks, but the matches themselves are mostly good. They're coming off a strong pay per view as well and the fans are going to make it even better. Nice job here, again.

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# Daily News Update – July 28, 2021

It's A Big Dynamite Day.

Huge Angle Sets Up NXT Takeover 36 Main Event.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/huge-angle-sets-nxt-takeover-36-main-event/>

VIDEO: Long Awaited Surprise Return Takes Place On NXT.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/video-long-awaited-surprise-return-takes-place-nxt/>

RUMOR: WWE Running First Time Ever Tournament This Year.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/rumor-wwe-running-first-time-ever-tournament-fall/>

WWE Announces Special Celebrity Appearance For Summer Jam.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wwe-announces-special-celebrity-appearance-summer-jam/>

Big E. Has A Really Specific Idea For Money In The Bank Contract.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/big-e-really-specific-idea-money-bank-contract/>

WATCH: Surprise Split Takes Place On This Week's NXT.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-surprise-split-takes-place-weeks-nxt/>

WWE Had Some Bizarre Plans Scheduled For This Week's Monday Night Raw.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/ww-e-bizarre-plans-scheduled-weeks-monday-night-raw/>

Update On Natalya's Injury Status After Monday Night Raw.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/update-natalyas-injury-status-monday-night-raw/>

As always, please check out all of the videos if you can, hit up the comments section and [get on the Wrestling Rumors Facebook page.](#)

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## NXT – July 27, 2021: The Anti-Raw

### NXT

Date: July 27, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph

Things got serious around here last week as NXT Champion Karrion Kross attacked William Regal to close the show. Samoa Joe is ready to destroy him as a result and that is all this needs to be. We are less than a month away from Takeover and that means it is time to start getting the card ready. Let's get to it.

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

The opening video recaps the end of last week's show, as

Karrion Kross left William Regal laying.

### Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher vs. Pete Dunne/Oney Lorcan

Thatcher and Dunne get things going with neither being able to get very far on the mat. Ciampa and Lorcan come in with Ciampa grinding on a headlock. A shot to the face knocks Lorcan outside and the beating continues back inside. Ciampa wants Dunne, who comes in and blasts him with a clothesline. Everything breaks down for a second with Ciampa and Thatcher pounding away with forearms to the chest. Everyone heads outside with Dunne and Lorcan being sent into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Dunne surfboarding Thatcher so Lorcan can fire off more chops. Thatcher slips away and brings in Ciampa so everything can break down. Lorcan is sent outside, leaving Ciampa to go after Dunne's arm. Thatcher and Lorcan brawl on the floor but the returning Ridge Holland takes Thatcher down. Lorcan is able to save Dunne and it's the Bitter End to finish Ciampa at 11:55.

**Rating:** C+. This was about people hitting each other hard and laying things in, which is why you have this match in the first place. The return is a nice twist too as we never got to see what Holland can do. Having him as the big bruising villain works out well and he could become a player around here in a hurry. Good brawl here, but the surprise is the important part.

Post match Lorcan and Dunne hold Ciampa back as Thatcher gets destroyed by Holland. The villains stand tall.

Carmelo Hayes is ready to win the Breakout Tournament.

Hit Row is ready to take apart Legado del Fantasma, with Top Dolla throwing in some Spanish.

Here is Samoa Joe to set up a table and chair in the ring. He



knows Kross isn't going to come do anything himself, so he would like William Regal out here right now. Cue Regal, with Joe saying he knows Regal is going to fire Kross. Joe has a better idea though, and it is in three steps.

First up, he presents Regal with his resignation as part of NXT management. Step two is another piece of paper, which needs Regal's signature to bring Joe back to the main roster. Regal signs, which brings us to step three: signing Joe vs. Kross for Takeover, which Regal does as well. Regal didn't say a word (at least not one we could hear).

Josh Briggs is ready to win the Breakout Tournament.

Earlier today, LA Knight and Cameron Grimes were on the golf course. Grimes is busy washing Knight's (golf) balls and then gets confused by which club to use (Grimes: "Driver? I'm your driver!" Knight: "That's a sand wedge." Grimes: "Sandwich? Now you're hungry?"). Grimes even throws out a \$5,000 bet on Knight hitting it into the trees. Knight does just that and then yells at Grimes for mentioning it.

### Breakout Tournament First Round: Carmelo Hayes vs. Josh Briggs

Hayes is a cruiserweight and Briggs is a giant. Briggs slams him down to start so Hayes is back with some rights and lefts in the corner. A dropkick sends Briggs face first into the middle buckle and it's time to go after Briggs' knee. That just earns Hayes a backdrop to the floor for the crash. Back in and Hayes catches him with a springboard legdrop for two, setting up the front facelock. Briggs gets in a shot of his own though and we take a break.

Back with Duke Hudson, who faces the winner in the next round, on commentary as Briggs gets two off a splash. Hayes counters a powerbomb attempt with a hurricanrana into the corner, followed by a pair of enziguris. A Codebreaker gives Hayes two more and he hits a running boot in the corner. Briggs shows him how to hit a big boot and a chokeslam gets two. The side

slam is countered into a faceplant and Hayes does it again for good measure. A top rope Fameasser gives Hayes the pin at 10:43.

**Rating:** B-. This was a power vs. speed match and that is wrestling 101. Hayes is someone who made an impact when he debuted a few weeks ago and he looked good again here. The high flying is effective as Hayes looks polished, which is what you could use in a tournament like this. Briggs is going to be fine as an enforcer of some kind and I'm sure he will be around in the future.

Frankie Monet is ready to take the Robert Stone Brand to the next level. Maybe they can even win the Women's Tag Team Titles. Kacy Catanzaro and Kayden Carter come up to say not so fast, because you can't create chemistry like theirs.

Back on the golf course, Cameron Grimes imitates a commentator and LA Knight hits his ball into the water. Grimes cracks up, until Knight sends him after the ball. He finds the ball, but here is Ted DiBiase in a golf cart. DiBiase talks about how people like Knight are always going to hold people like Grimes down. Grimes was born to be a champion and DiBiase sees him as a fighter. Think about that. The wheels continue to turn on this one and that's a good thing.

Here are Dakota Kai and Raquel Gonzalez for a chat. Gonzalez talks about destroying Xia Li last week and wonders who is next. Bring them on, because no one is stopping her. Kai says Gonzalez is the most dominant woman in NXT history and lists off the greats of the women's division.

This division is great because of one woman (though Kai doesn't say who) and asks who is woman enough to challenge Gonzalez at Takeover. Kai says Gonzalez will be champion as long as she has Gonzalez's back and posing ensues. Gonzalez turns around...and gets kicked in the face. Kai holds up the title and the fans seem to approve. This works.

Adam Cole thinks NXT is nuts right now, including Bronson Reed calling Cole his rebound. That's not what Cole is because he is at the top of the mountain. Tonight, Reed is falling off of that mountain because he isn't good enough. Cole doesn't care about Reed's fourteen year journey and tonight is another sad chapter.

Zoey Stark comes up to Io Shirai to ask for some partner bonding time. Shirai doesn't seem convinced but eventually gives in.

Mandy Rose talks to Gigi Dolin and Jayce Jane until she has to throw the cameras out.

#### Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter vs. Jessi Kamea/Frankie Monet

Robert Stone is here with Kamea and Monet. Kacy takes Kamea down for an early two and brings in Carter for a rollup. Monet comes in for a DDT out of the corner to take over on Carter, including the running knees in the corner. Rights and lefts keep Carter in trouble, with Monet getting to shout. Hold on though as Stone throws in his purse (yes purse) to get her attention. The distraction lets Carter hit a pump kick, setting up the neckbreaker/450 combination for the pin at 3:29.

**Rating:** D+. I get what they're going for with the story but egads did they need to have Monet take a fall here? There was no way to have this set up Kamea taking a fall? Or anything but Monet taking a pin? That feels like something they would do on Raw and that is not a good thing these days.

Wade Barrett had a sitdown interview with Malcolm Bivens and Roderick Strong. The Diamond Mine was perfect for Strong, because he was tired of the drama of the Undisputed Era. Bivens talks about how great of a talent Strong is and anyone, including William Regal, can understand that. Barrett asks about the Cruiserweight Title and Bobby Fish, so Strong promises to end Fish next week.

We look at Dakota Kai turning on Raquel Gonzalez.

Kai leaves without saying a word.

### Hit Row vs. Imperium

Ashante Adonis and Top Dolla for Hit Row. Adonis starts with Marcel Barthel, who takes him into the corner. It's quickly off to Fabian Aichner, who gets dropped with a neckbreaker for one. Dolla comes in for a jumping knee to drop Aichner and Adonis comes back in for a dropkick. Another neckbreaker is countered into a belly to back suplex but B Fab breaks up the double dropkick in the corner. Adonis uses the distraction to take Aichner down again and we take a break.

Back with Adonis having his spine busted but he kicks Barthel away anyway. The ankle lock cuts off the hot tag though and Aichner adds an elbow to the back for two. The beating continues, including Barthel grabbing a butterfly suplex for two of his own. Adonis finally manages a backdrop though and the hot tag brings in Dolla to clean house. Dolla knee lifts Aichner and a side slam putts him down again. Adonis plants Barthel but here is Legado del Fantasma to take Adonis out. Dolla chases them off and the European Bomb finishes Adonis at 12:23.

**Rating:** C. Not the best match but you're not going to have Imperium in there for something energized. I'm not wild on Hit Row losing but at least it wasn't a clean loss. Hit Tor vs. Legado will be pretty awesome once we get there and Hit Row isn't going to lose any kind of momentum as long as they can keep talking.

Post match Legado comes in for the beatdown until Swerve makes the save.

The Way is looking for Austin Theory, with Johnny Gargano saying he ran away from home. Indi Hartwell gets a present, which is a drawing of Dexter Lumis with the Way. Gargano

freaks out and says no way, even as Hartwell asks them for a chance. Gargano: "NO CHANCE!" A match is set up with Gargano vs. Lumis, with Lumis' inclusion in their lives seemingly on the line. Hartwell goes to find Lumis.

It's back to the golf course where the Grizzled Young Veterans pop up to ask if they can pick up the pace. Just let LA Knight hit the ball into the woods again so we can move on. Cameron Grimes makes another bet on who can get it into the hole next, with \$20,000 on the line.

Knight hits the ball into the water again, so Grimes busts out a gold ball and, after hitting Knight low with the club, knocks it into the hole with one shot (and hits Knight in the head with the club on the way back). Grimes blames Knight for the club shots so the Veterans bail in the golf cart. As usual, this feels like Knight and Grimes were given a script saying "hijinks on a golf course" with a few bullet points and told to fill in the gaps. It's the best thing on this show because it doesn't feel forced. This is how these two would act on a golf course and it works as a result.

#### Adam Cole vs. Bronson Reed

Reed runs him over to start and sends Cole flying with ease. That lets Reed sit on his chest for two, and then stay there despite the referee not counting due to a foot under the rope. A superplex is loaded up but Cole slips out and kicks the knee. We take a break and come back with Cole working on the knee, including a dragon screw legwhip.

Reed gets up and runs Cole over again to get a breather. A suplex drops Cole and Reed punches him in the corner, only to get kicked in the face for two. Reed chops away until Cole gets in a shot of his own. The Panama Sunrise gets two and Cole is stunned by the knockout. Back up and Reed blasts him with a clothesline to set up a powerbomb. The Tsunami misses though and the Last Shot gives Cole the pin at 11:19.

**Rating:** B. Another power vs. speed match here, with Cole being just smart enough to make the difference. Cole is primed for a huge match against Kyle O'Reilly at Takeover and Reed seems likely for the main roster. The good thing for Reed is that his size and that splash are going to be more than enough to carry him anywhere he needs to go, so this loss doesn't do much damage.

Post match Cole poses, but here is Kyle O'Reilly to chair him down. A brainbuster onto the steps leaves Cole out cold to end the show. I'm not sure how popular that made O'Reilly.

**Overall Rating:** B+. The wrestling was good here and the antics on the golf course made it even better. This show felt much more NXTesque as they seem to know where they want to go and are taking steps to get there. Not only did stuff happen on this show, but stuff happened that advanced the stories and got us closer to a Takeover card. That's where NXT shines and it is great to have that feeling back, even if it is just for a week.

### Results

Oney Lorcan/Pete Dunne b. Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher – Bitter end to Ciampa

Carmelo Hayes b. Josh Briggs – Top rope Fameasser

Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter b. Frankie Monet/Jessi Kamea – 450/neckbreaker combination to Monet

Imperium b. Hit Row – European Bomb to Adonis

Adam Cole b. Bronson Reed – Last Shot

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