

# NXT Takeover: London Preview

These things are pay per views for all intents and purposes so it deserves a preview of its own. That being said, I'm not sure how long this is going to be as there are only five matches and one of them is almost guaranteed to be a squash. However, since it's NXT, you can almost guarantee a good show. Given that there hasn't been a bad Takeover yet, I'd say you can indeed guarantee some awesome stuff. Let's get to it.

We'll start with the squash as Asuka demolishes Emma to end this short feud. Any debate on that? Yeah I'm thinking no too.

With that out of the way, we're left with four matches that could go either way.

First up we have the Tag Team Titles as the Mechanics (Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder since I don't think Mechanics has ever been made official) defend against Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady. I'm going to go with the champions retaining because Enzo and Cass would seem to be primed to go to the main roster and feud with the New Day, but it would be nice to see them get just a quick token reign with the titles. Still though, I think they're going with Gable and Jordan as the team to take the belts off the Mechanics down the line, meaning the titles don't change here.

Perhaps the most confusing match for me is the Women's Title as Bayley defends against the monster Nia Jax. I still don't know how Nia and Eva actually fit together because Nia has no real reason to keep Eva around, but I could see the title changing here. At the same time though, I could see them sticking with Bayley even longer because she's the most over person in the promotion and it hasn't been a very long reign for her yet. I think I'm going to go with Bayley retaining and eventually dropping the title to Asuka, but it could easily be the other way. I'll go with Bayley and very little confidence.

As much as I want to see Corbin rise up and feud against Balor for the title, I think they'll go with Crews and set up the rematch down the line as the two of them have some unfinished business. You would think Corbin would win a big match at some point but I don't think it happens here.

Crews wins and sets up the BIG showdown with Balor, maybe in Dallas.

That leaves us with the main event of Finn Balor vs. Samoa Joe. As clear as it seems to be that Balor retains the title, they have me believing that the title could change here. Joe wouldn't seem to be in NXT for long and it would probably be a short term title reigns, but I think they'll keep the title on Balor here in a match that could be a classic.

Overall there isn't a lot to say here because the stories are all so well put together yet still being simple. There's enough potential good on this show for it to be another classic and I'd assume we get a bonus match to make things even better. Takeovers are always some of the best shows of the year and I have no reason to believe that's not going to happen here again.

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# **NXT – December 9, 2015: Trying To Get Hyped**

## **NXT**

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

It's the go home show for Takeover: London and that means it's time for all the hard pushes before the next major show. The bit match for tonight is the always useful combining of two matches into a tag as Finn Balor and Apollo Crews face Baron Corbin and Samoa Joe. The card for next week's show looks good though and that's all that matters. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

#### Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore vs. Corey Hollis/John Skyler

Enzo and Cass are totally serious for once. Hollis and Skyler actually get an entrance. Cass pounds Hollis into the corner for some hard elbows to start before easily tossing him across the ring. Enzo comes in for some trash talk and a nice dropkick before it's back to Cass, who throws his partner at Hollis in the corner. The East River Crossing sets up the Rocket Launcher for the pin on Hollis at 2:40.

Enzo says that's how they feed their family and Dawson/Wilder aren't messing with that. They've been doing this longer than any team in NXT and the champs had the nerve to try and take out Cass. That jeopardized their futures and the only people who get to determine their futures are in this ring right now. Cass isn't standing for those two taking them out either and they're getting retribution and the titles in London. Where in the world did that come from? For their first ever serious promo, this was excellent and I was loving it.

Dana Brooke and Emma are ready for Asuka and want her to remember that this isn't Japan. Emma was the one that paved the way for the Divas Revolution (can we PLEASE find a new plot device for the Divas?) and they imply interference in Asuka's match tonight. Dana is annoyed at Tom Phillips for being too tall to pat on the head.

Video on Tye Dillinger.

#### Asuka vs. Deonna Purrazzo

They circle each other for a bit until Asuka grabs the hammerlock. After going over to a wristlock, Asuka snaps on an armbar to send Deonna into

the ropes. A hip strike drops Deonna again and here are Emma and Dana on the stage. Deonna tries to use the distraction and gets KICKED IN THE FACE for a knockout win at 2:55. The gasp from Emma and Dana made the whole thing even better.

Mojo Rawley talks about Blake and Murphy not being successful in the club and Zack Ryder has no idea what he's talking about. They're sure they'll win tonight though.

Alexa Bliss yells at Blake and Murphy for losing recently but they promise that the Hype Bros will be broken.

Another long song by who appears to be Elias Sampson.

### Hype Bros vs. Blake and Murphy

Blake, Murphy and Bliss are wearing what look like Freddie Kruger shirts that were run over by lawnmowers. Even the fans call them Freddie Kruger. Mojo dances a lot to start and Ryder facepalms on the apron. Blake works on a wristlock to start as Graves wants to go to prison instead of watching the Hype Bros. Blake and Murphy are sent to the floor, leaving Mojo to declare that none of them are hyped. Ryder baseball slides both of them and drops Blake with a flapjack to set up the Broski Boot.

Murphy comes in for the first time and takes Ryder down before it's back to Blake for a chinlock. That goes nowhere so it's Murphy coming in with a chinlock of his own. Ryder fights up and kicks them into each other before diving over to tag in Mojo. Rawley cleans house (Corey: "It's like someone shaved a Tasmanian devil.") and everything breaks down. Blake's superkick only gets two and it's the Hype Ryder for the pin on Blake at 6:24.

**Rating:** C. Totally fine match here between two teams that aren't the most interesting in the world. Blake and Murphy don't seem to have much of a future aside from being a midcard team here in NXT while the Bros look like they've been thrown together for the sake of giving them something to do. Still though, not a bad little match here.

Baron Corbin doesn't like Apollo Crews because he's a rookie who doesn't

deserve anything. Joe is still mad about Finn Balor not giving him the title shot he deserved. Tonight, Crews and Balor get their warmup beatings.

### Peyton Royce vs. Bayley

Non-title. Royce is clearly a heel here as she's a sexier character than the majority of the roster. Peyton starts with an armdrag (Fans: "BETTER THAN EVA!") and Bayley doesn't look to be 100% coming in. A running knee gets two for Royce and there's that annoying Bayley chant again. We hit the chinlock on Bayley but she comes back with some right hands, only to walk into a spin kick for two. The middle rope elbow staggers Royce though and the Bayley to Belly is good for the pin at 4:07.

**Rating:** C+. Not a great match or anything but this is the kind of match that Royce needed to look like a future player in the division. If there's one thing NXT is great at, it's setting up someone as a threat after they start off looking like any other wrestler. She might not go anywhere, but this was a really good performance from someone who hadn't shown much potential otherwise.

Post match Eva Marie and Nia Jax come out. Eve is booed out of the building until Jax takes the mic and says she doesn't need Eva to do the talking for her. Bayley is lucky that Nia didn't get here earlier because Bayley has been lucky so far but that ends in London. I still see no reason why Nia has Eva with her.

Apollo has been trying to get in touch with Balor all week but Finn hasn't answered. Balor says he's ready and that's all that matters. Crews is fine with that but promises to come for the title after London. Balor doesn't seem cool with that.

Video on Sami Zayn getting hurt back in May and his return next week.

### Finn Balor/Apollo Crews vs. Samoa Joe/Baron Corbin

Joe immediately tags out to avoid fighting Balor. Finn tries to bring in Apollo so Corbin tags out as well. Apollo slams Joe down and we take a way too early break. Back with Crews in the wrong corner and Corbin

flipping him to the mat for two. Joe comes in for an armbar and a big elbow to the jaw. It's back to Corbin but he misses a charge and hits the post, allowing the hot tag to bring in Balor.

The champ hammers away on Joe in the corner but Joe reverses him and tries the Muscle Buster. Finn reverses into a sunset flip for two, followed by the Sling Blade. Baron shoves Balor off the top and into a Death Valley Driver (I haven't seen one of those in a long time), setting up the Koquina Clutch to knock Balor out at 9:46.

**Rating:** C+. Again this wasn't great but it set up the two matches quite well. I could have gone for more interaction between Crews and Corbin here as their match isn't the most interesting in the world but it's good enough so far. Joe vs. Balor has gone from what felt like a filler feud to a match I want to see so they're certainly clicking there. Good stuff here and it accomplished its goal.

Joe poses with the title over the unconscious Balor to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Above all else a go home show is supposed to make me want to see the big show more than I did coming in and that goal was accomplished here. Other than that we had some good wrestling and a solid promo from Enzo and Cass, but I'm not as hyped up for London as I've been for recent Takeovers. The show is going to be awesome because that's how Takeovers work but I'm not as interested as I could be. Still though, another good show this week as you should expect.

### Results

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Corey Hollis/John Skyler – Rocket Launcher to Hollis

Asuka b. Deonna Purrazzo via knockout – Kick to the face

Hype Bros b. Blake and Murphy – Hype Ryder to Blake

Bayley b. Peyton Royce – Bayley to belly

Samoa Joe/Baron Corbin b. Finn Balor/Apollo Crews – Koquina Clutch to Balor

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# **NXT – November 25, 2015: Don't You Dare**

## **NXT**

Date: November 25, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Rich Brennan, Corey Graves

It's another title match week with Bayley defending against Eva Marie in a match that has the potential to burn the place to the ground. The Full Sail fans just do not like Eva no matter what she does and it's going to be quite the moment if she takes the title from the most popular act in NXT. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Michael Cole of all people is in the ring to open the show, though unfortunately we don't get his sweet theme song about how awesome his life is. Cole says he's in charge while Regal is out recovering from neck surgery. First up tonight: a contract signing for Takeover: London (finally not the week before the match) between Finn Balor and Samoa Joe. Cole goes to introduce Joe but Balor comes out first and promises to take

Joe out in London. This brings out Joe who walks into the ring, signs the contract and walks out without saying a word or even looking at Finn. The champ goes to leave but Joe attacks and chokes Finn out.

### Tag Team Titles: Vaudevillains vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Dawson and Wilder are defending and this is the Vaudevillains' rematch. Dawson starts on Gotch's leg to start but can't get very far, meaning it's off to English vs. Wilder. Aiden takes over for all of fifteen seconds before the champs go after his arm and take us to an early break. Back with Aiden in an armbar but he easily fights up and makes the hot tag to Gotch. Now it's the Vaudevillains taking over but Dawson trips up Gotch to stop the Whirling Dervish. Everything breaks down and the Shatter Machine to English retains the titles at 8:05.

**Rating:** C. These teams really don't have great chemistry together and a lot of that is due to the champs being the kind of guys that like to slow a match down. The Vaudevillains are a unique team as they don't have a particular style and that makes it hard to find interesting matchups for them. It's not bad, but these are really forgettable matches so it's probably best that they're done here.

Post match Enzo and Big Cass come out to beat up the champs for hurting Cass' leg a few weeks back.

Eva has taken over Regal's office because she needed a bigger place to get ready. Bayley is a swell girl but it's time for a woman to become champion. She knows the fans have her back too and there are a bunch of gifts waiting for the celebration. Nia Jax comes in with a present of her own.

We recap Asuka dismantling Dana Brooke at Takeover.

Someone whose face we can't see sings a song about needing liberators. Elias Sampson had a guitar a few months back so maybe it was him.

### Dana Brooke vs. Asuka

Maybe not as Dana talks from the stage and Emma jumps Asuka from behind and puts her in the Emma Lock. No match.



Bayley understands why WWE wants Eva Marie to be the Women's Champion but there's one difference between them: Bayley is a wrestler. I know it wasn't meant to be one, but that was one of the best insults I've heard in a long time.

Sami Zayn is coming back.

### Apollo Crews vs. Jesse Sorensen

This would be the former TNA guy Jesse Sorensen, who left because they didn't want him to wrestle any more after breaking his neck and decided to release him instead. Crews starts fast with a delayed vertical as the fans count the "time". Just to show off, Crews waves them on and holds Jesse up even longer. A big running clothesline sets up a throw into a powerbomb (called an Alley Oop into a powerbomb) to end Jesse at 2:06. Total squash.

Crews accepts Baron Corbin's challenge for London.

Corbin says Crews is going to be the answer to a trivia question for doing one thing once. He's going down in London.

Charles Robinson has been sent to referee the main event.

### Women's Title: Eva Marie vs. Bayley

Eva is challenging so let the nuclear heat (and wolf whistles) begin. Nia Jax is here with Eva to make sure things aren't fair. Robinson is the outside referee here so something might be afoot. They trade headlocks to start and a suplex gets two on Bayley, who comes right back with the Bayley to Belly for two as Jax pulls the referee out. Robinson comes in to count two on Bayley off a rollup and Jax adds a headbutt to keep Bayley in trouble.

Eva covers several times for two but Bayley takes her down with a running clothesline. Robinson breaks up the running elbow in the corner and Sliced Red gets a very close two. Another try at Sliced Red results in a ref bump and Eva goes up. Bayley stops her again though and, after dealing with Nia, grabs a super Bayley to Belly with another referee coming in for the count at 6:38.

**Rating:** B. This was one of the best done segments that NXT has done in a long time. It's just a six minute match and nothing great in terms of wrestling, but sweet goodness they nailed the story here. The idea of the fix being in had the fans freaking out on every near fall and going nuts when Bayley survived. Bayley is the most over thing in NXT since Sami Zayn and it's awesome to watch her mature into this hero instead of just being an underdog.

Nia Jax lays out Bayley post match and holds up the belt to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was a show that did a lot of good to set up the London show in three weeks while also throwing in two title matches with a really well done moment in the main event. Thankfully Cole wasn't the star of the show and felt like a regular NXT commissioner. That's the key to this whole promotion: find the formula that works and keep plugging people in and out when necessary. It's worked for years and it's working here, which makes this the most consistent show around.

### Results

Scott Dawson'/Dash Wilder b. Vaudevillains – Shatter Machine to English

Apollo Crews b. Jesse Sorensen – Throw into a powerbomb

Bayley b. Eva Marie – Super Bayley to Belly

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# NXT – November 11, 2015: The Groundwork

## NXT

Date: November 11, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We're on the road to London at the moment and the big story is Samoa Joe turning on Finn Balor last week after Balor's title defense against Apollo Crews. This likely sets up the main event at the next Takeover, though there's a chance Crews and Baron Corbin could be added in to make it a four way. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the end of last week's show.

Opening sequence.

### Tye Dillinger vs. Baron Corbin

Never mind as Apollo Crews hits the ring and destroys Corbin, sending him running off. Crews shouts at Corbin to come back but he's long gone.

The announcers preview the rest of the show.

### Bayley/Hype Bros vs. Blake and Murphy/Alexa Bliss

Ryder and Murphy get us going but it's off to Bliss a few seconds in. Bayley is more than happy to come in and, after Alexa takes off her bracelet, the champ takes her down with a headlock. Fans: "SHE AIN'T HYPED! BAYLEY'S HYPED!" Bayley sends her into the corner for a running elbow but the threat of a Bayley to Belly sends Bliss out to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Mojo clotheslining Blake and bringing in Ryder as Graves

psychoanalyzes his colleagues. Ryder gets caught in the wrong corner and stomped down, followed by a backbreaker as the fans continue to chant what sounds like "HEY WE WANT SOME BAYLEY!" Murphy's reverse chinlock doesn't get very far so he drives Zack back into the corner for a slingshot hilo from Blake.

Back up and Zack dives over for the tag to Mojo, in his neon green gear (Byron: "SLIMER IS ON THE LOOSE!"). Everything breaks down and Bliss gets knocked to the floor but she grabs the title and runs off. Bayley is ticked off so she Bayley to Bellys Murphy and chases Bliss off. Hyperdrive puts Murphy away at 12:11.

**Rating:** C. I don't usually get annoyed with the NXT fans but that HEY WE WANT SOME BAYLEY chant was driving me crazy here. The match itself was just a formula match but it sets up Bliss vs. Bayley for the new champ's first fresh title match. Good enough here but most importantly it got the job done, which is where NXT shines.

Ascension accepts Gable and Jordan's challenge.

Nia Jax runs into Eva Marie and they walk off together.

#### Deonna vs. Nia Jax

No Eva in sight. A quick Samoan drop plants Deonna early on and we're already in the slow squash. Jax throws her into the corner and plants her with a release spinebuster. A legdrop puts Deonna away at 1:49.

Clip of Dash Wilder/Scott Dawson beating the Vaudevillains in the Dusty Classic to set up tonight's title match.

William Regal underwent successful neck surgery. No word on how long he's out.

Bayley is looking for Bliss and finds her Women's Title. Nia Jax jumps her from behind and scares Bliss off for trying to get the title. Jax looks at the title and drops it next to Bayley before leaving.

#### Tag Team Titles: Vaudevillains vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Vaudevillains are defending. English and Dawson get things going but it's quickly off to Wilder with the champs taking over in the corner. Some kicks to the chest put Wilder down so it's off to Scott who gets caught in an armbar. Wilder offers a distraction from the apron though and Dawson takes out the knee as we go to a break. Back with English's knee in trouble as Wilder cranks away. Dawson wraps it around the post because he wrestle like a modern day Anderson.

More shots to the leg set up a slingshot suplex (so he's an Anderson and Blanchard hybrid) for two. English's leg is wrapped around the post again but he pulls Dawson's face into the post, allowing for the hot tag to Gotch. Everything breaks down with Simon cleaning house, only to have English tag back in for no logical reason. Gotch is sent into the steps and English's knee is crushed the same was Cass' was a few weeks back. Wilder's reverse Figure Four gives us new champions at 12:00.

**Rating:** C+. This was an old school psychology driven match with the leg work being the story running throughout the whole thing. The Vaudevillains felt like transitional champions so this was a better idea than letting them hang around while the titles got weaker. Wilder and Dawson will have more opponents anyway and can lead to a showdown with Gable and Jordan.

The new champs can't believe it.

Bayley vs. Bliss for the title next week.

Here's Samoa Joe for his big explanation. When the Dusty Classic was announced, Finn Balor came to him and asked Joe to be his partner. They won that tournament and Joe wanted an NXT Title match. Now to Balor's credit, he agreed to the match but did nothing when Regal put him in the #1 contenders battle royal.

That lack of action drove Joe to do what he did last week because he doesn't deserve to wait for a title shot. The day he walked in to NXT he was owed a shot because he's Samoa Joe. This brings out Balor but the referees break it up. Joe says good choices and grabs the Koquina Clutch to choke Balor out. Joe holds up the title to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. This was a moving day show for NXT as they got a lot more stuff set up for down the road but it didn't really like anything big happened here, including a title change. The good thing about NXT though is they're capable of taking something that doesn't feel huge and turning it into something bigger later. You can see most of the London show from here and it's going to be a fun night because NXT takes the time to set up their big shows instead of just throwing them together.

### Results

Bayley/Hype Bros b. Blake and Murphy/Alexa Bliss – Hyperdrive to Murphy

Nia Jax b. Deonna – Legdrop

Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder b. Vaudevillains – Reverse Figure Four to English

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# **NXT – November 4, 2015: NXT Is Really Neat**

**NXT**

Date: November 4, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

It's a big show this week as Finn Balor is defending his NXT Title against #1 contender Apollo Crews. NXT has spent the last few weeks building up Crews and giving us a person to care about but there aren't any real personal issues between the two other than the title itself. That could make for a good match but it might not be the most interesting. Let's get to it.

The opening video recaps Crews winning the battle royal and becoming #1 contender.

Opening sequence.

#### Asuka vs. Cameron

This could be interesting. Fans: "ASUKA'S GONNA KILL YOU!" Cameron tries a slap to start but gets caught in a cross armbreaker for an early submission attempt. A running kick into the splits drops Asuka but she comes back with a hip attack and mocks Cameron's pose. Asuka grabs a Fujiwara armbar before just smashing Cameron in the face. Fans: "REST IN PEACE!" The Asuka Lock is good for the submission at 3:41.

**Rating:** D+. I kind of feel sorry for Cameron as she has a horrible character and there is no way she's going to be accepted no matter how good she gets in the ring. Some of the gymnastics and flexibility stuff worked for her here but the screeching makes people hate her more than anything. Asuka's path of destruction continues to be awesome and her facial expressions make the squashes that much more entertaining.

We recap Big Cass' leg injury from last week.

Dawson and Wilder laugh at Carmella for injuring her friends. They get their title shot next week and then they'll be the baddest guys in the room. Wilder even brings in a wheelchair as a gift for the Vaudevillains.

Chad Gable and Jason Jordan want to keep moving up the card and one day they'll be the world's greatest tag team. Jordan: "Whoa whoa whoa I told you about that." Their next idea is to wrestle the greatest tag team in

NXT history. Gable: "We can't wrestle ourselves." This winds up being a challenge to the Ascension.

#### Bull Dempsey vs. Angelo Dawkins

Dawkins has a Sawyer Fulton with him. The threat of a right hand makes Dawkins duck, allowing a knee lift to the head. Dawkins kicks him down and puts on a front facelock but Dempsey Bulls up. Bull punches one of the headbands off and a top rope seated senton gives Dempsey the pin at 2:53.

Fulton walks away from Dawkins post match.

The Vaudevillains are impressed with Dash and Dawson but they're ready to add their names to the pantheon of NXT greats. They sent the wheelchair rolling away. Simple promo here but it was fine.

Crews looks at the NXT Title.

Bayley has the Hype Bros as her partners against Alexa Bliss/Blake/Murphy for a six person tag next week.

#### Eva Marie vs. Marley

Marley is a blonde in half of a football jersey. Eva armdrags her down and dances to celebrate before starting on the arm. The fans debate if Eva is ratchet before she stops a comeback with a boot to the face. Fans: "WHAT WAS THAT???" Marley is on her hands and knees so Eva runs in for a very low downward spiral and the pin at 2:48. If that's her finisher, she's in an even worse place than I thought.

Dana Brooke and Emma respect Asuka but want to give her a better welcome to NXT. It's Emma's turn soon.

#### NXT Title: Apollo Crews vs. Finn Balor

Balor is defending and there's no Demon this time. We get a spotlight and a staredown for the big match intros. That's a really cool idea that I haven't seen before. Feeling out process to start with neither guy's headlock getting them anywhere. Back from a way too early break with



Crews holding a headlock. Finn fights up and grabs a front facelock but Crews lifts him up into a delayed vertical suplex for two. Fans: "THAT'S TOO EASY!"

Off to something like a cobra clutch from the champ but Crews tries a sunset flip. That's fine with Finn who rolls through and takes Apollo's face off with a basement dropkick. Crews kicks him back down and goes to the middle rope, only to take an enziguri to put him on the floor. Finn nails a BIG flip dive to take us to our second break. Back with Balor firing off some running chops in the corner, followed by a clothesline for two.

Crews shrugs it off again and hits a fall away slam into a Samoan drop for two more. The fans are still split as Apollo nails a jumping enziguri, only to get caught in the Sling Blade. There's the gorilla press but the moonsault hits knees. REVERSE BLOODY SUNDAY of all things gets two but the Coup de Grace misses. They trade kicks to the head and both guys are down until Baron Corbin runs in for the DQ at 15:09.

**Rating:** B. Give this a finish and it's a borderline classic. These guys beat each other up for fifteen minutes and the shots were getting bigger and bigger every time. I'm sure we'll see them fight again at some point and it's going to be one heck of a war whenever they do. Really good stuff here but the ending was the right call as you don't want either one losing.

Post match Corbin beats both guys down until Samoa Joe makes the save. Joe stars Corbin down but then takes Balor out to turn heel. Fans: "WHY JOE WHY?" A Muscle Buster lays Finn out and Joe holds up the title to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. Another week, another great use of an hour to advance a bunch of stories and give you a reason to come back next week. Balor needed a new top heel and Joe is going to be a great opponent when they probably fight in London. As usual, another good hour of wrestling TV this week as they set up matches and stories so smoothly that it's like one big, long story that just keeps going, which is so much better than the start and stop style that you get elsewhere.

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# **NXT – October 28, 2015: I'm Running Out Of Ways To Say This Show Is Good**

## **NXT**

Date: October 28, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

Things are still picking up around here and we have what should be a good featured match tonight with Samoa Joe vs. Tyler Breeze. Tyler eliminated Joe from the battle royal a few weeks back and has been laughing at Joe for costing him a shot at the title. Other than that we also get part two of Apollo Crews' sitdown interview which should set up a good title match against NXT Champion Finn Balor next week.

Opening sequence.

Emma vs. Shazza

Two Australians here. Fans: "AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE! OY OY OY!" They stare

at each other to start until Emma dropkicks her down against the ropes and stomps away. Dana: "BREAK HER!" After Emma has to kick out of a quick rollup we hit the neck crank on Shazza. Back up and Emma charges into some boots in the corner but Emma comes right back with the Emma Lock for the submission at 4:21.

**Rating:** D+. This was your traditional "here's a new Diva now watch her get squashed" match and that's fine all around. It's a formula that works perfectly well in NXT so why mess with the plan? Building Emma back up before she gets squashed by Asuka is a fine move as it extends the feud for a few more weeks. That's an area where NXT shines and it's a shame so few companies can pull it off.

We look back at James Storm's debut last week.

Storm quotes his old TNA to sum up his character and says he loved to hear the fans tell him he deserves to be here. If anyone has a problem with that, sorry about their luck.

Video on Finn Balor with fans talking about how cool he is and clips of his time in New Japan.

#### Tommaso Ciampa/Johnny Gargano vs. Jason Jordan/Chad Gable

The fans are behind Gable again and he starts with Ciampa. They fight over a test of strength with Gable not being able to break it with a monkey flip. The grip continues as they're on the mat for a string of near falls. Gable finally takes over with an armbar and the fans are eating this guy up. Jordan comes in (Fans: "THIS IS WRESTLING!") but can't stop the tag off to Gargano who helps with some double team strikes to the face.

Gargano's front facelock doesn't go anywhere so Jordan picks him up and drives Johnny into the corner. It's back to Gable and the fans are right back at their chanting. Chad's armbreaker over the rope has Gargano in even more trouble but it's quickly back to Ciampa who has even worse luck. The fans think this is awesome and are even happier when Gargano slingshots in with a spear for two on Gable as we take a break.

Back with the fans wanting the Gable to be saved but Ciampa puts a knee into Chad's ribs. Ciampa and Gargano take turns on an abdominal stretch with Gargano adding a running dropkick to the back of the head. Gable finally comes back with a judo throw and makes the tag to Jordan for some dropkicks.

There go the straps (I didn't know we were in Memphis) and it's time for a bunch of suplexes (I didn't know Memphis was next to Pittsburgh). Everything breaks down and Gargano slingshots in with a DDT for two on Jordan. Jason slips out of a double suplex and brings in Chad for the Grand Amplitude for the pin on Ciampa at 14:53.

**Rating:** B. The length surprised me here but they barely stopped the whole time out there. I'm really glad they just turned Gable and Jordan face because the fans were going to cheer for someone like Chad no matter what he did. Really fun and long match here with a ton of energy that you don't usually see on TV.

Bayley loves the fact that she's the Women's Champion and has no idea why Alexa Bliss has so many problems with her.

Eva Marie is in front of the Moulin Rouge. She's coming back very soon though. Sweet goodness they're embracing this one full boar.

#### Nia Jax vs. Kay Lee Ray

Nia throws her into the corner to start, rag dolls her a bit and puts her in a Canadian backbreaker. That's actually not the submission though and Ray rolls Jax up for two. Kay tries a springboard though and gets caught in a spinebuster. A big legdrop (with an even bigger smile) give Jax the pin at 2:38. That smile runs in the family.

#### Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Dawson and Wilder jump them during the entrance and crush Cassady's leg against the video board. I knew those things were going to get someone hurt someday. They work over the leg as Enzo is down and that's how Cass will be written off TV for a legitimate leg injury. No match.

Alexa Bliss challenges Bayley to find a team for a six person tag at some

point in the future.

It's time for part two of the Apollo Crews video. He can't believe he's here and that he wrestled in front of 16,000 people in Brooklyn on his birthday. Crews' sister can't believe he's been this successful because she sees him as her little brother. The battle royal was another way for him to prove that he can hang with anyone in NXT and now he wants his chance at his friend's NXT Title.

### Samoa Joe vs. Tyler Breeze

Breeze bails to the floor to start and the threat of a stomping keeps him on the floor. Back in and Tyler gets in a few shots to the back and poses on the ropes. That's enough for Joe and he hammers away in the corner to send Tyler back outside. A suicide dive crushes Breeze and takes us to a break. Back with Joe hammering away with the usual including the corner enziguri.

Tyler grabs a quick backstabber for one and a dropkick gets two. A chinlock doesn't get Breeze anywhere as Joe fights up with his variety of strikes and the backsplash for two. The Rock Bottom out of the corner sets up the Muscle Buster but Tyler escapes into a rollup for two more. Breeze nails a quick Supermodel Kick for two and both guys are down. It's time to slug it out with Breeze trying an O'Connor Roll, only to get flipped into the Koquina Clutch (Normally I would ask if he had ever watched a TNA match but that's a very stupid question.) for the tap out at 12:08.

**Rating:** B-. As usual Breeze is good for a solid performance against anyone he gets in the ring with and is still an awesome gatekeeper to get into the NXT main event. This wasn't a classic or anything but for a quick match to further establish Joe as a player in NXT, this did everything it needed to.

Finn Balor is ready for Apollo Crews, who has beaten everyone he's fought. He hasn't fought Finn Balor though, and Crews isn't becoming champion next week.

**Overall Rating:** B. Another week and another efficient use of NXT's time.

They did everything they needed to do this week and set up the non-Takeover big show next week with Crews getting his title shot. It's probably too early for him to have a major shot at Balor but it's still cool to see the champ in action. Good show here, as is definitely the standard for this promotion.

### Results

Emma b. Shazza – Emma Lock

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable b. Tommaso Ciampa/Johnny Gargano – Grand Amplitude to Ciampa

Nix Jax b. Kay Lee Ray – Legdrop

Samoa Joe b. Tyler Breeze – Koquina Clutch

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## **The Open Challenge Was Answered By.....**

A surprise.... ..AND HIS NAME IS ALBERTO DEL RIO!!!! As managed by none other than Zeb Colter. This is quite the

surprise but why not.

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# Reviewing the Review: NXT Takeover: Respect

I don't know why I don't do these for every Takeover since they're NXT pay per views. This felt like a show that was thrown together for the sake of having another Takeover on the calendar, but this is NXT where you can actually have faith in your wrestling product for a change. Let's get to it.

We're going to do this one a little differently as there are four matches that matter so let's get the filler out of the way first.

Asuka squashed Dana Brooke in her debut. This was exactly what it needed to be as Asuka destroyed Brooke like she was nothing and even got in a few shots on Emma for good measure. I'm not sure what Brooke and Emma do now but it's pretty clear that Asuka needs to be pushed as something important. Save for Nia Jax, there's really no one left to challenge Bayley so it almost has to be Asuka.

As bad as the reason is, I'm hoping that Eva injuring Carmella at that house show might show WWE that she's just not ready to compete at this level. With Asuka right there and whatever Jax has (she's an Anoa'i so you know she's got a good Samoan drop), Eva really would stick out even worse than she did before. Anyway this was an awesome debut for Asuka as she showed a bunch of striking and submission abilities as well as some awesome presence. What more can you ask for in less than six minutes?

Apollo Crews beat Tyler Breeze in the featured non-main event level match. This was a match where I really didn't know who was going to win going in, but it became pretty clear that Crews is a major deal in NXT. I'm not sure what they're going to do with Breeze, but NXT is the kind of

place where they can rebuild you after some losses. Breeze has earned the fans' and my respect already by taking what should have been a nothing comedy gimmick and turned it into one of the most consistent characters on the roster.

Breeze could become one heck of a face who wins with last minute superkicks but right now he's great as a gatekeeper heel who has good matches against anyone. Crews still needs a character but the same could be said of Finn Balor back in June and he turned out fine. I like that powerbomb better than the standing moonsault as you can only get so far on a move like that. It doesn't seem like someone kicking out of it would mean that much, but the powerbomb is an upgrade.

That leaves us with just the tournament and main event to go so let's look at the three tag matches in a row.

First up we had Finn Balor/Samoa Joe vs. the Mechanics. This was an old school work the body part, which makes perfect sense given that the Mechanics are basically Anderson tribute wrestlers. Balor tweaked his knee during the match which seemed to be the most logical idea going forward into the finals. That being said, Balor and Joe won anyway after a Muscle Buster into the Coup de Grace which hurt the knee even worse. This was old fashioned tag team work and amazingly enough it still worked just fine despite people saying that those old styles don't work anymore.

In the surprise of the night (at least going on) Rhyno/Baron Corbin beat Jason Jordan/Chad Gable. I was really stunned when Corbin pinned Jordan, but the more I think about how huge of a reaction Gable received the more sense it makes. You really don't want to divide the audience with something like Balor vs. Jordan and miss the reaction that you want with Finn. Gable is something really special and could be a big deal going forward in NXT.

As for the match, they changed up the formula here and went with a fast paced tag match with a ton of saves. This is another one of the many things that I love about NXT: they know how mix up a card and not be repetitive. That's one of the things that drives me crazy about WWE. How many times do you see the same finish or the same kind of match either on



the same card or in a row? Stop doing the same stuff and mix it up a little.

That takes us to the final which was the most disappointing match of the night. Balor/Joe won the tournament in a good enough match over Rhyno/Corbin, but Balor's knee injury never went anywhere. Yeah the heels worked it over for a good chunk of the match but the injury never went anywhere. I kept waiting on the injury to cost Balor something and it just never came. I'm assuming it sets up Balor vs. Joe in the future and the match wasn't bad but it didn't do anything for me.

The Rhodes Family presented the winners with a trophy. Nothing came of this but it was a nice moment.

Oh and no Dusty Finish? Really? Not once in the whole thing?

And then there's the main event. Sweet goodness how awesome are Bayley and Sasha together? This was one of the best put together matches I've seen in years as every single thing set up the next move. I'm having trouble picking the first thing to rave about in this. We'll start with Sasha torturing Izzy.

This is one of the most inspired ideas I've seen in a long time as they took something so basic and simple as a major fan and turned it into a plot device. It's thinking outside the box, which would probably get them protested on Raw because a bunch of stupid groups who claim they're doing the best thing for children don't understand the concept that kids can handle being sad if something good happens in the end.

Bayley wound up winning and Izzy was happy, but instead of experiencing joy, there are people out there who would rather kids never have any problems in their lives because that's how things will work in the real world right? I'll cut myself off there and stick with using Izzy was awesome and made the match.

Another awesome moment was Bayley stomping on Sasha's head to make her tap in a callback to Sasha stomping on Bayley's hand in Brooklyn in a failed attempt to make her give up. It makes Bayley look like the tougher of the two and the one who deserves to be champion for never quitting in

the end.

I can't praise this match enough and somehow it's just a step behind their classic in Brooklyn. This is in the running for feud of the year and this is their second great match in six weeks. Those aren't numbers you see very often and it more than lived up to the hype as the first time two women main evented a pay per view.

This show more than exceeded expectations and was carried by the wrestling instead of the storytelling, though the main event delivered on both. For a show that felt like it was there for the sake of having a show and to give a tournament a big stage, this worked incredibly well and I had a blast watching it. As usual, NXT doesn't know how to fail at a major show. London should be outstanding, as almost everything they put on is.

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**NXT Takeover: Respect: B-A-Y-L-E-Y V-S. S-A-S-H-A B-A-N-K-**

# S

## **NXT Takeover: Respect**

Date: October 7, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

This is one of the weaker looking Takeovers on paper as it's only been about six weeks since the last special. However, there are four major matches taking place tonight with a thirty minute women's Iron Man match for the Women's Title and the final three matches in the inaugural Dusty Classic Tag Team Tournament. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about Bayley having the title but now it's about earning respect.

### Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Semi-Finals: Finn Balor/Samoa Joe vs. Mechanics

There's no stage this time but just the screen and a flat aisle. Balor gets knocked outside to start so Joe pounds on Wilder. Dawson pulls his partner out of the way of a corner charge though and the villains take over. Balor finally gets back on the apron as his partner is getting beaten down but an enziguri allows for the tag to the champ. A pair of kicks put the Mechanics on the floor and Balor unleashes the big flip dive to get the crowd even more fired up.

Wilder saves Dawson from the Coup de Grace and Dawson chop blocks Balor to put the champ in trouble. The Mechanics start taking turns working on the knee, including wrapping it around the post and a half crab from Dawson. Balor avoids an elbow drop but Wilder takes Joe off the apron to keep Balor in trouble. This is classic tag team formula stuff so far and it still works. Wilder doesn't have as much luck though as Balor dives over and makes the tag to Joe for some house cleaning. There's the Muscle Buster to Wilder and Balor adds the Coup de Grace for the pin at 9:08 but Balor wrenched his knee again.

**Rating:** B. This is what NXT does best: simple, basic storytelling that

accomplishes everything they needed to take care of. Balor's knee is messed up going into the finals and you had a good match to get to the point. They didn't just do a three minute match to set up the long final but rather took their time and gave us something entertaining in the less important match. Well done, as usual.

Clips of NXT at the Louder than Life festival in Louisville.

### Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic: Semi-Finals: Chad Gable/Jason Jordan vs. Baron Corbin/Rhyno

Corbin throws Jordan around with ease so for some reason Baron tags out to Rhyno. A quick suplex gets two on Rhyno and Gable gets the same off a slingshot sunset flip. The fans are entirely behind Gable here (complete with a Gable chant to the tune of Kurt Angle's old music) as he starts on Rhyno's arm. Jordan comes in to do the same and a double northern lights suplex gets two on Rhyno.

Rhyno tries to throw Gable over the top but Chad grabs the armbars over the ropes to put him in even more trouble. Corbin gets in a few shots on the floor so Rhyno can take over with a chinlock. It's off to Corbin for a chinlock of his own (fans: "SAVE THE GABLES!") before Rhyno misses a top rope splash.

Gable crawls over and makes the tag and it's Jordan coming in to speed things up. Everything breaks down with Jordan cleaning house but he has to save Gable after the End of Days knocks him silly. Gable O'Connor rolls Corbin out of the corner into a German suplex (awesome) but Rhyno makes the save. There's a Gore to Jordan and the second End of Days puts Gable away at 10:27.

**Rating:** B. I liked this one a lot with all the insanity at the end but the ending is a big surprise. I really would have bet on Gable/Jordan winning the whole thing and then they don't even make it to the finals? It's not the worst idea in the world but it was the last thing I was expecting. Maybe they don't want to see Gable getting cheered on the same level as Balor but I'm still surprised at the ending.

Kevin Nash is here.

Video of Asuka.

### Asuka vs. Dana Brooke

Brooke has Emma with her. Asuka comes to the ring with a long robe and a white mask for a cool visual. Dana has no interest in a handshake and they fight over a wristlock with Asuka moving at twice Dana's speed. A slap to the face takes the taste out of Asuka's mouth but she just smiles at Dana. Asuka comes back with a quick striking rush and Dana's pose followed by a Fujiwara Armbar.

Emma finally helps her partner with a distraction and the handstand choke has Asuka in some trouble. Asuka comes right back with a snap German suplex and a cross armbreaker followed by a cross face chickenwing. There's a spinning elbow to knock Emma off the apron. Fans: "ASUKA CITY!" Dana is almost done and gets caught in another cross face chickenwing with a bodyscissors (the Asuka Lock) for the tap at 5:30.

**Rating:** B-. Well that worked. Asuka picked Dana apart and destroyed her in very short order with every bit of offense you could want to see in five minutes. This was a great debut for Asuka who looks like a killer and blows away everyone else in the division at the moment. Now as long as they keep it going this way instead of going with Eva Marie, everything will be fine.

Asuka takes Dana down again and stares at Emma post match.

Breast cancer is bad.

We look at Balor injuring his knee again.

Nia Jax finally arrives next week.

### Apollo Crews vs. Tyler Breeze

Crews powers him up against the ropes to start and knocks Tyler to the floor like he's nothing. A delayed vertical suplex gets two for Crews but Breeze leverages him out to the floor to take over again. Back in and Breeze starts in on the back with some knees and a chinlock with a knee in the spine. A sideways Backstabber gets two and sets up a Sharpshooter

of all things from Breeze.

Apollo makes the ropes and nails a jumping clothesline, followed by a BIG kick to the face to knock Tyler silly. The back gives out though and Breeze Supermodel Kicks him for two. Tyler dives into a powerslam for two and there's the gorilla press but Breeze gets the knees up to block the standing moonsault. Breeze gets all fired up with forearms but Apollo kicks him square in the jaw. Crews loads up a belly to back suplex but spins him around into a powerbomb for the pin at 9:47.

**Rating:** C+. I like the idea of having Crews do something other than the standing moonsault for a finisher as that's only going to take him so far. It's also really nice to see him face some adversity and overcome it for a change because it makes him easier to get behind instead of just someone to marvel over.

Hideo Itami is here.

We look back at tonight's first two tournament matches.

#### Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic Finals: Finn Balor/Samoa Joe vs. Baron Corbin/Rhyno

Balor is limping to the ring. Finn and Rhyno get things going and Corey immediately declares this as a dumb idea. Rhyno shoves the champ around with ease and it's off to Corbin for some feeling out. The knee starts to go out though so it's off to Joe for the rapid fire strikes in the corner. Off to Rhyno who has some more luck with a knee to the ribs before Corbin comes in again to a chorus of booing.

A big boot gets two on Joe but he comes back with the enziguri in the corner. Joe tags off to Balor who uses Corbin as a launching pad into a dropkick to Rhyno. The knee seems fine at first but it gives out again when he charges into the corner. That's fine with Balor though as he nails an enziguri, only to have Rhyno drill him in the knee again to take over. Balor's comeback is stopped with a Boss Man Slam for two but he comes back again with a Sling Blade out of nowhere.

The second hot tag brings in Joe to take over on Rhyno with the Rock

Bottom out of the corner and an STO to Corbin. A Gore gets two on Rhyno with Balor making the save, only to damage the knee again in the process. Another Gore is countered by a kick to the face and it's the Muscle Buster into the Coup de Grace for the pin and the tournament at 11:09.

**Rating:** B-. No Dusty Finish? Other than that disappointment, I can't find much to complain about here. The first two matches were better and the knee didn't really play into the finish, but I'm sure this leads to Joe vs. Balor in some way. Rhyno and Corbin weren't an option for winning the whole thing save for Balor and Joe imploding but at least they were an impressive looking opponent in the final. Also well done to have Rhyno take the fall instead of Corbin.

The Rhodes Family (with Stardust out of character) present Balor and Joe with the trophy. Cody talks about his dad being the oak of NXT and how his dad was beamed into homes around the world for over forty years. Tonight, we are all part of the Rhodes family. Dusty's theme music plays with nothing from Joe or Balor.

Stephanie (of course), Charlotte, Becky Lynch and Lita are in the front row.

We recap Bayley taking the title in Brooklyn and Sasha wanting a rematch. The result is tonight's 30 minute Iron Man match for the title. We also see some more of Bayley training in an awesome montage.

#### Women's Title: Bayley vs. Sasha Banks

Bayley is defending and this is an Iron Man match, meaning the most falls (pin, submission, countout or disqualification) in thirty minutes wins. We get the entrances following the girls to the ring, thankfully with no talking from the announcers. Bayley has a cape and Iron Man colors, meaning my life is complete. Fans: "WOMEN'S WRESTLING!"

They stare each other down and there's no contact until a little over a minute in. A lockup gets us to Sasha holding a headlock, followed by some rollups for two. Bayley gets some rollups of her own for two each and a pinfall reversal sequence gives us even more near falls. Sasha gets in the first big move with a dropkick to knock the champ into the corner but

Bayley comes back with a Japanese armdrag to drop Sasha on her head for two. That looked bad but Sasha seems to be ok.

We're five minutes in and Sasha sends her into the corner with a top rope wristdrag. Both finishers are blocked and Sasha chills in the corner. Sasha suckers her in and pulls the hair to get a quick two but it ticks Bayley off. Some hard elbows and a clothesline put Sasha on the floor. Bayley keeps the pressure on with a dropkick under the bottom rope (ala Sami Zayn) and a bulldog back inside for two. Both of them nearly crush the referee in the corner but Sasha uses this to her advantage and pokes Bayley in the eye for the first fall at 8:32.

Bayley rams her face first into the buckle over and over but gets sent into them herself. Both of them are banged up as we're ten minutes in. The double knees in the corner are countered into something like Snake Eyes and the Bayley to Belly ties it up at 10:55. Sasha bails to the floor so Bayley tries the sliding kick again. Banks catches her coming in this time though (I love psychology) and slams Bayley into the steps, right in front of her family and Izzy in a nice touch. Sasha throws her into the steps two more times and makes sure to talk trash to the family. Bayley kicks out at two and the fans are chanting for Izzy.

The champ is thrown to the floor and bangs her knee on the landing. Sasha whips her into the video board and it's a countout to give Sasha a 2-1 lead at 14:12. Banks steals Izzy's headband and throws it at her, making Izzy cry to get the fans entirely on Bayley's side. Bayley beats the count back in at fifteen minutes to go but Banks starts right in on her back. Sasha is brimming with confidence as she slaps on a Liantamer and stomps on the bad hand for old times' sake. Bayley makes the rope and grabs a fluke rollup to tie us up at 2-2 with 12:38 to go.

The double knees in the corner miss again and Bayley makes the comeback with ax handles to the face followed by an awkward looking spinning facebuster for two. The middle rope back elbow gets the same and Bayley's hair is almost down. Bayley puts her in the Tree of Woe for a running springboard elbow as we have ten minutes left.

Banks crotches her on top and now the double knees hit (great job of



building that move up) for two. Bayley kicks her to the floor as the fans think it's better than Raw (time for Vince and Dunn to crush this show then). Now Bayley starts working on Sasha's hand and the fans want Izzy to slap Banks. The arm gets snapped across the middle rope and Sasha falls out to the floor again.

Bayley starts setting up the steps and Izzy looks like she's about to cry again. Sasha's hand is slammed into the steps again and a clothesline off the steps puts her on the floor. She's still able to kick Bayley into the steps though and the champ is in trouble again. Sasha's suicide dive is caught and a Bayley to Belly on the floor knocks her silly. Somehow that only gets two back inside and we've got five minutes to go.

Bayley puts her on the middle rope and a running super Bayley to Belly gets....two as the cover sent Sasha's feet into the ropes. Three minutes left and they're both spent. Bayley loads up the reverse hurricanrana but Sasha lands on her feet and hits a Bayley to Belly of her own. There's the Bank Statement and Sasha spins her away from the ropes. She can't get the full hold on though due to the hand injury from earlier.

Sasha kicks away from the ropes and gets a better version on with a minute left. Bayley reaches up and bends the hand back for the break before slamming the bad hand into the mat to get out. Sasha hooks the backbreaker to set up another Bank Statement but Bayley rolls through into an armbar while cranking on the hand with ten seconds left. Bayley KICKS HER IN THE HEAD until Sasha taps with three seconds left to retain Bayley's title at 30:00 by a score of 3-2.

**Rating:** A. It's not as good as the Brooklyn match (I underrated that one horribly. If that wasn't an A+, nothing is.) but my goodness they were feeling the drama and storytelling here. The back work from Banks worked perfectly but it made sense that Bayley didn't give up because of Sasha's hand injury. Bayley got WAY more aggressive than she ever has before here and it felt like a battle instead of just a match. Really good stuff here and I had a blast with it.

Bayley looks drained as the roster comes out to the entrance to help Sasha up. HHH presents Bayley with a bouquet and she soaks in the cheers.

Bayley and Sasha smile at each other to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** A. I'm still trying to catch my breath about five minutes after the show ended. This was AWESOME with the main event stealing the show all over again. Those two are something special and they know they are. The rest of the show was all really good stuff too with the worst match probably being Asuka putting on a show against Brooke. I had a blast tonight and it blew away my expectations, as these things almost always do.

### Results

Finn Balor/Samoa Joe b. Mechanics – Coup de Grace to Wilder

Rhyno/Baron Corbin b. Chad Gable/Jason Jorda – End of Days to Gable

Asuka b. Dana Brooke – Asuka Lock

Apollo Crews b. Tyler Breeze – Spinning powerbomb

Finn Balor/Samoa Joe b. Baron Corbin/Rhyno – Coup de Grace to Rhyno

Bayley b. Sasha Banks 3-2

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# NXT Takeover: Respect Preview

For some reason I don't think I've ever done one of these for a Takeover. These things are the NXT pay per views though so it's definitely worth looking at a little bit closer. This one does feel like it's slapped together and really not necessary, but at least you have a series of big matches that should eat up a lot of time. Let's get to it.

Let's get the smaller matches out of the way first.

I'll take Asuka over Dana Brooke. Brooke has been built up as a threat but Asuka feels like something special. I'm not saying Asuka is going to be the next top challenger, but I'll take her over Eva Marie's comedy show any day.

Apollo Crews over Tyler Breeze, though Breeze really needs a big win at some point.

As for the main event, of course Bayley wins though Sasha is likely getting a fall here or there. I'm sure the ending will have a bunch of drama, likely with Bayley locked in the Bank Statement with time running out and wondering if she'll give up or not. There's no way they're taking the belt off of her yet though. There has never been a repeat champion in NXT and I can't picture it happening now with Sasha looking like she's going after the Divas Title.

Now for the tournament, which could go more than one way. We'll start with the only easy match in the field: Jordan/Gable beat Rhyno/Corbin. They've got something special with Gable and I think they know it. There's no way they're going to put Rhyno and Corbin over them and into a final they have no chance of winning.

That brings us to the more complicated match as Finn Balor/Samoa Joe face the Mechanics. It's no secret that Balor and Joe are going to be feuding at some point in the future. However, the question becomes do they lose and argue over whose fault it was or do they win the whole thing and then fight over who was the more important member of the team? Or do they win the whole thing and then Joe gets a shot as a sign of respect? I'm not

sure if they win the whole thing or not, but I do think they advance to the finals.

So that leaves Joe/Balor vs. Gable/Jordan for the title. I think I'm going with Gable/Jordan here as they're a good choice for the next challengers to the titles and you can have Balor vs. Joe at the next Takeover. Or, they go with Gable/Jordan but a DUSTY FINISH gives it back to Joe/Balor. Seriously if they don't go with a Dusty Finish at some point, I'm going to be disappointed.

Overall this show feels....unnecessary. This feels like they're giving Full Sail a Takeover to make up for Brooklyn because they're afraid Full Sail will be offended. I have confidence in NXT to pull something off though and they're guaranteed to have some entertaining matches along the way, but I'm hoping we don't have another one of these for a good while. Like until London in late December.

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