

NXT LVL Up – November 24, 2023: That's Different Too

NXT LVL Up

Date: November 24, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Host: Blake Howard

It's nice to see some changes around here as the show had been so dull for such a long time. The show isn't that much better now, but at least it does feel a bit tighter and more entertaining in some ways. Granted I have no reason to believe that will last, but I'll take what I can get. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

This week is especially different, as it's a Best Of 2023 show.

Eddy Thorpe talks about his debut on LVL Up on February 17. He had been around for a few weeks and wanted to make an impact against someone he respected.

Dante Chen vs. Eddy Thorpe

The debuting Thorpe is better known as Karl Fredericks in New Japan. Chen's headscissors doesn't get him very far and we have an early standoff. A cradle gives Chen two and he takes Thorpe down into an armbar. Back up and Thorpe hits a quick spinning crossbody and grabs a seated abdominal stretch, followed by the standing version for a bonus. Chen fights out and hits a running kick to the face, only to get caught with a running boot to the face. An implant DDT gives Thorpe the pin at 4:29.

Rating: C-. Not much to see here but the important thing is that Thorpe won. Far too often, NXT will debut a new star on

this show and then have them lose to the “star”. Chen is still the resident jobber around here and it makes all the sense in the world to have Thorpe, who might become something in NXT, beat him in his debut. At least they have something logical with this one so they got off on the right foot.

We look at Lola Vice winning the Women’s Breakout Tournament over Kelani Jordan.

Vice talks about being ready for Ivy Nile on April 28 and how she doesn’t need any of us.

Ivy Nile vs. Lola Vice

They fight over a rather aggressive lockup to start until Nile rides her to the mat. Vice is right back with a kick to the ribs, followed by a running hip attack in the corner. A double arm crank is broken up though and Nile kicks her down again. Nile grabs a gutwrench suplex and the Diamond Chain Lock knocks Vice out cold for the win at 4:18.

Rating: C+. Vice has all of the tools in the world to be something, including the charisma that makes her feel like a star. Throw in the MMA background and all of the potential is right there. On the other hand you have Nile, who still feels like she could be something in the division as soon as she is given the chance.

Kelani Jordan was excited for her debut match on May 12 against Wendy Choo...which she found out about when she was at her niece’s funeral. Well dang that makes things sad.

Wendy Choo vs. Kelani Jordan

They fight over a lockup to start with Jordan’s early wristlock not getting him very far. A headlock takeover has a bit more success but Choo reverses into a headscissors. Choo grabs a quick takedown for two, followed by doing it again for the same, which leaves Choo looking a bit surprised. A kick to

the face and a running elbow drop gets two but Jordan fights up and elbows her down as well. Jordan's springboard spinning crossbody connects for another near fall but Choo is back with the Snooze Button (full nelson slam) for the pin at 5:17.

Rating: C. Jordan didn't do anything overly flashy here but she looked solid enough with the basics. You can see the athleticism and athletic background, which will be more than enough of a foundation to go somewhere. Choo still feels like she is finding her feet after returning, which is what a show like this can help her do.

Tavion Heights talks about throwing everything he had against Axiom on July 14.

Tavion Heights vs. Axiom

Heights wrestles him down but Axiom is fine enough to take over on the mat. A headscissors doesn't last long on Heights and they're back up for a standoff. Axiom grabs it again and holds Heights down a bit before kicking him in the head for two. Back up and Heights blasts him with a clothesline before a gutwrench suplex gets two.

The chinlock doesn't last long as Axiom is back up and hits a dropkick for a breather. Heights can't hit a German suplex so Axiom sends him outside for a big dive. Back in and Heights gets two off a doctor bomb but Axiom knees him in the head. The Golden Ratio finishes Heights at 7:05.

Rating: B-. This was a heck of a match, especially for around here, as Heights was looking like a power monster and Axiom was as smooth as ever. I was getting into this one and wondering who was going to win here. You don't get to see something like that very often and it worked really well. Good main event.

Overall Rating: C+. I'm not sure how much sense it makes to have a Best Of show for the night after Thanksgiving, but it's

not like this show has any real rules to follow. At the same time, it's nice to show that some of these wrestlers have indeed moved up the charts a bit, which is the point around here. It's not a great show or even a good one, but it was a nice change of pace for a one off.

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NXT LVL Up – November 3, 2023: Well, It Was Good

NXT LVL Up

Date: November 3, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

We're done with Halloween Havoc and this show has gotten a good bit more interesting in recent weeks. I'm not sure how interesting that really is, but it's better than nothing and I'll take anything I can get around here. For now, hopefully

we get something even better this week, or at least some fresh names. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Ivy Nile vs. Valentina Feroz

Feeling out process to start with neither being able to get very far. They wrestle to the mat with Feroz getting a fast one. Nile sends her flying but Feroz manages to snap off an armdrag. The short arm scissors has Nile frustrated until she powers up and takes her into the corner for the break. Feroz is right back with a hammerlock before ramming the bad arm onto the apron. Nile is back up and runs her over for two but Feroz hits a running Meteora. Not that it matters as the Diamond Chain Lock finishes Feroz at 4:48.

Rating: C+. This is probably going to be one of if not the last Nile match around here and she went out with a pretty good one. The best thing here was that Nile had to work to win but then she just snapped on the Lock to wrap it up. That very well could be her calling card on the main roster and it's nice to see her giving Feroz a boost on the way out.

Trey Bearhill is ready to run it back against Myles Borne. I have almost no memory of their first match so that might go rather well.

Trey Bearhill vs. Myles Borne

Borne's friends are here too. Bearhill knocks him down without much trouble to start and begins dancing. The dancing is replaced by an armbar but Borne slugs his way to freedom. Borne grabs a chinlock with a knee in the back until Bearhill fights up with the chops. Damon Kemp offers a distraction though, allowing Borne to hit a dropkick for the pin at 3:49.

Rating: C. So I barely remembered Bearhill's first match and I

barely remember this one either. He feels like something that belongs on a low rent 90s indy show and it's almost hard to fathom him being here now. It's not terrible or even bad, but it's really not working so well. On the other hand, Borne and his wrestling obsessed friends are a good idea, though they're also kind of losers.

Dante Chen vs. Oro Mensah

This is described as a "big" main event as the commentators lie to us again. The women o Meta Four are here with Mensah. Mensah fights out of a wristlock to start but gets pulled down into an armbar. The armdrag into the armbar works so well that Chen does it a second time. Mensah seemingly gets frustrated by having his arm pulled and kicks Chen in the head to take over.

A legsweep lets Mensah hit a forearm to the head for two before he grabs a crossface chickenwing in the ropes. Chen fights out of a chinlock and starts kicking away, setting up a springboard clothesline. The double chop gets two but Lash Legend puts a boot on the rope...as Boa can be seen watching from the aisle. Mensah is back up with the running spinwheel kick in the corner for the pin at 7:41.

Rating: C. Well, that was certainly a match between these two and that is not the highest compliment. They're not very interesting and it was a rough watch to see the two of them in there having the same boring match I've seen them have over and over. Throw in Boa and it's somehow even less interesting.

Boa helps Chen out of the ring to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. The opener was pretty good but it was a rough watch otherwise, with a pair of mediocre (at best) matches to wrap it up. The not so interesting stars were back in full force here as this felt like they snapped back from the change of pace over the last few weeks. Hopefully that changes again, but this show hasn't given me much of a reason

to believe that will be happening.

Results

Ivy Nile b. Valentina Feroz – Diamond Chain Lock

Myles Borne b. Trey Bearhill – Dropkick

Oro Mensah b. Dante Chen – Running spinwheel kick in the corner

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NXT LVL Up – October 20, 2023: The New Format Is Working

NXT LVL Up

Date: October 20, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Blake Howard

Things were actually a bit different last week as there were

only two matches with a slightly shorter run time. It made things a bit easier to watch, though granted having the best match NXT LVL Up has presented in months helped as well. I could go on more of the new format as it did make for a tighter show. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Edris Enofe/Malik Blade vs. Boa/Dante Chen

Blade works on Chen's arm to start but Chen reverses into a headlock. That's broken up and Blade hits a dropkick before Enofe comes in to elbow away. It's off to Boa, whose armbar doesn't work in the slightest. Enofe has to fight out of the corner, allowing Boa to get in a kick to the ribs.

Chen's belly to back suplex gets two as commentary actually gives us a backstory for the villains (Boa has been around since Chen's tryout and kept his eye on him the whole time). Enofe backflips out of another suplex attempt and hands it back to Blade to pick up the pace. A high crossbody takes Boa and Chen, setting up an assisted Blockbuster to finish Chen at 6:08.

Rating: C+. Not exactly a surprising result but Boa and Chen worked well enough together as a makeshift villainous team. Blade and Enofe continue to be a team that feels like it has a lot of potential but this is about all they've gotten to do in recent months. For a quick opener though, there were far worse options.

Fallon Henley, with Josh Briggs and Brooks Jensen, is ready for Lash Legend, who is loud and annoying.

Fallon Henley vs. Lash Legend

Josh Briggs, Brooks Jensen and the rest of the Meta Four are here too. Legend shoves her against the ropes to start and

talks a lot of trash before firing off an elbow to the face. A hard slam puts Henley down again for two. Henley tries to fight up but gets caught with a right hand to slow her back down.

A pump kick sends her to the floor and Legend sends her face first into the apron back inside. Legend grabs a delayed suplex before putting on a torture rack (a move that needs to make a comeback), only to be reversed into a sleeper. With that broken up, Henley gets in a facebuster, leaving the others to brawl on the floor. Henley hits the Shining Wizard for the pin at 6:12.

Rating: C. Legend isn't great in the ring but she's a good bit better than she was a year or so ago. Letting her get in the ring more and more often is the best thing for her so even a six minute match can help her advance. I still see something in Henley and could go for having her around a lot more often but that doesn't seem likely to happen anytime soon.

Overall Rating: C. It's not just the shorter run time but I like the new format a good bit more. This lets the matches get a bit more focus instead of trying to get three matches and two commercials into half an hour. It also might help keep things feeling a bit fresher around here as it's one less match to have each week, which could help things out nicely. For now it's not exactly a game changer, but it is an improvement, which is long overdue around here.

Results

Edris Enofe/Malik Blade b. Boa/Dante Chen – Assisted Blockbuster to Chen

Fallon Henley b. Lash Legend – Shining Wizard

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NXT LVL Up – October 6, 2023: I Don't Know What This Means

NXT LVL Up

Date: October 6, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

We're back to the point where there isn't much to say about this show. There is no reason to believe that much of anything of importance is going to take place around here. It's all the more frustrating when you see WWE trying something around here and then just dropping it as fast as they can. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Kelani Jordan/Valentina Feroz vs. Izzi Dame/Tatum Paxley

Paxley and Feroz lock up to start and neither gets the better of things, meaning it's an early double tag. Jordan gets knocked down against the ropes so it's Dame coming in to stomp

away. A double elbow sets up Paxley's splash for two, followed by Paxley grabbing a bodyscissors. Jordan finally kicks her way to freedom though and it's back to Feroz for some rapid fire armdrags. Everything breaks down and Paxley grabs a Psycho Driver for the pin on Feroz at 4:33.

Rating: C-. What are you supposed to get from a match like this? It's four women paired off with nothing to set up the match and no reason for them to be fighting. At the same time, they only had about four and a half minutes to get anything going, which doesn't work so well for people without much experience. Matches like these make me wonder what the point of this show is supposed to be, because this didn't do much.

Dante Chen is ready to face Drew Gulak. Tonight it's Singapore style, though Chen doesn't know what that means.

Javier Bernal/Luca Crusifino vs. Tyriek Igwe/Tyson DuPont

DuPont faceplants Luca to start so it's off to Bernal, who gets slammed down. Bernal's headlock doesn't do much so it's Igwe coming in to splash Luca in the corner. Luca manages a hiptoss neckbreaker for a breather and Bernal comes in for a headscissors. That doesn't last long and DuPont hits a backdrop. It's back to clean house, including a superkick to Bernal. Luca makes the save and gets tossed, allowing Luca to grab a rollup for the pin at 4:44.

Rating: C. You know, it is ok to let these young guys score a quick win over two "bigger" names who aren't a regular team and are hardly top level stars in the first place. The match was mostly a squash for Igwe and DuPont but then they lost to a fluke rollup to protect Bernal and Luca? That's quite the odd choice.

Drew Gulak vs. Dante Chen

Myles Borne, Damon Kemp and Charlie Dempsey are here with Gulak. Chen grabs a headlock to start and snaps off an armdrag

into an armbar. Back up and Chen hits a backdrop for two before dropkicking him out to the floor. Gulak comes back in and stomps away on the ropes before grabbing a neck crank. That's broken up and Chen chops him out to the floor, setting up a big dive. Gulak's cronies offer a distraction though and Gulak picks Chen up and hits a kind of powerslam piledriver for the pin at 5:43.

Rating: C+. It was better than the other matches but that doesn't really clear a high bar. Chen continues to be little more than a person who happens to be on the show over and over again without really doing anything important. Gulak is still someone who could be used in a slightly bigger way and he only got to show so much of his skills here.

Overall Rating: C. Oh this was LVL Up alright, as there was almost nothing going on and a bunch of the normal lineup having matches that didn't change anything and won't lead anywhere. In other words, there is no reason to watch this show again, and there is nothing to suggest that it is going to get better.

Results

Izzi Dame/Tatum Paxley b. Kelani Jordan/Valentina Feroz – Psycho Driver to Feroz

Javier Bernal/Luca Crusifino b. Tyriek Igwe/Tyson DuPont – Rollup to Igwe

Drew Gulak b. Dante Chen – Powerslam piledriver

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NXT LVL Up – August 25, 2023: Well They Were Close

NXT LVL Up

Date: August 25, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

Last week's show was a bit of an upgrade as there were two matches featuring names from the regular NXT roster. If that keeps up, the show can be that much better, as there are all kinds of stars who could pop up around here. Or maybe there won't be anyone included whatsoever. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Hank Walker/Tank Ledger vs. Tyriek Igwe/Tyson DuPont

Walker runs Igwe over to start and cranks on the arm before driving in corner shoulders. Ledger is pulled in with a slingshot splash or two so it's off to DuPont, who is double shouldered down. Igwe comes back in for a belly to back suplex and some right hands as Walker is in trouble for a change. A clothesline out of the corner puts DuPont back down and there's the tag off to Ledger to pick up the pace. Everything breaks down and a running powerslam with a crossbody to the back at the same time finishes Igwe at 5:05.

Rating: C. Not a bad power match here but I'm still not that into Walker and Ledger. They feel like some weird cross between Heavy Machinery and Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen and it's not really working. They're not bad but they come off as quite the token power team and that's not great. Igwe and DuPont are the latest team who looks great but have little to make them stand out, which has to change at some point.

Kiyah Saint is ready to debut against Kiana James. She's educated and calculate.

Kiyah Saint vs. Kiana James

James snapmares her down to start so Saint nips up. Saint grabs a headlock this time and manages to take her down. That's broken up so James takes it into the corner, where Saint rolls her up for two. The chinlock doesn't last long as Saint comes back with some running forearms. A fisherman's suplex gets two but James is back with the 401k. The Dealbreaker finishes Saint off at 5:19.

Rating: C+. For someone's debut match, Saint looked a lot better than most of the rookies you get around here. She has quite the athletic background and when you mix that in with quite the bit of energy, it makes for a nice debut. James is fine in the role she's been filling, but that isn't going to get her much further.

Scrypts vs. Dante Chen

Scrypts has Bronco Nima and Lucien Price with him. Scrypts gets in a shot to the ribs to start but Chen pulls him down into an armbar. Back up and Scrypts gets knocked to the floor, where he manages an arm snap across the top rope. An elbow to the face gives Scrypts two and we hit the chinlock with a knee in Chen's back. Chen fights up and strikes away but can't hit the double chop. Instead he kicks Scrypts in the head but Nima offers a distraction. That's enough for Scrypts to hit a handspring cutter for the pin at 6:39.

Rating: C. I know I've said it before but my goodness Scrypts is still rather lame. Even giving him a pair of monster lackeys isn't going to hide that and I'm not sure what else could. Chen isn't that much better, but at least he never makes it out of LVL Up. This was a rather uninspiring pick for a main event here and it showed pretty badly.

Overall Rating: C. It says a lot that the thing that stood out the most here was a rookie best known for her triple jumping career in college. They went straight back to the "oh who cares" version here with some lower level names than last time. As usual the short run time saves the show but that's about all it has to offer.

Results

Hank Walker/Tank Ledger b. Tyriek Igwe/Tyson DuPont – Powerslam/crossbody combination to Igwe
Kiana James b. Kiyah Saint – Dealbreaker
Scrypts b. Dante Chen – Handspring cutter

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NXT LVL Up – August 11, 2023: There's Some Star Power

NXT LVL Up

Date: August 11, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

Last week's show was a bit better last week and hopefully that continues this time. The show tends to be at its best when it has a mixture of some younger stars and a few established names, though you never can tell which format it is going to take. There have been some more rookies around here though so maybe that is where this is heading. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Dante Chen vs. Damon Kemp

Kemp grabs a headlock to start but Chen takes him down for a quick slap. A springboard headlock takeover puts Kemp down again but he counters another springboard into a backbreaker. As Charlie Dempsey and Drew Gulak watch in the back, Kemp gets elbowed and punched in the face.

Another backbreaker cuts Chen off though and Kemp throws him with a t-bone suplex. The chinlock goes on before Kemp misses an elbow. Chen rams him into the buckle and strikes away, setting up a springboard chop to the head. Back up and Kemp avoids a charge and grabs a Rock Bottom, only to pull Chen into a neckbreaker for the pin at 6:12.

Rating: C. The ending was a nice pick up as that was a fairly slick neckbreaker. Other than that, Kemp looked like his usual good self and I'm glad to see him getting something of a spot

on the regular NXT. Then you have Chen, who has been around LVL Up for a long time now and there is nothing to suggest that he is going to be heading anywhere else as he is about the same as he has been for a good while now.

Tavion Heights is ready to bully the bully Joe Coffey and take him to new heights.

Fallon Henley vs. Izzi Dame

They fight over a lockup to start with Henley going after the arm. A running shoulder drops Dame and a drop toehold sends her throat first into the bottom rope. Dame gets in a throat snap across the top of her own and pulls Henley out of the corner for two. The reverse chinlock with a knee in Henley's back goes on but she's right back up without much trouble. A quick Shining Wizard finishes Dame at 4:38.

Rating: C. Dame hasn't exactly had much of a chance to show what she can do and that was the case again here. She seems like a basic villain but there is only so much you can do in a situation like this. At the same time, Henley has done a grand total of pretty much nothing in recent months and unfortunately I don't quite see that changing. She's just kind of there as a manager for the most part but she can do well enough in the ring if she is given the chance. I'm not sure I see her getting such a chance though.

Joe Coffey vs. Tavion Heights

Heights seems to win a battle over a lockup to start before twisting Coffey down by the arm. Back up and Coffey runs him over with a shoulder but Heights snaps off a hiptoss. Coffey hits a backbreaker for two and grabs the quickly broken chinlock. Heights tries to fight back and is quickly crossbodied for two. Coffey works on the arm to little avail and Heights grabs a backdrop. A suplex drops Coffey and a belly to belly gives Heights two of his own. Something like a Dominator drops Coffey for another two but he headbutts

Heights into the corner. All The Best For The Bells finishes Heights at 6:23.

Rating: C. That would be the bigger name match of the show but that doesn't mean it was the most thrilling. Heights, as well as Lucien Price, seem to be getting more of a push but losing to Coffey in a singles match isn't going to help that along. At least it wasn't a tag loss, so he should be ok going forward.

Overall Rating: C. This one had the format working well enough but it only got so far with the quality. The three matches we got here were all rather skippable and you can only get so much out of a show like that. It's still the easiest show to watch all week, but it's nothing you need to see.

Results

Damon Kemp b. Dante Chen – Neckbreaker

Fallon Henley b. Izzi Dame – Shining Wizard

Joe Coffey b. Tavion Heights – All The Best For The Bells

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NXT LVL Up – July 21, 2023: The Most LVL Up Match Ever

NXT LVL Up

Date: July 21, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

Back to Orlando and that has meant all kinds of things over the last few weeks. I'm almost curious to see what is going on around here but the bad stuff is so lame that it can be a chore to watch. Then again you can occasionally get a nice match here and there, so maybe there is some hope to be had. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Tank Ledger/Hank Walker vs. Ikemen Jiro/Quincy Elliott

Walker headlocks Elliott to start and gets a dance as a result. Ledger comes in off a blind tag for a running elbow and stereo knees rock Elliott again. It's off to Jiro, who gets shouldered down but nips back up. Jiro gets in a shot in the corner but misses the springboard moonsault. Ledger hits a slingshot splash for two and we're off to the armbar. Jiro kicks his way to freedom though and it's Elliott coming back in for a corner clothesline and bulldog. Everything breaks down and Ledger spansks Elliott, setting up the Flying Fridge to give Walker the pin at 5:41.

Rating: C. Not bad here and it was nice to see Jiro back. I had kind o forgotten about him but he certainly knows how to look smooth in the ring, which is a talent that not everyone has. Nice enough return match here, even if Walker and Ledger aren't exactly the most polished pairing out there (which is

kind of the point).

Izzi Dame is the friend that you don't like but you need.

Izzi Dame vs. Dani Palmer

Dame has quite the height advantage so Palmer flips over her to start and hits a dropkick. Palmer's headlock puts Dame down but she powers up and faceplants Palmer in the corner. A bearhug of all things goes on before Dame slams her down for two. Back up and Palmer hits some running elbows, setting up a high crossbody to finish Dame at 4:35.

Rating: C. As usual, you can only get so much out of someone in less than five minutes so it's not quite fair to judge Dame yet. She was fine enough at what she did and has some attitude to her, but she feels like a long term project, which is the case for a lot of people around here. Palmer is starting to find herself as an energetic star who has to come from behind and it worked well enough.

Dante Chen vs. Javier Bernal

And this would be the most LVL Up main event imaginable. Chen's headlock works for all of two seconds to start so Bernal works on an armbar. That's reversed into the same thing from Chen but Bernal hot shots his way to freedom. A stomp to the ribs and a belly to back suplex gets two on Chen as Bernal gets a bit frustrated.

The chinlock goes on for a bit before Bernal dives into a raised boot. Eat Defeat drops Chen but the referee almost gets bumped, allowing Bernal to get a poke to the eye. A reverse DDT gives Bernal two (I bought that) but Chen is back with the double chop for the pin at 6:51.

Rating: C+. You can definitely see that these two are further along than most of the regulars around here and that makes for a better match. They were doing some more complicated stuff

and had more of a story, with Chen being the clean wrestler while Bernal cheated wherever he could. It was a good enough match and I bought on the near fall, even if it meant challenging the undefeatable power of Dante Chen.

Overall Rating: C. The main event helped but this was a show drastically lacking in big names or in anything you needed to see. That being said, going with this kind of a show is certainly a way to go around here. If LVL Up is supposed to be the big developmental show, then this is what it needs to be, though that doesn't make it the most interesting.

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NXT LVL Up – June 9, 2023: They'll Do

NXT LVL Up

Date: June 9, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Blake Howard

Things were a bit different last week as we had some different faces around for a change. That can make all the difference in the world with a show like this, which is built around getting people some ring time before they're called up to the main NXT show (in theory at least). Hopefully they keep that up here so let's get to it.

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

In Memory of the Iron Sheik.

Opening sequence.

Nathan Frazier vs. Tavion Heights

Heights wrestles/powers him to the mat to start but Frazier reverses into a sunset flip for two. Back up and Frazier starts flipping away, only to dive into an overhead belly to belly suplex (and a sweet one at that). Heights grabs the chinlock but Frazier reverses, only to get kicked throat first into the rope. A Dominator gives Heights two more but Frazier kicks him in the head. Frazier flips out of a German suplex, nails a superkick and finishes with the Phoenix splash at 4:40.

Rating: C+. Frazier being around instantly made the show feel more important and the fact that it was a rather nice power vs. speed match helped. This felt like Heights was told to go do all of his impressive stuff and the power/amateur mixture worked. Heights is another star who feels like he could be a big deal going forward, but he has to actually win something for that to take place.

Luca Crusifino is ready for Myles Borne, who lacks his intelligence.

Luca Crusifino vs. Myles Borne

Borne works on a wristlock to start before switching over to an armbar. Luca can't shake him off but can send Borne throat

first into the rope to escape. Some knees to the back set up a chokeslam as the fans argue over whether Luca is their lawyer or not. Borne finally suplexes his way out of trouble but can't get a powerslam. Instead Borne tries la majistral but Luca stacks him up for the pin at 5:38.

Rating: C. Crusifino winning matches is almost strange to see but it's nice to have someone fresh actually getting some wins. The evil lawyer isn't likely to be the biggest gimmick, but I'll take it over having absolutely nothing else to do. Now just let him get better and find something for him to do and he should be fine.

Charlie Dempsey vs. Dante Chen

Drew Gulak is here with Dempsey. They fight over arm control to start, with Chen flipping him over for an annoyed stare from Dempsey. Another battle over the arm goes to Dempsey, who suplexes him down a few times for some near falls. Back up and Chen elbows him in the face, setting up the armdrag into the armbar.

Chen whips him into the corner a few times but Dempsey gets it back to the mat. The cravate holds Chen in trouble for a bit until he wins a forearm exchange. A big boot drops Dempsey again but he bails to the floor before the double chop. Chen misses a springboard though and gets pulled into a reverse STF (Dempsey has the legs tied up but is laying on his back to pull on the chin.) for the tap at 7:50.

Rating: B-. This was one of the better matches I've seen on this show in a good while, as Dempsey was working well with the torture and Chen kept up the energy. Chen is a mainstay around here and isn't interesting enough for the main NXT show, but he can do well when given the chance. Dempsey could be a force in NXT if he ever gets to move up a bit, but I can settle for him tormenting innocent victims for the time being.

Overall Rating: C+. They went in the opposite direction this

week with more star power and that was a nice change of pace. LVL Up is not usually the place for people like Frazier and Dempsey but it was cool to have them around here for a change instead of the same people over and over. I get why NXT wouldn't want that to be the case every week, but for a one off, this was a fun night.

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NXT LVL Up – May 19, 2023: They're At It Again

NXT LVL Up

Date: May 19, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

We're getting closer to Battleground and that could be quite the shakeup for NXT. That is something LVL Up could use, as the show tends to be in a rather similar mold a lot of the

time. It might be helpful for the wrestlers around here, but that doesn't make things all that entertaining. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Eddy Thorpe vs. Kale Dixon

Feeling out process to start with Thorpe's headlock not working all that well. Back up and Dixon runs him over with a shoulder, followed by some forearms to the spine. The neck crank and chinlock go on until Thorpe is up with a dragon screw legwhip. A Saito suplex out of the corner gets two on Dixon and the jumping elbow finishes him off at 4:52.

Rating: C. Thorpe continues to beat up lower level competition and Dixon continues to be Dixon. In other words, it was exactly what you would have expected from these two on this stage. It wouldn't surprise me to see Thorpe getting a push on the main NXT show, but it might take some more seasoning to get him ready.

Kelani Jordan and Wendy Choo are ready to team together against Elektra Lopez and Lola Vice. Apparently karma is a bi...scuit.

Kelani Jordan/Wendy Choo vs. Elektra Lopez/Lola Vice

Lopez powers Jordan around without much effort to start and it's Vice coming in for a double shoulder. Back up and Jordan takes Vice over to Choo for an assisted moonsault. A tornado DDT hits Vice but she brings Lopez in off a blind tag to take over. Jordan gets knocked hard into the corner and a gutbuster sets up a body vice to stay on the ribs. A quick kick away allows the tag off to Choo as everything breaks down. The Snooze Button gives Choo the pin on Vice at 5:36.

Rating: C. I can see why WWE wants to push Jordan, who has the

impressive athleticism and appeal to become something down the line. She needs experience though and getting her feet wet on this show is a good start. Jordan has a long way to go, but at least she is getting started with a solid base.

Dante Chen vs. Luca Crusifino

They fight over a lockup to start as we get a LET'S GO LAWYER chant. Chen goes for the hammerlock to take over before some armdrags into the armbar have Luca in more trouble. Back up and Luca grabs a neckbreaker for two, followed by the double arm crank. With that broken up, Chen hammers away in the corner but the threat of the double chop sends Luca outside. Luca loads up the briefcase but when it's taken away, a thumb to the eye lets him roll up Chen for the pin at 5:15.

Rating: C. I'm sorry what now? A young up and comer beat Chen? I'm not sure how to handle this but it's nice to see for a change. As usual, Chen is fine enough in the ring and certainly not bad, but he has such a history of running people over and I do not get the point having him beat so many people without actually going anywhere. That being said, Luca is a bit of a weird case and I could go for having him around a bit more in the future.

Overall Rating: C-. It says a lot when your star power is comprised of Thorpe, Choo and Chen, which isn't exactly top level talent in NXT. The wrestling was completely watchable and the show is less than thirty minutes from beginning to end so it isn't like you feel you're wasting your time. In other words, this was the weaker end of LVL Up and that's not exactly thrilling stuff.

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NXT LVL Up – May 12, 2023: They (Still) Have A Future

NXT LVL Up

Date: May 12, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

It's time for the latest offering from LVL Up and as usual, there is almost no guessing what weird combinations you might get. At the same time, there is not going to be much of a difference no matter who is involved, but it could make for an entertaining 20 minutes of content. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Dante Chen vs. Tavion Heights

Heights headlocks him down to start but Chen fights up for a quickly broken sleeper. An armdrag into an armbar has Chen in more trouble but he's right back with a crossbody. Back up and Heights snaps off some suplexes for two before we hit the chinlock, as Chen still can't do anything with him. Chen manages to counter a suplex into another crossbody and the comeback is on. The double chop finishes Heights fast at 4:44.

Rating: C. Well of course. Someone gets going against Chen but

they always fall short in the end. It's the same thing every time no matter who it is and I really don't get it. There's nothing overly special about Chen and that was on display again here. Heights looks to have potential, but woe unto anyone who runs up against the force that is DANTE CHEN.

Kelani Jordan is ready to prove that she can hang here against someone as talented as Wendy Choo. She was a successful gymnast at Michigan State and even has a motto about being silent and showing your abilities. Who am I to argue with someone whose slogan belongs in any page-a-day calendar in the clearance section?

Wendy Choo vs. Kelani Jordan

They fight over a lockup to start with Jordan's early wristlock not getting him very far. A headlock takeover has a bit more success but Choo reverses into a headscissors. Choo grabs a quick takedown for two, followed by doing it again for the same, which leaves Choo looking a bit surprised. A kick to the face and a running elbow drop gets two but Jordan fights up and elbows her down as well. Jordan's springboard spinning crossbody connects for another near fall but Choo is back with the Snooze Button (full nelson slam) for the pin at 5:17.

Rating: C. Jordan didn't do anything overly flashy here but she looked solid enough with the basics. You can see the athleticism and athletic background, which will be more than enough of a foundation to go somewhere. Choo still feels like she is finding her feet after returning, which is what a show like this can help her do.

Respect is shown post match.

Bronco Nima/Lucien Price vs. Malik Blade/Edris Enofe

Enofe hammers away on Nima to start but Blade has to pull him out of what looked like a powerslam. Price comes in and gets headlocked, which doesn't last long as the power takes Enofe

into the corner. One heck of a clothesline gives Price two and we hit a bit harder chinlock. Snake Eyes sets up a standing stomp to the chest to give Nima two. Enofe gets away and brings in Blade to clean house. The big slingshot dive to the floor drops Price and Nima, followed by a top rope elbow to finish Nima at 7:01.

Rating: C+. Nima and Price continue to look like a team who could go somewhere with more polish and seasoning, which is something they could get around here. The exact same thing is true with Enofe and Blade, but on a much higher level. They still seem to be able to move on to a much higher level, but I'm starting to wonder if it is ever going to happen.

Overall Rating: C. This felt a lot like what LVL Up has been for a long time now, as it had a lot of familiar faces running on a treadmill. At the same time, Jones had a nice debut, Heights looked good and the tag match did rather well too. There is a future here, but LVL Up has to actually do something different for a change if this show is going to benefit most of them in the long term.

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