

NXT – March 29, 2017: Big Guys Have More Fun

NXT

Date: March 29, 2017

Location: University Area CDC Gymnasium, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness, Tom Phillips

It's the final show before Takeover: Orlando and that means most of the card is set, though you can probably guarantee one more match that we'll get to later. The show has been starting to look better in recent weeks though I'm not entirely sold yet. Tonight we'll have a Loser Leaves NXT match between Kassius Ohno and Elias Samson so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Akam vs. Johnny Gargano vs. Dash Wilder

Preview for Saturday's triple threat for the Tag Team Titles. Akam goes after Wilder so Johnny jumps on the big man's back, because that's always worked so well over the years. Double teaming works a bit better though as Dawson dropkicks him to the floor before turning on Gargano almost immediately. Akam gets back in but he has to snarl at Scott Dawson for some attempted interference as we take a break.

Back with the Revival nowhere to be seen (apparently they just left instead of merely backing away before the break), leaving Akam to put Gargano in a torture rack. Johnny escapes and slugs away to limited avail before the slingshot spear is good for two.

Unfortunately he decides to look away for a second and turns back into a boot to the face.

Johnny comes right back with three straight superkicks but Ra'zar pulls Gargano out at two. That earns Ciampa a beating on the floor and Johnny's slingshot DDT is caught in mid-air. One heck of a powerbomb plants Gargano but here's Dawson to grab Akam's leg.

Naturally that means Wilder can slide back in and steal the pin on Gargano at 10:11.

Rating: C. The wrestling wasn't anything spectacular here but I love the booking. The Revival is smart enough to not try and go head to head with the Authors, as well as knowing better than to stay out there and waste energy before the title match. I can always go with smart wrestling and it worked very well here.

Video on Aleister Black vs. Andrade Cien Almas.

Heavy Machinery vs. Jonathan Ordegen/Mike Marshall

That would be Otis Dozovic and Tucker Knight as your standard big guy tag team, though they're not huge enough to make them immobile blobs. Tucker and I think Jonathan start things off and we're already in a bearhug. Otis tags himself in so Tucker throws Ordegen into another bearhug for a cool spot. Now it's Marshall being pulled in for a double shoulder and a double chest bump to send the jobbers outside.

Ordegen offers a distraction so Marshall can get in a shot from behind on Knight, which pretty much wraps up the team's offense. Otis comes back in and cleans house with clotheslines and elbows, including one to put Jonathan back outside. Dozovic picks up Marshall for a slam but doesn't put him down, allowing Tucker to crash into Mike's back. Otis picks Knight up and slams him down onto Marshall for the pin at 3:37.

Rating: C+. I had a lot of fun with this one and Heavy Machinery worked well together out there. I'm not sure how far they can go but they're certainly good for stuff like this. They fought the Authors of Pain at a house show in January and it was rather entertaining so they can definitely hang with the bigger names.

We go to William Regal's office for the contract signing between Asuka and Ember Moon. Asuka snickers at Ember's name but Ember says Asuka has let the success go to her head. Ember signs and Asuka does the same with Moon saying she's been ready for a long time. Regal says good luck and we're done in maybe two minutes.

Long video on Bobby Roode vs. Shinsuke Nakamura. The video presents a battle for the future of NXT with Roode being out for himself while Nakamura does what the fans want. That's about as basic of a heel vs. face feud as you're going to get and that's just fine.

Paul Ellering and the Authors of Pain think DIY's fairy tale ends soon and the Revival just wants to be them.

Sanity vs. Ruby Riot/No Way Jose/Tye Dillinger/Roderick Strong is confirmed for Takeover.

Kassius Ohno vs. Elias Samson

Loser leaves NXT. They trade rollups to start before taking turns on the arm. Ohno gets the better of it, though sadly that means we have to look at his rather disturbing looking thighs. A backsplash gets two on Samson but they head to the apron where Ohno is sent into the post for a big crash onto the steps.

Back from a break with Samson working on the injured back with some kicks and knees. He switches gears with a Crossface though and Ohno has to roll over three times before making the ropes. Ohno blasts him in the jaw with some hard strikes, including a jumping knee to the face. A big boot gets two but a neckbreaker is countered into a backslide for two. Samson's swinging neckbreaker gets the same, only to have Ohno blast him with the discus forearm to get rid of Samson at 12:47.

Rating: C. The only word I can think of is eh. Ohno has never really done it for me in NXT and that continues here. The match was fine but absolutely nothing I'll remember in about an hour. It doesn't help that the story felt slapped together for the sake of getting Samson on to the main roster (I have no idea why as it's not like he's been a huge deal in NXT) and giving Ohno a win. That being said, while it accomplished those goals, it certainly wasn't exciting in the least.

Samson is dragged away by security but agrees to go quietly if he's given his guitar back. Ohno offers to hand it back before stomping on it instead. So to recap: Samson is a drifter who FINALLY found a

home in NXT and is being forced to leave. On top of that, his most prized possession is destroyed in front of his eyes by the person who forced him out of NXT. Why am I supposed to boo him again?

One last Takeover promo wraps up the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This is a good example of a shot where the wrestling wasn't the point. Tonight helped build towards Takeover: Orlando with every match getting some focus and another match added to the card. It's a perfectly fine show and it accomplished everything it needed to do. This was fine for a go home show, though the main event still felt forced in, which isn't a good thing.

Results

Dash Wilder b. Johnny Gargano and Akam – Powerbomb to Gargano

Heavy Machinery b. Jonathan Ordegen/Mike Marshall – Dozovic slammed Knight onto Marshall

Kassius Ohno b. Elias Samson – Discus forearm

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NXT – March 15, 2017: It Makes Sense For Once

NXT

Date: March 15, 2017

Location: University Area CDC Gymnasium, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness, Tom Phillips

It's title time and that means we're going to know who is heading to the main event of Takeover: Orlando. Tonight Bobby Roode puts the NXT Title on the line against Kassius Ohno with the winner facing Shinsuke Nakamura for the title at the big show. This has some serious potential so let's get to it.

We get a quick look at the title match.

Opening sequence.

Ealy Brothers vs. Authors of Pain

Non-title and a result of last week's beatdown of the Ealy Twins. Uriel tries his luck on Ra'zar and gets headbutted down with ease. The Super Collider sets up the Last Chapter for the pin on Uriel at 2:23.

Post match Paul Ellering says his men are close to creating a dynasty and aren't scared of the Revival. Cue DIY to say they don't know what Ellering means half the time but they know they can beat the Authors of Pain. This brings out the Revival to say they're the best team in the world and want a rematch too. Now it's William Regal coming out to make a triple threat elimination match for the titles at Takeover.

Heavy Machinery, a tag team comprised of Otis Dozovic and Tucker Knight, is coming. I saw them at a house show earlier this year and they were pretty good.

Video on Asuka's dominance of the women's division. She's ready to crush Ember Moon at Takeover.

Macey Estrella vs. Nikki Cross

Estrella is sent face first into the mat to start and Cross hits six (yes six) straight swinging fisherman's neckbreakers for the pin at 2:29. The idea was that Cross didn't care how much she was hurting Estrella.

Post match Tye Dillinger and No Way Jose go after Sanity but get beaten down again.

Alistair Black video.

We look back at Billie Kay's injury last week.

We go to the Performance Center to check on Kay but see Andrade Cien Almas going after Hoho Lun. Oney Lorcan intervened and kept Lun safe.

Lorcan says he saw Lun getting bullied last week and if Almas wants to do that, try bullying him. They have a match next week.

Next week will also have a six man tag between Roderick Strong/No Way Jose/Tye Dillinger vs. Sanity.

Ohno says he's ready to make up for past failures.

Roode is ready to send Ohno packing.

NXT Title: Kassius Ohno vs. Bobby Roode

Ohno is challenging and wrestling in a shirt, likely to hide his not great physique. Roode is knocked to the floor to start and struck hard in the face back inside. Some chops and a clothesline put Roode on the floor and we take a break. Back with Roode in control, as is so often the case after a break. Roode slowly stomps and chokes away before hitting a hard clothesline in the corner.

More right hands have Ohno rocked as Roode isn't exactly showing an in-depth offense here. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Ohno fights up with his strikes, only to be sent over the corner and out to the floor in a big crash. Back from a second break with Roode cranking on both arms and putting a knee in Ohno's spine.

The Glorious DDT is countered into a release vertical suplex and Ohno gets in a sliding dropkick to the head. A spinning big boot to

the jaw gets two for Ohno but Roode gets the same off a Backstabber. Ohno goes up and hits Diamond Dust of all things (flipping Stunner, one of my favorites) for no cover.

Instead Roode gets up and snaps off a spinebuster for two. Roode loads up the DDT again but Ohno just blasts him with the big forearm, sending Roode outside again. Back in and Ohno drops a big backplash for two but Roode sends him throat first into the top rope. The Glorious DDT retains the title at 22:22.

Rating: B. This started slow but turned into a good match by the end. I'm not sure if Ohno is going to be a big star down here but there's nothing wrong with being the guy you put with someone to get a solid performance. Roode vs. Nakamura II is going to be a lot of fun if they build off the previous version, though I'd bet on Roode retaining at this point.

Overall Rating: B+. This was all about the one match and the rest of the show did enough to help set up both Takeover and next week's TV show. They accomplished a lot in just an hour and I'm more interested in seeing Takeover than I was before. The main event worked well and things are picking up when they need to. It's like the old days but with weaker stars.

Results

Authors of Pain b. Ealy Brothers – Last Chapter to Uriel

Nikki Cross b. Macey Estrella – Swinging fisherman's neckbreaker

Bobby Roode b. Kassius Ohno – Glorious DDT

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NXT – March 1, 2017: It Better Be Going That Way

NXT

Date: March 1, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Tom Phillips

It's the final night of the taping cycle and we've got a big title match to send us out. This time around it's the Authors of Pain defending the Tag Team Titles against the former champions DIY. These teams had a surprisingly good match back at Takeover: San Antonio so maybe they can pull it off again here. Let's get to it.

Preview for tonight's show, including Asuka defending the Women's Title against Peyton Royce.

Opening sequence.

Sean Maluta vs. Patrick Clark

Clark is your latest "flamboyant" wrestler so Maluta punches him in the face during his opening....shall we say prancing. Maluta gets two off a Shining Wizard but Clark gets all ticked off and hammers away in the corner. A suplex sets up a chinlock and of course Maluta makes a quick comeback. Clark will have none of that though and hits a bad looking Fameasser for the pin at 2:40. The fans didn't seem impressed though Clark has a really athletic and lanky body which could be used in a better gimmick.

Sanity wants Tye Dillinger to accept his fate and stop drowning in his own choices. Instead of dragging his friends down with him, Tye needs to face Eric Young on his own. Nikki Cross says if he doesn't,

the whole world will burn.

Women's Title: Peyton Royce vs. Asuka

Royce won a triple threat last week to earn her shot. Feeling out process to start with Nigel talking about other great female Japanese wrestlers (and managing to plug the Network at the same time). A shoulder just fires Asuka up and she forearm's Peyton down. Both of them miss big kicks and it's a standoff.

Back to back hip attacks put Peyton on the floor but she sends Asuka into the steps as we take a break. We come back with Asuka fighting out of a chinlock (as is customary) so Royce starts working on the arm that went into the post. A standing armbar only seems to tick the champ off and a suplex drops Peyton.

Asuka starts striking away but hurts the arm again. Instead it's a Shining Wizard for two on Royce but a spinning kick to the face gets the same on Asuka. That goes nowhere though as Asuka kicks the heck out of Peyton and spins her down into the Asuka Lock to retain the title at 11:20.

Rating: C+. They did a very good job here of making Asuka look vulnerable. One of the biggest problems is finding a realistic opponent for her and this was as good as it was going to get with either Royce or Billie Kay. Asuka wasn't in the greatest danger here but she also didn't squash Peyton, which made for a much better match.

Post match Billie Kay comes in for the double team but Ember Moon makes the save. Asuka holds up the title and Ember stares her down. There's Takeover.

We look back at Takeover: San Antonio where Shinsuke Nakamura's knee was injured. Kassius Ohno checked on him in the back.

Here the end of last week's episode with Kassius Ohno saving No Way Jose from Bobby Roode and getting in a fight with Ohno clearing house.

William Regal makes Roode vs. Ohno for the title in two weeks.

Paul Ellering gives the Authors of Pain a pep talk.

Wolfgang is coming.

Shinsuke Nakamura is back next week.

Tag Team Titles: Authors of Pain vs. DIY

DIY is challenging. Akum stares Ciampa down to start but Tommaso isn't the slightest bit intimidated. The double spear through the ropes drops Akum and some double clotheslines put the champs on the floor. Ciampa tries a dive through the ropes but gets sent hard into the post to put him right back down.

Back in and Ciampa gets caught in the wrong corner and runs into a backbreaker for two. Ciampa chops and slaps the heck out of Akum but gets caught in an assisted backbreaker to put him down again. The one sided beating takes us to a break with Ciampa in trouble. Back with Tommaso avoiding a charge and making the hot tag off to Gargano so things can speed up. A suicide dive drops Akum and a springboard moonsault does the same to Razar.

The double strike to the corner drops Akum for two and Ciampa grabs his flip over armbar. Razar makes the save and sends Gargano to the floor. Ciampa gets in a kick though and Gargano comes back in for a double powerbomb out of the corner. Razar saves his partner from the running double strike (which really needs a name) but it's time for the stereo armbars. Cue the Revival for the DQ at 13:25.

Rating: B. These matches are giving me a Sting vs. Vader vibe where the smaller guys do whatever they can to take down the monsters but then they get hit really, really hard. The ending was the right call as all three of them deserve to be in the title hunt and there's a chance that the title match will be outstanding. The Authors are a good choice here for the sake of mixing things up and that makes for a good dynamic.

Back to back Shatter Machines let the Revival stand tall to end the show. I can't stand them (triple threats, not the Revival) but this better set up a triple threat tag match for the titles at Takeover.

Overall Rating: B. Fifty minutes go by and we seem to have two title matches set up for Takeover. In two or three weeks we'll likely have

the NXT Title match and you can probably pencil in either Young vs. Dillinger or a big tag match as well. This show flew by and gave us some good wrestling as a bonus while setting up the big card. Good stuff all around, as usual.

Results

Patrick Clark b. Sean Maluta – Fameasser

Asuka b. Peyton Royce – Asuka Lock

DIY b. Authors of Pain via DQ when Revival interfered

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NXT – February 15, 2017: The NXT Special

NXT

Date: February 15, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson

We've got two big matches for tonight with a title on the line.

First up it's the Aussie women Billie Kay and Peyton Royce teaming

up to face Liv Morgan and a mystery partner. We'll cap it off with Tyler Bate making his first defense of the WWE UK Title against the debuting Trent Seven. Let's get to it.

Quick look at Bate vs. Seven.

Opening sequence.

Authors of Pain vs. Garrison Spears/Lance Anoa'i

Non-title and Lance is Samu's son. It's total domination with stereo Death Valley Drivers putting the jobbers into the corner. The Final Chapter ends Spears at 1:20.

The jobbers get a Super Collider post match.

Video on Tyler Bate.

Billie Kay/Peyton Royce vs. Liv Morgan/Ember Moon

Kind of an obvious pick. Moon spins away from Billie to start and the Aussie is already looking shaken. Billie is smart enough to twist away and get in a kick to the ribs, only to get tossed down with a suplex. The hot tag brings in Morgan to a very limited reaction (that's hard to do in NXT) for the house cleaning. An STO gets two on Peyton as everything breaks down. Moon gets sent outside and Billie knees Morgan in the side of the head for the pin at 3:18.

Rating: C-. I'm still confused by Morgan as they seem to want her to be the new big star of the division but keep having her do jobs in the bigger matches like this one. It's also interesting that they didn't have Moon get the pin here as it's pretty clear that she's going to be the next challenger for Asuka's title and she wasn't exactly the star of the match here.

We look back at Sanity telling Tye Dillinger that he belongs to the team and then beating him down later in the night. No Way Jose and Roderick Strong made the save.

Strong and Jose don't like bullies and respect Dillinger enough to give him a hand.

Here's DIY with something to say. They realized their dream in Toronto but that dream became a nightmare in San Antonio. They've

never fought anyone like the Authors of Pain but they saw doubt in their eyes. No matter how much they're beaten down they'll never quit fighting so it's time for a rematch. Cue Paul Ellering to say the match can take place in two weeks. DIY doesn't want to wait but here's the Revival to beat them down, only to have the Authors chase them off.

Video on Trent Seven.

Video on Kassius Ohno, who returns soon.

General Manager William Regal announces a #1 contenders triple threat match for next week between Peyton Royce, Ember Moon and Liv Morgan.

UK Title: Tyler Bate vs. Trent Seven

Bate is defending. They start slowly with both guys having a clean break and offering a twirl of the others mustache. Bate bounces off the much bigger Seven until Trent runs him over with a much harder version. Nigel starts talking about cricket and gets in a few jabs at Watson (not that difficult) as the slow beating continues while taking us to a break.

Back with Trent getting two off a backslide and Bate giving us that great scared face in the corner. Tyler finally gets going and knocks Trent outside for a good looking dive over the top. Back in and the Seven Stars Lariat is broken up so Tyler grabs the airplane spin. Since it's just an airplane spin though, Trent pops up and gets in a powerbomb for two. A half crab (not a great one though) has Bate in trouble but the hold doesn't last that long.

It's time for rights and left (Bop and Bam if you haven't been formally introduced) but Seven just blasts him with the Seven Star Lariat for two. You know, if it hardly ever finishes anyone, it's not really a finisher. Trent takes his sweet time going up and gets caught in a super exploder suplex for two. Bate gets all fired up and hits the rolling kick to the head, followed by the Tyler Driver '97 for the pin at 15:39.

Rating: B. I'm not really feeling Seven yet but I'm digging the heck

out of Bate the more I see him. The fact that the guy is just nineteen years old is mind blowing as the guy looks like he's been doing this for years, despite also looking like he's about fourteen years old. These matches don't really have stories but they're knocking the heck out of the work, which is all they can really do at this point.

They shake hands post match.

Overall Rating: B-. Kind of a middle of the road show this week as we're still getting ready for the bigger stories but it was still entertaining enough. The show breezed by and that makes for a very easy fifty minute show, especially with a strong main event. They also made sure to announce stuff for the future, which is still one of their greatest strengths. It's never "what does someone have in store" but rather "this is what you're going to get". That's a very key difference and incredibly important.

Results

Authors of Pain b. Garrison Spears/Lance Anoa'i – Final Chapter to Spears

Peyton Royce/Billie Kay b. Ember Moon/Liv Morgan – Knee to Morgan's head

Tyler Bate b. Trent Seven – Tyler Driver '97

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NXT – February 8, 2017: Glorious Insanity

NXT

Date: February 8, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness, Tom Phillips

Tonight is all about Bobby Roode and his GLORIOUS NXT Championship celebration. In other words it's probably time to find out who we're going to be seeing as Roode's first challenger, likely at Takeover: Orlando. I'm really not sure who that's going to be as Shinsuke Nakamura is still down with a knee injury. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence, now prominently featuring Roode.

Sanity vs. Bollywood Boyz

Dain and Wolfe for Sanity here with Harv getting shoved around to start. Gurv comes in and has the same issues dealing with the monster Dain. The Boyz try some dancing and get their heads taken off with a double clothesline. A double backsplash sets up a One Winged Angel (I'm thinking that's going to get its own name) for the pin on Gurv at 2:33.

Post match Nikki Cross demands Asuka but Eric Young cuts her off to say Tye Dillinger belongs to Sanity.

Liv Morgan vs. Billie Kay

Billie gets taken down to start and Liv walks on her back, setting up a rollup for two. Kay grabs an armdrag and we hit the chinlock. Peyton tries to get on the apron for a distraction but Liv grabs a rollup for the pin at 3:40.

Rating: C-. Nothing to see here and I'm still not sure why I'm supposed to be interested in Morgan. She's just kind of there based

on charisma and the in-ring work is only average at best. I'm hoping this doesn't mean the downfall of Billie and Peyton as they're still a great act but with the title being dominated, there's only so much they can do.

Tye Dillinger says Sanity hasn't humbled him and he won't join them. That brings Sanity in for the triple team but No Way Jose and Roderick Strong come in for the save.

William Regal announces a UK Title match next week with Tyler Bate defending against Trent Seven. Peyton and Billie come in and demand a match against Liv next week. Regal agrees and says Liv can pick her partner, which delights the Aussies because Morgan has no friends.

Shinsuke Nakamura's knee injury won't require surgery.

Revival vs. Heavy Machinery

Machinery is Tucker Knight/Otis Dozovich. Knight shoulders Dash around a few times and bearhugs him over to the corner for the tag off to Otis. We hit another bearhug from Otis, who Percy describes as "Tugboat reincarnated." Dawson comes in and snaps off some jabs to the face but Dash is easily kicked off at two. It's off to a chinlock on Otis for a bit until the hot tag brings in Tucker. House is cleaned but Dawson makes a blind tag and DDT's Knight for the pin at 3:46.

Rating: C-. Nothing to see here other than a reminder that the Revival is still a thing in NXT. To be fair that's probably better for them as you could milk a little more out of them before calling them up to job to Cesaro and Sheamus. Heavy Machinery could be something down the road but for now they're fine as the intimidating team that everyone beats.

Post match Revival says they're the top guys around here and want a shot at the Authors of Pain at Takeover: Orlando. Cue the Authors so Revival bails, only to sneak back in and jump the champs.

Video on Tyler Bate.

Here's Roode for the celebration. Roode gets straight to the point

with an I TOLD YOU SO. He's proven his greatness over and over already and that includes defeating Nakamura. That man defeated everyone he got in the ring with until he got in the ring with Bobby Roode. It was the most glorious moment in NXT history because now NXT has someone who looks like a champion is supposed to look. It's no longer WE ARE NXT because now it's his NXT.

Video on Trent Seven, who is from a cabin halfway up Mustache Mountain.

Sanity vs. No Way Jose/Tye Dillinger/Roderick Strong

Sanity gets jumped in the aisle to start and we take a break before the opening bell. We come back joined in progress with Tye knocking Eric to the floor for a breather. It's off to Jose vs. Wolfe with No Way taking over before Eric gets taken into the wrong corner for his efforts. Strong dropkicks Wolfe down but it's off to Dain so Sanity can take over.

Tye gets beaten into the corner and Nigel wonders how many times he has to take a beating until he's officially a 9. Dillinger easily escapes and the hot tag brings in Strong to clean house. Everything breaks down but Dain breaks up the Sick Kick, allowing Cross to get in a hurricanrana on Tye. Dain runs Strong over and Young gets the pin at 6:20.

Rating: C. This was fine but nothing all that great. Sanity getting a win is a good idea as the team hasn't really done much of note so far. Then again NXT isn't exactly a place for stables so it's not like there's a blueprint for how to pull this off. The trio was a good idea and I'm sure Dillinger vs. Sanity will keep going for a good while.

Overall Rating: C. This was a weird one with the last match being necessary to make the show run long enough but at the same time it made the show feel longer than it needed to be if that makes sense. In other words they would have been better off expanding some of the earlier matches and then having the Roode stuff close the show while leaving the six man for later. As it is the show feels a bit heavier than it needed to be but it was still entertaining enough. Not bad

here but it needed some adjustments to really work.

Results

Sanity b. Bollywood Boyz – One Winged Angel to Gurv

Liv Morgan b. Billie Kay – Rollup

Revival b. Heavy Machinery – DDT to Knight

Sanity b. No Way Jose/Roderick Strong/Tye Dillinger – Crossbody to Strong

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Takeover – San Antonio: Another Broken Streak

Takeover: San Antonio

Date: January 28, 2017

Location: Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Percy Watson, Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

For the first time that I can remember, NXT actually has its work cut out to make one of these shows work. The card just isn't all that strong this time around and it shows badly. The main event here is Shinsuke Nakamura defending the NXT Title against Bobby Roode,

which really could go either way. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at all five matches tonight with a theme of change.

Tye Dillinger vs. Eric Young

During Sanity's entrance, the camera starts on Alexander Wolfe and pans over to the other members but goes one to far and pans over to air. Young gives Dillinger one last chance to join the team but gets left hands to the jaw for his efforts. A trip to the floor goes nowhere and Dillinger chops away again before whipping Eric outside one more time.

Eric finally sends him outside so Killian Dane (Big Damo) can get in a crossbody to really take over. Back in and Eric's top rope elbow hits Tye in the back before sending him outside again. A neckbreaker gets two on Tye but he dropkicks Young out of the air to put both guys down.

Back up and Tye grabs him by the beard to really start his comeback. Young runs up to the top so Tye charges up into a belly to belly superplex for two, which means crowd reaction shots have come to NXT. Cue Wolfe to the apron so Tye gives him a Tyebreaker, followed by a superkick to Dane. Another Tyebreaker hits Young but Wolfe puts his foot on the ropes. Tye goes after Sanity once too often and gets caught in the wheelbarrow neckbreaker for the pin at 10:56.

Rating: B-. Good match here but the crowd is going to go INSANE when Tye finally wins a big match. He keeps getting closer and there's enough interference here to warrant a rematch or another big match of some sort. If they don't have him get that big win in Orlando over Wrestlemania weekend, I have no idea what to tell them.

Samoa Joe is here.

Andrade Cien Almas vs. Roderick Strong

Strong eliminated Almas in a four way for the #1 contendership so it's time for payback. Almas does his pose in the ropes to start before kicking at the arms. A cross armbreaker has Strong in trouble and a running kick to the head makes it even worse. This has been

ALL Almas so far but he misses a moonsault and gets caught in an Angle Slam. Back up and they slowly chop it out before switching over to elbows, followed by a hard kick to send Strong into the corner.

Strong kicks him in the face again but gets pulled down into something like Rings of Saturn, sending Roderick's foot onto the ropes for a break. Almas gets caught on top and Strong drops him onto the turnbuckle with a backbreaker for two. Andrade gets in the double knees in the corner, only to have Strong get out of the hammerlock DDT. Another knee to the face sets up the Sick Kick for the pin on Almas at 11:44.

Rating: C+. Again, not bad here and it's one of Almas' better matches. I'm starting to get more into him but he came in so flat that it's really hard to care about him no matter what he does. The heel character is working far better though and having good matches will get him noticed faster than anything else. Strong getting the win is a good idea as he hasn't really established himself too well yet.

Video on Shawn Michaels winning the 1995 Royal Rumble.

Michael P.S. Hayes is here.

We recap DIY vs. the Authors of Pain. Akam and Razar, managed by Paul Ellering, won the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic to become #1 contenders and now it's DIY trying to fight off the monsters to retain their newly won titles.

Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Authors of Pain

Johnny Gargano and Tommaso Ciampa are defending and unfortunately the Authors take off their jackets, meaning the name tags go away. Razar takes Ciampa into the corner and shouts at him a lot, drawing a PSYCHO KILLER chant from the crowd. Gargano tries the spear through the ropes and is casually swatted away. Everything breaks down and the champs just can't do anything with rights and lefts. Some running knees work a bit better though and the monsters are knocked to the floor for a suicide dive and running knee from the

apron. Back in and Akam casually slams Gargano over the top and the beating is on. It's off to an over the shoulder backbreaker until Johnny slips down into an enziguri....which has no effect whatsoever.

Gargano finally slips away and makes the hot tag off to Ciampa so house can be cleaned as well as possible. Some German suplexes take the Authors down and Paul Ellering is losing it on the floor. The referee tells Ciampa "six minutes left" as he chops away at Akam, who takes Ciampa's head off for two. The champs get two of their own off a double spear but Johnny gets knocked to the floor again, leaving Ciampa to get caught in a powerbomb/neckbreaker combination for two.

Johnny is back in to break up the Last Chapter and it's off to the double arm submission. Akam powers out of Johnny's crossface though and slams Gargano onto Tommaso to break the other hold. That's a really effective spot as the champs took their best shot and couldn't stop the raw power. They slug it out from their knees but the double strike is countered into the Authors' double powerbomb. The Last Chapter on Ciampa give us new champions at 14:27.

Rating: B. I'm kind of surprised here but at the same time not exactly. Coming in I didn't think this would happen but now that it has, it makes the most sense. That being said, I was very, very pleasantly surprised here as I was expecting a big drop off and got the best match the Authors have ever had. It's a good match though and that's all you could ask for out of these guys.

Here's Seth Rollins to take over the ring and call out HHH, who he knows is here because HHH runs NXT. HHH comes out but walks to the back, sending security out instead. Rollins is taken out and the fans aren't happy.

We recap the Women's Title match. Asuka is unstoppable but has been dealing with the combined forces of Billie Kay and Peyton Royce. Nikki Cross has gotten in on things too and Asuka wants to fight all of them at once.

Women's Title: Asuka vs. Nikki Cross vs. Peyton Royce vs. Billie Kay

Asuka is defending and this is one fall to a finish. Billie and Peyton look terrified and bail out to the floor shortly after the bell. With Asuka and Cross circling each other, the Aussies come back in for little success before being tossed back out. Asuka German suplexes both of them at the same time and it's back to Asuka vs. Cross.

Nikki ducks Asuka's big kick and takes the champ to the floor for an elevated neckbreaker off the apron. Cross hits a big dive but the Aussies beat Nikki up the aisle while Asuka is down at ringside. Is there a reason they're not running back to the ring so one can get a fast pin on the other?

They actually take Cross to the announcers' area and double suplex her through a table in a rare big spot. Back to the ring with the Aussies double teaming Asuka instead of just doing something a bit less complicated, like LAYING DOWN FOR EACH OTHER. Billie kicks Asuka into a Widow's Peak for two but the champ shrugs it off and kicks them both down to pin Peyton at 10:02.

Rating: C-. Did I fast forward the last five minutes here? It felt like the last part of the match was missing as Asuka was in the first real trouble of her title reign and then retained the title about fifteen seconds later. Asuka retaining is fine but this needed a few more minutes to really sell her being in trouble.

Nikki raises her head and smiles at Asuka as the champ leaves.

Tyler Bate is here.

We recap the NXT Title match. Shinsuke Nakamura got the title back after winning the feud against Samoa Joe. Bobby Roode won a four way elimination match to become #1 contender and wants to make the title GLORIOUS.

NXT Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Bobby Roode

Roode is challenging and comes to the ring with eight rather attractive women in matching dresses. Nakamura rides to the ring on a platform for a rather unique entrance of his own. The fans sing Nakamura's song after the bell for a pretty intimidating atmosphere.

They hit the mat to start with Nakamura getting caught in a headlock, only to send Roode off and tell him to bring it on.

Roode switches to the basics with an elbow to the jaw followed by a wristlock. Good Vibrations is broken up so Roode blasts him in the jaw to send Bobby outside. Roode is right back though and sends him into the steps, which seems to jar the champ's neck. Back in and Bobby goes right after the neck until Nakamura comes back with the strikes. Good Vibrations works this time as the pace picks up a bit.

Roode blocks the inverted exploder as he's had counters for almost everything so far. The running knee in the corner hits Roode's ribs and now the exploder works just fine. Nakamura loads up Kinshasa but Roode is out on the mat. It's playing possum though and Bobby gets two off a rollup. A backstabber gets the same and that perfect spinebuster gives Roode yet another near fall.

Roode's superplex is broken up and Nakamura scores with a middle rope kick to the chest. Kinshasa is blocked and Roode grabs a rollup with his feet on the ropes for two more. Nakamura starts no selling the chops and wants some more. The hard strikes come back and it's off to a triangle choke of all things. Roode reverses into something like a powerbomb which is countered into a sunset flip for two.

A sliding knee gives Nakamura the same so he goes to the middle rope for a jumping knee but both guys crash down to the floor. The champ's knee is banged up though and Nakamura goes down after hitting Kinshasa. Roode is out and the referee brings the trainer in to check on the knee. Nakamura says he can go and Roode is sitting up in the corner.

Back in and Roode grabs the Glorious DDT for a very, very close two. Bobby slaps on a half crab and punches at the knee for extra damage before dragging it back to the middle of the ring. Cue Matt Bloom (Albert, the head NXT Coach) as Nakamura tries to reverse into another triangle. The knee gives out though and a second Glorious DDT gives 27:09.

Rating: A-. Much, much better match than I was expecting here though I'm not entirely sure where we go from here. I don't exactly see

Roode vs. Nakamura II with Nakamura winning his third title as the best Takeover: Orlando main event but who else is there? Ohno? Dillinger? We can figure that out later though because this was a heck of a match as Roode stayed simple and was smart enough to take down the unpredictable and wild Nakamura.

Graves is THRILLED to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. And somehow, that's probably the worst Takeover ever. The show was a completely fine two hours and twenty minutes with the Women's Title being the worst match and still totally watchable. The talent drain has really hurt NXT and the two house shows instead of regular TV didn't do this one any favors. Still though, it's certainly a good show but when the bar is set that high, something like this is bound to happen.

Results

Eric Young b. Tye Dillinger – Wheelbarrow neckbreaker

Roderick Strong b. Andrade Cien Almas – Sick Kick

Authors of Pain b. DIY – Last Chapter to Ciampa

Asuka b. Billie Kay, Peyton Royce and Nikki Cross – Kick to Royce's head

Bobby Roode b. Shinsuke Nakamura – Glorious DDT

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NXT Takeover: San Antonio Preview

It's that time again as NXT will be taking over another Saturday night before we get to one of the Big Four pay per views. Unfortunately this show hasn't had the best build in the world and a lot of that is due to a combination of the talent being taken up to the main roster and the two weeks spent on international shows that could have been used on the build towards the matches. Today we're going to look at the build towards "Takeover: San Antonio" and see if it looks better on paper than it's looked on "NXT" TV.

Eric Young vs. Tye Dillinger

This feud has served two purposes: showing that Dillinger has a reason to still be in NXT and giving Sanity's leader his first major feud. The stable has the potential to be something special and Dillinger's TEN gimmick is getting over like almost nothing has in a very long time. The fans just want to cheer for the guy and he's more than made up for it in the ring. He's no Sami Zayn or anyone near that level but he's doing enough to make it work.

That being said, there's no reason for Young to lose here. I could easily see Dillinger moving up to the main roster for the Royal Rumble alone while Sanity with Young at the helm could dominate NXT for a good while going forward. Young wins here as he's the only logical option along with deserving it (that was much easier to say that it should have been).

Andrade Cien Almas vs. Roderick Strong

I always forget that Strong is even in NXT as he just hasn't done all that much yet. Almas is in a similar place as he's barely established himself in the promotion. His in ring stuff hasn't done much to impress me and I'm still not sure why I'm supposed to care

about him (though his heel work has been better than his face run). Strong is entertaining though and I've always been a fan of the guy. I'm actually going to go with Strong in what could be considered an upset. Strong is a talented guy and can go with anyone in the ring but neither guy really has a strong personality. Both of them need something to do but I'd rather see Strong knock that smile off of Almas' face than anything else and that's enough to give him the nod here. I have next to no confidence in it but I'll go with Strong.

Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Authors of Pain

Now this is where things get a little hazy. DIY is on a roll at this point and is one of the best teams I've seen in a long time. However, the Authors of Pain have been treated as nearly unstoppable monsters and the logical move would be to see them steamroll the champions for the titles. At the same time though, I can't imagine DIY losing the belts that they spent so much time winning.

I see this one going along the lines of Sting vs. Vader in 1992: the Authors of Pain destroy the champs and then get disqualified or counted out for going a bit too hard. DIY will probably drop the belts to them later on but I don't think it happens just yet. They did too much great stuff against the Revival to lose them to a team like the Authors of Pain, at least this early on.

Women's Title: Asuka vs. Peyton Royce vs. Billie Kay vs. Nikki Cross

This one depends on where you think the title is going after the match as we get closer to the big Wrestlemania weekend show. Asuka has been running through the division for almost a year now and the only real idea is to have the three challengers in one match instead of lining them up one at a time.

That being said, I still think Asuka runs through them all with a fall on one of the Aussies. There's no reason to have her go over Cross yet but I could easily see the big showdown between Asuka and Ember Moon at the big show in Orlando. They could throw in a big curve ball and have the Aussies basically be the NXT version of Laycool but again, I just don't see it happening. Asuka retains.

NXT Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Bobby Roode

The more I think about this match, the more confused I really am about the whole thing. NXT has managed to book a match where it's hard to imagine either of them actually losing here. Roode has been built up as the big star but Nakamura is Nakamura, as in someone who requires a small cannon to finally put down. On paper this should be a squash it's hard to not buy into Roode's schtick.

At the end of the day though, I think it's going to be Nakamura retaining the title and setting up a showdown with.....well I have no idea actually (Kassius Ohno maybe?) but I don't think Roode wins here. He's the kind of guy who could get his heat back in the span of about five minutes so Nakamura goes over here after a match which far exceeds expectations.

I think I've talked myself into being excited over this show. If there's a single promotion that can make me believe they can pull off what feels like a lackluster card, NXT is the one. I'm not sure it's going to work but I'm more than willing to give the show a chance. If they can get most of the matches right and hit the ground running heading into Orlando, everything will be fine.

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NXT – January 11, 2017: Asuka Cries

NXT

Date: January 11, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Corey Graves, Tom Phillips

We're back to Full Sail and that means it's time to hit the gas on the road towards San Antonio. The NXT Title match is already set up but now it's time to set up the Tag Team Title match. We know that the Authors of Pain are waiting on the champions but the question is who will be defending against them. That's what we'll find out tonight as the Revival gets their rematch against DIY. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of DIY vs. Revival, as you probably expected.

Opening sequence.

Earlier today, Billie Kay and Peyton Royce attacked Asuka in the back. I'm sure their destruction will be quick and imminent.

Billie Kay/Peyton Royce vs. Sarah Bridges/Macy Evans

Peyton offers an early distraction so Billie can run Evans over from behind. The Aussies take turns beating on her until a hot tag brings Bridges in for the hope spot. That lasts all of about fifteen seconds as Bridges gets double teamed, setting up the bulldog onto Billie's knee for the pin at 2:06.

Post match the Aussies get the mic and are told that Asuka will kill them. Cue Asuka, who is beaten down again, only to have Nikki Cross come in for the save. With Kay and Royce taken out, Cross kicks Asuka in the face to leave the champ laying.

Sanity says they're taking over and it starts with Cross becoming the new Women's Champion. Big Damo watches from the shadows.

Elias Samson vs. Jonathan Cruz

Before the match, Samson sings about being around forever. With Graves ripping on Samson for general annoyances, Elias drives Cruz into the corner but gets rolled up for one. A clothesline drops Samson and that's about it for Cruz's offense as he gets his ribs bent around the post. Samson knees him in the ear (ow) and kicks him in the jaw, setting up the neckbreaker for the pin at 3:25.

Rating: D. Total squash here and Samson is starting to look better. The gimmick works very well but Samson is one of those guys who just doesn't click for some reason. He's got the look and the character but the in ring work really isn't all that great. Squashing people will keep him fresh in the audience's minds though and that's a good thing at the moment.

We take another look at DIY vs. Revival.

Andrade Cien Almas vs. Oney Lorcan

Almas now has pyro for his entrance. This is a rematch from Osaka where Lorcan won in an upset. Lorcan shoves him off a headlock but Almas just poses on the mat like the jerk that he is. A hard shot to the chest puts Andrade on the floor so Lorcan hits a Blockbuster off the apron. Back in and a clothesline cuts Oney off for the first time, setting up a slap to the face. Lorcan elbows him right back though and an Alabama Slam into the corner staggers Almas even more. Not that it matters as Almas does his pose on the ropes to buy himself some time, setting up the hammerlock DDT to put Lorcan away at 5:00.

Rating: C-. I still just don't get it with Almas. He's MUCH better as a heel than his disaster of a face run but that's not really saying much. Lorcan is an interesting case but his name and lack of much of a character hold him back. Their Osaka match was a lot better but that's probably due to them having five minutes this time as opposed to over double that in Japan.

Almas says this will be his year.

Another look at the Toronto match.

In a sitdown interview, Shinsuke Nakamura says he's proud of being

NXT Champion after a very hard series against Samoa Joe. That brings him to Bobby Roode, who he calls one of the best wrestlers in the world. Despite not being willing to appear on camera, Roode has a gift for Nakamura: Roode's ticket for last year's Takeover: Dallas, when Nakamura made his in ring debut.

Tag Team Titles: Revival vs. DIY

DIY is defending and the winners face the Authors of Pain in San Antonio. Gargano and Dawson get things going with Scott getting caught in an atomic drop. The champs come in and knock Dash and Dawson outside for an early break. Back with Gargano working on Dawson's arm as Graves plays cheerleader for the challengers.

Wilder makes one of those always great blind tags and the chop block puts Gargano down. That means it's time to pick apart a limb and the leg is wrapped around the post. Gargano gets tied in the Tree of Woe and they be clubberin on that knee. Johnny is sent outside and Revival is way too happy with a potential countout. Dash goes to get him but gets posted for his efforts, only to have Dawson tackle Gargano to break up a hot tag attempt.

Back from another break with the leg work continuing via a half crab. Ever the cocky heel, Dash slaps Johnny in the face and gets caught with an enziguri, allowing the hot tag to Ciampa. With a PSYCHO KILLER chant rolling, Ciampa cleans house with running knees and German suplexes. A hard knee to Dash's head gets two but Dawson just BLASTS Ciampa with a clothesline. Something like a Hart Attack is broken up with a superkick and Ciampa grabs the armbar.

Dawson gets smart by shoving Gargano onto them for the save in a great false finish. Gargano breaks out of an attempted leglock and suicide dives onto Dawson. Dash gets floored as well and it's back to Ciampa who walks into a DDT for another two. The champs unload with strikes and the running knee/superkick to both Dawson and Wilder (who were hugging) at the same time retain the titles at 21:02.

Rating: B+. Somehow that might be the worst match these four have ever had together. Some teams just have outstanding chemistry and

that's what these guys have. They just work so well together and that's something you either have or you don't. This was another brutal match and I'm curious to see what DIY can do with the Authors in San Antonio.

Speaking of the Authors, they run in and beat the champs down.

Regal makes DIY vs. the Authors for San Antonio. Wasn't that already announced? Also, next week it's Nakamura and Roode having a contract signing, which certainly was announced earlier in the night. Regal is almost done but Asuka comes in and demands to face Cross, Kay and Royce at Takeover to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was all about the main event and given how awesome that was, the rest of the show being this average wasn't going to bring it down. I'm curious about where they're going with that Roode ticket as that story needs to be more emotion based because not many people are going to buy Roode hanging in a slugout with Nakamura. Good show here, as expected.

Results

Billie Kay/Peyton Royce b. Sarah Bridges/Macy Evans – Bulldog onto a knee

Elias Samson b. Jonathan Cruz – Neckbreaker

Andrade Cien Almas b. Oney Lorcan – Hammerlock DDT

DIY b. Revival – Running knee/superkick

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NXT – December 21, 2016: One For Texas

NXT

Date: December 21, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Corey Graves, Tom Phillips

It's time to start the build towards "Takeover: San Antonio" as we have a four way elimination match to crown a new #1 contender.

Tonight it's Bobby Roode vs. Andrade Cien Almas vs. Tye Dillinger vs. Roderick Strong for the shot at Shinsuke Nakamura in January.

We've also got Daria Berenato vs. Billie Kay in a revenge match.

Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Billie Kay vs. Daria Berenato

Berenato, an MMA style fighter, was betrayed by Kay and Peyton Royce a few weeks back and wants revenge. Peyton offers an early distraction from the floor so Billy can suplex Daria for two.

Something like a spear puts Billie down and there go the gloves so Daria can punch a bit harder. Another Peyton offers another distraction and the big boot ends Daria at 2:25.

Post match Peyton and Billie challenge Asuka for a fight.

Authors of Pain vs. Anthony Bowens/Johnny Vandal

Total and complete squash with the Authors throwing the jobbers all over the place. Bowens is powerbombed onto Vandal and their heads collide, giving Bowens a bad concussion. The match is stopped due to the injury at 1:05.

Ellering says they want the titles and don't care who they have to beat.

We look back at the opening match.

Asuka says Royce and Kay aren't competition. Nikki Cross is shown looking on with a smile.

Long package of videos on all four participants in the elimination match. None of them like each other all that much.

Roderick Strong vs. Andrade Cien Almas vs. Tye Dillinger vs. Bobby Roode

Elimination rules and the winner gets the title shot in San Antonio. Roode bails to the floor to start but Strong follows him out for some chops with Dillinger following to help with the beatdown. Almas takes Strong back in for a VERY loud chop and a dropkick as we take an early break.

Back with Almas still in control and slapping Dillinger in the face. Almas tries to moonsault onto Strong and Dillinger but only hits Tye's knees, sending him out to the floor. That leaves Roode to clothesline Tye and Roderick at the same time but Strong grabs a quick backbreaker for two. Roode's neckbreaker gets the same on Strong and Bobby knocks Almas to the floor again. Roderick comes back with a dive to take all three out and we go to a second break.

Back with Roode's rollup being called off due to feet on the ropes. A release gordbuster sends Roode flying and Strong follows up with a running knee in the corner. Everyone heads to the corner for the four man Tower of Doom with Dillinger getting the best of it and small packaging Almas for two. Andrade comes back with the running knees in the corner but the Sick Kick gets rid of Almas at 17:17. Strong staggers into the Tyebreaker and is out at 18:43.

We're down to Roode vs. Dillinger for the title shot and the fans are WAY into Tye. Dillinger wins the slugout and stomps him down in the corner. Roode's attempt to bring in a chair goes badly as well as Tye superkicks him down for two. The Tyebreaker is broken up and Roode snaps off his spinebuster. The Glorious Bomb is reversed into the Tyebreaker for a VERY close two and the fans lose it on the knockout. Roode escapes a superplex attempt and the Glorious DDT

sends him to San Antonio at 24:21.

Rating: B. This was really just a long coronation for Roode, who was the only real option to face Nakamura at this point. You might be able to consider Dillinger but the other two are nowhere near ready for something like that. I like the elimination rules as it's not just a fluke pin setting up a major title shot. Good match here but not the highest level of drama.

Replays and posing end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Really, this was the main event and anything else. That means a short match and a squash, which isn't the most interesting stuff in the world. Now, the stuff they presented did set up some stuff for the future, which is where NXT shines. It's not a great show by any stretch but there's a main event in San Antonio and we have a good idea of where the rest of the card is going.

Results

Billie Kay b. Daria Berenato – Big Boot

Authors of Pain b. Anthony Bowens/Johnny Vandal via referee stoppage

Bobby Roode b. Tye Dillinger, Andrade Cien Almas and Roderick Strong last eliminating Dillinger

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NXT – December 7, 2016: Around the World

NXT

Date: December 7, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves, Percy Watson

This is another interesting show as it's a combination of the regular taping and the NXT Title match from Osaka, Japan with Shinsuke Nakamura challenging Samoa Joe for the title. It's also nearly time to start getting ready for Takeover: San Antonio, which is only about six weeks away. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick video hyping up the title match.

Opening sequence.

Here's DIY to get things going with the new champs coming in through the crowd to celebrate. It takes some time for the cheering to die down but Paul Ellering and the Authors of Pain cut them off before anything can be said. Ellering talks about how awesome they are until the Revival cuts them out with the fans singing their song. Revival gets to ringside and says the Authors only won because Revival was out of the tournament. The Authors come down to shove Revival around with Ellering saying they're coming for the titles. I'm thinking a rematch is in order to set up the Authors' opponent and that's just good.

We're getting a new commentators and it's....Percy Watson? Yes that Percy Watson. As in the guy you haven't thought of since he was released. I have no idea why he's here or what need he's filling but he's certainly here.

No Way Jose/Rich Swann vs. Sanity

Sanity confirms their heel status by cutting the pre-match dance off. It's Alexander Wolfe and Eric Young for the team here. There's no Sawyer Fulton here and Eric stomps on Fulton's jacket in some symbolism. Swann and Jose go fast to start by knocking Wolfe out to the floor.

Unfortunately the announcers have to go out of their way to get Watson in on commentary and it doesn't feel very natural. Swann gets taken into the Sanity corner and it's time for an early break. Back with Swann taking a Bret Hart chest bump in the corner and getting caught in a dragon sleeper from the middle rope. That's not bad.

Wolfe comes in for his version of dancing and a neck crank to keep things slow. A double clothesline gives Swann a breather and of course equals out several minutes of offense. Jose comes in off the hot tag and gives Young a TKO for two. A big corkscrew dive sends Swann into Wolfe but here's a huge man to send Jose into the steps. The announcers acknowledge him as Damo (formerly Big Damo) as he stares Wolfe down. Back inside, Young's wheelbarrow into a neckbreaker ends Jose at 10:35.

Rating: C. The match was nothing special but Damo debut as a potential new member of the team makes a lot of sense. He looks like a monster (please have him put on a singlet or a shirt) and would fit in really well with the group. Not a good match or anything but I'm digging Sanity more every week.

Sanity looks at Damo, who leaves on his own.

William Regal makes Revival vs. DIY for the titles on January 11 (that's a long way off for NXT). Tye Dillinger comes in to suggest he should leave NXT after losing to Samoa Joe. Regal cuts him off and offers him a spot in a tournament to crown a new #1 contender. There will be four singles matches with the winners facing off in a four way match for the title shot in San Antonio.

Eric Young has nothing to say about Damo but Nikki Cross runs into Asuka and stares at the title. Asuka gives her the evil smile. I could go for this.

Ember Moon vs. Kimber Lee

Lee is a former Chikara Grand Champion. Moon wastes no time in starting in with the kicks but charges into a side suplex for two. A hurricanrana gets Ember out of trouble and the Eclipse ends Lee at 3:03.

Rating: D+. I still can't get over how awesome the Eclipse looks. The timing she has to have to pull off a move like that is just amazing and I've never seen her come close to missing. Lee got in some offense here and I wouldn't mind seeing her signed up to appear more in NXT.

Here are the matches for the #1 contenders tournament:

Tye Dillinger

Eric Young

Elias Samson

Roderick Strong

Oney Lorcan

Bobby Roode

Andrade Cien Almas

No Way Jose

NXT Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Samoa Joe

Joe is defending and is quickly kicked into the corner for Good Vibrations. A poke to the eye gets the champ out of trouble and we take a break. Back with Nakamura in an STF which is turned into a Crossface which is turned into a rope grab. A German suplex looks to set up Kinshasa but Joe snaps off a powerslam for two instead.

Nakamura gets out of the Muscle Buster, only to get caught in the Koquina Clutch. It's the standing version though (I believe we call that a sleeper) and Joe releases for a string of suplexes instead. Joe kicks him out to the floor and loads up the Rock Bottom onto the steps. That earns him a bunch of strikes to the back and neck as Nakamura takes over for a change. Back in and Nakamura can't keep

him up in a fireman's carry. Instead he goes to the middle rope so the middle rope knee to the head can set up Kinshasa for the pin and the title at 10:45 shown.

Rating: B. This was the usual good, hard hitting brawl from these two though I'm pretty sure it's going to be the last big match, unless we see the Australia cage match. There's not much left for Joe in NXT at this point so odds are he's either in the Rumble or debuts before then. Good match of course and it's cool that we got to see it.

We'll actually see the cage match next week on NXT.

Overall Rating: B-. This was fine for a special show and next week feels like it's going to be the same thing. It's kind of weird that this didn't feel like anything all that interesting but, as usual, NXT got a lot done here. We had two debuts (I'm still wondering why Watson is here), a title match set up, another title match after that set up, a title feud teased and a title change.

Results

Sanity b. No Way Jose/Rich Swann – Wheelbarrow neckbreaker to Jose

Ember Moon b. Kimber Lee – Eclipse

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Samoa Joe – Kinshasa

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