

NXT – August 5, 2015: This Is How We Do It

NXT

Date: August 5, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We're on the road to Brooklyn and most of the card can be seen from here. With just three shows left, it's time to add some build to a lot of the midcard matches as the main event is pretty much set. There's a good chance we'll be seeing more of Charlotte vs. Bayley tonight as Bayley is aiming for the Women's Title again. Let's get to it.

In memory of Roddy Piper.

Opening sequence.

Charlotte vs. Bayley

They're starting fast this week as the bell rings less than three minutes into the show. After a handshake, Bayley grabs a headlock and takes Charlotte over, only to have Charlotte nip up to her feet. A hammerlock and headscissors earn similar results for Bayley but Charlotte comes back with the rolling figure four headscissors to put Bayley down hard. Things get a bit more aggressive as Bayley scores with some ax handles to the chest, only to get kneed in the face for two.

Back from a break with Bayley countering the Figure Eight into a small package for two of her own, followed by the middle rope elbow to the jaw. Bayley lifts her up onto the top rope for a hurricanrana (that's a new one), dubbed awesome by the fans. They slug it out (fans: "WOMEN'S WRESTLING!") and a spear gets two for Charlotte. The young Bayley fan in the crowd freaking out on these near falls is great to see. Charlotte gets the Figure Eight but Bayley is too close to the ropes.

They fight over a backslide with Bayley climbing the ropes and flipping

over Charlotte into the Bayley to belly for.....two? That's a very rare kickout. Now a German gets two more on Charlotte so she rolls Bayley up, sending Bayley head first into the middle buckle for a cool move. Charlotte goes up but Bayley grabs a super Bayley to belly for the upset pin at 12:22. The same fan that freaked out on the kickout is shown crying.

Rating: B. This was a really fun back and forth match with both of them working hard to one up the other. The big spot to end the match makes more sense as Bayley had to bust out something big to finally beat Charlotte and prove she's worthy of getting a shot. Above all else though, the young girl being happy tells you all you need to know about Bayley. Wrestling has rarely had a character girls her age can look up to and Bayley is nailing the role to perfection.

Post match Bayley gives the girl her headband. That's awesome.

We get a sitdown interview with Kevin Owens, who doesn't like Michael Cole implying that his apology for jumping Finn Balor and William Regal wasn't sincere. Regal said he wanted to see Owens lose and it takes a real man to say that behind someone's back. "Or a real man's man should I say."

Owens needs the NXT Title back, not just because it's worth more money, but because it reminds him of what he did to Sami Zayn and he likes that feeling. However, he's scared of Regal screwing him like Montreal, which is where Owens is from after all. Therefore, why not make the rematch a ladder match? Cole asks if Owens can beat Balor and Kevin walks off. I like making it a ladder match as we've covered a regular match so why bother doing it again?

Bull Dempsey doesn't like the video of him trying to get in shape last week and wants to do it right. This doesn't go well either but it's to be continued.

Baron Corbin vs. Steve Cutler

I'm starting to recognize these jobbers. The jobber would be the guy losing to Corbin via End of Days at 22 seconds.

Bayley comes in to see William Regal and nervously asks him for a Women's Title match. Regal thinks she deserves one, but so does Becky Lynch. Therefore, next week it's Bayley vs. Becky for the shot at Sasha in Brooklyn. Regal throws in that Bayley is his niece's favorite wrestler. I'm getting into this story more and more every week. I want to see Bayley win the Women's Title and it's going to be an awesome moment when she finally does.

Tyler Breeze vs. Aaron Solo

We haven't see Tyler in the ring in awhile. Breeze stomps Solo down in the corner to start, then pounds him down on the mat, then hits the Beauty Shot for the pin at 52 seconds. Well that worked.

Post match here's Regal to announce Tyler's opponent: Japanese legend Jushin Thunder Liger. The fans are STUNNED and we get a Liger video, which is one of those things you never expected to see in WWE.

Uhaa Nation video, who is now known as Apollo Crews. His debut is in Brooklyn.

Finn Balor gets a sitdown interview of his own and talks about what an honor it is to be NXT Champion. He's known Kevin Owens for about a year now and after getting to know him, he really isn't surprised by what happened at the contract signing. Owens may be a man of words, but Balor is a man of actions, and Owens' actions don't back up his words. Sami Zayn has been helping Balor get ready for the title match and Finn doesn't care if it's a ladder match, a cage match or a street fight, because he's going to prove that Tokyo wasn't a fluke. When asked if the Demon will appear, Balor gives a vague "we'll see."

Dash and Dawson vs. Hype Bros

Mojo and Dawson get things going with Rawley cranking on a wristlock and bringing in Ryder for the double knees in the corner. We get a WOO WOO WOO chant to the New Day rhythm but a Dash distraction lets Dawson pull Ryder off the middle rope and take over. Ryder takes a quick double teaming before slipping over for the hot tag to Mojo. Rawley cleans house and holds up Dash for the elevated Rough Ryder and the pin at 3:33.

Rating: C. This tag division continues to have depth and I'm so glad that Ryder is getting some TV time out of the deal. I've never liked how WWE wasted him and it's nice to see him getting something other than a jobber's treatment. Mojo and Ryder compliment each other in a weird way and should be fine as a meal for some big heel team.

Dash and Dawson beat up Ryder post match and lay him out with the Shatter Machine.

The Vaudevillains are given a rematch for the NXT Tag Team Titles in Brooklyn. Regal advises them to come up with a way to counter Alexa Bliss.

Bull Dempsey has some more success with his training and seems to be making progress, even being able to turn over a big tire.

Rhyno vs. Samoa Joe

This should be a hard hitting ending to a pretty nothing feud. Joe fires off right hands to start but Rhyno rams him face first into the buckle. That's fine with Joe who sends Rhyno outside and scores with the suicide dive. Back in and the corner enziguri drops Rhyno again but he comes back with a spinebuster as we take a break.

After the commercial it's Joe coming back with an STO, earning him a TKO for two. Joe's middle rope boot to the face puts Rhyno down but he grabs a belly to belly. The Gore hits a boot so Rhyno settles for a clothesline for two instead. Rhyno makes the mistake of going to the middle rope, earning himself another enziguri and the Muscle Buster for the pin at 12:57.

Rating: C-. It's a good enough power brawl but Joe is still "Samoa Joe: that guy you've seen elsewhere". He hasn't been wasted but after a big debut, Joe has just been a midcarder doing nothing of note since. I could see him being the opponent for Corbin in Brooklyn though, followed by a run higher up on the NXT ladder.

Overall Rating: C+. As usual, NXT provides a great blueprint for how to build up a big show. They didn't have much of a midcard set for Brooklyn

but in an hour they set up a Women's Title match, a Tag Team Title match and a match with a legend, along with (for all intents and purposes) adding a stipulation for the title match. I had a good time with this show, but swapping the opener and main event would have been a good idea.

Results

Bayley b. Charlotte – Super Bayley to belly

Baron Corbin b. Steve Culter – End of Days

Tyler Breeze b. Aaron Solo – Beauty Shot

Hype Bros b. Dash and Dawson – Middle rope Rough Ryder to Dash

Samoa Joe b. Rhyno – Muscle Buster

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

NXT – July 22, 2015: Let's Get To It

NXT

Date: July 22, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton

We're officially on the way to the next Takeover in Brooklyn with an announced main event of new NXT Champion Finn Balor defending against former champion Kevin Owens. This makes for an interesting match as Owens has kind of outgrown NXT despite only being there about seven months so far. It should be interesting how they get to the show so let's get to it.

A quick opening video shows us Balor returning to Japan to win the title.

We open with the champ, holding the title in his hand instead of around his waist, which is something I've always been a fan of. After a quick YOU DESERVE IT chant, Balor talks about all the places he's wrestled and how hard of a decision it really was to come to NXT. However, the moment he was handed the NXT Title, he knew it was all worth it so he could hold this title up. As for Owens, yeah he's done a lot, but there's one thing he couldn't do: pin Finn Balor. He couldn't do it in Tokyo and he won't do it again in Brooklyn. This was a nice, to the point debut promo for the title reign and Balor looks like a star.

Eva Marie is very thankful for an opportunity tonight and is taking it so seriously. There's a misconception about her but she's ready to show what she has so open your eyes.

Eva Marie vs. Cassie

First sign of trouble: Graves tells the other commentators to pick their jaws up off the floor during Eva's entrance. The NXT girls' looks are almost never mentioned and it sets them apart from the Divas and it's the first thing mentioned about Eva. The LET'S GO EVA/EVA SUCKS chants start up almost immediately as Eva cranks on a wristlock followed by a decent suplex for two. We hit the armbar on the mat for a good while before Cassie kicks her in the face for two of her own. Eva grabs a quick Sliced Bread #2 for the pin at 3:52.

Rating: D+. Well, she didn't bomb. The problem though is that's the only standard Eva had to reach here. She didn't have to be anything great and

while she could be good in the ring one day, there's always going to be a mark on her due to how she got into WWE. This could have been far worse, but it's like watching a Tough Enough rookie having their debut: after all this time, she's only up to average. It's a step up, but she had nowhere to go but up.

Tyler Breeze is in Regal's office and wants something good for Takeover.

Baron Corbin vs. ???

I don't even have time to look up the jobber's name before End of Days wraps this up in 12 seconds. I believe it was Jesus de Leon, who has appeared on a TNA One Night Only show and some indy shows.

Samoa Joe vs. Mike Rallis

Joe has new, far more sinister music which takes out the stupid upbeat sound of his original. That's one of my favorite things in NXT: they actually fix big problems like that instead of just waiting for fans to go numb to them. Mike goes right at Joe to start and pounds away with some forearms, only to have Joe stomp him into the corner. The Rock Bottom out of the corner sets up the Muscle Buster to end Rallis at 2:05.

Emma and Dana Brooke aren't worried about Bayley.

Bayley vs. Emma

This is about revenge after Emma broke Bayley's hand about two months ago. I know it's goofy and aimed at kids, but there is something so goofily innocent about Bayley that I can't help but smile every time she does anything. I've said she's the purest face in wrestling right now and the more I see her the more right I think I am. Emma slaps her in the bad hand (still in a brace) to start and takes over for a few moments, only to have Bayley send Emma face first into the buckle a few times.

A bulldog gets two but Dana offers a distraction so Emma can post the bad hand. Emma pulls on the fingers so hard you would think she was trying to steal them (but I'm sure she meant to pay for them). She cranks on both arms for a choke but Bayley comes back with ax handles to the chest. A pull of the hair tie sets up a middle rope elbow to the jaw for two and

the fans are right back with the BAYLEY chants. Dana tries to interfere again but gets ejected, setting up the Bayley to Belly (didn't it used to be the other way around?) for the pin at 5:37.

Rating: C-. This was about revenge and Bayley did exactly what she should have done here. Now, assuming this ends Bayley vs. Emma, there's almost no reason not to send Bayley after the Women's Title. It's been a very long time coming and the fans would erupt when she finally wins it. Bayley is as close to a female Sami Zayn as you can get and the win would be a great main event for a Takeover if they want to roll the dice.

Post match Bayley says she wants the title and wants to beat the best to get there. Therefore, she wants a match with Charlotte.

We get a clip of the NXT girls making their in ring debut at Battleground.

Charlotte is thankful for the opportunity when Dana Brooke comes in. Dana is tired of everyone getting a chance because of their last name when she has never gotten a single shot. Charlotte likes the sound of that and says Bayley can wait a week.

Vaudevillains vs. Angelo Dawkins/Sawyer Fulton

Gotch and Dawkins get things going but it's quickly off to Fulton to lay a beating down on Simon. Something like a Hart Attack with a dropkick instead of a running clothesline gets two on Gotch and it's off to an abdominal stretch. Gotch picks up his own boot and kicks Angelo in the face to escape (that's just cool) and makes the tag off to English. The Whirling Dervish puts Dawkins away at 2:47.

Blake/Murphy/Alexa aren't impressed by the Vaudevillains and think Gotch and English are from the old days of 1999. The title match is next week and Bliss guarantees they retain the belts. That could open some doors for a new team at Takeover, such as some hometown boys.

It's time for Balor and Owens to sign the contract for Takeover with Regal moderating. He talks about the largest audience in NXT history but Owens comes out to cut him off. Before he can say or do anything though,

here's Finn Balor to look like a star again, offering a very nice visual compared to Owens' brawler look. Balor goes to sign but Owens asks him how it feels to be champion. How does it feel to defend the title in the biggest main event in NXT history ("which takes place in BROOKLYN!")? And how does it feel to go in as the underdog.

Balor was exactly right earlier in the night when he talked about all the things Owens did, such as beating up Rusev, sending Neville out of NXT, crippling Sami Zayn twice and beating John Cena. All that was in his first six months, so now he gets to show the fans that Japan was just a fluke. Balor can't wait to make Owens eat those words and both guys sign. There goes the table and Regal gets punched in the face. Balor forearms Owens to the floor and dropkicks him for good measure to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I had a good time with this show and I was amazed by how fast it went by. This was about setting up Takeover as they have five weeks and most of the card isn't set already. The wrestling wasn't the point here and it covered a lot of the stuff it needed to get to. They'll be fine going forward and the Brooklyn crowd is going to help the show a lot. Fun, well done show this week.

Results

Eva Marie b. Cassie – Sliced Bread #2

Baron Corbin b. Jesus de Leon – End of Days

Samoa Joe b. Mike Rallis – Muscle Buster

Bayley b. Emma – Bayley to Belly

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

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Thought of the Day: The Best Face In Wrestling Today

This was a comment but it's worth mentioning to see how crazy you people can say I am. I'm going with Bayley. I can't think of someone who is as innocent and wholesome as she is. She believes in the powers of hugs, she gives girls snap on bracelets, and the sign that she's getting serious is cinching up her headband. Bayley is everything that a face is supposed to be, including someone who loses early to make her big comeback and win later.

So This Paige vs. Bellas Storyline...

Makes me think of some more fantasy booking. And again, this isn't anything revolutionary and isn't meant to be.

So the story is that the Divas on the main roster aren't willing to help Paige out against the Bellas. Therefore, Paige is in need of someone to help her out. Maybe she goes back to her roots. Back to where she started. Back down to

NXT. Not for a fresh start or anything, but for reinforcements. Like.....Sasha Banks, Bayley, Charlotte and Becky Lynch.

I know you hear about these invasion storylines all the time, but in this case I dig the idea. Why not use this opportunity to bring some of them up and breathe some much needed life into that division? Is anyone going to miss Layla or Tamina or Eva Marie or even Natalya? Bring in some fresh blood and cut some of these girls that never do anything.

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NXT – May 27, 2015: A Bit More Stoppable

NXT

Date: May 27, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Rich Brennan

It's the week after Takeover: Unstoppable and the main story seems to be

Kevin Owens fights everyone at once. After challenging John Cena on Raw, sending Sami Zayn away to get shoulder surgery, possibly putting Hideo Itami on the shelf, attacking Commissioner William Regal and getting a new #1 contender with Samoa Joe, Owens now has to deal with the debuting Samoa Joe. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week, complete with a quick interview with Joe where he says he's coming for the title.

Opening sequence.

Sami Zayn's music opens the show but we get Kevin Owens instead. He was going to issue an NXT Title Open Challenge, but he isn't insecure enough to have to defend his title against anyone every week. The fans sing JOHN CENA SUCKS, but Owens finds it odd that they never say that about Sami Zayn and he sucks too. We won't be seeing Sami again anyway because Owens did exactly what he said he would do at Takeover. The only reason he did that was so he could keep the NXT Title and keep providing for his family, because that's what a good man does.

Another thing a good man did was to let Samoa Joe live last week. A lot of people have said that Joe is gonna kill him, but that's as ridiculous as the colors of John Cena's merchandise. If Joe ever steps in the same ring as Owens again, he'll drop Joe just like that. Speaking of dropping people, that's what he's going to do at Elimination Chamber when he shows John Cena that the champ is here.

This brings out General Manager William Regal, who says Owens is walking a thin line. Owens says Regal put his hands on Owens first, which Regal considers the only reason Owens still works here. Regal lists off all the people who have been taken out on a stretcher since Owens arrived, but Kevin denies being behind Itami's injury. Also, Sami's injuries are on Sami for asking for it and on Regal for making the match.

This brings out....Solomon Crowe? Solomon heard Owens talking about how he isn't going to fight anyone unless they earn it and that means Kevin is scared. Kevin thinks Solomon has just earned an opportunity, so Regal makes the match. That means you can add Solomon to the list of people he's sent out of here on a stretcher ("Riley, Sami, Sami, Sami, and now

him.").

Look back at Hideo's arm injury last week.

Hideo says he's had surgery and when he comes back, there will be no stopping him.

We get an interview from last week with Zack Ryder, who was interrupted by Mojo Rawley, who freaked Zack out a little bit.

Emma vs. Bayley

Emma is flanked by Dana Brooke. Bayley gets stomped down in the corner to start and Emma cranks on an armbar, only to have Bayley throw her to the mat and just pound away with right hands. A kick to the face gets two near falls for Emma as the fans are of course completely behind Bayley. Emma throws her down by the hair a few times and grabs a leg drag, followed by the Emma Lock for the clean submission at 4:13.

Rating: D+. This was a glorified squash for Emma, which isn't something you often see in this division. Emma being more aggressive is a good change of character for her, but I'm not sure where Bayley goes from here. She's so ridiculously over that it's kind of a strange choice to have her lose like this.

Charlotte comes out for the post match save but gets beaten down as well.

Recap of Baron Corbin beating Rhyno last week.

Baron was being interviewed after his win last week when Rhyno came up and said they should do it again soon.

We see Becky Lynch's career retrospective from last week with new footage of her match with Sasha last week.

Elias Samson/Mike Rallis vs. Blake/Murphy

Non-title and Alexa Bliss is with the champs. Blake and Rallis get things going with Mike taking a quick beating. It's off to Murphy for a slingshot hilo and a chinlock as the champs continue to dismantle Rallis. Mike finally rolls over for a hot tag, bringing in Elias for some

dropkicks. That lasts all of ten seconds before the running brainbuster into the frog splash is enough for the pin on Samson at 3:15.

Rating: D+. Another squash here to establish the new trio. The new look works very, very well for Bliss and she's very fitting as a woman who looks down on everyone around her. Blake and Murphy are good in these roles but I'm really not sure how far they can go after they lose the belts.

Samson takes a Sparkle Splash for some insult to injury.

Post break, Bliss says she gravitated to the team because they're all winners. Compare this to Carmella, who is famous for being from a garbage dump like Long Island. Next week, that's where Bliss is sending her.

Tye Dillinger vs. Finn Balor

Dillinger scores with a quick elbow to the face but Balor smiles at him. Some choking with a boot in the corner has some more effect on Finn and we hit the chinlock. Balor comes back with a running forearm and basement dropkick, followed by the Sling Blade. The Coup de Grace completes the squash for Finn at 2:45.

Jason Jordan says he's found the perfect partner when Chad Gable comes up, saying it has to be him. Gable lists off his qualifications but Jordan says he already has a partner. He also says the wrong name so Gable throws him a towel with his name on it.

Kevin Owens vs. Solomon Crowe

Non-title. Owens bails to the floor so Solomon goes after him, only to eat some right hands to the face. Back in and Owens throws him outside again and we take a break. We come back with Owens putting on a chinlock. That gets boring in a hurry so Owens just hammers him down and tosses Solomon back to the floor. The pop-up powerbomb finally ends Crowe at 9:24.

Rating: D+. Another dull squash but did anyone expect anything else? There was no need for this to be anything other than Owens crushing Crowe and it's not like you lose anything. Crowe is the definition of a guy who

is just there and not doing a thing despite being a fairly big signing back in the day. Nothing to see here.

Owens loads up the apron powerbomb but Samoa Joe comes out big staredown, sending Kevin running to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This just wasn't very good. It's a big fallout show from Takeover, but unfortunately that meant little more than airing clips from the show and having the winners in squash matches. It wasn't the worst because not a lot happened, but this was one of the flatter shows they've done in a long time. Things should pick up when they start the big stories again soon.

Results

Emma b. Bayley – Emma Lock

Blake/Murphy b. Elias Samson/Mike Rallis – Frog splash to Samson

Finn Balor b. Tye Dillinger – Coup de Grace

Kevin Owens b. Solomon Crowe – Pop up powerbomb

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New Column: Knock, And The Chamber Shall Be Opened

Looking at the Elimination Chamber and what it's return means, plus how it connects to NXT.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-knock-chamber-shall-opened/35591/>

Thought of the Day: So That Was....Wow They Really Did That

Time for some house show discussion. I was looking at the results from an NXT house show today. It wasn't the most in depth card in the world, but the main event was Becky Lynch vs. Sasha Banks. Let me say that again: the main event was Becky Lynch vs. Sasha Banks.

Think about this for a second: the main event of a house show was a Divas match. Yeah, that sounds like a disaster in WWE, but if you saw that as the main event of an NXT show, would you really be disappointed? The fans that I see that as the main event of a card and think "oh ok" tells you quite a bit about the way NXT runs. As I've said before: if you build them up properly, the Divas can work very well. That's not what we've gotten anytime in the last ten years or so though

and it holds them back quite a bit.

NXT – April 22, 2015: The New Plan

NXT

Date: April 22, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

We haven't heard from NXT Champion Kevin Owens in a good while so it's probably time to get him out here for more greatness. Alex Riley has called Owens out to meet him in the ring tonight because, due to quitting his commentary job, Riley has nowhere else to go but the ring. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Finn Balor vs. Tye Dillinger

Balor starts with some dropkicks as the fans want him to KILL THE JOBBER. The Pele sets up the Sling Blade and the Coup de Grace ends Dillinger at 2:28. This was an old school squashing and Balor looked great.

Tyler Breeze pops up on screen to call Finn Balor the flavor of the month. See you around Finn.

Dana Brooke says last week was the rebirth of the women's division in NXT because it was the debut of the strongest Diva ever. It's play time.

Kevin Owens is asked his thoughts on the match with Riley tonight but first, he thinks it's cold. Riley gave him a good fight a few weeks back but he's never going to be NXT Champion. After the loss tonight, he can go find a chair, table and headset to use because his future isn't in the

ring. If you'll excuse him, he'd like to go find a coat.

Charlotte vs. Bayley vs. Becky Lynch

#1 contenders match. Becky gets double teamed to start and Bayley throws her to the floor, setting up another showdown between herself and Charlotte. A chop out goes to Charlotte (of course) and we hit the figure four headlock with the flips to knock Bayley senseless. Becky sneaks back in with a nice German suplex to take Charlotte down and we take a break. Back with Becky dropping some running legs on Bayley for two.

Off to a knee hold as we get what might be the first ever crawler advertising NXT live shows. A limping Bayley fights out of the corner but charges into a knee. Becky outs on a complicated leg lock but Charlotte breaks it up with Natural Selection and no cover. The fans think that this is wrestling and better than the Divas.

Becky pulls Charlotte off the middle rope to break up a superplex attempt but Charlotte pulls her away from the corner into a powerbomb with Bayley adding a middle rope elbow to the jaw to drive Lynch down. Charlotte pulls Becky off the cover and puts her bad leg in the Figure Eight (the official name for the bridging version). Charlotte can't see though and Becky drapes her arm over Bayley for the pin at 11:32 with the hold still on.

Rating: B. The girls continue to steal the show and Becky is getting better every week. Lynch vs. Banks could be something interesting given their history and now I have a reason to believe it could be a good match. Charlotte has nothing left to do in NXT and is ready for the main roster and the destruction of her career as a result. Bayley needs to find something to do as she's been running in still adorable circles for a while now.

CJ Parker vs. Hideo Itami

Dang Parker just won't leave. Parker stalls to start as the fans want

Hideo to kick his head off. A headlock slows Itami down but he drives a knee into Parker's ribs to set up some kicks for two. CJ punches him in the corner and gets two off a suplex. Another attempt doesn't work though and it's time for the strike off. A running delayed corner dropkick sets up the Shotgun Kick to give Hideo the pin at 4:06.

Rating: D+. This has to be Parker's last match as I can't find anything else taped for him. Hideo looked better here and it seems that the GTS is going to be his super finisher when he isn't using the Shotgun Kick. This did its job of getting Hideo back on track after his big moment was treated like nothing special by Big Show at Wrestlemania.

Becky Lynch doesn't like Sasha Banks taking credit for her career.

Rhyno vs. ???

No name for the jobber. Gore ends this in 27 seconds.

Blake and Murphy sing to Carmella when Enzo and Cass come up to accuse the two Sinatras of having Halitosis. Carmella is wearing the jewelry they gave her and that's not cool either. Cass brings up getting Carmella a job.

Alex Riley vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title and no sign of the coat. Owens gets in his face in the corner but Riley shoves him into the same corner. A nice dropkick sends Owens outside and the champ needs a breather. The mind games begin as Owens won't get back inside, which eventually draws Alex outside for a whip into the barricade.

We come back from a break with Owens choking on the middle rope and not seeing Riley as much of a threat. The backsplash gets two and we hit the chinlock. Riley fights up and hits a running elbow in the corner, followed by a flipping neckbreaker. He gets crotched on top though, setting up the Cannonball and Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 8:44.

Rating: C-. I wasn't wild on this one as it was basically a less energized version of their first match. Owens is a killer and looked fine while Alex looked like he could still go in the ring, but we knew those

things after their match in Columbus. Not much to see here but Owens is always entertaining with his explosiveness.

Post match Owens loads up the apron powerbomb but Sami Zayn comes out for the big brawl. Security comes out but Sami dives on the pile to send Owens running away to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This wasn't the best show but it seems that this was a show taped out of order which took away a lot of the chemistry. Sami coming out to go after Owens was a great sign though as it's time to pick things up all over again, likely for the next upcoming Takeover. Not a great show but it set up the future and gave us a good triple threat.

Results

Finn Balor b. Tye Dillinger – Coup de Grace

Becky Lynch b. Charlotte and Bayley – Lynch pinned Bayley while Bayley was in the Figure Eight

Hideo Itami b. CJ Parker – Shotgun Kick

Rhyno b. ??? – Gore

Kevin Steen b. Alex Riley – Pop Up Powerbomb

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NXT – April 1, 2015: April Fools Ole

NXT

Date: April 1, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

Wrestlemania has come and gone, but that really doesn't mean much in NXT. Last week we saw Finn Balor come up just short in his match against Kevin Owens for the NXT Title. That means we're in need of a new #1 contender as we wait on Sami Zayn to make his return to continue the war with Owens. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's the returning Sami Zayn to open the show. He's been overseas in Abu Dhabi for a great tour but the timing was interesting as he's had a lot of things to think about. It should have been the time of his life but all he can think of is Kevin Owens. The Kevin Owens that he was in the ring with isn't the same one he's known for twelve years.

He's changed as a human being and Sami could see it when he looked into Kevin's eyes. Sami has had time to think and formulate a plan, and here it is: use his rematch to get HIS NXT Title back, but the number one thing on his list is to give Owens the beating he deserves. Once those two are in the ring together again, it's going to be gold.

Rhyno vs. ???

Rhyno throws him across the ring with a belly to belly and the Gore is good for the pin at 25 seconds.

Post match Rhyno says he's here to make a statement by winning the NXT Title. It doesn't matter if it's Sami Zayn, Finn Balor or Kevin Owens, because it all ends with a Gore. This is the perfect way to use someone like Rhyno and the fans are still into him, so what's bad in this

scenario?

Former bodybuilder Dana Brooke is here in two weeks.

Last week after the match, Kevin Owens says it only matters that he won because no one is taking his title away.

Bayley vs. Emma

This is called a Divas match. I really hope that's a one time line and not a trend. Last week Emma slapped Bayley for not turning her back on the fans. In other words, set it up one week and pay it off in the future. Emma still does all of her old shenanigans but pulls herself into the ring under the bottom instead of flipping in. She tries to clown around with Bayley before the match gets going and the first minute only sees them trade lockups.

Bayley gets annoyed with the slow pace and nails her with a running shoulder for two before walking into a clothesline. Emma still doesn't seem to want to fight that hard so Bayley sends her into the buckle a few times but gets caught in the Emma Lock. The Emma Sandwich (Graves: "The what?") gets two but Emma spends too much time posing and gets caught in a sunset flip for the pin at 4:12.

Rating: D+. The wrestling was nothing special here but it felt much more like a story being told than anything else. Emma as the jaded wrestler who has been burned by the main roster and not wanting Bayley to make the same mistakes is an interesting story but the matches need to be a bit better than this.

Emma smiles as Bayley leaves.

Becky Lynch wants to know when she gets her title shot. Could it be after you finally win a few matches? Sasha might not be bad, but she's certainly not this good. "Welcome everyone to N Becks T." I apologize for making you read a line that horrible.

Blake and Murphy vs. Lucha Dragons

Non-title. You get a rare time slip from NXT as they talk about the

Dragons being on Superstars and Main Event but obviously they can't know about the Raw appearance yet. Murphy and Kalisto get things going. Well at least I think it's Murphy as his tights say Murphy but the commentary says he's Blake. Either way both champions are sent to the floor for a big dive from Cara. Kalisto adds a huge moonsault and everyone is down for a few seconds.

Back in and Blake gets some help from his partner for two on Kalisto before we hit the chinlock. Kalisto fights up for a rollup for two but it's quickly back to Murphy (the commentary matches the tights) for another chinlock. That doesn't last long though and Kalisto finally rolls over for a tag to Cara. Everything breaks down and Cara kicks Buddy in the face, only to miss the Swanton. The referee gets distracted and Murphy gets in a cheap shot, setting up the suplex into a frog splash for the pin on Cara at 6:12.

Rating: C+. Nice basic tag match here with both teams looking fine. There's nothing left in NXT for the Dragons though and I have no issue with them going down in one of their last matches in NXT. Murphy and Blake aren't ready for the main roster yet but they're fine for around here. Nice little match.

Sami Zayn is in the back but Rhyno cuts him off. He doesn't care about Zayn's vendettas because the line for the NXT Title starts behind Rhyno.

Solomon Crowe video.

Tye Dillinger vs. Jason Jordan

Dillinger swings away to start but gets sent hard into the corner for a spear, followed by some elbows for two. We hit the chinlock early on as Jason has already taken the straps down on his singlet. Back up and Tye makes a comeback with some very basic offense but Jordan muscles him into the corner and finishes with something like a t-bone suplex at 2:58. Jordan looked better but that's not saying much.

We recap Tyler Breeze vs. Hideo Itami. They've split matches so far and tonight Hideo has been granted a 2/3 falls match. It's a cool video but Brennan calling this historic is a pretty big stretch.

Hideo Itami vs. Tyler Breeze

2/3 falls. The selfie stick gets a chant before the bell rings. The chants change to a debate over whether Breeze is gorgeous or ratchet. Breeze drives him into the corner to start for some shoulders to the ribs but Hideo comes back with a running clothesline and a kick to the chest. A running dropkick and a running boot to the face give Itami the first fall at 2:21. Well that was fast.

The second fall starts after a brief break but no commercial. Breeze sits in the corner to get a breather but it's just a ruse so the Beauty Shot can connect for the pin at 3:42 total to tie things up. We take a break (with an ad for NXT at Wrestlemania Axxess next week) and come back with the third fall in progress with Breeze stomping away in the corner. Some forearms to the head get two for Tyler and we hit the chinlock. The hold stays on for a good while until Hideo fights up and avoids a dropkick.

The top rope misses but another kick to the face gets two for Hideo. They botch a fisherman's suplex into a small package before going into a pinfall reversal sequence. After the near falls they trade kicks to the face to start and get two each with Breeze getting control. He fires off some more kicks but Hideo screams at him. A running corner dropkick misses Breeze but he can't hit the Beauty Shot. Now the running dropkick connects but Hideo tries the same running boot to the face that won him the first fall, allowing Breeze to hit another Beauty Shot for the pin at 13:24.

Rating: C. This got better near the end but it was pretty dull stuff getting to that point. I really liked the ending with a callback to the first fall, but I really didn't need to see this as a 2/3 falls match instead of just having a long regular match. It's also interesting to see Breeze get the pin here as Itami got the tournament win on the big stage. Not bad but nothing special.

Overall Rating: C. After last week's double title match show, this was pretty much a filler episode instead of anything really that important. Sami coming back is a big deal though and getting a feud with Rhyno is fine enough for a filler while Owens is recovering from knee surgery. Not

much to this show but it was hardly a disaster.

Results

Rhyno b. ??? – Gore

Bayley b. Emma – Sunset flip

Blake and Murphy b. Lucha Dragons – Frog splash to Cara

Jason Jordan b. Tye Dillinger – T-bone suplex

Tyler Breeze b. Hideo Itami – Beauty Shot

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NXT – February 25, 2015: It Had To Happen Eventually

NXT

Date: February 25, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Alex Riley, Tom Phillips

We're still living in Kevin Owens' NXT as he shows no sign of letting up soon. Last week he ran through former NXT Champion Adrian Neville, clearing more of the path to get to his showdown with Finn Balor. Other

than that, we have the potential split of Carmella from Enzo Amore and Colin Cassady, which might be well received by the NXT fans. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Hideo Itami vs. Bull Dempsey

Dempsey elbows him in the face to start and drives another into Hideo's chest. A chinlock doesn't last long as Itami fires off elbows of his own, followed by kicks to the leg. That's fine with Dempsey who hits a running Vader style splash for two to regain control. When all else fails, just have the big guy run someone over. Itami comes back with a quick series of strike and a running basement dropkick in the corner. A running kick to the face is enough to pin Dempsey at 2:50.

Tyler Breeze superkicks Itami as he leaves. He stops to take a picture though and Itami gets up to chase him away.

Video on The Brian Kendrick, who is making a return tonight like Rhyno did last week.

Lucha Dragons vs. Tye Dillinger/Jason Jordan

During Dillinger/Jordan's entrances, Solomon Crowe hacks the feed and says he'll be NXT Champion. Jordan drags Sin Cara into the corner but Kalisto is pulled in, only to get face planted for his efforts. Off to Dillinger for a mocking bow to Cara as the fans chant NO ME GUSTA ("I don't like it!") and a slam to Kalisto.

It's quickly back to Cara who quickly takes Dillinger into the Dragons' corner for a tag back to Kalisto. That's quite the fast exchange.

Dillinger and Jordan (thank goodness for those letters on the trunks. To be fair I couldn't tell the Hardy Boys apart for years either) don't seem to agree on a tag so Tye tells him to relax. Cara slips over for a tag to Kalisto as things speed way up. Jordan drops to the floor and walks out on the match, allowing the Salida Del Sol and Swanton Bomb to pin Dillinger at 3:31.

Rating: D+. This was angle advancement but I'm getting a little bored

with the Dragons. We saw them win and lose the titles and they're still basically the same team. Those belts have always been defined by heel teams so the Dragons never did much for me with the titles. Nothing much to see here, especially considering Jordan and Dillinger haven't meant anything in months.

Finn Balor is ready for Kendrick tonight and isn't looking ahead to Owens.

After a break, Dillinger demands Jordan come out here. He doesn't care whose match is next because he can whip that man too.

Baron Corbin vs. Tye Dillinger

End of Days, 17 seconds. Corbin needs to move up the ladder a bit now. Give him a feud against someone not named Dempsey.

Charlotte says the title is coming back where it belongs next week.

Breeze says Itami will soon be squashed in his trap.

Quick video on Sami Zayn in Abu Dhabi.

Bayley vs. Becky Lynch

The fans are split on who to cheer for but the Bayley fans boo at the Becky fans. Becky charges into an elbow in the corner but avoids a splash, setting up a pumphandle suplex for two on Bayley. A hair whip legdrop gets the same and we hit the chinlock. Bayley fights up and takes Becky outside for a baseball slide through the corner ala Sami's running DDT.

Back in and the aggression comes out of Bayley with some running corner elbows, complete with the tightening of the hair band (as usual, far more adorable than it should be). Bayley tweaks her arm but shoves Becky away and keeps going. A middle rope back elbow to the jaw gets two on Lynch. The Belly to Bayley is countered into a seated armbar out of nowhere and Bayley taps at 4:30.

Rating: C. As usual, this is miles ahead of the messes that the Divas

usually put on. The Divas seem impressed when they manage a suplex. This was a four and a half minute match with different stages and even some psychology with the arm. It's so much better than listening to BRIE MODE or someone putting on lip gloss. You can still be a heel without makeup if that's believable.

Rhyno is back because he loves the intensity he sees here in NXT. It reminds him of the energy he has when he Gores people in half.

Jason Jordan did what he did and will give an explanation when he wants to.

Finn Balor vs. The Brian Kendrick

Owens is on commentary and says he'd love to face Balor anytime he'd like. Kendrick grabs a headlock to start but gets thrown off and dropkicked down. Brian claims an ankle injury but goldbricks to grab a small package for two. Back to the headlock on the mat but Balor kicks him off, sending Kendrick crawling away. It's even more goldbricking though as he grabs a hammerlock. Owens doesn't like something Riley says and leaves as Kendrick grabs another headlock.

Back from a break with Balor hitting a running forearm to the jaw to put Kendrick down. Finn charges into a boot to the jaw though and eats a tornado DDT for two. A kick to the chest drops Kendrick again though and the Sling Blade does the same. The top rope double stomp is good for the pin on Kendrick at 11:32.

Rating: C-. I like seeing Balor having a bit simpler match for a change but I've never been a fan of Kendrick. He's much more interesting on the mic than in the ring but it's continuing a cool idea of having people return to the show like this. Owens vs. Balor has real potential to tear the house down though and this was more build to that.

Post match Owens comes out and stares at Balor before throwing Riley over the announcers' desk. Balor stares him down from the ring and invites Owens to come fight him. The champ walks away to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This really didn't do it for me and was one of the

weaker shows they've had in a long time. They're in a holding pattern until we get to Balor vs. Owens and then the big rematch with Owens vs. Zayn. Tonight's show felt like a filler episode but next week there's going to be a title match which NXT almost always does well. Not a bad show this week, but not one of their better episodes.

Results

Hideo Itami b. Bull Dempsey – Running boot to the face

Lucha Dragons b. Jason Jordan/Tye Dillinger – Swanton Bomb to Dillinger

Baron Corbin b. Tye Dillinger – End of Days

Becky Lynch b. Bayley – Seated armbar

Finn Balor b. The Brian Kendrick – Top rope double stomp

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