

# NXT – January 28, 2015: It Made Sense

## NXT

Date: January 28, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Alex Riley, Jason Albert, Tom Phillips

This is another big show as we're two weeks out from Takeover and the showdown between Owens and Zayn. The contract signing is tonight and Owens has promised to say what he has to say to Zayn to his face. Also tonight the tournament to crown a new #1 contender continues with more first round matches. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Lucha Dragons vs. Buddy Murphy/Wesley Blake

Blake and Murphy are challenging and have some new, loud entrance music. We even get big match intros before we get going. Cara and Blake get things going with Wesley slamming him down in the corner, only to have Cara come back with a double springboard wristdrag.

Murphy dropkicks him out of the air for two though as the challengers are staying aggressive. Blake puts on a chinlock for a bit until Cara fights up and makes the tag to Kalisto. Everything speeds up and a sunset bomb gets two on Buddy as everything breaks down. Blake counters Cara's springboard and makes a blind tag. Kalisto hits Salida Del Sol on Murphy but the legal Buddy rolls him up for the clean pin and the titles at 4:00.

**Rating:** C. This is where NXT's booking pays off for them in the end. Murphy and Blake haven't won a bunch of matches over the months, but they've hung in enough of them that this isn't the most shocking win in the world. In WWE, a team like Slater Gator has been crushed almost every time they go out there and would have almost no chance in a title match. Even if they won, it wouldn't be accepted. On the other hand, this was

fine and made sense, as well as giving us a fresh set of matches for the division.

We recap Bayley suplexing Charlotte last week and Regal making the fourway title match.

Charlotte yells at Bayley but Bayley says maybe she's been too nice. She saw what Sami Zayn did when he got more serious and now it's time for her to do it. Charlotte says if Bayley tries that again, she won't make it to Takeover.

Tyler Breeze is going to be watching the rest of the tournament very closely.

#### #1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Adrian Neville vs. Tyson Kidd

The fans are split on who they like best. They hit the mat to start for a nice counter sequence leading to a standoff. Adrian starts cranking on the arm before he takes Tyson down with a hurricanrana, sending Kidd scrambling to the floor. Neville even teases him with a dive but pulls back with a Tajiri handspring flip. Kidd keeps sliding under the corner and out the other side of the ring to break the count, eventually drawing Adrian outside where he gets sent into the floor.

We take a break and come back with Kidd hitting a hard dropkick to the face and rubbing the same face into the mat. Neville sends him right back outside with a clothesline and hits a big old flip dive to take him down. A standing moonsault gets two for Neville as the referee is drenched in sweat.

The spinning fisherman's neckbreaker snaps Adrian's neck for two but he flips out of a release German suplex and grabs a Batista Bomb (crowd: "Better than Batista!") for two. Neville heads outside but a hard dropkick sends him to the floor. Back in and Kidd can't hook the Sharpshooter, allowing Neville to hit a running kick in the head (similar to the Helluva Kick), setting up the Red Arrow for the pin at 16:25.

**Rating:** B+. These guys beat the heck out of each other and it got better and better throughout the match. This is the basic idea of hitting each

other really, really hard over and over again until one of them can't get up and that's a great way to enjoy a match. Really fun stuff here and worth checking out.

Neville says he's ready to face either Corbin or Dempsey. The fans seem very interested in Neville vs. Corbin. I can't say I disagree.

Becky Lynch implies she'd turn on Banks to win the title. Good, as I like her better than Sasha.

Murphy and Blake are thrilled to win the belts and would give the Lucha Dragons a rematch anytime anywhere. They're still getting the hang of this talking thing.

### Becky Lynch/Sasha Banks vs. Bayley/Charlotte

The fans aren't as into Bayley as they used to be. Bayley and Banks get things going with Bayley hitting a springboard armdrag but botching a second attempt, allowing Banks to take over. Off to Lynch for a forearm to the back before it's already back to Sasha. Charlotte comes in and snapmares Becky down before tagging Bayley right back in. In a smart move, Bayley thinks about going to the ropes but realizes <http://onhealthy.net/product-category/stop-smoking/> Banks would nail her in the back and opts for a jumping clothesline to a seated Lynch instead.

The villains use some cheating to take over and Sasha gyrates a bit, drawing a Sasha's ratchet/no she's not dueling chant. Becky comes back in and goes for the knee, only to get suplexed down, allowing the hot tag to Charlotte. She quickly gets Banks in the bridging Figure Four but Becky breaks it up as everything breaks down. Sasha Bankrupts Charlotte and Bayley makes a save but hits her partner in the process. Charlotte and Bayley start fighting each other and the opponents come in, drawing a double DQ at 5:50.

**Rating:** C. The match wasn't great but it was exactly the right booking. There was no need to have anyone get a pin here and it let Bayley show a lot more aggression. I'm still really high on Becky but she needs to show that she can do something in the ring as she's barely had any ring time so far. The fourway could be awesome if they let these four go nuts.

Hideo Itami comes up to Finn Balor in the back and says he brought Finn into the company and will take him out if he has to in order to advance in the tournament.

The returning Emma says things haven't gone as she planned since she left NXT so next week she's coming back to face Carmella.

#### #1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Bull Dempsey vs. Baron Corbin

Baron sends him into the corner to start and runs him over with a shoulder. Dempsey bails to the floor but Baron is right back on top of him to send him back inside. Back in and a corner splash has Bull in trouble and the End of Days is good for the pin at 1:31. Total squash here with Dempsey getting nothing. That almost has to end the feud.

Baron Corbin says he just took a step closer to becoming NXT Champion and next week Adrian Neville takes a step closer to being erased. Dempsey comes up and says he'll knock Corbin's teeth out. Baron just walks away. That would seem to be the way out of Baron losing clean next week.

It's time for the contract signing. The champ comes out first but Regal is hesitant to bring out Owens. Kevin comes out and Sami looks sad as much as mad. Regal isn't going to let this turn into every other contract signing in WWE because he'll cancel the match if they make any contact. The fans chant OLE and Sami signs without saying anything. Owens looks at Sami instead of the contract. Sami asks if he's just going to look at him or if Owens is going to explain why. Owens doesn't move so Sami says he'll talk about the last 12 years.

They fought with and against each other so maybe he should have seen this coming. The truth is he didn't see it coming though and he never thought it would happen on a night like R-Evolution when both of them arrived. It doesn't matter though because Sami is going to beat the heck out of him at Takeover. Owens still won't sign because he doesn't like it being a non-title match.

What Owens did at R-Evolution was business because he'll fight anyone for the right prize. That title means more money and a better life for his family, so Owens isn't doing this unless it's a title match. Regal

doesn't like Owens' last minute demands but Sami says wait a minute. Make it a title match because Owens really won't do it if he doesn't get what he wants. Regal writes something on the contract and Sami signs again. Owens eventually signs and throws the pen at Sami before leaving to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. This show was about moving things forward for Takeover and they've done a great job. The title change was a nice surprise as it was something you almost never get on TV but it made sense. That's the tagline I would use for almost everything on this show: it made sense. It's clear that someone is paying really close attention to these stories and has planned them out step by step. That's such an important thing to do and the matches are almost always worth the payoff. Good show here and they're doing a very good job of a short build to the next Takeover.

### Results

Buddy Murphy/Wesley Blake b. Lucha Dragons – Rollup to Kalisto

Adrian Neville b. Tyson Kidd – Red Arrow

Bayley/Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks/Becky Lynch went to a double DQ

Baron Corbin b. Bull Dempsey – End of Days

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# NXT – January 14, 2015: The Best Hour Of Wrestling I Have Ever Seen

## NXT

Date: January 14, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Renee Young, Rich Brennan, Alex Riley

It's the first show on Wednesday nights and we're starting with a bang as Sami Zayn is giving Adrian Neville his rematch for the NXT Title. Kevin Owens is still lurking around and there's always a chance he could get involved. We also have the continuing story of crazy Marcus Louis stalking Tyler Breeze. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Tyson Kidd vs. Finn Balor

Balor has the full entrance minus the face paint, which is still awesome. On another note, does Charles Robinson age? He looks identical to how he looked back in 1999. Balor starts with a running dropkick at the bell but misses a top rope stomp. That's fine with Finn as he takes Tyson into the corner for a running basement dropkick, sending Kidd out to the floor. The Irishman follows but gets speared into the barricade for a loud crash. The fans seemed to like that one and I can't say I disagree.

Kidd has dedicated this match Charlotte. His cat, not the wrestler. Back in and Kidd shouts at Finn to kill him before we take a break. We come back with Kidd catapulting him face first into the bottom buckle for two before we hit a chinlock. A dropkick in the Tree of Woe gets two for Kidd but Balor nails a Pele Kick to get a breather. I'm glad someone in WWE finally started using that move. A running sleeper drop puts Kidd down so he bails to the floor, only to have Balor nail a great flip dive.

Kidd pops back up with a running chest kick from the apron and the

springboard elbow drop for two. They're just beating the heck out of each other here. The Sharpshooter goes on but Finn finally crawls over to the ropes. A slingshot Fameasser misses Balor so he grabs a reverse Impaler, followed by the top rope double stomp to end Kidd 11:55.

**Rating:** B+. These guys were beating the tar out of each other and it was awesome. Balor has such a presence to him and is more than ready to be on the main roster. Based on that, I'd be surprised if he makes it there in the next year because WWE won't bring people up to the main show for reasons I don't understand. Granted the longer he's here and doesn't have to get "fixed" by the writers, the better he's going to be.

Package on Zayn winning the title at R-Evolution minus the post match beatdown. This is all about Neville vs. Zayn.

Bull Dempsey says he's just as undefeated as Baron Corbin and tonight will be Corbin's End of Days. The last thing he's going to hear is BULL BULL BULL.

#### Baron Corbin vs. Bull Dempsey

The fans start the counting as they hammer away on each other with Bull going down first. Thankfully the fans give up after about twenty seconds and the fight heads outside. Back in and Bull slams him down but misses his flying headbutt. End of Days is good for the pin at 1:36. This was exactly what it needed to be and Baron looked like a monster.

#### Sasha Banks/Becky Lynch vs. Natalya/Charlotte

Banks' theme song is rapidly growing on me. Natalya headlocks Becky to the mat to start before getting two off a rollup. Renee tells us about Natalya and Lynch tagging in Japan about nine years ago as the villains are sent to the floor, setting up stereo baseball slides from Natalya and Charlotte. A double delayed suplex gets two on Becky before Charlotte wheelbarrow slams Natalya on top of her for two.

Banks comes in and gets snapmared down, allowing Natalya to step on the back of her head to drive Sasha's face into the mat, immediately followed by a low dropkick. Sasha pops back up with two knees to the ribs as

things FINALLY slow down a bit. The men on the main show can't keep up a pace like that most of the time. Off to Charlotte for a neckbreaker for two as everything breaks down. Banks hits a neckbreaker of her own on Charlotte and grabs the tights for the pin at 4:20. Banks: "I WON!!!"

**Rating:** B-. I really wanted more of this as Charlotte and Natalya were looking like a polished team out there while Lynch and Banks have more than enough attitude to carry themselves. I still want to see more from Lynch as she has a great look and persona, but Banks is getting almost all of the spotlight, which she certainly deserves.

NXT Title: Sami Zayn vs. Adrian Neville

Sami is defending. They shake hands to start and Sami scores first with an armdrag. The champ hooks a headlock but charges into an armdrag, sending him out to the floor for a second. Back in and Neville sends him into the corner but gets caught in his third headlock in three minutes. Sami leapfrogs over Adrian and avoids a dropkick, sending Neville into his first frustration of the match.

Adrian slaps him in the face and Neville says he's sorry. Sami says sorry and forearm him in the face, starting the slugout with Neville getting the better of it and sending the champ to the floor. A big dive puts Sami down again as we take a break. Back with Neville hitting a running uppercut in the corner for two and hooking a hurricanrana for an even closer near fall.

Sami grabs the leg to block the Red Arrow but Neville won't let him hit the Blue Thunder Bomb. The power of OLE lets Sami force him up on the second try but Neville kicks out again. Zayn rolls some Germans but Neville flips out of a chicken wing/half nelson suplex. Neville cartwheels onto Sami's shoulders and snaps off one of the hardest hurricanranas you'll ever see for two. The referee has to check if Sami can continue but he shakes his head yes.

Zayn half pops up into a Koji Clutch attempt but Neville rolls away, only to have to bail outside to avoid the Helluva Kick. Sami loads up the diving DDT through the ropes but Neville superkicks him into a state of shock. Back in and Adrian has to bail out of the Red Arrow but avoids



another Helluva Kick into a sweet bridging rollup for two. Sami goes into Beast Mode and grabs the exploder suplex followed by the Helluva Kick for the pin at 13:56.

**Rating:** A. This was a completely different kind of match than the title change. While that one was about the drama and storytelling, this was about two guys beating the living tar out of each other and actually making me believe the title was in jeopardy. Outstanding match here and both guys come out looking awesome.

Sami celebrates but Owens comes in with a pop up powerbomb and puts his boot on Sami's face. Owens kicks the title over to Zayns' head to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** A+. This was as good of an hour of wrestling television as I've ever seen. Ignoring a 96 second power brawl (which was entertaining as well), the worst match would have been the best Divas match on the main roster in probably six months. Between Balor and Kidd just beating the heck out of each other and Neville and Zayn beating the heck out of each other even harder, I haven't had this good of a time watching a show since....oh I'd say the last big NXT show. Go out of your way to see this episode as they debuted on Wednesday with a major bang.

### Results

Finn Balor b. Tyson Kidd – Top rope double stomp

Baron Corbin b. Bull Dempsey – End of Days

Sasha Banks/Becky Lynch b. Natalya/Charlotte – Neckbreaker to Charlotte

Sami Zayn b. Adrian Neville – Helluva Kick

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# NXT – January 1, 2015: The Anti-Raw

## NXT

Date: January 1, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Renee Young, Corey Graves

We're starting a new year here and Sami Zayn is still on the shelf due to his attack at the hands of Kevin Owens. Last week was the Best of 2014 special with the only plot advancement being Charlotte defeating Sasha Banks in an R-Evolution rematch. I'm sure there will be other rematches in the future so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Lucha Dragons vs. Jason Jordan/Tye Dillinger

Non-title. Dillinger chops Kalisto up against the ropes to start so Kalisto comes back with a three bounce springboard armdrag. Off to Jordan who tries the different approach of a release fall away slam to put the champions in early trouble. Jordan mockingly bows to Cara on the apron to allow some cheating. Renee keeps talking about how pretty the villains are but still manages to be adorable. That takes talent.

Dillinger slams Kalisto down again and draws a nice Tye chant. Back up and Kalisto flips forward to escape a backdrop and the hot tag brings in Cara. Everything breaks down and Kalisto takes Jordan out with a corkscrew dive, allowing Cara to hit a super victory roll for the pin on Dillinger at 3:07.

**Rating:** C. Standard pairing here but the match worked well enough. Dillinger and Jordan are fine for a pretty boy team with some nice technical skills. If nothing else they're much better in this role than as the second (and more talented) version of the American Males. The Dragons need some better competition though as this is getting a little repetitive.

The Vaudevillains come out and jump the champions post match.

CJ Parker is worried about facing Baron Corbin but Bull Dempsey comes in and tells him that taking down Corbin is for the better good. This sounded a bit like a bounty.

NXT moves back to Wednesdays in two weeks.

Enzo and Cass are here to introduce Carmella's opponent and the BLUE PANTS chant is just ridiculous. The guys give her an over the top entrance, complete with superlatives and a hummed theme song. Cass: "Inspired by Sami Zayn and straight from the discount rack!" Enzo: "Since we have last seen Blue Pants, she has met up with Steve and gotten a Blue's Clue."

#### Carmella vs. Blue Pants

Carmella runs her over and steps on Blue Pants's hair, thus freaking Renee out again. Enzo gets on the apron and....dances I think? The distraction lets Blue Pants grab a small package and BLUE PANTS WINS!!! Cass: "DUH-DUH-DA-DA!" Match ran 1:13.

This is another reason I love NXT: if this sort of reaction took place on Raw, WWE would make sure to either destroy Blue Pants and have people make stupid jokes about her or never bring her back in the first place. Here they give her a win to advance a story. The audience is happy, Blue Pants doesn't have to go anywhere else (though she could) and Carmella's story is advanced. What more can you ask for?

Carmella is mad at Enzo post match but Cass breaks it up.

#### Baron Corbin vs. CJ Parker

Parker's sign: "You can break my sign but you'll never break my spirit." Fans: "BREAK HIS SPIRIT!" Bull Dempsey is at ringside and watches snake eyes and a big boot set up End of Days for the pin at 0:29.

Post match Corbin asks if Dempsey is going to stand there or if they're going to do this. Dempsey goes after him but referees quickly break it up.

Regal announces that Sami Zayn will be back next week. Curtis Axel comes in and says he's barging in on Regal's interview. The boss never got back to him, even though Axel is a former Intercontinental Champion who has beaten HHH and John Cena. That sounds good to Regal and he makes Axel vs. Itami next week. Regal just made an announcement and a match for next week. His total time on screen: 74 seconds.

Here's Charlotte for a chat. She's asked what her new challenge will be and the Blue Pants chant starts up. Charlotte tells the crowd to not chant while she's talking, even though she wasn't saying anything yet. NXT is revolutionizing women's wrestling but she's beaten Sasha Banks twice now. Cue Banks and Lynch to surround her but Natalya comes out for the save before anything happens. That was a very odd response to the fans from Charlotte when she's clearly been a face for at least a month now.

The Vaudevillains get their title rematch next week.

We get a video from Sami, who is home for the holidays but doesn't know what to say about what's happened to him. He worked so hard to win the NXT Title but he can only think about Kevin Owens. When he comes back he'll say everything to the fans and to Owens himself. This was shot with a handheld camera instead of a professional camera and it gave the video a much more realistic and gritty feel.

Kevin Owens sits down with Renee Young. He didn't steal anyone's moment because Sami got his big celebration. That's enough of the interview for him though because he doesn't like being accused of things.

#### Hideo Itami/Finn Balor vs. Ascension

I know Balor's face paint (not here this time) got all the attention but I really like Hideo's gi inspired attire. They go at it immediately with the dream team taking over. Ascension bails before the seated corner dropkicks can connect until it settles down to Viktor vs. Balor. Finn charges into the corner with a running chop before it's off to Itami, who the fans are really excited to see.

Back to Finn for more forearms and chops before Itami drops a knee for

two. We hit the chinlock on Viktor as a Hideo chant starts up. Finn does a nice jump over the ropes to avoid a charging Viktor before kicking Konnor off the apron. The distraction lets Viktor get in a big uppercut to knock Balor outside though as we take a break.

Balor fights out of a chinlock from Konnor but the Ascension uses their old school double team beatdown to keep him in trouble. It worked for the LOD and Demolition so why not here? Off to a reverse chinlock from Konnor for a bit before a big uppercut gets two. Finn gets spiked like a football to break up a hot tag attempt as the beating continues. Slugging it out with Viktor goes as well as you would expect it to go so it's back to Konnor to just hammer Balor in the head.

The Pele Kick finally gives Finn an opening and the double tag brings in Itami and Viktor as things speed up. Hideo snaps Viktor's neck across the top rope and scores with a top rope clothesline, only to walk into an STO for two. Itami teases the GTS again to another big reaction (and a GTS chant) but Konnor makes the save. Finn takes Konnor to the floor, leaving Itami to kick Viktor in the head for the pin at 16:15.

**Rating:** B-. I liked this one a bit more than the first match, even though I'm not sure why this match needed to exist. It's basically the same thing they did in the first match but with less hype. I still liked it a good deal though and it was more than enough for a TV main event. The reaction to Itami is a very good sign though as I don't remember people being into him like that since his debut. Also he was showing a more varied offense here and not just kicking all the time so he's growing in the ring. Good signs all around.

**Overall Rating:** B. Story advancement, matches made for next week, everything moving. This show is the anti-Raw and it still gets more done in an hour than Raw can get done in three. Sami coming back to face Owens is going to be great and you can imagine how awesome their promos are going to be before setting up the big showdown. Really good and fun show this week that got a lot done in a little time.

### Results

Lucha Dragons b. Tye Dillinger/Jason Jordan – Super victory roll to

Dillinger

Blue Pants b. Carmella – Small package

Baron Corbin b. CJ Parker – End of Days

Hideo Itami/Finn Balor b. Ascension – Kick to Viktor's head

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# **NXT – December 4, 2014: Inzayn Intensity**

## **NXT**

Date: December 4, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jason Albert, Alex Riley, Rich Brennan

It's the last show before R-Evolution and I'd assume tonight is just going to be about firming up matches for next week. I'm really hoping we don't get a rushed heel turn from Neville as the match would be far more entertaining with both guys staying on the paths that got them here. Other than that we might have some fallout from Bayley calling out Lynch and Banks last week. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Charlotte vs. Mia Yim

Non-title. Charlotte starts with a WOO before sending Mia into the corner for a slap to the back. Natural Selection is good for the pin at 51 seconds.

Post match Sasha Banks, in a Charlotte shirt, comes out and says just give her the title now. Charlotte tells her to bring it and starts a ratchet chant. Sasha says she has more flair than Charlotte and her daddy. She's going to beat Charlotte so badly that she'll be a bigger loser than her old man. This brings out Bayley in a big leg brace and on crutches to tell Sasha to shut her ratchet face. Banks kicks her in the knee and runs off when Charlotte comes up the ramp. Sasha tries to get a cheap shot but Charlotte drags her to the ring and says get a ref out here. Becky Lynch sneaks in from behind though and Banks lays out the champ.

Time for another silent movie from the Vaudevillains! This time the police commissioner calls them to say the Lucha Dragons are dropping water balloons off the roof of city hall. After a training montage (complete with Gotch fighting a video of a tiger), the Vaudevillains attach an anvil to the Dragons, sending them down....into a mushroom cloud? Gotch is glad that they took the belts away because they would have just weighed the Dragons down even more. Keep in mind though that no Lucha Dragons were harmed in the filming of this motion picture, but that won't be the case next week. These things are brilliant.

## Vaudevillians vs. Buddy Murphy/Wesley Blake

English jumps over Blake to start but dives into a powerslam for two. A snapmare sends Wesley into the ropes though in a nice idea. It's off to Murphy as the fans sound like they're sighing for some reason. Off to Gotch for some Hindu Squats while holding Buddy in an Indian Deathlock. English comes back in for some elbows to the leg before it's back to Gotch to stay on the leg. Murphy finally rolls away and makes the tag as everything breaks down. Blake is sent to the floor for a big crash and the Whirling Dervish ends Murphy at 4:15.

**Rating:** D+. Not much to see here but the Vaudevillains are getting better

in the ring. Those vignettes are as good as anything I've seen in a long time. Murphy and Blake are decent in the ring but they really need to stop losing every time if they're supposed to have a future.

Regal is in the back with Tyler Breeze, who hasn't seen Marcus Louis since he wandered off last week. Tyson Kidd comes in and says he wants a rematch with Balor, but Regal makes it a tag with Itami/Balor vs. Kidd/Breeze. This took less than a minute and covered two stories. Why does it take Raw twenty minutes to cover one?

#### Bull Dempsey vs. Elias Samson

The fans count until the flying headbutt ends Samson at 22 seconds.

#### Baron Corbin vs. ???

End of Days, 11 seconds. Of course Bull was watching from the stage.

Kevin Owens video, talking about how he's fought and teamed with Seth Rollins, Daniel Bryan, Adrian Neville, and Sami Zayn (called Owens' best friend), but WWE called all of them first. Now it's his turn.

#### Tyler Breeze/Tyson Kidd vs. Hideo Itami/Finn Balor

Kidd holds the ropes open for Natalya and offers to do the same for Breeze in a funny bit. Itami and Kidd get things going but it's quickly off to Breeze, whose arm is quickly yanked. Balor comes in with a slingshot stomp for no count but Kidd makes a blind tag and decks Finn to take over as we go to a break. Back with Breeze coming in to stomp Finn in the corner before it's quickly back to Kidd for even faster stomping.

A neckbreaker gets two for Tyson and we hit a bow and arrow. Balor fights up but misses a dropkick to put him right back down. Breeze grabs a neckbreaker of his own for two before Kidd comes back in for a hard kick to the leg. A slingshot legdrop to the back of the head gets two for Kidd but he eats a Pele (now called a soccer kick), allowing Finn to tag Hideo. Itami fires off a series of kicks to destroy Breeze before hitting a delayed running dropkick in the corner to a sitting Tyler. Everything breaks down and Balor hits Shadows Over Hell, setting up Itami's kick to the back of the head for the pin at 11:30.



**Rating:** C. Pretty standard tag match here but Itami continues to look totally one dimensional. I know he isn't the biggest guy in the world but he needs to do something more than just kick a lot. Daniel Bryan has proven that a smaller guy can do more than just strike while still having it be a major part of his offense so it certainly can be done.

Post match Finn tells Ascension to bring everything they have because he's going to show them something they've never seen before.

Here's Adrian Neville for the final speech before the title match. A lot of people have said he should be conflicted by this match, but his goal is the same as always: to win at all cost. Some people say that he should be ashamed of what he did to retain the title at Fatal Four Way and every other title match. If he had it his way, it would have gone completely differently, but that's the fundamental difference between himself and Sami: Zayn doesn't have the killer instinct and that's why he'll never be NXT Champion.

This brings out Sami who says he's been listening to everything Neville has been saying and it's ticking him off. Who is Neville to act like Sami's babysitter and tell him how he should live? Whatever Sami decides to do after the match is up to him and his actions, not Neville's. Adrian backs off a bit and says he respects Sami more than anyone else and next week it's going to be an honor to face Sami in the match of their careers.

Adrian offers a handshake but Sami says no. This is where he goes wrong every single time but he won't do it here. This isn't about respect and he slaps Adrian in the face. Neville doesn't get to end him because it's going to be Sami ending Adrian's story and taking that title. This wasn't a heel turn for either guy but rather Sami just being more intense this time around.

**Overall Rating:** B-. The wrestling wasn't great here but I'm wanting to see Takeover a lot more than I did coming in. That main event has me drooling because you know those two are going to tear the house down with the near falls. The only match that doesn't do much for me is Ascension vs. Itami/Balor as there doesn't seem to be a ton of drama there, but

whatever gets Ascension onto the main roster is a good thing at this point. This show did exactly what it was supposed to do and sets up a good looking card for next week.

### Results

Charlotte b. Mia Yim – Natural Selection

Vaudevillians b. Wesley Blake/Buddy Murphy – Whirling Dervish to Murphy

Bull Dempsey b. Elias Samson – Flying headbutt

Baron Corbin b. ??? – End of Days

Finn Balor/Hideo Itami b. Tyler Breeze/Tyson Kidd – Kick to Breeze's head

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# **NXT – November 20, 2014: The Fastest Show In Wrestling**

## **NXT**

Date: November 20, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Renee Young, Alex Riley, Rich Brennan

We're getting close to the end of the year and ultimately the next Takeover special, but now the main event isn't as clear. Last week Sami Zayn was tricked into losing his NXT Title shot against Adrian Neville, leaving his future up in the air. Other than that we have Itami/Balor getting ready for their showdown against the Ascension which will be the newcomers' official welcome to the company. Let's get to it.

We recap Sami's loss last week.

Opening sequence.

### Bayley vs. Becky Lynch

Bayley is sent out to the apron to start and gets dragged right back in. A release northern lights suplex and legdrop give Becky two and we're already in a chinlock. They get right back up with Bayley hitting some quick ax handles to the chest for two. Sasha offers a distraction from the floor though, allowing Lynch to pull the hair and grab a rollup and tights for the pin at 2:14.

Charlotte comes out to save Bayley from a post match beatdown.

Bayley thanks Charlotte for the help but warns her to stay away from Sasha. They hug and everything seems ok.

Here are the Vaudevillains with something to say. They're patient gentlemen, but they deserve the title shot that they've earned. Cue two mini wrestlers dressed like the Lucha Dragons (Renee: "Kind of like Lucha-Loompas!") and we're actually having a match.

### Mini Lucha Dragons vs. Vaudevillains

The full sized guys takes turns with airplane spins on #1, even handing him off between each other instead of dropping him. #2 gets tagged and doesn't want to come in. A quick neckbreaker from English gets the pin at 1:29.

Kevin Owens (Steen) is coming on December 11, 2014.

### Baron Corbin vs. Elias Sampson

End of Days, 22 seconds. The fans were counting again.

Bull Dempsey comes out for his match and stares Corbin down on the way.

### Bull Dempsey vs. Steve Cutler

The fans start counting again. Fans: "21! 22! 23! BARON'S BETTER! BARON'S BETTER!" Bull destroys Cutler and no sells some right hands before the top rope headbutt ends this at 54 seconds.

### Tyson Kidd vs. CJ Parker

It's the rare heel vs. heel match here. Kidd grabs a hammerlock around the ropes as the fans chant TOTAL DIVAS. Parker nails a quick kick to the face for two but Kidd knocks him out to the floor. A dragon screw leg whip onto the ropes has Parker in even more trouble and the Sharpshooter ends him at 2:59.

Kidd offers to excellently execute Finn Balor next week.

Enzo takes credit for Carmella's success but nothing comes of it.

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

Enzo and Cass aren't the Parker Brothers, but they'll scrabble your headpiece, monopolize you, connect your four eyes and never feel sorry for it. Enzo grabs a headlock on Dawson to start as Renee critiques Amore's hair. Off to Cass to clean house before shouting "ENZO! I'M GONNA TAG YOU IN!" Cass kicks Dawson's head off, giving Enzo the pin at 1:38.

Ascension runs in and destroys Wilder with the Fall of Man. Fans: "SEVEN MORE TIMES!" They're going to kill Itami and Balor before they rise again.

Zayn thanks Regal for the chance to get something off his chest tonight. End of scene.

Here's a serious looking Sami Zayn to talk about last week. He's known he has what it takes to be a champion his entire life, but last week proves otherwise. We see a similar video to the opening montage of Neville pinning Sami in the title match last week. Fans: "YOU GOT ROBBED!" Sami asks Neville to come out so here's a limping champion.

Sami talks about having no business being here if he can't win the big one. Now Neville doesn't owe him anything because he gave him a title match last week, but if their friendship means anything to him, Adrian will give him one more chance at the NXT Championship. If Zayn can't win that one, then he's done. Neville says he'd give him a rematch tonight but that's not his decision.

Above all though they're friends, and Neville thinks Sami has nothing left to prove. Zayn gets mad and says the only thing he has left to prove

is on Adrian's shoulder. If he can't beat Neville for that title, then he doesn't need to be here. Sami sounds like he's on the verge of tears. Cue Regal who says Zayn is far from a failure.

Sami was part of NXT Arrival and Regal can't think of any main event better than Sami Zayn vs. Adrian Neville. That rematch will take place at NXT Takeover: Our Evolution on December 11. Neville is pleased but he doesn't want Sami's career on the line because he won't be responsible for ending Sami's dream. Zayn again says he's done if he loses and drops the mic to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This is a hard one to grade as everything went by so fast. I kind of like it that way though as the matches may have been short but they all did their jobs efficiently enough, especially when two of them were about winning as fast as they could. Sometimes you don't need to keep a match going just for the sake of keeping it going and NXT was smart enough to realize that. Sami's promo at the end was awesome but it kind of telegraphs the ending to the match. Still though, solid show tonight as NXT continues to destroy the main show in making the most out of their time.

### Results

Becky Lynch b. Bayley – Rollup with a handful of tights

Vaudevillains b. Mini Lucha Dragons – Neckbreaker to #2

Baron Corbin b. Elias Sampson – End of Days

Bull Dempsey b. Steve Cutler – Top rope headbutt

Tyson Kidd b. CJ Parker – Sharpshooter

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Dash Wilder/Scott Dawson – Big boot to Dawson

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# NXT – October 2, 2014: The Best Thing Going Today. Fact.

## NXT

Date: October 2, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Alex Riley, Jason Albert

Tonight we move one major step closer to Sami Zayn vs. Adrian Neville in the showdown for the NXT Title as Tyson Kidd has his FINAL title shot. Other than that we also have a rematch from Takeover as Bayley gets a Women's Title shot at Charlotte, who seems to have turned face after their first match. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Takeover II and last week to set up both of tonight's title matches.

Opening sequence.

### Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Bayley

Feeling out process to start with the champ shoving Bayley down, only to have Bayley come out of the corner with an armdrag to send Charlotte out to the floor. Back in and Charlotte cranks on the leg as we get a LET'S GO BAYLEY/CENA SUCKS chant. Some backslides and rollups get two for Charlotte but she fights out of another backslide attempt and goes after Bayley's ankle. The champ CRANKS on the leg and Bayley is in trouble as we go to a break.

Back with Charlotte still cranking on the leg in the corner before putting on the same leg hold. Charlotte tries to cannonball down onto the leg and gets rolled up for two. Bayley starts firing back but gets kicked in the leg to put her right back down. The leg is wrapped around the post and we hit the Figure Four with Charlotte bridging up ala Bray Wyatt's spider walk for more pressure.

Bayley turns it over but Charlotte is right next to the ropes. Back up and Charlotte misses a knee drop and a charge into the corner and a middle rope back elbow gets two. Charlotte reverses a suplex into a neckbreaker and a bad looking Natural Selection (Charlotte shoved Bayley's back to put her into the mat) retains the title at 11:38.

**Rating:** C+. I was getting into the story here of Bayley being in over her head with the wrestling skills but being able to get close by making Charlotte miss or trying a quick rollup. More importantly, the announcers SOLD THAT IDEA. They spent the entire match talking about the different styles and made me think Bayley could steal a quick win. Good stuff here.

Charlotte hugs Bayley post match.

#### Hideo Itami vs. Viktor

Ascension double teams Hideo down as the announcers mention that he has no friends in NXT. They destroy him with ease until referees come out to break it up. No match.

Earlier this week, Enzo and Big Cass trained Carmella at the Performance Center. Enzo puts her hand on his arm in a lockup. Carmella: "Sawft!" They do some basic stuff until Carmella dropkicks him out of the ring. He tells Cass not to post the video.

#### Baron Corbin vs. Troy McClain

A big elbow drops Troy, a clothesline stuns him in the corner and the End of Days gives Baron the pin at 53 seconds.

Kidd says he only needs one last chance and he'll become NXT Champion. He walks away when asked about Natalya getting him the shot.

The Legionnaires want a rematch with Enzo and Cass next week.

### Vaudevillains vs. Tye Dillinger/Jason Jordan

Aiden and Jason get things going with English being thrown into the corner. He takes a little bow but Jordan makes his chest dance in return. Off to Gotch vs. Dillinger with the pretty boys taking over in the corner. Back to English for a swinging neckbreaker for two on Jordan but Dillinger quickly comes in for some knees to the face. Fans: "YOU'RE NOT MANLY!" A rollup gets two for Aiden but the kickout sends him into the corner for a tag off to Gotch. We go old school with airplane spins to both pretty boys, setting up That's A Wrap for the pin on Dillinger at 4:10.

**Rating:** C. The fans have basically turned the Vaudevillains face with the chants and calling things manly. They're perfect challengers for Lucha Dragons and the match should go well enough. I'm surprised at how far the pretty boys have fallen as they looked like the next thing in the tag division. That's probably better for everyone involved though.

Titus O'Neil is in the front row for the main event.

Itami is getting checked in the back (and speaking pretty clear English) when Funaki comes in to say he'll have Itami's back against Ascension.

Bayley says she isn't done because there are girls that look up to her. Sasha Banks jumps her and says she'll get the next shot at Charlotte.

### NXT Title: Adrian Neville vs. Tyson Kidd

Adrian is defending and this is Kidd's last chance. The champ takes Tyson down by the arm to start and we can see the lights reflecting off Titus' head. Back up and they slug it out with Kidd ripping the skin off with a chop in the corner. Neville backdrops him to the mat and a hard kick to the back gets two. He bails out to the floor for a breather, only to get kicked in the face from the apron as we take a break.

Back with Neville cranking on an armbar but getting choked on the ropes. Off to a figure four neck lock on the champion and the fans want him to tap. Neville turns around in the hold and lifts Tyson up for a powerbomb



to escape. A series of kicks have Kidd in trouble but he nails a running big boot for two. Kidd nails another running kick before flipping Neville over with a snapmare and turning underneath him to make it a neckbreaker. Tyson goes up but gets kicked in the head, setting up a sitout powerbomb ("BETTER THAN BATISTA") for two.

Neville bails out of a Shooting Star and tries a dropkick but gets caught in the Sharpshooter. He makes a rope though and heads to the apron to kick Kidd in the head. For some reason Adrian heads outside though and Titus gets in a cheap shot. Sami Zayn runs out and kicks Titus in the head as Neville dives back in at nine. Kidd loads up a superplex but gets kicked down, setting up the Red Arrow to retain at 13:07.

**Rating:** B-. Another good match between these two and the build to Zayn vs. Neville continues. Neville is still mostly good at this point but the big heel turn is probably looming. I'm not sure where Titus is going to fit in but I don't think he's going to be much more than a short term foil for someone.

Zayn salutes Adrian and says he's coming for the title.

Kidd looks devastated and the announcer emphasizes that he's out of chances to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. This was back to the standard for NXT, meaning it's the best wrestling show on TV again. They had story development for some angles and set up stuff for the future while having some good action at the same time. As usual, NXT is as efficient of a wrestling show as you'll find and a huge improvement over the usual waste of time that Raw feels like anymore.

### Results

Charlotte b. Bayley – Natural Selection

Baron Corbin b. Troy McClain – End of Days

Vaudevillains b. Tye Dillinger/Jason Jordan – End of Days to Dillinger

Adrian Neville b. Tyson Kidd – Red Arrow

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# NXT – September 18, 2014: Ah NXT, How I've Missed You

## NXT

Date: September 18, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Renee Young, Rich Brennan, Alex Riley

We're past Takeover II now and the main story seems to have been Adrian Neville teasing a heel turn by pulling the referee out of the ring to retain his title. Other than that we saw the debut of Hideo Itami and what looks to be the start of a feud with former NXT Tag Team Champions the Ascension, who lost their belts to Sin Cara and Kalisto. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Takeover.

Opening sequence.

Here's Titus O'Neil as your WWE Superstar for this taping cycle. He tells the fans that they're lucky to be in his presence ("WE WANT DARREN!") and complains about people like Sami Zayn and Adrian Neville taking up his time on Raw last week. Now he's going to take up our time and just stay out here for awhile. Now this show will be called NXTITUS but here's Sami

Zayn to cut him off.

Sami says we need someone like Titus here who can't win a match to save his life. While Titus is getting beaten up by a bunny, NXT is stealing the show. A fight is teased but here's Adrian Neville to interrupt. The champ says he's the man that stands up for NXT, but here's Tyson Kidd with something to say.

Kidd says it's a fact that Titus and Sami are both losers but at least Adrian is a champion. Tyson praises Adrian for doing what he did last week, which Sami says he's cool with. Titus cuts them off and says he's here to make a statement, but GM William Regal comes out and makes Titus/Tyson vs. Adrian/Sami for later. NXT does NOT need these long talking segments to start the shows.

We look back at Hideo Itami debuting and taking out the Ascension.

#### Charlotte vs. Emma

Non-title and of course the fans welcome Emma back. Emma knocks the belt out of Charlotte's hand so the champ knocks her down and ties Emma up in the Figure Four headlock. She even mocks Emma's dance with the hold on. That's the kind of thing that elevates wrestlers just a step above the rest.

Emma rolls back for a cover and breaks the hold but Charlotte runs her over with a shoulder. The moonsault is broken up though and Emma grabs a rollup (after missing on the first try). A few running forearms drop Charlotte and there's the Emma Sandwich. Emma gets two off a high cross body but gets caught in a neckbreaker and Natural Selection gives Charlotte the pin at 4:10.

**Rating:** C-. This was sloppier than I was expecting but it continues to amaze me how much more polished these girls look than the regular WWE girls. They look like wrestlers who happen to be women instead of the Divas who are bad actresses who try to have a match every now and then. The fans don't seem to care about Emma anymore.

#### Justin Gabriel vs. Hideo Itami

Feeling out process to start until Hideo kicks him in the face to block a leapfrog. Gabriel bails to the floor and snaps Hideo's neck across the top rope to take over. Off to a double chickenwing but Itami fights out with strikes and even taunts Justin a bit. A running boot to the face and kick to the chest have Justin in trouble before a springboard kick to the ribs drops Gabriel. Itami mostly hits a top rope double stomp for the pin at 3:35.

**Rating:** D+. Oh I hope there's more to him than what I saw here. I know I'm going to get yelled at for this but I really do not care for wrestlers with such one dimensional offense. I don't think Hideo used anything but kicks here and that's going to get old in a hurry if it's all he's doing. That being said, this was just a three and a half minute match so it's way too early to pass judgment on him yet. I haven't seen much of his Japan work so I don't know if this is what he's like most of the time, but I really hope not.

Post match Ascension comes out and destroys Itami with the Fall of Man.

#### CJ Parker vs. Baron Corbin

Baron looks to be a biker. Parker gets shoved into the corner and is dropped by a right hand. The same snap Downward Spiral, now called End of Days, takes out Parker at 34 seconds.

We look at Marcus Louis getting his hair removed last week.

The girl (Carmella) that gave Enzo and Big Cass the hair cream comes into the gym to yell at them for getting her fired. She wants a job as a fighter and smacks Enzo down to the floor. I like these videos where they take things out of the arena. It's a nice change of scenery even if it's something as basic as a gym.

#### Tyson Kidd/Titus O'Neil vs. Sami Zayn/Adrian Neville

Kidd and Sami get things going but it's off to Neville before there's any contact. Adrian jumps over Kidd in the corner and gets one off a hiptoss. Sami tags himself back in and hits Adrian's standing moonsault (Fans: "BETTER THAN NEVILLE!") for one of his own. Adrian comes back in and does

a standing corkscrew moonsault onto Tyson's legs for two. Neville dropkicks Tyson to the floor but Sami tags himself in. The champ doesn't notice and loads up a dive but Sami hits a springboard moonsault to take Kidd out again as we take a break.

Back with Tyson driving Sami into the corner for the tag off to Titus. O'Neil hits two backbreakers in a row before just throwing Sami away. It's already back to Tyson who gets a TYSON CHICKEN chant. A chinlock slows things down a bit until Titus comes in with a huge uppercut. Off to an abdominal stretch before a hard slam drops Sami again.

A legdrop to the back of the head sends Zayn crawling for the corner where he avoids a charging Titus. The hot tag brings in Adrian to clean house with kicks and a standing moonsault for two on Tyson. Everything breaks down and O'Neil breaks up the Red Arrow by shoving Adrian onto Tyson's knees, giving Kidd the pin at 11:30.

**Rating:** C+. Basic tag match here but you can see the seeds being planted for the eventual full heel turn by Adrian and the showdown with Sami. That story could take months to set up and the blowoff match could be a classic. Good match here though it was much more about setting stuff up for the future.

Sami is annoyed but says it's ok to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. This was a very basic but still entertaining show. They're clearly setting stuff up instead of focusing on what's going on right now and that's a smart move. It gives the fans a reason to come back, but the good thing is NXT can keep things interesting on the way to the big stuff later on. Corbin could be a big deal in the future, Carmella can restock the Divas division and Itami is going to be a main event player soon enough. Couple that with the build to Neville vs. Zayn and things are looking up again for NXT.

## Results

Charlotte b. Emma – Natural Selection

Hideo Itami b. Justin Gabriel – Top rope double splash

Baron Corbin b. CJ Parker – End of Days

Tyson Kidd/Titus O'Neil b. Sami Zayn/Adrian Neville – Kidd pinned Neville after a missed Red Arrow