

NXT – December 2, 2015: I Believe In A Thing Called Joe

NXT

Date: December 2, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Rich Brennan

Takeover: London is in two weeks and the card is mostly set. That leaves us with two shows to firm up the build, which means we could be in for some entertaining nights leading up to the next big show. The cliffhanger from last week saw Nia Jax throw her head in to the ring for the Women's Title shot and Bayley doesn't have an opponent for London yet. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Baron Corbin vs. Tye Dillinger

Some chops earn Dillinger a throw across the ring and Corbin chokes on the mat. Corbin is in his full slow mode here and it's working as always. Dillinger comes back with a clothesline and a superkick for two, only to come off the middle rope and right into the End of Days for the pin at 2:52.

Apollo Crews is ready for Corbin at Takeover and is ready to team up with Finn Balor to face Corbin and Samoa Joe next week.

Tommaso Ciampa says Joe is dangerous, but Ciampa is even more dangerous because he has nothing to lose. When he pins Joe tonight, everything changes.

Nia Jax vs. Blue Pants

Pants has a modified version of the Price is Right theme. Jax takes her down by the arm to start and stomps on the hand. A toss by the head keeps Blue in trouble and her kicks have no effect. Some elbow drops and a Samoan drop set up the big leg to squash Pants for the pin at 2:10.

Dash and Dawson don't want to talk about Enzo and Cass because they'd rather just hurt people. If the consequences of hurting people are the Tag Team Titles, they don't have much to worry about. Last week Enzo and Cass jumped them because those two can just talk the talk instead of walking the way. Dash really doesn't get why Enzo and Cass are getting the title shot in London when they haven't beaten anyone. That's fine with them because Cass has a good leg that they haven't broken yet.

Adam Rose vs. James Storm

Rose orders his music cut off because this is serious business. Storm starts with a shoulder but Rose gets in some shots to the back to take over. A chinlock doesn't get Adam anywhere as Storm comes back with his forearms and running neckbreaker, followed by the Last Call for the quick pin at 2:38.

The Vaudevillains are disappointed that they lost last week but they're going to win here tonight. Cue Jason Jordan and Chad Gable to disagree. Really quick and to the point promos here.

Video on Sami Zayn winning the NXT Title last year at Takeover: R-Evolution.

Vaudevillains vs. Jason Jordan/Chad Gable

Gable takes Gotch to the mat to start but Simon grabs the arm, only to have Chad easily flip out. It's off to Jordan to take English to the mat with ease and Aiden's leapfrog is countered into an atomic drop. The fans say this is wrestling as English counters an Irish whip into the corner by standing on the middle rope and posing. Gable comes back in and goes after English's bad leg but gets backdropped out to the floor for a big crash. Not that it matters as Chad slides over and makes the tag off to Jason for a bunch of dropkicks. The Grand Amplitude puts Gotch away at 5:28.

Rating: C. This was just a step ahead of a squash as Gable was barely in trouble for a minute before making the comeback for the hot tag. Those two could be something special in the future as Gable is getting quicker every week. Jordan has come out of his shell by bouncing off Gable, which

has been the big trick they've needed for over a year now.

Gable and Jordan offer a handshake but the Vaudevillains walk away. Well it fits their name a lot better.

Emma and Dana Brooke are ready for Asuka in London.

We get another song from what seems to be Elias Sampson.

Liv Morgan vs. Emma

Morgan is formerly known as Marley and Gionna Daddio. Emma doesn't seem impressed and grabs the Dilemma followed by the Emma Sandwich. Morgan comes back with a quick guillotine choke and a dropkick. That's it for the jobber offense as Emma drops her again and gets the win with the Emma Lock at 3:48.

Rating: D+. Morgan has some good charisma and the fans like her but she's still in the early stages of her NXT run, meaning these losses don't mean much. This was clearly just a warmup for Emma before she gets ripped into 14 evenly divided pieces by Asuka in London. At least it wasn't a total squash.

Emma is in the ring when Asuka pops up on screen, beating the fire out of a punching bag. She'll see Emma in London.

Bayley says she's ready for all challengers, including Nia Jax. This brings up Nia, who stares at the title. Bayley says she'll accept anyone who comes at her, so Jax knocks her through a door.

Tommaso Ciampa vs. Samoa Joe

Ciampa isn't scared as Joe drives him into the corner and works on a wristlock before not selling a chop. Joe stays on the arm until Ciampa tries another chop. That just ticks Joe off so he forearm smashes Ciampa's head half off. They start slapping the taste out of each others' mouths with Joe getting the better of it until Ciampa grabs a rollup and stomps on Joe's arm.

More hard strikes stagger Joe and a guillotine choke has him in even more

trouble. Make that a Kimura but Joe drives him into the corner again for the break. The enziguri knocks Ciampa half cold and a scoop powerslam makes it even worse. Joe Facewashes him in the corner and the release Rock Bottom drops Ciampa again. The fans are behind Joe until the Muscle Buster and Koquina Clutch end Ciampa at 6:37.

Rating: B. That might be a bit high but dang these two were beating the tar out of each other. Those were some incredibly hard strikes with Joe absorbing everything Ciampa threw at him and looking like a real killer for the first time with London looming. This has me even more ready for the title match and was a really, really fun surprise. Good stuff.

Overall Rating: B+. NXT is getting in six matches an hour. Can you imagine most other wrestling shows pulling that off? This is straight out of the old school WCW shows as they're flying through squash matches to set up the big show with the showdowns you want to see. Awesome show this week and one of the best they've done in a while.

Results

Baron Corbin b. Tye Dillinger – End of Days

Nia Jax b. Blue Pants – Legdrop

James Storm b. Adam Rose – Last Call

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable b. Vaudevillains – Grand Amplitude to Gotch

Emma b. Liv Morgan – Emma Lock

Samoa Joe b. Tommaso Ciampa – Koquina Clutch

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books

at:

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

Blue Pants Done With NXT

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

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

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

NXT – April 15, 2015: Can I Marry This Show?

NXT

Date: April 15, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves

NXT is back home tonight after last week's show took us to Axxess

weekend. Things are starting to get back to normal around here and there are some interesting stories at the moment. Kevin Owens needs a new opponent for the NXT Title, Blake and Murphy are on a collision course with Enzo and Cass, Dana Brooke debuts tonight and we have Sami Zayn vs. Rhyno. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

CJ Parker vs. Solomon Crowe

I'm pretty sure this is Parker's last appearance. The fans are behind Crowe as Parker hammers on him in the corner. I love that Crowe has said he wants to be NXT Champion. Even if that's not a realistic option (at least not yet), it's what a wrestler in NXT should want to be. Crowe takes Parker down in the corner and threatens a charge, sending Parker out to the floor. He settles for a suicide dive and Parker is in pain on the ramp.

Back in and Crowe charges into a pair of boots in the corner to put him down for the first time. A backsplash gets two for CJ and we hit the chinlock, completely with a few LET'S GO CJ chants. Crowe fights up with some right hands but gets turned inside out by a clothesline. A side kick gets a near fall on Solomon but another backsplash hits feet. Crowe goes up for a splash onto the leg, setting up an old Brock Lock (bending Parker's knee around his neck) for the submission at 5:09.

Rating: C-. I'm not sold on Crowe yet but I like the idea of him using a submission instead of a pin. He's built a bit like Taz and it's kind of hard to buy him throwing punches and coming off the top as a result. This worked well enough though as he wrestled a scrappy style and found an opening to win. I'd like to see more development from him though as there's something in that hacker character. If this is Parker's last appearance, I'm going to miss him. You need jobbers like him who are over with the fans no matter how many times he loses.

Post match, Crowe says the show is just beginning.

Baron Corbin vs. Steve Cutler

I had been wondering what happened to Corbin. He was one of the hottest things on the show and then he was jobbing in a highlight package. Cutler eats an early clothesline but gets his days ended at 25 seconds.

Sami Zayn isn't surprised that he still has a target on his back. Kevin Owens used him to get to the top but Rhyno isn't going to do the same.

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Sawyer Fulton/Angelo Dawkins

Carmella is back and still loathed by the fans. Enzo says he has a spectacular vernacular and the Michael Jordan of Jargon. Cass says they are who they say they are and they aren't gonna fake it. Blake and Murphy have something they want so they're just gonna take it. Enzo grabs a headlock on Fulton to start and takes him down for a walk over his back. Fulton gets hold of Enzo's wrist though and hooks a fireman's carry takeover. That's fine with Enzo who brings in Big Cass for a beating.

It's quickly back to Enzo but Fulton crotches him on top. Cue Blake and Murphy with flowers for Carmella, who seems impressed despite the NO chants from the fans. Back inside, Fulton goes old school with an abdominal stretch to Enzo. He's too close to the ropes though and Amore escapes, followed by a Downward Spiral Stunner to get a breather. The hot tag brings in Cass to clean house with the East River Crossing, setting up a Rocket Launcher to pin Dawkins at 3:48.

Rating: C. This is one of the things that I love about NXT: they take a really basic idea for a feud like this one but execute it well enough with characters that the crowd cares about that it's easy to get into. There's nothing revolutionary here but the fans love Cass and Enzo so they're easy underdog challengers. Carmella turning heel seems to be the next step, but maybe the champs are just using her and both teams dump her?

Cass and Enzo aren't happy with Carmella taking the flowers.

Alex Riley says he isn't going away that easily. Not after all those years of fighting for every inch, because Owens has painted a bullseye on his back for the rest of his career. He has nowhere else to go, so he'll be waiting for Owens in the ring next week.

Blue Pants vs. Dana Brooke

Blue Pants has a recorded version of Cass' da-da-duh da-da entrance and is introduced from the clearance aisle. The fans still love her too and it's one of those things that can only work here in NXT. Brooke is a former bodybuilder with a decent rock song for her entrance. She shoves Blue Pants down and hammers in some slow right hands.

The fans don't seem to like Dana, but it might have something to do with her being billed as the Total Diva. Graves sounds like he has a big crush on her for a bit of flavor. Brooke sends Blue Pants into the corner and stands on her head to choke Pants with her boot. Blue Pants comes back with some jobber offense but walks into a forearm, setting up a Whiplash for the pin at 2:04. Total squash.

Charlotte vs. Becky Lynch vs. Bayley in a #1 contenders match next week.

Sami Zayn vs. Rhyno

Sami dodges a bit to start but gets caught with a right hand to the face. A headlock works a bit better for Zayn until Rhyno shoves him away and shoulders him out to the floor. The fans are split about 60/40 in Sami's favor but the Rhyno cheers are certainly there. Back in and Sami grabs a headscissors to send Rhyno outside for a second. It just seems to make Rhyno angrier though so he pounds Sami into the corner and chokes with the boot.

A stiff SHUT UP to the fans get the cheers more in Sami's favor (at least they're obedient) and Rhyno chokes on the ropes. Sami comes back with forearms and a dropkick but Rhyno takes his head off with a clothesline. Back from a break with Sami fighting out of a chinlock and bobbing and weaving to stay in a slugout. That's fine until Rhyno plants him with a spinebuster for two.

Sami can barely get to his feet as Rhyno hits him with a running shoulder in the corner. Fans: "BETTER THAN ROMAN!/NO IT'S NOT!" With the wrestling not working, Sami gets up and starts firing off right hands before the Blue Thunder Bomb gets a close two. Rhyno catches the high cross body and muscles Sami up into a TKO for a near fall of his own.

Barely on his feet, Sami slaps Rhyno in the face, earning him a bunch of right hands to the head. Rhyno goes up for some reason and gets punched in the jaw, knocking him down to the floor. There's the big flip dive from Sami but Rhyno throws him down with a belly to belly inside. The Gore misses though and the Helluva Kick gives Sami the come from behind win at 15:16.

Rating: B. They had the right idea here by having Sami get a warmup for Owens by facing someone who wrestles a very similar style and with a similar body type. Sami is back to form here and the fans are going to be ready for his rematch. That being said, hats off to Rhyno here, who hasn't been around the big leagues in a while but he put on a solid performance here. Getting veterans here who can put over people like Zayn while still looking good in the ring is invaluable for a place like NXT, or any wrestling organization actually.

Overall Rating: C+. This was back to form for NXT as they have a solid show with a good main event and story advancement coupled with some quick matches to help fill things out. The key to this show is that it doesn't do a lot of stupid things that drag the product down. They let the wrestling do the talking and the stories tell themselves naturally. In other words, they don't shove things down your throat and beat you over the head with them. Those key differences are why NXT work so well and I hope they don't change anytime soon.

Results

Solomon Crowe b. CJ Parker – Brock Lock

Baron Corbin b. Steve Cutler – End of Days

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Sawyer Fulton/Angelo Dawkins – Rocket Launcher to Dawkins

Dana Brooke b. Blue Pants – Whiplash

Sami Zayn b. Rhyno – Helluva Kick

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of

1998 Pay Per View reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00UYAMB8U>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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

NXT – February 18, 2015: They're Giving Me Chills

NXT

Date: February 18, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Jason Albert

Last week, evil won. Kevin Owens destroyed NXT Champion Sami Zayn and powerbombed him into oblivion over and over until he just couldn't get up again, leading to the referee stopping the match and awarding the title to Owens. The question now is what is he going to do with the title, because Zayn can't possibly be back that soon. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Rival, mainly focusing on the title change.

Commissioner Regal says the title can change hand by referee's decision so the title change stands. However, Owens doesn't have authority here because he's won the title. Therefore, tonight Owens will face Adrian Neville in a non-title match as Neville hasn't earned a title match. However he has earned the right to get revenge on the man that put him in the hospital. A new era begins tonight.

Opening sequence.

Here's the new champ with something to say. The fans are almost completely divided on their opinion of him. Some people may have issues with how he won the title, which draws a WIN OWENS WIN chant. Those people who are upset have no right to be angry at anything. He hasn't lied or pretended to be anything he isn't. He said he would fight anyone and everyone to make things better for his family and that's exactly what he did.

Who he beat and how he beat them is irrelevant because Sami Zayn is now the past. That means it's time to look to the future, and that is Finn Balor. Owens is well aware that Balor is the #1 contender for the NXT Title, so go to Regal and pick whatever date you want. However, what happened to Sami at Takeover is what's going to happen to Balor, because no one is taking this title from him. It takes a lot to instantly make me care about a new champion like this but I'm digging the heck out of this already. Hearing him say Balor is next gave me a big smile.

Rhyno vs. Elias Samson

Yes THAT Rhyno, who wins with the Gore in 33 seconds. The only note here is that the announcers said Rhyno invented the spear, which is completely inaccurate but his version has enough impact that it works like a charm. I can also totally get behind the idea of people like Rhyno showing up for short stories or even one night cameos like this for a surprise.

Finn Balor says he has a high opinion of himself too. Owens calls himself a prize fighter, but Balor fights for a prize too. Before he can finish what that is (the NXT Title), Rhyno comes in for a staredown. The fans REALLY like that idea.

Vaudevillains vs. Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady

Enzo and Cass get a great reaction but Carmella isn't exactly beloved by the fans. Amore now has a blond beard to go with his black handlebar mustache. Cass say they wan the titles. Gotch grabs Amore's foot to start but English gets in a cheap shot to give the Vaudevillains early control. Aiden stomps away but Enzo ducks a clothesline and dives over for the tag. The big man cleans house and throws English into the corner. Enzo is thrown onto him for good measure and Cass' big boot is good for the pin

at 2:03.

Blake and Murphy pop up on screen and say that's not enough for a title shot before hitting on Carmella.

Adrian Neville says he can be the hunter tonight and he wants revenge for Owens putting him on a stretcher.

Bayley says her night is coming.

Becky Lynch gave it her all last week but Bayley cost her the title. At least Charlotte lost.

Here's a ticked off CJ Parker to rant about not being on the show last week. He's ending this show by taking it hostage, meaning he starts tying caution tape across the ring. Cue the long awaited debut of Solomon Crowe who quickly destroys Parker and returns us to our regularly scheduled broadcast. As usual with NXT debuts, this worked.

Sasha Banks vs. Blue Pants

Non-title and Blue Pants is billed from the clearance rack. Sasha offers her the chance to leave but Blue knocks her out to the floor. A rollup gets two on the Boss but she cranks on Blue's arms to take her down. Sasha plants her down and the Bank Statement is good for the tap out at 2:30. Just a feel good moment before the squash.

Sasha says its her time.

A doctor looked at Sami and says he'll be back strong.

Kevin Owens vs. Adrian Neville

Non-title. Owens bails to the floor at the bell but Neville is right there with him to hammer away. Back in and Neville takes him down with a kick, only to walk into a gutbuster. He hammers on Adrian with big right hands as this is starting similar to last week's title match. The fans tell Owens to fight but another faction is behind Neville. We hit the chinlock for a good while before Kevin throws Neville to the floor and us to a break.

Back with Owens stepping on Neville's head (such a simple yet effective heel move) before kicking him in the back. Another chinlock has Adrian in trouble but he fights up with more kicks and hits a springboard dropkick for two. That sends Owens outside again but this time Neville dropkicks him through the ropes, followed by a 450 from the apron. Back in and Adrian rolls some Germans for a very close two.

Owens just takes his head off with a clothesline, but the Cannonball is broken up with a superkick. A reverse hurricanrana gets two and the fans are WAY into this. The Red Arrow has to be canceled in mid air, setting up the popup powerbomb to give Owens the pin at 15:34.

Rating: B. This is the kind of stuff that that NXT excels at: take two guys, give them some time and let them beat each other up. Owens looked great as always and a win over Neville still means quite a bit since no one could pin him for so long. The match with Balor could tear the house down and hopefully they get a lot of time to do so.

Overall Rating: B+. Tonight was about setting up new stuff for NXT and they did a great job of doing so. Sami being gone opens up some room at the top of the card, but his return for revenge is still going to rock. As usual, the future looks incredibly bright in WWE and it looks even brighter for the next few months down here. Really solid show this week and a good followup to last week's classic show.

Results

Rhyno b. Elias Samson – Gore

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Vaudevillains – Big boot to English

Sasha Banks b. Blue Pants – Bank Statement

Kevin Owens b. Adrian Neville – Popup powerbomb

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of Saturday Night's Main Event at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00SATPVKW>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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

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

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of the Royal Rumble at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00PZ1GR7E>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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