

Takeover: Brooklyn III: I'm Sorry For Doubting You... Bay Bay

Takeover: Brooklyn III

Date: August 19, 2017

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness

It's the biggest night of the year for NXT and they're getting to be in front of probably 15,000 people. Not bad for a show that regularly gets a few hundred no? Anyway tonight's main event is Bobby Roode defending the NXT Title against Drew McIntyre as NXT continues to do TNA better than TNA ever could. Let's get to it.

Code Orange performs one of the three theme songs live, intercut with shots of the wrestlers on the card tonight. It's not quite HHH shouting WE ARE NXT but I'll take what I can get.

Johnny Gargano vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Almas has Zelina Vega with him. The JOHNNY WRESTLING chants are out in full force tonight for what Mauro calls a quintessential crossroads confrontation. Almas takes him down into a headscissors to start and throws in some posing for good measure. Johnny is right back with a very nice series of rollups for two and we hit a front facelock. Some chops earn Gargano an elbow to the chest and he charges into a hanging armbar over the top rope.

Andrade stays on the arm for a bit until a drop toehold sends him into the buckle. There's a hard double clothesline to put both guys down and things slow down a bit. Gargano is back up first with the slingshot spear for two and a good looking kick to puts Almas on the floor. Johnny follows him out with a suicide dive and you know that means an NXT chant. A slingshot DDT gives Johnny two more but another slingshot spear is countered (never do the same spot twice) into a faceplant.

As I picture Randy Orton countering that into a DDT, Almas gets two off an inverted tornado DDT. Almas takes him up top but has to counter a sunset bomb before hiptossing a charging Gargano into the corner. Johnny is right back with a headscissors into the Gargano Escape (that shoulder lock) but Andrade spins out into a rollup, which he lifts up into a buckle bomb.

The running knees in the corner get a VERY hot two and Almas is stunned. Gargano hits a pair of superkicks (well you knew that was coming) and a launches him face first into the middle buckle. Zelina throws in a DIY shirt at Johnny though and the distraction is enough for Almas to grab the hammerlock DDT for the pin at 13:13.

Rating: B+. Oh yeah this is going to work. Gargano is going to be just fine with a performance like this as he doesn't have anything overly flashy but he does everything so well that it's hard to not like what you see. Almas winning is the right call though, especially after you give him Vega to make him more focused. He could easily get into the main event scene and I wouldn't have a single complaint.

Gargano backs away from the DIY shirt.

Kurt Angle, Daniel Bryan, Billie Kay, Peyton Royce, No Way Jose and some others are in a sky box.

We recap the Tag Team Title match. The Authors of Pain have run through everyone around but they haven't ever dealt with anything like Sanity. The rules are thrown out the window with this one and it could mess with the champs.

Corey Graves comes out to do commentary for the next match.

Tag Team Titles: Authors of Pain vs. Sanity

Sanity, represented by Alexander Wolfe and Killian Dain with Eric Young and Nikki Cross at ringside, is challenging. It's a big brawl to start with the Authors clearing the ring before the bell. Sanity is more than willing to fight on the floor as Young sets up a table against the barricade. We finally settle down (or as close as we're going to get to

doing so) with Akum hamming on Wolfe until a charge misses.

Young jumps on the apron and tells Dain to go to the floor, which seems to be legal because Dain was never legally in and you can change lineups until that takes place. The things you learn watching a Takeover. The fight heads into the crowd with Akum missing a charge and going shoulder first into the barricade. It doesn't seem to bother him though as he sends Young back inside for a Dominator.

A sideslam/middle rope stomp gets two on Eric and it's off to Razar for a chinlock. Young tries to slide between Razar's legs but gets choked down for his efforts. Razar misses a charge in the corner and there's the hot tag to Wolfe to start the house cleaning. Everything breaks down and Wolfe snaps Akum over with a German suplex. The Authors are back up and try a superbomb but Wolfe reverses into a hurricanrana.

It's back to Young for a neckbreaker but the top rope elbow is broken up. Nikki grabs Young's legs to prevent the Tower of Doom though and it's Akum powerbombing Razar by mistake. Eric's top rope elbow gets two, followed by Sanity hitting back to back suicide dives. Cross loads up one of her own but Paul Ellering of all people cuts her off. Nikki dives anyway so Akum catches her, earning himself a spear from Dain to put all three of them through the table. A belly to back/middle rope neckbreaker combo puts Razar away to give Sanity the title at 12:15.

Rating: B. I was thinking Sanity would get the call up and be revealed as the people tormenting Breezango but this works too. This was WAY better than I was expecting as they went just crazy enough to get past the monsters. I had a good time with the match and that's not something I expected out of Sanity. Good stuff here and probably the right call.

Post match here are Kyle O'Reilly and Bobby Fish (ReDRagon, former ROH Tag Team Champions) to go after all four guys, including Chasing the Dragon and a modified high/low. ReDRagon holds up the titles to make it clear before leaving through the crowd.

Neville, Shinsuke Nakamura and Kalisto are in the crowd.

Jim Ross comes out for commentary on the next match.

Hideo Itami vs. Aleister Black

Black gets played to the ring live. There's not much of a story here other than Itami saying he wanted respect and getting his head kicked off by Black. They go straight for the kicks to start (as you knew they were going to) until Black sends him outside and moonsaults into his sitting position. Black charges into a kick in the corner and gets draped over the ropes for a middle rope Fameasser.

We hit the neck crank for a bit before a knee to the ribs cuts Black off again. Black has a bloody nose as Itami grabs a chinlock. JR: "It's hard to kick someone in the head when you're laying on the mat." Eh I've seen Bryan do it. Black fights up but eats a DDT for two. Back up and Black starts hitting his kicks, followed by a sliding knee to the head.

A standing Lionsault is nearly botched as Black barely moves backwards, forcing Itami to go forward so the legs can hit him. Itami breaks up the Black Mass and gets two off a top rope clothesline. A spinning strike to the head drops Black into the corner and there's a big old spinning kick to Itami's head to knock him silly. Black goes up top for some reason but gets pulled down with a super Falcon Arrow for a very delayed two.

Itami crawls over to him but Black pops up (with JR possibly calling him Allison) for a strike off. The jumping knee to the face staggers Itami, only to have Black charge into another Falcon Arrow for two. There goes the kneepad but Black knees out of the GTS. Itami demands respect so Black Mass knocks him cold for the pin at 12:35.

Rating: B+. Aleister Black is just cool and when you add in an amazing finisher, there's only so much you can find wrong with him. There's not much of a reason to not move him up towards the top of the card very soon, though I'm not sure who you have him beat up next before he goes to the title picture. Itami got to look great out there too and that's going to keep him strong going forward. Really awesome match here.

Notice that we're three matches in and this is what we've had:

Match 1 – Wrestling clinic

Match 2 – Total chaos/power brawl

Match 3 – Strike off

Three different match types, meaning the fans have no chance to say “we’ve seen this before”. That’s a very important key that so many shows don’t get.

Bayley, Sasha Banks and Becky Lynch are here.

We recap Asuka vs. Ember Moon. Asuka has been undefeated for nearly two years and has been champion for over sixteen months. She had to cheat to beat Ember in Chicago though and that gives Ember more confidence. The key to the whole thing is the Eclipse, which is the one weapon that even Asuka can’t prepare for.

Women’s Title: Asuka vs. Ember Moon

Ember is challenging and looks almost confused during Asuka’s entrance. We get the Big Match Intros and Ember kicks her in the jaw early to start followed by a second kick to send the champ outside. Ember follows with a Cannonball to the floor but Asuka sends her hard into the steps for a breather. Moon comes up holding her bad shoulder so Asuka grabs a suplex onto the ramp.

Back in and it’s time for the kicks to the arm followed by a standing armbar. An STO sends Moon down again, with Mauro actually saying what it stands for (space tornado Ogawa) in your nightly trivia. Asuka grabs an armbar but Ember powers her up into an electric chair. Some kicks give Ember a delayed two, only to have Asuka German suplex her into the corner. The Asuka Lock is broken up and Moon grabs one of her own.

That’s reversed into the regular version with Asuka jumping onto the back. Moon falls backwards for the break and a clothesline with the good arm drops Asuka again. Asuka’s running hip attack hits the corner so Ember comes back with the middle rope suplex (ala Wade Barrett) for two more. They head back to the corner with Asuka not being able to hit a superplex. Instead Ember pulls her down for a Del Rio double stomp and two.

The Eclipse connects....for two? Huh? Like really, huh? Ember goes up

again for a high crossbody but Asuka rolls through and grabs the trunks for two with the referee catching her in the act. A superkick gives Ember a VERY close two but Asuka pulls her down into the Asuka Lock in the middle of the ring for the tap at 14:36.

Rating: B. Well I'm stunned. The ONLY thing I can guess now is that they want the winner of the Mae Young Classic to take the title from Asuka, though it's hard to imagine anyone being built up that fast to take the title from her. Ember winning might have been a stretch and Asuka winning a hard fought match is always fun, but I'm actually shocked here. That's a good thing...I think.

Ember gets the big standing ovation.

Kevin Owens and Samoa Joe are here.

We recap Bobby Roode vs. Drew McIntyre. Roode debuted last year in Brooklyn and won the NXT Title just a few months later. McIntyre returned earlier this year in Orlando and said it was time for him to reach a level he didn't reach in his first run. He said he took things for granted but nothing like that is happening this time. Of note, the package featured McIntyre's old Broken Dreams theme music.

NXT Title: Drew McIntyre vs. Bobby Roode

Drew is defending and is played to the ring by the New York Police Department Emerald Society Pipes and Drums. Roode's entrance features a digital piano on the stage with blue lights sliding down to play the notes. The stage is covered by smoke and here's Roode on his pedestal for the real entrance.

Drew shoves him away to start and we get a 3MB chant. Roode tries to chop to no avail, allowing Drew to hit his suplex slam. They fight out to the floor with Roode getting in a few shots, only to charge into a tilt-a-whirl slam onto the apron. A neck snap across the rope and a Blockbuster from the apron drop Drew though and the champ takes over. Roode gets two off a Rude Awakening and stomps away on the ropes.

There's a missile dropkick to set up the chinlock for a bit as Nigel points out a bruise on Roode's thigh. Bobby charges into a belly to belly and Drew gets in a top rope forearm to the chest. The Celtic Cross (White Noise) gives Drew another near fall. They head to the corner where Drew's superplex is broken up, only to have Drew sit up out of the Tree of Woe for a kind of choke throw off the top.

Roode is smart enough to play possum (it's a Canadian thing) and a Backstabber gets two. Future Shock gives Drew the same but his super Celtic Cross is countered into a running powerbomb for another near fall. Drew is back up with the Claymore but Roode's foot is in the ropes. Roode heads outside so Drew busts out a huge no hands flip dive to put both guys down.

Back in and another Claymore is countered into a big spinebuster. The Glorious DDT connects for a very close two and both guys are spent. There's another Glorious DDT but Roode picks him up for an attempt at a third, setting up the Claymore to give Drew the pin and the title at 22:26.

Rating: A-. I'm a big fan of Roode's matches for the simple reason of he has such a basic style but does it so well that it's hard not to get behind it. McIntyre winning for the feel good moment is a cool idea though and it's clear that he's one of the best things they have in NXT. He's going to be on the main roster sooner rather than later so putting the title on him quickly makes sense.

Post match Drew holds up the title but you can see the fans looking at something in the crowd. RedRagon shows up on the apron and here's the debuting Adam Cole (called by that name, complete with the announcers saying BAY BAY) to lay McIntyre out with a superkick. Cole holds up the title to end the show.

Overall Rating: A. Yeah these things are still awesome and I'm sorry for every doubting that they would be. The ending is a very nice touch as NXT isn't one to use stables all that often. Cole is a good talker and could be a great leader for the ROH stable, though I wouldn't be complaining about them adding a fourth name. The rest of the show was of course

outstanding with five good to very good matches, which you just don't see on almost any other show. As usual, NXT is likely to win the weekend but that goes without saying anymore. Another fantastic show.

Results

Andrade Cien Almas b. Johnny Gargano – Hammerlock DDT

Sanity b. Authors of Pain – Belly to back suplex/middle rope neckbreaker combination to Razar

Aleister Black b. Hideo Itami – Black Mass

Asuka b. Ember Moon – Asuka Lock

Drew McIntyre b. Bobby Roode – Claymore

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NXT Takeover: Brooklyn III

Preview

It's that time of year again. Summer is wrapping up and that means WWE is heading to Brooklyn New York with its little buddy NXT in tow. It's time for NXT's biggest show of the year as we're ready for "Takeover: Brooklyn III". This show really doesn't seem to have the same pop that a lot of the series' entries have had, but there's one thing I've learned watching NXT: never bet against them blowing you away.

Tag Team Titles: Authors of Pain(c) vs. Sanity

This is a match that hasn't gotten a lot of attention but the more I think about it the more interesting I think it could be. The Authors have run roughshod over the NXT tag team division since they won the titles about seven months ago, but the key is they've won them against teams who are going to come at them with a logical plan. TM61, Revival and DIY are all smart teams, but they're also teams you can plan for. How do you plan for a pair of crazy monsters? Can the Authors really hang on against these two?

Yeah I kind of think they can. The more I think about it, the more I think Sanity is better suited for the main roster (imagine them as part of a re-energized Wyatt Family or just something more like them) than the Authors. The problem is the Authors aren't exactly the most in-depth team in the world and I'm not sure what they would do on the main roster. Once they lose a match, a lot of their mystique goes away. Sanity has a lot more depth and that would suit them better on the main roster, perhaps as the people tormenting Breezango? The Authors retain, pinning Wolfe in the process.

Aleister Black vs. Hideo Itami

This is all about who can kick the hardest and while the ending may look pretty obvious, that doesn't mean the match won't be entertaining. Itami has had a much better edge in

recent months, all starting back when he lost to Bobby Roode in Chicago. Black on the other hand has turned into one of the best characters on the roster as he's just freaking cool. His entrance is awesome, his calm is sweet and that Black Mass kick looks like it could stop anyone.

In what isn't the most surprising choice in the world, I'll take Black to win after one heck of a hard hitting (or kicking in this case) match. It's pretty clear that Black is going to be one of the bigger stars going forward and I wouldn't be surprised to see him getting the title at a big show in the future. Itami's floundering continues but there's nothing wrong with being the heel gatekeeper who you beat on your way to becoming a bigger star down the line. Black wins, likely with a great looking Black Mass.

Women's Title: Asuka(c) vs. Ember Moon

If NXT timed this to coincide with the lunar eclipse on Monday, they're some of the most brilliant people I've seen in years. I don't think that's actually the case but you know Mauro Ranallo is going to mention it about a million times on Saturday. Asuka has been a dominant force for well over a year now but WWE has built up the Eclipse as the deadliest weapon in NXT. Moon isn't as great overall as Asuka, but Asuka doesn't have anything that can hang with that one big move.

I'll take Moon to become the new champion but it doesn't feel like she's ready to win the thing just yet. The problem here is Asuka has been built up as completely unstoppable and that makes it really hard to take the title off of her. Moon is going to need a lot more than just one move to make her a champion and that needs to be showcased in this match. The pinfall is going to be a big deal but if they don't earn their way there, it's risking a major failure. Asuka needs to go straight to the main roster after this as there's just no reason for her left to do in NXT.

Johnny Gargano vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Now this one actually interests me more than almost anything else all night long for one simple reason: I'm not completely sure who is going to win. There's no reason to believe that either of them should lose as Almas has grown a lot as a heel while Gargano has gotten one heck of a rub since the DIY split. You really could go with either of them winning here, which really isn't something you would expect most of the time on a Takeover.

I think I'll actually take Almas as Gargano seems like someone who can bounce back up from a single loss with a lot less effort. By putting Zelina Vega out there so recently, it would be a huge question mark to have Gargano beat Almas so quickly. Let Almas get a big win for a change and then Gargano can come right back with a win later on. Granted you could say the exact same thing with the names reversed, but I'll take Almas to win here in a pick likely to go wrong.

NXT Title: Bobby Roode(c) vs. Drew McIntyre

The more I think about it, the less I'm sure that McIntyre wins here and it's because of the Roderick Strong match coming up. There isn't much of a story to McIntyre rising up to the title but Strong is right there ready to defeat Roode and take the title. Then you can have McIntyre go down the ladder a bit and rise back up to get the title later. McIntyre keeps talking about how he took things too lightly back in the day and now he needs to be more serious. What better way to test that than by having him lose here and build himself back up?

I'll take Roode to retain the title here, likely through something other than a clean win. Have him get a pin with his feet on the ropes or something like a DQ but I wouldn't be surprised to see him retain the title. McIntyre's day will come, but I have a feeling it's not coming just yet. We'll go with Roode retaining the title, but don't be surprised if they

go with McIntyre winning for the feel good moment to end the show.

This is a show where everything is going to come down to the booking. We could have some great matches and that's all that it needs to have an awesome show, but the right choices really need to work at the same time. It doesn't feel like the biggest show of the year but that's definitely how NXT sees Saturday night. The 15,000 people in the crowd probably won't hurt either.

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