

NXT LVL Up – June 16, 2023: Just Like PN News

NXT LVL Up

Date: June 16, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

Things have started to pick up around here a little bit and that is nice to see after so many months of pretty much nothing. The star power has been better and should that continue, the show could be a lot more entertaining to watch week in and week out. Granted I've said that before and nothing has lasted so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Elektra Lopez/Lola Vice vs. Dani Palmer/Kelani Jordan

Lopez throws Jordan around to start but Jordan is fine enough to take Vice down with a drop toehold. Palmer comes in to work on a wristlock before getting taken into the wrong corner. Stereo hip attacks to the head knock Palmer silly for two and Vice kicks her into the corner. Palmer fights out of Lopez's neck crank and brings in Jordan as everything breaks down. Lopez grabs Jordan with the sitout chokebomb for the pin at 4:23.

Rating: C. I've mostly given up on Lopez becoming a breakout star but Vice and Palmer both have that charisma that can offer something going forward. There's a spark to them that makes you want to see them in the ring and I could go for seeing what NXT does for them. Jordan is another rather athletic star, but she is still brand new and it could be awhile before we see what she can really do.

Javier Bernal is ready to show a new side of himself tonight against Stacks. He talks about having a chip on his shoulder and goes over the various types of chip it might be (including tortilla size).

Boa vs. Bryson Montana

Montana grabs a cravate to start and they go to the mat rather quickly. The exchange of strikes goes to Boa, who scores with a running dropkick but can't get a sunset flip. Montana is right back with a powerslam and the chinlock goes on. Boa fights up and fires off knees to the ribs, followed by a big kick to the head for the pin at 4:08.

Rating: C. I know I say this every time, but it's still just Boa. He's a guy who paints his face and kicks a lot, which is only going to take him so far. Montana is a big power guy and looks good when he is out there, but he needs a lot more experience. For now, he's stuck with losing to Boa, who is eternally stuck going nowhere.

Javier Bernal vs. Stacks

They fight over a lockup to start until Bernal grabs a wristlock. Stacks reverses into one of his own and pulls him into a hammerlock on the mat. Back up and Stacks crotches him on top before dropping the legs between the legs. Bernal is fine enough to catch him on top and drop a running leg for two. Commentary talks about how Bernal wants to follow in the paths of Oz and PN News, as stars who had big performances at the Great American Bash. Bernal runs him over again and we hit the Liontamer of all things, but Stacks flips him away for the break. A running knee to the back of the head finishes Bernal at 6:45.

Rating: C+. This is the best thing on the show and even then it's just pretty good. Stacks is in the middle of a pretty big story and while I still believe that he's going to wind up being the one to have turned Tony D'Angelo in, he's doing well

on the way there. Bernal is such a funny goof that it's easy to have him around, even if he isn't going to get anywhere anytime soon.

Overall Rating: C. It was back to the run of the mill version of this show this week and that is rather disappointing. I guess Bernal and Stacks are the big names on the show and even they are little more than lower midcarders on NXT. I'm not sure why they changed course so fast, but hopefully they change it again and make the show the more interesting offering that it can be.

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NXT LVL Up – December 30, 2022: Egads What A Dull Show

NXT LVL Up

Date: December 30, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Byron Saxton

It's time for the final WWE show of the year and I have no idea what to expect around here. The good thing is that the show has been a little more focused in recent weeks but there is no reason to believe that it is going to continue for any length of time. Maybe they have something planned, but I'm not getting my hopes up. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Thea Hail vs. Amari Miller

The rest of Chase U is here with Hail, who gets armbarred to start. That's reversed into a headlock takeover and some armdrags have Miller in more trouble. A middle rope spinning splash misses for Hail though and we hit the chinlock. Hail fights up and hits a springboard backsplash, setting up the neckbreaker spun into a faceplant for the pin at 5:54.

Rating: C. Hail is such a ball of energy that it is almost impossible to not like her at least a bit. She is so all in on this Chase U stuff that she is going to be something if she can back it up even the slightest bit in the ring. Miller has that great personality and smile but she feels like she is in the same place she was a year ago, which is rarely a good sign.

Oro Mensah is ready to show Javier Bernal what he is all about.

Bronco Nima/Lucien Price vs. Bryson Montana/Oba Femi

Now this is interesting as you don't have any star power involved. Nima and Montana fight over a lockup to start with neither being able to get very far. Price comes in to kick Montana in the face for two, meaning it's off to Femi. A big spinebuster drops Price and we hit the chinlock. It's already back to Montana to forearm away but a charge misses in the

corner. The tag brings in Nima as everything breaks down, leaving Montana to get Codebreakered into a German suplex for the pin at 4:20.

Rating: C. This is the kind of match that this show needs to do more often, as they let one of the new teams actually win something. Nima and Price might not be the next stars called up but at least they did something different here and that is long overdue. There's something to be said about having four big guys hit each other and that's what you got here.

Oro Mensah vs. Javier Bernal

Mensah wrestles him to the mat to start as commentary compares Bernal to Conor McGregor and Zoolander. An armdrag into an armbar has Bernal in trouble but he drops Mensah ribs first onto the top rope to take over. We hit the seated abdominal stretch, followed by an over the shoulder backbreaker to stay on the ribs. With that broken up, Mensah makes the comeback and starts striking away, setting up a springboard missile dropkick. The running spinwheel kick in the corner finishes for Mensah at 6:20.

Rating: C. These are two guys who are in weird places. Mensah hasn't done anything since he came over here and has dropped rather hard since being in that #1 contenders match. Then you have Bernal, who is doing his comedy stuff well on NXT but loses to someone like Mensah. That's a strange way to go and it didn't work well here.

Overall Rating: C-. Egads this was a pretty worthless show, though I did like Nima and Price getting a win. Hail beating Miller doesn't feel like much but the energy picking up was nice. The problem here was the show feeling so boring and there isn't much that could be done to fix it this week. Maybe it was due to the holiday season but there wasn't much here in the way of effort in the matchmaking and it showed badly.

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NXT – December 6, 2022: Something About This Show

NXT

Date: December 6, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Booker T., Vic Joseph

It's the go home show for Deadline and I'm not exactly expecting much tonight as a result. The card is mostly set, though we do need to determine the final entrants in each Iron Survivor Challenge. That means a pair of triple threat matches and they at least have some stakes going in. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Iron Survivor Challenge Qualifying Match: Axiom vs. Von Wagner vs. Andre Chase

The rest of Chase U is here with Chase. A running boot rocks Wagner at the bell but he's fine enough to headlock both of

them at once. That's broken up and a double shoulder puts Wagner on the floor. Axiom loads up a dive but gets rolled up for two by Chase. That's enough for Wagner to get back up and send them both outside as we take a break. Back with Chase hitting a top rope superplex on Axiom near Wagner, who was either out of position to get knocked down or was trying to help with the crash.

Either way, Axiom heads to the floor and it's a slugout between Chase and Wagner. A Russian legsweep drops Wagner to set up the spelling stomps, followed by a tiger driver to give Chase two on Axiom. Wagner comes back in but gets triangle choked by Axiom. That's broken up and Wagner plants Chase for two. Chase DDTs both of them at once but Axiom shoves Chase to the floor and superkicks Wagner for the pin at 11:58.

Rating: C+. It was fast paced and that's one of the best things that can be said about something like this. On top of that, at least Chase didn't take the fall, even if it would be nice for him to actually win something for a change. The fans are into him and for some reason that seems to be enough for NXT for whatever reason. Also it was someone other than Wagner, which is a positive.

Julius Creed's knee is cleared for him to compete but Ivy Nile asks the trainer to check his ribs. Those are banged up, and he won't be able to compete because of them. Brutus Creed isn't happy, but Nile says she's protecting Julius.

Cora Jade is ready to do whatever it takes to become #1 contender.

Bron Breaker is about to go fishing when Apollo Crews shows up at the doc to join him. Crews compliments the boat and Breaker shows him how to cast. They praise each others' athleticism, with Breaker admitting he copied the standing moonsault from him. Crews asks if this really calms you down, with Breaker talking about the pressure that comes from being

champion.

Crews catches a fish, earning some praise from Breakker, before throwing it back. They agree that Deadline should be a good one and shake hands. Crews says today wasn't Breakker's day with fishing and Saturday won't be his day at Deadline either. These vignettes have been different enough to make the feud interesting and that's a nice change of pace.

Bryson Montana is in the ring for a match but Indus Sher takes him out. Cue Montana's opponent.

Javier Bernal vs. Bryson Montana

Actually hang on as Bernal has a sudden hamstring injury so he's out. Indus Sher says they won't fight the Creed Brothers unless they're 100%, so the challenge is turned down for now. Cue the Creed Brothers but Ivy Nile and some referees hold them back. No match.

Duke Hudson is trying to console Andre Chase when a very excited Thea Hail runs in to say she's facing Isla Dawn tonight. Hudson doesn't think it's a good idea because Dawn is scary, but Chase says go do it. Chase isn't happy when Hudson questions his decision.

Sol Ruca danced on Tik Tok at a live event but Brooks Jensen/Josh Briggs and Malik Blade/Edris Enofe got in an argument behind them. A tag match was set.

Tony D'Angelo vs. Xyon Quinn

Stacks is here with D'Angelo, who is getting quite the positive reaction here. Quinn drives him into the corner to start but D'Angelo slugs away at the ribs. A suplex drops Quinn again Quinn's Samoan drop sends D'Angelo outside, only to run him over back inside. D'Angelo hits something close to John Cena's ProtoBomb for the pin at 1:49.

Post match D'Angelo says he's back and he wants Wes Lee and

the North American Title. Cue Lee to say the Don is back and the champ is ready for him. Dijak took Lee out recently though so if D'Angelo wants the title, he'll have to wait until Lee takes care of some business. That doesn't work for D'Angelo, who says his business comes first. Dijak pops up on screen to say he's going to decimate NXT and take the title. Then Stacks jumps Lee, who shoves Stacks down and bails from the numbers advantage.

Last week, Hank Walker talked to Charlie Dempsey and says he wishes he could have followed in his father's footsteps. Walker wants respect and they can do this if they need to. Dempsey says he'll show Walker that he doesn't belong.

Scripts looks at his debut match and talks about how he needs to change things up, starting with the chosen ones. He writes his name down while surrounded by crinkled papers.

Hank Walker vs. Charlie Dempsey

Dempsey slaps him in the face to start so Walker takes him into the corner. There's a big hiptoss to send Dempsey flying and a slam makes it worse. Dempsey grabs a gutwrench suplex but here is Drew Gulak of all people for a distraction. The Kimura keeps Walker in trouble about he fights out and hits a Thesz press. That's fine with Dempsey, who dragon screw legwhips him down but a half crab attempt is broken up. Dempsey cranks on the knee instead and ties up the face at the same time to make Walker tap at 4:02.

Rating: C. This was quick and to the point, as there is no reason to believe that Walker, who is little more than a brawler, could hang with a technical monster like Dempsey. I'm glad to see Dempsey taking someone apart, and having him do that to Gulak in a technical off could be very entertaining. Or Gulak mentors him, which might not be the best idea as Gulak last won anything...when?

Zoey Stark talks about timing and knowing how none of the

people in the Iron Survivor Challenge can touch her.

Grayson Waller is ready to win the Iron Survivor Challenge because everyone is scared of him going in.

And now, Pretty Deadly as Santa and an elf in a Christmas set in the ring, for the real meaning of Christmas. They both sit in the throne (yeah there's a throne) and read the book, which talks about their bulging sacks overflowing. They'll never lose the titles and never be bruised so they have a Merry Christmas hug...and here is New Day to interrupt.

Kofi Kingston talks about how Pretty Deadly has beaten everyone, so let's have a title match at Deadline. The fight is on and New Day clears the ring without much effort, including having presents put on Pretty Deadly's heads. That's a big surprise and Pretty Deadly will benefit from the win.

Isla Dawn is ready to hurt Thea Hail.

Javier Bernal is going to leave and suddenly remembers he's in pain when McKenzie Mitchell shows up. No, he is NOT scared of Indus Sher, who don't want any of him. He accuses Mitchell of being biased and wants someone more fair. Cue Ikemen Jiro, who Bernal trusts. Jiro calls him a chicken and Bernal isn't pleased.

Thea Hail vs. Isla Dawn

Chase U is here too. Dawn shoves her down to start and hits a running shot to the back. Hail fights up and slugs away, including a running shot in the corner. There's a t-bone suplex to Dawn, who is right back with a sitout reverse DDT. A second one finishes Hail at 2:50.

Post match Alba Fyre pops up to go after Dawn but gets held back by referees. Fyre charges anyway and a referee gets misted by mistake.

Kiana James is ready to be smart and win the Iron Survivor

Challenge.

Lyra Valkyria is here next week.

Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen vs. Malik Blade/Edris Enofe

Odyssey Jones is here with Blade and Enofe. Jensen gets knocked into the corner to start and Blade hits a heck of a dropkick for two. That's broken up and it's Jensen working on the arm as Kiana James' assistant shows up with a letter for Jensen. Blade hits a big moonsault on the floor onto Briggs (and almost misses), leaving Enofe to hit an old Dean Ambrose standing top rope elbow for two on Jensen. Von Wagner shows up to brawl with Jones and it's the high/low to give Briggs the pin at 3:25.

Rating: C. It might not be the best idea to have multiple people getting involved or interfering in a match that doesn't even last three minutes. I like both teams but it would be nice to have Blade and Enofe win something for once. The tools are there, but eventually they just feel like losers and that is a hard stigma to overcome.

Respect is shown post match.

Roxanne Perez is ready to prove herself because she keeps getting screwed over. But how do you prepare for a match that has never taken place before? She looks in a mirror to talk herself up and seems to buy it.

Shawn Michaels runs down the concept of the Iron Survivor Challenge.

Iron Survivor Qualifying Match: Indi Hartwell vs. Wendy Choo vs. Fallon Henley

In the back, Brooks Jensen opens the envelope from the assists, which contains VIP tickets to Deadline from Kiana James. Hartwell starts fast but Choo headlock takeovers Henley. A double rollup gives Hartwell two as Toxic Attraction

is watching. Back up and Henley flips both of them down at once, with Hartwell being sent outside. Hartwell kicks Henley down on the floor though and we take a break.

We come back with Choo in the Tree of Woe with Hartwell kicking away, only to get rolled up by Henley. With Choo free, Hartwell is sent outside and Henley is suplexed, with Hartwell having to make the save. The Tower of Doom leaves everyone down and Choo splashes Henley. Then Hartwell sends Choo outside, decks Henley, and steals the pin at 10:15.

Rating: C+. Hartwell was the focal point of the match and is the most established star so her going forward makes sense. I still like Henley a lot but she might be better suited as the manager/friend of the team rather than a featured star. You know what you're getting with Choo, though to be fair she has toned down A LOT of the silliness and it's a big improvement. Hartwell was the right call here though.

Toxic Attraction says of course they'll be at Deadline but Indi Hartwell comes in to say Saturday is her night.

Deadline rundown.

Here is Grayson Waller for the Grayson Waller Effect, with the rest of the Iron Survivor entrants (JD McDonagh, Carmelo Hayes, Axiom and Joe Gacy) as his guests. Waller insults all of them but Hayes says he's ready to show that he is the A Champion again. McDonagh asks about Hayes losing the North American Title twice, but Hayes says that doesn't matter right now. McDonagh is sure he can go 25 minutes, which Waller would never understand.

Waller shrugs that off and asks Gacy about this group. Gacy says individuals are selfish and will step over each other to get what they want. Axiom talks about how you have to evolve to win and that is where he excels. Hayes: "NERD!" We get a question from a fan: which spot would you want to enter the match?

Axiom says first or second so he can maximize his falls, but that doesn't appeal to anyone else. Gacy promises that he'll win but Hayes says he won't miss. Waller says you never know when someone is going to strike first, earning himself a headbutt from Gacy. The fight is on and everyone but Waller heads to the floor, leaving Waller (with camera) to flip dive onto everyone else. The big brawl ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This could have been worse, as they did make the Iron Survivor Challenge feel like a big deal. That is kind of hard to do when it's nothing but a heavily gimmicked #1 contenders match, but they pulled it off here. There wasn't much else of interest on the show and Deadline is looking like a pretty unimportant card, but they made the featured matches feel bigger and that's the important thing.

Results

Axiom b. Von Wagner and Andre Chase – Golden Ratio to Wagner

Tony D'Angelo b. Xyon Quinn – Belly to back slam

Charlie Dempsey b. Hank Walker – Leg trap crossface

Isla Dawn b. Thea Hail – Sitout reverse DDT

Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen b. Malik Blade/Edris Enofe – High/low to Enofe

Indi Hartwell b. Fallon Henley and Wendy Choo – Running forearm to the back of Henley's head

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NXT LVL Up – October 21, 2022: He Definitely Adds Something

NXT LVL Up

Date: October 21, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Byron Saxton

It's the second week of the Saxton Era and that means...well very little really, as Saxton isn't as well versed as Nigel McGuinness and not quite as good of a commentator as him either. That more or less leaves the wrestling to carry things and that is a hit or miss bet around here at best. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Ikemen Jiro vs. Myles Borne

Borne grabs a headlock to start but gets reversed into a cravate. Another headlock slows Jiro down but Borne hurts his knee on a leapfrog. Jiro is right on that knee with a leglock sending Borne over to the rope. The half crab has Borne in more trouble until he crawls over to the rope. The jacket punch rocks Borne but the reverses the Ikemen Slash into a small package for the pin at 5:20.

Rating: C. This was a different way to go from most Borne matches and it was quite the win for his career. Borne has gotten better than I would have expected him to be able to do and it's nice to see his success. At the same time, Jiro was acting more heelish, which is quite the weird way to go for someone with his kind of charisma.

Javier Bernal is ready for Andre Chase because he learned at the school of hard knocks.

Bryson Montana vs. Duke Hudson

Montana grabs him in a front facelock to start and Hudson has to bail to the rope. Hudson elbows away without much trouble but Montana runs him over with a clothesline. A Michinoku Driver gives Montana two but Hudson is back with a snap German suplex. The big boot finishes Montana at 3:53.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to go anywhere and Hudson continues to be quite the charisma vacuum once the bell rings. Montana seems to be one of NXT's next projects and that isn't a bad thing. He has the size and look to go somewhere so let him see what he can do when he gets his feet a bit wetter in the ring.

Andre Chase vs. Javier Bernal

Thea Hail is here too. Chase takes him down by the arm to start and Bernal is sent outside, where Thea Hail yells at him. Back in and Chase shoulders him down before hammering away in the corner. Bernal manages to get in a knee lift and hammers away, only to get caught with a middle rope sunset flip for two. Some kicks keep Chase in trouble but he comes right back with a suplex. Chase slugs him down and the spelling stomps have Bernal in trouble. The high crossbody finishes Bernal at 6:41.

Rating: C. Chase has become one of the biggest stars around this show and that is one of the things that can make him into

a special treat. The fans go nuts when he comes out and while it would be nice to see him doing something bigger in NXT, it might be easier to take the moments on the smaller stage like this one. If it means less of Bernal being boring on the main show too, so be it.

Overall Rating: C. There was a bit more energy to this show, though that might just be the reactions to Chase being in the ring. The show is still completely skippable and I don't see that changing anytime soon, but at least it was a fun use of half an hour. I'm still not sure why they stopped sending one slightly bigger name down here a week but maybe they found it beneath those stars. For now though, ok show, especially for the short run time.

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NXT LVL Up – October 14,

2022: That's Not Good TV

NXT LVL Up

Date: October 14, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Byron Saxton

We're back to this show again and as usual, it's anyone guess what to expect. I've given up having any hope for a high quality show around here and that is about as good as it is going to get. The show always needs some bigger stars but if we can get a decent midcard name, it's going to be as solid as can be expected. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Ikemen Jiro/Tank Ledger vs. Duke Hudson/Bryson Montana

Hudson powers Jiro into the corner and starts in on the arm but gets tripped into a headlock. Jiro gets shoved off for the tag to Ledger, who trades some shoulders with Hudson. Some arm cranking slows Ledger down and it's off to Montana, who charges into a hiptoss. Ledger starts in on the arm as well and the good (I think?) guys start taking turns on Montana's arm.

Hudson draws Ledger over with a distraction though and a neckbreaker gives Montana two. Montana's chinlock doesn't last long and the diving tag brings in Jiro to clean house. The Jacket Punches rock set up the springboard moonsault as Hudson walks off. The Ikemen Slash finishes Montana at 6:20.

Rating: C. Hudson and Montana as a team was a little weird but throwing people together can make for some interesting moments. I'm not sure how much of a future they have together, but for a one off match, it wasn't that bad. Jiro continues to

be a fun guy and it's smart to have him around to open up a show like this.

Myles Borne is ready to keep his wins going.

Myles Borne vs. Dante Chen

Borne wrestles him down to start but the fans seem more behind Chen. An armdrag into an armbar has Borne down but he's back up with a standing moonsault over a charging Chen. Back up and the armbar has Borne in more trouble, with the fickle fans now behind him for a change. Chen gets up and charges into an elbow in the corner but kicks Borne right back down. The armbar goes on again, only to have Borne come back with a belly to belly. Something like an inverted Downward Spiral (which I thought was a botched inverted DDT at first) finishes Chen at 5:13.

Rating: C-. The match wasn't much to see, and I do wonder how much of that is due to Borne's hearing issues. I'm not sure how you would exactly call a match like that but Borne has already improved a pretty good bit. It's certainly a good story though and it should be interesting to see how far he can go.

Ivy Nile vs. Lash Legend

Legend kicks her down to start and then grabs an awkward cravate to keep Nile in place. Nile is back up with some hard kicks and starts cranking on the arm. Back up and a butterfly suplex gives Legend two, allowing her to bend Nile's arm over the middle rope. Some taunting gives Nile a chance to pull her down by the leg for two but Legend blasts her with a clothesline for the same. The armbar and then chinlock goes on Nile before Legend tries her own dragon sleeper. You don't do that to Nile though, as she flips over and into her own dragon sleeper to make Legend tap at 6:06.

Rating: C-. Believe it or not, this was decent for a Legend

match, though it was still a pretty boring one. Maybe Legend can get somewhere with a good bit more practice, but anytime she talks my interest in her goes right back down. Nile did her thing and the ending looked good with her flipping over to take Legend out. That being said, she seemed ready to break out as a big star and it just never happened for some reason. Maybe it happens later, but I don't quite see it from here.

Overall Rating: C-. This was a weaker show as the star power was almost non-existent. It was more about getting people in the ring than anything else. That works fine as a training deal, but it doesn't make for a good television show. LVL Up can be a nicely done show, but that wasn't the case with this one. Now awful, but boring, which is often worse.

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NXT LVL Up – September 23,

2022: Back To It

NXT LVL Up

Date: September 23, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness, Matt Camp

The low level roller coaster continues with this show as I'm not sure what to expect. There have been some minor stories to set up some matches, plus a few appearances from bigger names. Then again, given this show's track record, all of that will be dropped as soon as possible. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Dante Chen vs. Bryson Montana

The rather strong Montana runs him over to start so Chen grabs a headlock and hopes for the best. Some takeovers give Chen some momentum and there's a dropkick to stagger Montana. That's about it for the offense though as Montana runs him over and hammers away on the mat. A Michinoku Driver gives Montana two and we hit the bearhug. Chen fights out and hits a clothesline, followed by a boot to the face. The double chop finishes Montana at 5:42.

Rating: C-. I still have no idea what they see in Chen but he keeps sticking around here and keeps getting wins. Chen is completely average in the ring and does nothing that makes me want to see whatever he is doing next. Montana might not be much, but at least he has a good look, which puts him ahead of Chen.

Myles Borne, with a VERY mumbly voice, is ready for Andre Chase. Don't let him talk again.

Indi Hartwell vs. Valentina Feroz

They fight over wrist control to start until Hartwell powers her down to the ground. Back up and Feroz grabs a sunset flip into a headlock but Hartwell slips out without much trouble and grabs a nerve hold. A suplex sets up a double arm crank on Feroz, who powers up and hits a crossbody. That's too far for Hartwell, who hits a spinebuster for the pin at 4:34.

Rating: D+. Hartwell has fallen so far in the last few months and it is kind of sad to see. She is a talented wrestler but there is only so much room for her without anything to do. The Dexter Lumis stuff going away more or less took her legs out and I don't see that getting better anytime soon, especially with a not so great match like this one.

Andre Chase vs. Myles Borne

Borne wrestles him to the mat to start but Chase slips out for a standoff. Chase takes him down by the arm and cranks on a hammerlock. Back up and Borne hits a dropkick before taking him down by the arm as well. With that broken up, Chase hits the spelling stomps and a high crossbody finishes for Chase at 5:36.

Rating: C. Borne is someone who can do some nice things on the mat, but there is nothing more to him than amateur style. That is going to get your foot in the door, but you need something better than that to make an impact. I haven't seen that from him yet and until that changed, he isn't going much further than this. On the other hand you have Chase, who could break through to the next level but I'm almost scared to see him try.

Post match Chase shakes Borne's hand, which might be a bit of recruiting.

Overall Rating: C. Yep, so much for anything having staying power around here, but at least they did keep the interviews between the first and second match. It isn't much, but it does add the slightest bit of flavor to what we're seeing here. LVL

Up is still little more than a warmup show for the real NXT broadcast, and that doesn't exactly make for a great show. Until that changes, it's going to be little more than filler programming and that isn't overly interesting

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NXT LVL Up – August 5, 2022: I Don't Have Much Hope

NXT LVL Up

Date: August 5, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

The Road to Clash At The Castle is on and will have absolutely no bearing on this show whatsoever. I've again give up on trying to figure out what is going on with this show from one week to another and that means we are probably in for random matches this week. That works to an extent, but it can get a little tiresome after awhile. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Dante Chen/Guru Raaj vs. Bryson Montana/Damaris Griffin

Raaj and Montana grapple a bit until Raaj hits a dropkick to stagger him. Chen comes in for a chop but Montana is back with a clothesline. Griffin hits a chokebomb into a neck crank as we talk about Rhea Ripley hurting Dominik Mysterio. With that broken up, the double tag brings in Chen and Montana with the former cleaning house. Everything breaks down and Griffin misses a middle rope splash, allowing Chen to hit a double chop for the pin at 5:20.

Rating: C. This got a bit better near the end with the pace picking up, but it was still just a random tag match between people who were only so good in the first place. I still like Montana, but he was only something of a factor here with Chen getting the focus. At least we know what his finishing move is though, if that is something that kept you up at night.

Arianna Grace reminds us that she is a former beauty pageant queen and gives something like a beauty pageant speech about inspiring girls by beating Thea Hail tonight.

Thea Hail vs. Arianna Grace

The rest of Chase U is here with Hail, who works on a wristlock to start. A headlock goes on and Hail runs around in a circle to keep Grace in trouble, setting up a headlock takeover out of the corner. Back up and Grace runs her over, setting up a pose on Hail's chest. Hail reverses a belly to back suplex into a crossbody for two but Grace stomps her in the corner. A chinlock is broken up with a drop back onto Grace and Hail hits a running flip neckbreaker for two. Grace is right back with a rollup and a grab of the rope for the pin at 5:03. Ignore that being the same finish that Javier Bernal used last week.

Rating: C-. Maybe it's the rather lame beauty queen deal or the lack of much else from her, but Grace still hasn't shown me very much since she got here. That isn't the worst thing as she is still stuck with a pretty bad gimmick, but there is nothing to suggest that she is going to break through to the next level (as low as that still may be) anytime soon.

Xyon Quinn vs. ???

Before the match, Quinn gives the unnamed opponent a chance to leave...and that's exactly what he does. Quinn wants an opponent out here right now and that's what he gets.

Quincy Elliott vs. Xyon Quinn

Elliott comes to the ring on a bedazzled moped for reasons of "just because". Quinn unloads on him in the corner to start but Elliott hiptosses him down. The basement shoulder gives Elliott a breather but Quinn knocks him into the corner for the shoulders to the ribs. Elliott starts gyrating until a forearm and Death Valley Driver plant him for two. The frustration sets in for Quinn so he grabs a cobra clutch, which is broken up with ease. A running shoulder in the corner sets up the slingshot bottom rope splash to finish Quinn at 4:49.

Rating: C-. As is usually the case, I get what WWE sees in Elliott, but I hope they don't try to go too far with him. It's almost weird seeing him get a singles win, but it's even odder seeing him beat someone like Quinn. It seemed that Quinn was going to be one of the upcoming big projects and he has completely collapsed. Elliott might not be the next big thing, but he's in a better place than Quinn right now.

A lot of dancing ends the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This wasn't one of their better efforts as there was almost nothing worth seeing and a bunch of forgettable matches. The only part that felt different

whatsoever was seeing Quinn's opponent run off and that's not enough to carry a thirty minute show. Nothing to this one and I don't know if there is a reason to believe that is changing.

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NXT LVL Up – July 22, 2022: The Underlying Problem

NXT LVL Up

Date: July 22, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

This show has started to change a little bit in recent weeks and that is a good thing. There have been some original interviews and even a tease of some storylines. It shouldn't be that hard to do SOMETHING with this show but unfortunately that doesn't seem to be WWE's idea. Maybe they have a different idea this week though so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Thea Hail vs. Brooklyn Barlow

Chase U is here with Hail. They fight over wrist control to start before trading some rollups for two each. A headlock takeover puts Hail down and we hit the armbar as commentary talks about how much Chase U appreciates Hail. Something like a seated abdominal stretch brings Hail back to life for a side slam. A standing moonsault into Hail Yeah (ok that's clever) finishes Barlow at 5:37.

Rating: C-. This was a lot of Barlow dominating, or at least dominating as much as you can with a headlock. Barlow continues to be little more than another blonde with an athletic background and that isn't exactly getting her very far. On the other hand you have Hail, who is a total ball of charisma and she is starting to get somewhere with Chase U.

Hank Walker isn't going to let Duke Hudson disrespect him tonight.

Ru Feng vs. Bryson Montana

Feng grabs a headlock to start and takes Montana to the mat to crank away. It works so well that Feng does it again before switching to a front facelock. Montana fights up and starts with the most generic power offense you could imagine, including right hands and shoulders to the ribs in the corner. A backbreaker into a side slam mix things up a bit and there's a Michinoku Driver for two on Feng. The chinlock doesn't last long as Feng fights up with his variety of martial arts. Montana isn't having that and hits a Sky High for the pin at 4:34.

Rating: D+. They tried to make beating Feng important but that has never been the case and probably won't for most of his

time around here. Montana got my attention when he debuted and maybe he can do a little something. With that kind of power and look, there might be a chance for him and that is the point of a show like this one.

Hank Walker vs. Duke Hudson

Hudson drives him into the corner to start and puts on a quickly broken headlock. Walker powers up and slams him down for two, only to get driven into the corner for some shoulders to the ribs. A reverse DDT gets two on Walker and we hit the chinlock with a knee in Walker's back. That's broken up and Walker pulls the hair before taking off his shirt and faceplanting him for two. Back up and Hudson slips off the shoulders, setting up a big boot for the pin on Walker at 6:04.

Rating: C. Walker feels like quite the dead end gimmick, if nothing else because Brooks Jensen, Josh Briggs and Fallon Henley are already doing it and doing it better. Hudson is someone who should be able to do something of his own but for some reason it hasn't quite started yet. He feels like a bigger star than most around here and having him around does help a bit.

Overall Rating: C-. You can add in the interview (which is a good idea) and the stories from one week to another (which seems to have already been dropped) but ultimately, the wrestling just isn't that good. What are you supposed to do when the wrestling is pretty weak at best and you're lucky to get an ok match? That is LVL Up in a nutshell and I have no reason to believe it is going to change.

Results

Thea Hail b. Brooklyn Barlow – Hail Yeah

Bryson Montana b. Ru Feng – Sky High

Duke Hudson b. Hank Walker – Big boot

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NXT LVL Up – July 8, 2022: The Faintest Hope

NXT LVL Up

Date: July 8, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shaw, Nigel McGuinness

We are well on the way to Summerslam and as usual, that will have no impact on what you are about to see here. That isn't a good thing, but it is the way this show, and its predecessor, has worked for years. The show continues to just exist and I don't see that changing anytime soon. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Dante Chen vs. Myles Borne

Chen goes to the arm to start and stays on it as Borne tries to take him to the mat. Back up and the arm gets cranked over

Chen's shoulder, only to get flipped down into a headlock. Chen can't shove him off so we stay in the hold for a rather good while. To their credit, Borne is cranking on the thing and Chen is trying to fight his way out. Back up and we're right back to the headlock....which Chen rolls up into a cradle for the pin at 4:39???

Rating: C-. What is there to say about something like this? The whole match was work the arm, headlock, another headlock, pin. They were trying to do some stuff with the basics and Borne was billed as an amateur, but usually that means more than working a headlock. It's certainly different and they surprised me, but this is their best use of the show's TV time?

We actually get a promo on this show (DO MORE OF THIS) as Malik Blade and Edris Enofe are ready to face two of the strongest guys in NXT in the main event. Super basic promo, but get these guys (or anyone for that matter) in front of a camera and talking. There is no pressure on a show like this so let them get their feet a little wet.

Yulisa Leon vs. Arianna Grace

They go with the power grappling to start with Leon getting her to the mat without much trouble to start. A headlock doesn't work for Grace as Leon flips over and strikes a pose on the mat. Grace cranks her to the mat by the arm before working on the armbar on the mat. Leon powers out and grabs a flapjack, setting up a missile dropkick. A fall away slam, with Leon holding onto her and flipping back over into the cover, is good for the pin at 6:16.

Rating: C. It's almost weird seeing Leon winning a match like this but Grace isn't ready to beat just about anyone yet. What mattered here was finding something for Feroz and Leon to do and the dancing seems to be their thing. I don't know how far that is going to get them, but it is better than having them

stand around doing nothing.

Edris Enofe/Malik Blade vs. Damaris Griffin/Bryson Montana

On the way to the ring, Enofe grabs a microphone and handles the team's (somewhat risque) introductions. Blade grabs a headlock on Griffin to start but gets driven into the corner for his efforts. Montana comes in and gets caught with some quick kicks to the face. A fall away slam (with Montana not leaving his feet) sends Blade flying though and we hit the bearhug.

With Blade dropped again, the chinlock goes on for all of a few seconds before he fights back up. Enofe gets the hot tag but gets taken down...as Quincy Elliott is here for no apparent reason Dancing on the floor distracts Montana, leaving Griffin to take a running Blockbuster. Enofe drops a top rope elbow for the pin at 5:28.

Rating: C-. As annoying as Elliott can be, it is nice to see something resembling a story around here. It can't be hard to have the slightest idea going from one week to another rather than a bunch of one off matches so I'll take what I can get. Enofe and Blade continue to have some potential, but they are going to need to string together some wins that actually matter for ones. This wasn't one of those, but it's better than another loss.

Overall Rating: C. It's not a good show, but there is the slightest bit of hope for the future and I'll take that after so, so much of the one off matches. Blade and Enofe getting the focus is nice to see, but it wouldn't surprise me to see it wind up being about Elliott, as NXT seems to like him a lot. Other than that there wasn't much here, but I'll take the slightest change over nothing at all.

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NXT LVL Up – June 24, 2022: One Of The Common Ones

NXT LVL Up

Date: June 24, 2022

Location: Capitol Sports Studios, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Sudu Shah

So we continue around here, as NXT stars continue to take over WWE. They now have three shows, as the NXT undercard has invaded NXT UK, because we haven't seen enough of these people just yet. That isn't necessarily a good thing, but when has that ever stopped WWE before? Let us know in the comments below.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Bryson Montana vs. Quincy Elliott

The much bigger Elliott powers him into the corner to start but misses a charge and gets knocked own. Back up and Montana

starts driving in shoulders to the shoulder before grabbing a reverse chinlock. A forearm to the back cuts off Elliott's comeback and some heavy forearms set up the chinlock sequence. The slam attempt collapses though and Elliott runs him over, only to get caught with a dropkick. Back up and Elliott elbows him out of the corner, setting up a kind of reverse Vader Bomb (lifts himself up on the ropes and drops forward) to pin Montana at 5:07.

Rating: C. Elliott is the kind of guy that WWE always finds a place for, as he has the size and enough charisma to make up for his lack of mobility. It's not my kind of thing, but I get what they're trying for with him. Montana has a great look but needs time in the ring and some coaching, which is where (hopefully) the NXT house show loop can do him some good.

Kiana James vs. Brooklyn Barlow

James cranks on the arms to start but gets reversed into a headscissors. Back up and Barlow gets to work on the arm for a change, only to get snapmared down into an armbar from James. The exchange of arm cranking continues until Barlow rolls her up for two. A kick to the knee gives James the same and it's off to a seated abdominal stretch. That's broken up and Barlow strikes away but gets knocked into the corner. A belly to back gutbuster finishes for James at 5:17.

Rating: C-. This was an exchange of grappling until the bigger name won. James isn't a big star yet but she has something that sets her apart enough. Barlow looks like Tiffany Stratton without the gymnastics background and the rich girl stuff, which doesn't leave much. Then again, how far can you get when you're presented as nothing but the next generic blonde?

Ikemen Jiro vs. Ru Feng

During his entrance, a fan high fives Jiro and then gives him a thumbs down behind his back. Feng takes him down without much effort to start but Jiro grabs a headlock. That's broken

up so Jiro takes him down and hits a slingshot splash to the back. Feng goes after the knee until a small package gets Jiro out of trouble. More shots to the knee put Jiro down and we hit the half crab. Jiro gets out and hits a monkey flip, setting up the Ikemen Slice for the pin at 5:28.

Rating: C. I'm not that into Jiro's deal with the wacky jackets, but he is very smooth in the ring and that is more than enough to keep him around at least for the time being. Feng is someone who has been around for a bit and I still don't know what I'm supposed to see in him. They had a nice enough match here with the leg thing and Jiro coming from behind to win, but it was a LVL Up main event so it isn't worth much.

Overall Rating: C-. The star power wasn't around here and that isn't exactly the best thing to watch. LVL Up isn't exactly a great show most of time but they can get some people out there to do some good stuff. This wasn't one of those weeks though as it just came and went without much going on, as tends to be the case here more often than not.

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