

NXT – October 19, 2021: Rapid Fire Time

NXT

Date: October 19, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Wade Barrett

Things got a bit more intense at the end of last week's show as Carmelo Hayes cashed in his Breakout Tournament contract to become the new North American Champion. Odds are we'll deal with some fallout, plus we have Halloween Havoc coming up next week. That might mean some spinning the wheel and making the deal so let's get to it.

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

Here are Trick Williams and Carmelo Hayes to celebrate Hayes winning the North American Title last week. They aren't humble, so tonight is the start of the Mellowbration, which seems to please the fans. Hayes talks about how great he is and says that he is holding this title, which is now the A title, for a long time.

Cue Johnny Gargano, who says that he has been busy as of late, but now Candice LeRae is off pregnant and Austin Theory is on Raw, so now it's time for him to get back in the ring. Gargano issues the challenge, but Trick says that Indi Hartwell has been in their DM's all week. With that, Dexter Lumis pops up behind them and the Way clears the ring. Lumis scares Williams and Gargano is left looking at the North American Title. Gargano and Lumis share a thumbs up as Gargano holds up the title.

Odyssey Jones vs. Andre Chase

Chase dedicates his win to the student section. We start with

an ODYSSEY chant as Jones shoves him down with ease to start. Chase realizes that isn't going to work so he starts kicking at the legs to take Jones down. The double stomp puts Jones in trouble and there's a short DDT for two. Jones isn't having that and shoves Chase away, setting up a big slam and splash for the pin at 2:54.

Malcolm Bivens wants the Creed Brothers to get a chance.

Creed Brothers vs. Imperium

The rest of the Diamond Mine is here with the Brothers. Barthel takes Brutus down to start but Brutus pops up with a belly to belly to escape. Back up and a heck of a big boot cuts Brutus down so it's off to Julius, who gets hit in the face. Hold on though as Roderick Strong gets in a quick distraction, allowing Julius to plant Barthel and take over.

The chinlock brings Barthel back to life and it's off to Aichner to start cleaning house. A cheap shot takes Aichner down so Barthel comes back in, only to dive into a gutwrench powerbomb for two. Cue Kushida and Ikemen Jiro to go after the Diamond Mine though, allowing Barthel to grab a rollup for the pin at 5:39.

Rating: C. I'm really not sure I would be having the Creed Brothers taking falls for a long time, though at least it wasn't clean. Imperium is probably getting the Tag Team Title shot against MSK sooner than later, likely at Halloween Havoc. Not the most exciting match, but they hit each other hard and it was an interesting pairing.

Post match the Diamond Mine and Kushida/Ikemen Jiro go to the back, allowing MSK to come in and jump Imperium, again drawing the ire of the fans. MSK clears the ring and challenges Imperium for the Tag Team Title match next week.

Kyle O'Reilly was supposed to meet Von Wagner for a bike ride but Wagner didn't bring a bike. Instead they go to the woods

and work out with large pieces of wood/in the trees. Beers are consumed.

Joe Gacy doesn't like violence or people who make any micro aggression. He will speak for us as a coalition and we will be stronger together. Gacy extends his hand and here is Harland to put his hand there too, with Gacy calling him little snowflake.

Here is Legado del Fantasma for a chat. The first words Santos Escobar ever heard in this business were "may God always bless you with luck", which was always the case, at least until last week. Carmelo Hayes is a lucky son of a ***** but Escobar and Lady Luck are going to find him. Elektra Lopez is about to speak but Cora Jade and her skateboard interrupt.

Elektra Lopez vs. Cora Jade

The bigger Lopez powers her into the corner to start and whips Jade hard into another corner. A toss out of said corner has Jade in more trouble as this has been one sided so far. Then Jade grabs a small package for the pin at 1:47, though Lopez seemed to be out a good bit before the pin.

Bron Breaker tells Tommaso Ciampa to watch himself in their tag match tonight. Ciampa says he's going to follow Breaker's lead.

Grayson Waller thinks he should host Halloween Havoc.

LA Knight thinks he should host Halloween Havoc.

Io Shirai vs. Persia Pirotta vs. Jacy Jayne

The winner gets to spin the wheel for next week's Women's Tag Team Title match. It's a three way slap off to start until Pirotta clotheslines both of them down. Shirai isn't having that and dropkicks Pirotta down for two as the fans are WAY behind Shirai here. Pirotta is back up to suplex both of them before throwing Jayne in a fireman's carry. That's broken up

by Shirai's dropkick, sending Jayne into a Samoan drop.

With Pirotta sent outside, Jayne tries a suicide dive but gets her feet caught in the ropes and faceplants on the floor for a SCARY crash. Pirotta immediately checks on her and Shirai adds a moonsault to send us to a break. Back with Jayne gone (as she should be after that landing) and Pirotta kicking Shirai in the face for two. A hard clothesline gets the same but Shirai tries a comeback.

That's cut off with a Batista Bomb to give Pirotta two more but a kick to the head puts her into the ropes. There's the 619 into a springboard (with a bit of a slip) missile dropkick to give Shirai two. We hit the Crossface on Pirotta but she powers out, only to get caught in a German suplex. The Moon Over Moonsault finishes Pirotta (ignore Shirai's shoulders being down too) at 11:21.

Rating: C-. This was a hard one to rate as they had to shake everything up due to the injury. Shirai had to put in some effort to beat Pirotta in a glorified singles match, which is about how it should have been. Pirotta is brand new around here and shouldn't be beating a former Women's Champion on her own. Hopefully Jayne is ok though, as that was a terrifying landing.

Post match, we spin the wheel and it's going to be a ladder match. Jayne got hurt in a regular match and you want her in a ladder match?

Legado del Fantasma has beaten up Trey Baxter while Cora Jade had to watch. Josh Briggs and Brooks Jensen made the save.

Tony D'Angelo knows everyone is talking about him and it's time for him to do it again.

Solo Sikoa is still coming.

Ikemen Jiro and Kushida are ready to go back to the future.

The lights turn blue for some reason.

Tony D'Angelo vs. Ru Feng

D'Angelo grabs a headlock to start and, after shrugging off a kick to the face, elbows Feng down. A short arm clothesline sets up a northern lights suplex, rolled into a fisherman's neckbreaker to give D'Angelo the pin at 1:47.

Post match D'Angelo is questioned about Lash Legend's producer missing so he pays off the interviewer and says forgetaboutit.

We're in Duke Hudson's Poker Room where we can hear Hudson's thoughts about his hand. Hudson wins, then wins again.

Legado del Fantasma has jumped Brooks Jensen and Josh Briggs before their tag match.

Legado del Fantasma vs. Josh Briggs/Brooke Jensen

Joined in progress with the rest of Legado at ringside. Jensen fights back against Mendoza and hands it off to Briggs to send him flying. Elektra Lopez distracts the referee though and Santos Escobar gets in a cheap shot so Wilde can take over. Briggs gets send into the corner for some running clotheslines from both of them, setting up a double slam to plant Briggs again.

Back up and Briggs manages to toss Mendoza outside and kicks Wilde away, allowing the diving tag to bring Jensen in. Everything breaks down and a powerslam puts Wilde down for two. A backdrop makes it worse for Wilde but Jensen heads outside to deck Escobar. The distraction lets Mendoza jump Jensen from behind though, setting up the Russian legsweep/running kick to the face to give Wilde the pin at 5:17.

Rating: C. Briggs and Jensen are an easy gimmick to understand and what they're doing works rather well, though I'm not sure if they make sense as good guys. Big bar fighters scream heels

most of the time, but it's not like this has been a terrible thing. They can fight in anywhere and they do look the part, so maybe we're on to something with them, despite a loss here.

Video on Mandy Rose vs. Raquel Gonzalez for the Women's Title next week. Gonzalez wants to be champion for the competition while Rose wants to be champion because it makes her look better.

The mystery man is still in the graveyard, with a broken mirror, playing cards and a WWE chair. Whoever it is debuts next week.

Trick Williams and Carmelo Hayes are looking for the North American Title. They search through Ikemen Jiro's locker (Williams: "HOW MANY JACKETS DOES THIS GUY HAVE???") but find a drawing from Dexter Lumis. It's an invitation to an open haunted house next week, though Williams is a bit scared. Hayes wants his title back.

LA Knight vs. Grayson Waller

The winner is the Halloween Havoc host. Waller rolls him up for two to start but Knight cuts off a jump in the corner. The chinlock goes on but the fans get behind Waller again. Waller tries to fight up and hits the jumping Stunner, only to have Knight hit him in the face. Blunt Force Trauma makes Knight the host at 2:45.

Halloween Havoc rundown.

Tommaso Ciampa/Bron Breakker vs. Grizzled Young Veterans

Drake headlocks Breakker to start but gets taken down with a shoulder. Breakker tells Drake to try his own running shoulder, which does not go well for Drake. With Drake in trouble, Ciampa tags himself in, much to Breakker's annoyance. Ciampa scores with a series of running clotheslines, including a double clothesline to put both Veterans down.

Back with the Veterans working over Ciampa's arm and cutting off a comeback attempt in a hurry. A double shot to the face doesn't do much good though as Ciampa chops right back. Drake Downward Spirals Ciampa into the Kofi Clutch but Ciampa slips out. That's fine with Drake, who pulls on his beard like a real villain.

Ciampa fights up and smacks Breakker for the tag, meaning it's time to clean house. Breakker isn't happy with that and teases clotheslining Ciampa but takes Drake down instead. The straps come down but the Breakker Recliner is broke up by Gibson. That's fine with Breakker, who clears Gibson out and hits the gorilla press powerslam for the pin on Drake at 10:59.

Rating; C+. Remember all those times when WWE has people who are about to face each other in a big match team up and beat an established team while teasing tension? Well this is the most recent version, as this was every tired, worn out version of the same idea that we have seen forever now. I wasn't interested when it was announced and I was bored while it was going on, as it just isn't that interesting of an idea. The match itself was completely fine due to the talent involved, but can we please retire this idea already?

Breakker yells at Ciampa and wants him to come back in to end. Ciampa joins him in the ring for the staredown to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. I'm really not sure what to think about this one, as it did feel like a big hype show for Halloween Havoc, but nothing stood out whatsoever. They have done a good job of cutting back on the rapid fire debuts and new characters, but at the same time they have cut back on anything being overly interesting. Next week should be better as NXT knows how to do big shows, though I'm not sure how much interest they are going to be able to bring. This was another one sized fits all show, with almost everything being right in the middle or at least pretty close to it. That's good in a

way, but it's not the most exciting.

Results

Odyssey Jones b. Andre Chase – Splash

Imperium b. Creed Brothers – Rollup to Julius

Cora Jade b. Elektra Lopez – Small package

Io Shirai b. Persia Pirotta and Jacy Jayne – Moon Over Moonsault to Pirotta

Tony D'Angelo b. Ru Feng – Fisherman's neckbreaker

Legado del Fantasma b. Brooks Jensen/Josh Briggs – Russian legsweep/running boot combination to Jensen

LA Knight b. Grayson Waller – Blunt Force Trauma

Tommaso Ciampa/Bron Breaker b. Grizzled Young Veterans – Gorilla press powerslam to Drake

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NXT – October 5, 2021: Fighting With The Fans

NXT

Date: October 5, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph

Things are starting to come together around here and that's a good thing. Now, instead of bringing in a bunch of new people, we're seeing those wrestlers getting to do something. The pieces that have been introduced are now being put into some stories and that's a positive sign. Let's get to it.

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

The opening video looks at the Tag Team Title situation. Tonight's scheduled eight man tag has been changed into a four way for the titles.

Mandy Rose vs. Ember Moon

The rest of Toxic Attraction is here with Mandy. Moon takes her down to start and Mandy bails to the floor, meaning it's a suicide dive to take the team out. Back in and Mandy kicks away in the corner, setting up a bodyscissors. Moon fights up and slugs away, including a heck of a discus forearm. A middle rope Codebreaker drops Mandy again but Moon has to bail out of an Eclipse attempt. Mandy's running knee finishes Moon at 4:35.

Rating: C-. If they want to make Mandy into the next big thing, this is how you go about doing it: short matches where she can pick up wins, including over someone like Moon. While she has fallen a long way, Moon still has some name value and it is a good move to have Rose go over her. Mandy plays her part well, and keeping the match short made it even better.

Legado de Fantasma isn't done with Hit Row and Santos Escobar wants Isaiah Scott's North American Title.

Odyssey Jones vs. LA Knight

Jones throws him around to start, including one heck of a toss into the corner. Knight needs a breather on the floor before Jones runs him over back inside. Knight manages to get in a shot of his own but a cover only gets one. For some reason Knight tries a slam, which goes as well for him as you would expect. Cue Andre Chase for a distraction though and Knight scores with a jumping neckbreaker for the pin at 4:02.

Rating: C. Another short match and again, that is probably the right idea. Jones is a huge guy and it should be a case of less is more. Don't let the fans get worn out on a guy that size who can move like that. Let him get the crowd's attention and then leave, as now they want to see him pummel Chase, as is the plan.

Cameron Grimes says love is in the air around here and wants to find a lucky lady of her own. Pete Dunne and Ridge Holland come up with Dunne throwing out a challenge for tonight. Grimes heads off to hit on some women instead.

Kyle O'Reilly asks Von Wagner why he has been helping him. Wagner says he respects O'Reilly but Kyle doesn't trust anyone. O'Reilly appreciates it but wants Wagner to leave him alone. Wagner is going to need some help with the talking.

Here is Tommaso Ciampa for a chat. Halloween Havoc is back on October 26 and the champ needs a challenger. He knows that Bron Breakker has been circling around but who has the guts to come out here and face him? Cue Bron Breakker, who says he doesn't care how long he has been here because he wants the NXT Title. Ciampa says Breakker wants the title but Ciampa needs it. Breakker sees it as a stepping stone to something bigger and better, but to Ciampa, it is something bigger and better. That leaves Breakker with three weeks to get ready,

because challenge accepted. Breaker's Steiner was showing here again.

Joe Gacy talks about how he wasn't worried when social media crashed yesterday. Tonight, the ring is his safe space.

Persia Pirotta is here with Indi Hartwell and talking about how great the honeymoon was. Indi wore Dexter Lumis out by going through two packs. After saying Lumis is 9.5, they find a door with smoke coming out from underneath and find...Tian Sha, who throws them out.

Joe Gacy vs. Ikemen Jiro

Jiro shoulders him to start and Gacy encourages him to do it again. That earns him a running armdrag and a hurricanrana, meaning Gacy wants a breather. Gacy runs him over but Jiro slips out of a slam. Jiro tosses him down again but misses the Ikemen Slash. The handspring clothesline finishes for Gacy at 3:08.

Rating: D+. I don't remember the last time I've seen a gimmick that beat you over the head as hard as Gacy. There might as well be a big sign over his head explaining the joke every time for how subtle the whole thing is. It isn't funny and the matches aren't exactly great, but I'm sure the people writing it are having a great time so we aren't getting away from it anytime soon.

Post match, Gacy picks him up for a bit of an awkward hug. As Gacy leaves, a guy stares down at him from the stands and Gacy smiles back up at him.

Cora Jade likes to skateboard.

Duke Hudson is a wrestler and a professional poker player with his own Duke's Poker Room. He'll take your belt or your money. Or your Swinger's Palace.

Cora Jade vs. Virginia Ferry

Hold on though as here is Frankie Monet to jump Ferry and take her place.

Cora Jade vs. Frankie Monet

Monet hits the running knees in the corner to start so here is Trey Baxter to cheer Jade on. A stomp has Jade in more trouble and a spear cuts her in half. Not that it matters as Jade rolls her up for the pin at 2:04.

The Grizzled Young Veterans come up to MSK in the back. Let's just make the title match elimination rules? Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen and Trick Williams/Carmelo Hayes come in for the brawl.

Tommaso Ciampa is ready for Bron Breakker but Joe Gacy comes in. Gacy thinks Ciampa is putting forth his privilege as champion and would like a shot of his own. Ciampa says if Gacy can beat him next week, Halloween Havoc can be a three way. Just remember that the ring isn't going to be a safe space for Gacy.

Pete Dunne vs. Cameron Grimes

Ridge Holland is here with Dunne. They trade wristlocks to start with Dunne getting the better of things. Back up and a running hurricanrana gets Grimes out of trouble, setting up an armdrag into an armbar. Dunne kicks him down again but misses a charge in the corner, allowing Grimes to hit a good high crossbody for two. A double stomp to the hands slows Grimes back down but he is back up with a bridging German suplex for two more. Holland goes for the distraction, drawing out Kyle O'Reilly for the save. The distraction lets Dunne hit the Bitter End for the pin at 5:40.

Rating: C+. I could have gone for more of this as these two had some chemistry. It's always nice to see some of the people who can have a good match getting the chance to do so and it worked out well enough here. Dunne winning off the distraction

is fine as Grimes saves some face, but he's over enough that a loss to a more established star isn't going to hurt him.

Post match Dunne and Holland lay out O'Reilly.

Hit Row isn't running from NXT but running to the money. Smackdown wanted them and that's where they're going. They're ready to finish things with Legado del Fantasma and Santos Escobar can have his title shot.

During the break, Von Wagner helped Kyle O'Reilly up.

Tony D'Angelo vs. Malik Blade

The fans go nuts for D'Angelo, who talks a lot and grabs a headlock to start. A running shoulder sets up another headlock as commentary talks about D'Angelo's, ahem, businesses, with all the subtlety of a pair of concrete shoes. Blade manages to get in a shot and head outside, only to walk into a spear. A waistlock sets up an abdominal stretch but Blade fights up and hits a high crossbody. Some rolling suplexes set up a fisherman's neckbreaker to finish Blade at 4:44.

Rating: C. Oh man this has potential. The fans were loving D'Angelo and it certainly felt like a case where they're in on the joke of how bad he really is. D'Angelo looks like an athlete but there were a lot of instances of pausing for holds here as it didn't seem like they were ready. The fans were absolutely loving it though and it is a rare case where they were able to bring this WAY higher than it would have been otherwise.

Carmelo Hayes and Trick Williams are bout it and ready to win the Tag Team Titles without using Hayes' contract.

Indi Hartwell vs. Mei Ying

Persia Pirotta is here with Hartwell and Boa is with Ying. We get a MRS. LUMIS chant as Ying hammers away to start and grabs the nerve hold. The Tongan Death Grip has Indi on the floor

but Ying lets go and kicks Persia in the face by mistake. Indi posts Ying and hits a springboard clothesline for the surprise pin at 2:52.

Lash Legend is talking about how great her show will be next week. Tony D'Angelo comes in and wants to be her guest, which works for Legend. She takes credit for shutting down Facebook and Instagram yesterday because her show was so hot.

Malcolm Bivens introduces the Diamond Mine and gives us a quick bio of every member. More stuff like this please, as you need to get to know these people.

Raquel Gonzalez thinks Mandy Rose's hair dye has gotten into her brain because Mandy doesn't know who she is messing with. Touch her title again and Mandy can start posing for a body cast. Cue Toxic Attraction to say Raquel is coming off desperate. The three of them talk about how great they are but Gonzalez says she can only look at the staples in Gigi Dolin's head from when Gonzalez hit her with the belt. Jacy Jayne says they'll hold all of the gold soon because they're THE attraction. Gonzalez is surrounded but Zoey Stark and Io Shirai run in for the save.

Von Wagner comes in to tell Kyle O'Reilly that they're facing Pete Dunne and Ridge Holland. O'Reilly isn't happy.

Raquel Gonzalez, Io Shirai and Zoey Stark are ready for Toxic Attraction but Indi Hartwell and Persia Pirotta come in to say they're coming for the titles. Shirai said the only gold they're wearing is in their ears.

Tag Team Titles: Grizzled Young Veterans vs. Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen vs. Trick Williams/Carmelo Hayes vs. MSK

MSK is defending and it's elimination rules. Wes Lee rolls Zack Gibson up for two to start and it's off to Nash Carter for the rapid fire kicks to the chest. That's enough to send Gibson over for the tag to Hayes, who drops Lee in a hurry.

Williams comes in and clotheslines Jensen, who cuts Hayes off with an atomic drop. A double shoulders sends Hayes over to Williams, who gets booted in the face. Lee comes back in and sends Williams outside for a suicide dive. Back in and the Hart Attack Blockbuster pins Williams at 3:55.

We take a break and come back with the Veterans working over Lee, including some choking on the ropes. Lee gets away and brings Carter back in though, allowing house to be cleaned. A moonsault to the floor drops the Veterans but Gibson drops Lee. Briggs makes a blind tag though and a double powerbomb finishes Gibson to get rid of the Veterans at 10:30. Briggs' running boot into a Russian legsweep from Jensen gets two on Lee. There's a huge double spinebuster to plant Lee again but Carter breaks up the double powerbomb. Lee hurricanranas Jensen to retain at 12:32.

Rating: C+. I like the elimination rules, but MSK needs to drop the titles pretty soon. That being said, outside of the Veterans, who are they supposed to drop them to? The country boys? Hayes and the new guy who shouts bout it all the time? I'm sure the Veterans aren't gimmicky enough for this NXT though and that shouldn't be a big surprise. Nice match, but they need to shake up the titles sooner than later.

Post match Briggs and Jensen pick up the titles...and hand them to MSK. The fans want Melo but get Imperium jumping MSK instead. Briggs and Jensen run in for a late save. Fans: "THANK YOU IMPERIUM!" This really didn't do the division or the titles any favors, but there is in fact a division there now, which is more than you can say about the main roster.

Overall Rating: C. This was a big step back for NXT and I'm scared that it's a sign of things to come. A lot of this show felt like WWE saying "this is what you're getting and we don't care if you like it". Maybe the live fans were complaining for the sake of complaining, but it was pretty clear that they weren't happy with a good bit of this.

Between Toxic Attraction doing their best Beautiful People impression to Duke Hudson suddenly copying Johnny Swinger to that wacky Joe Gacy to Imperium vs. MSK, there wasn't much to get excited about around here. That seems to be NXT in a nutshell, but at least Vince's lovable gang of goons have their jobs instead of HHH right?

Results

Mandy Rose b. Ember Moon – Running knee

LA Knight b. Odyssey Jones – Jumping neckbreaker

Joe Gacy b. Ikemen Jiro – Handspring lariat

Cora Jade b. Frankie Monet – Victory roll

Pete Dunne b. Cameron Grimes – Bitter End

Tony D'Angelo b. Malik Blade – Fisherman's neckbreaker

Indi Hartwell b. Mei Ying – Springfield clothesline

MSK b. Grizzled Young Veterans, Josh Briggs/Brooks Jensen and Carmelo Hayes/Trick Williams last eliminating Briggs/Brooks Jensen

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NXT – September 28, 2021: More Like It

NXT

Date: September 28, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett

It's time to focus on the women's division as we have several women's matches taking place this week. This includes a pair of title matches, plus a grudge match. That's the easy part though. The fun part is finding out how many new people can be brought in with little to no explanation. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Here is Hit Row to get things going. They run down tonight's focus on the women's matches and wonder why no one is coming after Isaiah Scott's North American Title? B Fab is ready to take out Elektra Lopez, so here is Legado del Fantasma to make things serious.

B Fab vs. Elektra Lopez

No DQ and the brawl starts on the floor before the bell. B Fab kicks Lopez in the head and they're outside in a hurry, with the guys getting in a big brawl of their own as we take a break. Back with a fight over a table, with Lopez driving it into B Fab's ribs. They get back in with a bunch of weapons joining them. B Fab grabs some kendo sticks to swing away but Lopez crossbodies her through an open chair. Lopez drops her ribs first across the top of the open chair, setting up a Blue Thunder Bomb to put B Fab away at 10:05.

Rating: B-. They had a hard hitting match here and it worked

well given how little experience both of them have around here. Again, I'm still not sure why the regular television shows are going more extreme than most of the Extreme Rules pay per view, but at least we are getting some better stuff this week.

We go to InDex's honeymoon, with the two of them walking on the beach. Johnny Gargano and Candice LeRae are watching from the balcony of a hotel room and LeRae suggests that more things are going to happen. Dexter seems to like how Indi looks coming out of the water and Gargano panics. Then a shark starts coming up from the water and....yeah it's Gargano with a shark fin on his head.

Here is Joe Gacy, to say that the ring is still a safe space and he has not been canceled. He has made a bigger impact than stars like Tommaso Ciampa and Bron Breakker, because he didn't throw a punch. Gacy speaks for a generation while the rest of them lives in a dark world. Then last week he was shunned, but now he is here to usher the world into a new normal. Woke, as written by WWE.

Xyon Quin vs. Oney Lorcan

It's a 205 Live rematch and Quin knocks Lorcan outside to start. Back in and Lorcan runs him over, setting up a quickly broken chinlock. Quin fights up with a Samoan drop and finishes with a running forearm at 2:58. They might have something with Quin, just based on his look.

Grayson Waller talks about being a thrill junkie who loves to take chances. Now he's taking a chance by going after the Cruiserweight Title. Why are we getting these (good and useful) vignettes explaining people AFTER we've been confused by their debuts?

Here is MSK for a chat. They have been champions for awhile now and they are going to keep smoking the division. Cue the Grizzled Young Veterans, who say that they want their two on

two title shot but here are Trick Williams and Carmelo Hayes to interrupt. Hayes says they are going to be champions because he has the golden ticket. MSK is good with that but Zack Gibson wants to know why everyone is talking in riddles. Cue Josh Briggs and Brooks Jensen, who want in on this too. The brawl is on among the challengers and MSK hold up the titles. MSK really need challengers so this was a messy but necessary segment.

Raquel Gonzalez is ready for Frankie Monet but Toxic Attraction comes in, with Mandy Rose saying the title will look better on her.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Toxic Attraction vs. Io Shirai/Zoey Stark

Shirai and Stark are defending and Mandy Rose is here with the challengers. Shirai flips away from Dolin to start, though she can't quite get the nip up right. The second takedown sets up a more successful nip up and it's off to Jayne, who gets taken down in the corner. Stark comes in for some rapid fire rollups as commentary talks about how the champs never defend their titles. That's because they don't have much need to exist, but that has never stopped WWE before.

Stark chops her down and hits a slingshot Swanton for two. Dolin comes in off a blind tag and kicks Stark down but the champs are back up with some springboard dropkicks. Some dives to the floor have Attraction in trouble and we take a break. Back with Jayne hitting a running knee to Shirai's face. Shirai is back with a kick to the face though and the tag brings in Stark to hit people in the face.

Stark gets knocked into the corner though and it's back to Shirai to clean house again. A 619 sets up a springboard missile dropkick for two on Dolin as Rose is panicking on the floor. Everything breaks down and it's Stark hitting her GTS on Jayne...and tagging out instead of covering for no apparent

reason. Stark dives onto Dolin but stops to glare at Rose. Shirai hits the Moon Over Moonsault to retain at 12:43.

Rating: C+. I would have bet on the title change here, but that would mean a regular team holding the titles instead of a wacky tag team with nothing in common and that's not how WWE rolls. Toxic Attraction is a fine enough idea and they can work well in the ring, though it seems like they're only around as lackeys for Rose more than anything else.

Video on Bron Breaker, who still feels like Scott Steiner and wants to be NXT Champion.

Tommaso Ciampa joins us via Facetime to say that Breaker is talented but let's hold off on the Hall of Fame induction for now. Breaker is a stud but it took Ciampa over 900 days to get back the title that he never lost. They'll face each other one day and Breaker will drown in an ocean of inexperience.

Andre Chase vs. Boa

Chase doesn't think much of Tian Sha and grabs an armbar to start. A suplex sends Boa flying and it's time to stomp away. Chase puts on a chinlock and shouts that Boa has a lot to learn, but Boa is back up with some kicks to send Chase outside. Chase shouts a lot and then goes over to Mei Ying, who mists him in the face. Boa's layout reverse DDT finishes at 3:09.

Rating: D+. Boa still isn't great in the ring but at least they are pushing someone new. That's the point of something like this, though you can expect Chase to keep getting the TV time despite him losing over and over. Chase's gimmick isn't the worst thing, but egads it's another one where they beat you over the head with everything and that can get tiring.

Back to the honeymoon, with Johnny Gargano worrying about what could happen when InDex goes to their room. Gargano lies his way into the hotel room (Gargano: "Security around here

sucks.”) and finds a bunch of condoms in Lumis’ bag. InDex comes back and Gargano hides in the closet as a pillow fight breaks out, complete with various statements that sound like...I think you get the idea. InDex takes a nap and Gargano leaves, with Lumis holding up the condoms and giving him a thumbs up.

Cruiserweight Title: Grayson Waller vs. Roderick Strong

Waller is challenging and comes through the crowd to jump Strong before the bell. A heck of a suicide dive takes Strong down and we take a break. We come back joined in progress with Waller hammering away until Strong dumps him outside for a breather. The abdominal stretch goes on to keep Waller in trouble but he fights out into pinfall reversal sequence.

Strong goes with his basics by hitting a backbreaker and the camel clutch goes on. With that broken up, Waller gets suplexed for two but manages to block a superplex attempt. Waller hits a top rope missile dropkick and sends him outside for a big flip dive. Back in and Waller grabs a Stunner for two of his own, only to walk into a jumping knee to the face to retain Strong’s title at 6:19.

Rating: C+. This was a good showing from both of them, even though I’m not sure what the point was in having Waller go from a heel on 205 Live to a face here. That being said, at least he’s doing something and I’ll take what I can get. It’s nice to have the title being defended a little more regularly and Strong is going to be good at anything he does.

LA Knight doesn’t like Odyssey Jones coming in here and talking about the uncrowned NXT Champion. Cue Jones to scare Knight and say that Knight has never seen anything like him. Andre Chase walks by to complain about the lack of a DQ, allowing Knight to jump Jones.

Dante Chen is from Singapore. This is the extent of his character.

Cora Jade and Trey Baxter are excited for her match next week. She's only twenty years old and is ready for the future. They seem rather happy together.

Moving on from happy to unhappy, we have the debut of Lashing Out With Lash Legend, who is on a stage with an audience. She goes over various topics in NXT, such as the Draft (allowing her to talk about her WNBA career), Trey Baxter/Cora Jade and her Lash Out of the Week, which is Andre Chase. We're done in a hurry, which is probably a good thing. I'm assuming this is a parody of a daytime talk show and it was every bit as bad.

Ridge Holland vs. Kyle O'Reilly

O'Reilly jumps Holland before the bell and we take a break (again). We're joined in progress with Holland working on the ribs and hitting a backbreaker to keep O'Reilly in trouble. The bearhug goes on but O'Reilly fights out in a hurry and starts striking away. Holland plants him face first though and grabs a powerbomb for two. O'Reilly knocks him down again and goes up but Pete Dunne offers a distraction. Not that it matters as O'Reilly grabs a rollup for the pin at 5:27.

Rating: C. What we got was pretty good, but the same match setup as the Cruiserweight Title match isn't exactly a positive sign. O'Reilly as someone who fights from underneath and survives against a monster is smart, though not so much with Holland losing twice in a row. Then again, he's kind of perfect for the main roster so a promotion wouldn't shock me.

Post match the beatdown is on but Von Wagner makes the save.

Tony D'Angelo is still on the docks, is still in the mob and is still talking about his family. The difference this time: he debuts next week.

Women's Title: Raquel Gonzalez vs. Frankie Monet

Monet, with the rest of the Robert Stone Brand, is

challenging. Gonzalez gets headlocked down to start and then powers her off without much trouble. Another hard toss has Monet in trouble so it's out to the floor, where Gonzalez gets pulled off the steps for a crash. Back in and some running knees to the back have Gonzalez in more trouble and a suplex gives Monet two.

Monet cranks on part of a surfboard and then kicks her down for...well no count actually as Gonzalez's shoulders aren't down. Back up and Gonzalez drops Monet for a change, setting up the spinning Vader Bomb for two. Gonzalez's back gives out though and Monet double stomps her for two of her own. Not that it matters as Gonzalez is back up with the Chingona Bomb for the retaining pin at 7:52.

Rating: C+. I would have bet on the title change here but the segment with Toxic Attraction earlier was kind of a giveaway. Monet losing like this is a little weird, but it would not surprise me at all to see her going straight to the main roster. She's one of the stars who absolutely does not need NXT so it isn't the worst idea.

Post match Monet and company go to leave but here is Toxic Attraction to jump them from behind. With Monet dispatched, Toxic surrounds Gonzalez and beats her down, allowing Mandy to hold up the title to end the show. Assuming you ignore them losing earlier this show, this was an effective segment.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this a good bit better than last week's show, if nothing else because they slowed WAY down with the whole thing. There weren't a bunch of people being tossed out there and it felt like we were seeing wrestlers who had debuted being put into place. The Gargano/InDex stuff is going to be hit or miss, though I'm sure there are people who find it funny. Overall, the show felt much more structured this week and while it is still a bunch of newer people who aren't quite ready for these spots, it felt WAY more like NXT than whatever the last two weeks have been.

Results

Elektra Lopez b. B Fab – Blue Thunder Bomb

Xyon Quin b. Oney Lorcan – Running forearm

Io Shirai/Zoey Stark b. Toxic Attraction – Moon Over Moonsault to Jayne

Boa b. Andre Chase – Reverse layout DDT

Roderick Strong b. Grayson Waller – Jumping knee to the face

Kyle O'Reilly b. Ridge Holland – Rollup

Raquel Gonzalez b. Frankie Monet – Chingona Bomb

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NXT – August 3, 2021: Effectively Logical

NXT

Date: August 3, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph, Beth Phoenix.

We are less than three weeks away from Takeover and after last week, we have a new main event for the show as Samoa Joe will challenge Karrion Kross for the NXT Title. Granted Kross might not mean as much after how things have gone on Monday Night Raw, I'm not sure how much that is going to be worth. Other than that, more things will be happening. Let's get to it.

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

Opening recap.

Legado del Fantasma vs. Hit Row

Santos Escobar and the rest of Hit Row is at ringside. It's a brawl to start with Legado being knocked outside until Mendoza and Adonis slug it out inside. A whip into the corner takes Mendoza down and a neckbreaker makes it worse. Top Dolla comes in to throw people around, including running both of them over. Hold on though as Escobar gets up for a distraction, allowing Mendoza to low bridge Adonis to the floor.

We take a break and come back with Adonis getting planted with a double spinebuster into a chinlock. Back up and some running clotheslines in the corner set up a moonsault for two. Mendoza's chinlock doesn't last long either as Adonis gets up for a dropkick. That's enough for the hot tag off to Dolla to clean house. Legado is rocked but Escobar hits Dolla in the back with a chair for the DQ at 10:52.

Rating: C+. It was nice while it lasted but they were smart to not have a definitive ending here. This is all but guaranteed to have some kind of a big match at Takeover (or maybe even two of them) so there was zero reason to have a clean fall here. Hit Row shouldn't be losing, but you also don't want Legado taking another loss until it's on a big stage. The ending might be annoying, but it was the right call.

Post match the beatdown is on with Escobar stealing Swerve's grill. The Pillmanizing of the neck is broken up though and Dolla sends Legado running. Escobar still has the grill.

William Regal tells Samoa Joe to not get physical until Takeover.

We look back at the return of Ridge Holland last week to wreck Tommaso Ciampa and Timothy Thatcher.

Dexter Lumis is drawing INDEX over and over.

Ridge Holland vs. Ikemen Jiro

Pete Dunne and Oney Lorcan are here too. An uppercut drops Jiro in a hurry and we're already off to a chinlock. Jiro fights up but gets knocked outside in a hurry. The big tackle sends Jiro hard into the barricade, allowing Holland to take off the jacket, which is high treason against Jiro. A headbutt into Northern Grit finishes Jiro at 3:12.

Rating: C. This was all it needed to be as Holland destroyed someone with a minor name. Holland is going to need ring time after being gone for so long (and not being around that long before he was put on the shelf). Holland is a monster who can wreck people for a good while while he develops and that should work fine for the time being.

Post match Pete Dunne says they're ready to destroy Timothy Thatcher and Tommaso Ciampa, because Holland is a real man.

Frankie Monet blames Robert Stone for her loss last week. The Robert Stone Brand is used to losing but that is not what she does. Stone seems to accept responsibility as Monet and Jessi Kamea leave.

Video on Roderick Strong vs. Bobby Fish.

Video on Trey Baxter, who is All Heart.

Roderick Strong vs. Bobby Fish

The rest of the Diamond Mine is here too. They go technical to start with Fish grabbing a headlock into a suplex to take Strong down. The grappling on the mat goes to Strong until he lands a kick to the chest. Fish is fine enough to take him into the corner as Malcolm Bivens is looking worried on the floor. Strong gets knocked to the apron and we take a break.

Back with Strong taking him down for another chinlock but Fish fights up again. A fish hook gives Fish a breather and it's time to strike away at Strong. Some chops stagger Fish and a belly to back faceplant puts him down again. Fish is back with a rollup for two but Strong knees him in the face. End of Heartache finishes Fish at 12:45.

Rating: C+. Only way this one could have gone as Fish isn't going to win any important match right now. Strong seems to be on the rise and a Cruiserweight Title match against Kushida at Takeover would make sense. You almost have to get the Fish match out of the way though and it gives Strong a nice win on the way there.

Cameron Grimes is ready for the tag match tonight but LA Knight wants him to be more serious. Grimes promises to be there for him and Knight will have his back too. For now though, Grimes has a boot to polish.

Grizzled Young Veterans vs. Cameron Grimes/LA Knight

Grimes is still in his tuxedo. Before the match, the Veterans say they don't like Grimes and Knight and want them out of their way. Grimes and Gibson start things off but it's quickly off to Knight, who gets caught with a clothesline. Drake comes in to forearm away but a neckbreaker gets Knight out of trouble. It's back to Grimes, who gets distracted by Knight and taken into the wrong corner.

Grimes manages to backdrop his way out of trouble but Knight

walks off, saying Grimes can do this on his own. That's fine with Grimes, who takes off the gloves and sends the Veterans into each other. A double hurricanrana puts the Veterans on the floor and Grimes snaps off the flipping powerslam for two on Drake. Gibson comes back in though and it's the Ticket To Mayhem for the pin at 4:42.

Rating: C. This was angle advancement and that's fine. The big blowoff match is coming at Takeover and that is the right way to go for Grimes and Knight. Grimes needs to get the big win and probably will, which will be even better now that they have put in the effort like this. The Veterans even got to win something for a bonus too!

Post match Ted DiBiase comes out to say that Grimes is a man of his word, but he needs to find a way out of this.

Video on Samoa Joe.

We look back at Dakota Kai turning on Raquel Gonzalez last week.

Dakota Kai talks about how she found Raquel Gonzalez and helped bring her up. They were friends and partners, but it was all Kai's doing. Then Io Shirai gave Gonzalez the Women's Title shot at Takeover: Stand & Deliver and won the title. That should have been Kai's, because she plucked Gonzalez out of security. Kai is more than Gonzalez's sidekick and the only opportunity should be hers. How does it feel knowing that the person standing next to you is about to kick your head off? Kai brought her into this world and now she is going to take her out of it by winning the Women's Title. Logical explanation.

Johnny Gargano and Candice LeRae are sick of Dexter Lumis messing with the Way. Tonight, Gargano is ending InDex for good.

Joe Gacy won't be controlled until he wins the Breakout

Tournament. After that, sure why not.

Adam Cole has a neck injury after last week's attack at the hands of Kyle O'Reilly. We look at the attack again.

Breakout Tournament First Round: Trey Baxter vs. Joe Gacy

The smaller Baxter tries a waistlock to start but gets thrown into the corner for his efforts. A dropkick puts Gacy on the floor but he catches a dive by sending Baxter into the ropes. That lets Gacy knock Baxter silly again and we hit the neck crank back inside. Baxter reverses into a quickly broken choke and Gacy suplexes him down for two. The neck crank is on again but Baxter escapes just as quickly.

A missile dropkick sends Gacy outside and this time the suicide dive works. Back in and a slingshot splash gets two but Gacy sends him into the corner for a Cannonball. Gacy takes him up but Baxter slips off and sends him into the ropes. Baxter hits a quick middle rope 450 stomp (or maybe he just didn't rotate properly) for the pin at 5:11.

Rating: C+. I liked what we got here but Baxter needs to either pick a 450 or a stomp because it was messy enough that I couldn't really tell what he was trying. At the same time, Gacy winning would have been nice as the roster could use someone built like him rather than another cruiserweight style guy. Baxter was good though and will be fine as an appetizer for Odyssey Jones in the semifinals.

Zoey Stark and Io Shirai get sushi and Stark is rather confused/disgusted. Food is thrown away when Shirai isn't looking and Stark gets stuck with the bill. Shirai hugs the waitress, who says they don't know each other but speak the same language. The two of them leave and Stark is somewhere between annoyed and disgusted by the food.

Indi Hartwell wishes the Way would give Dexter Lumis a chance because he isn't a bad guy. Tonight, we'll see how much he

cares.

Commentary talks about Johnny Gargano vs. Dexter Lumis but Karrion Kross interrupts to stand on the announcers' table and call out Samoa Joe. Cue Joe, who fights through security and chokes one of them out but Kross has escaped. Joe shouts a lot.

We get the Prime Target video on Ilja Dragunov vs. Walter II. They beat each other so horribly in the first match and everyone is talking about it. Dragunov talks about how angry and aggressive he has been since the first match because he knows something was missing. The rematch will take place at Takeover, and Walter says he is unbeatable on his best day. Dragunov says he has the stamina and mental toughness, which is why he can take the title. We see clips from the press conference with Dragunov getting in Walter's head as he's smarter this time around. This is going to be awesome.

Kushida says of course Roderick Strong can have a Cruiserweight Title shot.

Dexter Lumis vs. Johnny Gargano

Love Her Or Leave Her, which technically means the winner gets Indi Hartwell. Gargano shouts about how Lumis has to go through him to get her and starts in on the arm. Lumis is back up with a dropkick but gets sent outside as Hartwell comes out. The distraction lets Lumis get in a Thesz press back inside to hammer away and slowly stalk Gargano in the corner. Gargano is back up to knock Lumis outside, with Lumis going under the ring. Hartwell goes after him so here is Candice LeRae to help pull her out...with her hands interlocked with Lumis'.

We take a break and come back with Gargano winning a slugout but getting caught in a spinebuster. The Silence is broken up with Lumis being elbowed to the floor. Gargano hits his suicide dive and yells at Beth Phoenix, with the distraction

allowing Lumis to block the slingshot spear. A slingshot Falcon Arrow gives Lumis two but Gargano's superkick gets the same. Lumis runs him over again but misses the springboard elbow. The Gargano Escape goes on until Lumis reaches out to Hartwell/the rope for the break. Lumis' rollup gets two and the kickout sends him into Hartwell. One Final Beat finishes Lumis at 12:53.

Rating: C. I was getting into the love conquers all story and you know this isn't going to be the end of the thing. It's a fine enough story, but Lumis is still not doing anything for me for the most part. This isn't exactly the most thrilling stuff, but Beth being so into the romance thing and Hartwell in general are making it work well enough. Just...please find something to make Lumis more interesting somehow.

Post match Hartwell goes to leave with the Way but then runs back and dives on Lumis for the big kiss as Beth Phoenix screams about InDex to end the show. Makes enough sense (while not doing much for the stipulation), as Hartwell never said she was leaving anyone.

Overall Rating: C+. Nothing really jumped off the page here but it was an easy to swallow use of two hours. The good thing is you can see almost all of (if not all of) Takeover from here. NXT knows how to set up a card and then make it come into reality. That's what they did a lot of here, making it more efficient/important than good.

It's also nice to see how logical things are around here. There might be some things that don't make a ton of sense at first, but NXT knows how to tie them together. It is such a jarring change of pace from Raw, where things seem like they are happening at random and if they can be made somewhat coherent later, so be it then. NXT feels like they have this planned out and that can make all kinds of difference.

Results

Hit Row b. Legado del Fantasma via DQ when Santos Escobar interfered

Ridge Holland b. Ikemen Jiro – Northern Grit

Roderick Strong b. Bobby Fish – End of Heartache

Grizzled Young Veterans b. Cameron Grimes/LA Knight – Ticket to Mayhem to Grimes

Trey Baxter b. Joe Gacy – Middle rope 450 stomp

Johnny Gargano b. Dexter Lumis – One Final Beat

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NXT – July 27, 2021: The Anti-Raw

NXT

Date: July 27, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph

Things got serious around here last week as NXT Champion Karrion Kross attacked William Regal to close the show. Samoa Joe is ready to destroy him as a result and that is all this needs to be. We are less than a month away from Takeover and that means it is time to start getting the card ready. Let's get to it.

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

The opening video recaps the end of last week's show, as Karrion Kross left William Regal laying.

Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher vs. Pete Dunne/Oney Lorcan

Thatcher and Dunne get things going with neither being able to get very far on the mat. Ciampa and Lorcan come in with Ciampa grinding on a headlock. A shot to the face knocks Lorcan outside and the beating continues back inside. Ciampa wants Dunne, who comes in and blasts him with a clothesline. Everything breaks down for a second with Ciampa and Thatcher pounding away with forearms to the chest. Everyone heads outside with Dunne and Lorcan being sent into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Dunne surfboarding Thatcher so Lorcan can fire off more chops. Thatcher slips away and brings in Ciampa so everything can break down. Lorcan is sent outside, leaving Ciampa to go after Dunne's arm. Thatcher and Lorcan brawl on the floor but the returning Ridge Holland takes Thatcher down. Lorcan is able to save Dunne and it's the Bitter End to finish Ciampa at 11:55.

Rating: C+. This was about people hitting each other hard and laying things in, which is why you have this match in the first place. The return is a nice twist too as we never got to see what Holland can do. Having him as the big bruising villain works out well and he could become a player around here in a hurry. Good brawl here, but the surprise is the important part.

Post match Lorcan and Dunne hold Ciampa back as Thatcher gets destroyed by Holland. The villains stand tall.

Carmelo Hayes is ready to win the Breakout Tournament.

Hit Row is ready to take apart Legado del Fantasma, with Top Dolla throwing in some Spanish.

Here is Samoa Joe to set up a table and chair in the ring. He knows Kross isn't going to come do anything himself, so he would like William Regal out here right now. Cue Regal, with Joe saying he knows Regal is going to fire Kross. Joe has a better idea though, and it is in three steps.

First up, he presents Regal with his resignation as part of NXT management. Step two is another piece of paper, which needs Regal's signature to bring Joe back to the main roster. Regal signs, which brings us to step three: signing Joe vs. Kross for Takeover, which Regal does as well. Regal didn't say a word (at least not one we could hear).

Josh Briggs is ready to win the Breakout Tournament.

Earlier today, LA Knight and Cameron Grimes were on the golf course. Grimes is busy washing Knight's (golf) balls and then gets confused by which club to use (Grimes: "Driver? I'm your driver!" Knight: "That's a sand wedge." Grimes: "Sandwich? Now you're hungry?"). Grimes even throws out a \$5,000 bet on Knight hitting it into the trees. Knight does just that and then yells at Grimes for mentioning it.

Breakout Tournament First Round: Carmelo Hayes vs. Josh Briggs

Hayes is a cruiserweight and Briggs is a giant. Briggs slams him down to start so Hayes is back with some rights and lefts in the corner. A dropkick sends Briggs face first into the middle buckle and it's time to go after Briggs' knee. That just earns Hayes a backdrop to the floor for the crash. Back in and Hayes catches him with a springboard legdrop for two,

setting up the front facelock. Briggs gets in a shot of his own though and we take a break.

Back with Duke Hudson, who faces the winner in the next round, on commentary as Briggs gets two off a splash. Hayes counters a powerbomb attempt with a hurricanrana into the corner, followed by a pair of enziguris. A Codebreaker gives Hayes two more and he hits a running boot in the corner. Briggs shows him how to hit a big boot and a chokeslam gets two. The side slam is countered into a faceplant and Hayes does it again for good measure. A top rope Fameasser gives Hayes the pin at 10:43.

Rating: B-. This was a power vs. speed match and that is wrestling 101. Hayes is someone who made an impact when he debuted a few weeks ago and he looked good again here. The high flying is effective as Hayes looks polished, which is what you could use in a tournament like this. Briggs is going to be fine as an enforcer of some kind and I'm sure he will be around in the future.

Frankie Monet is ready to take the Robert Stone Brand to the next level. Maybe they can even win the Women's Tag Team Titles. Kacy Catanzaro and Kayden Carter come up to say not so fast, because you can't create chemistry like theirs.

Back on the golf course, Cameron Grimes imitates a commentator and LA Knight hits his ball into the water. Grimes cracks up, until Knight sends him after the ball. He finds the ball, but here is Ted DiBiase in a golf cart. DiBiase talks about how people like Knight are always going to hold people like Grimes down. Grimes was born to be a champion and DiBiase sees him as a fighter. Think about that. The wheels continue to turn on this one and that's a good thing.

Here are Dakota Kai and Raquel Gonzalez for a chat. Gonzalez talks about destroying Xia Li last week and wonders who is next. Bring them on, because no one is stopping her. Kai says

Gonzalez is the most dominant woman in NXT history and lists off the greats of the women's division.

This division is great because of one woman (though Kai doesn't say who) and asks who is woman enough to challenge Gonzalez at Takeover. Kai says Gonzalez will be champion as long as she has Gonzalez's back and posing ensues. Gonzalez turns around...and gets kicked in the face. Kai holds up the title and the fans seem to approve. This works.

Adam Cole thinks NXT is nuts right now, including Bronson Reed calling Cole his rebound. That's not what Cole is because he is at the top of the mountain. Tonight, Reed is falling off of that mountain because he isn't good enough. Cole doesn't care about Reed's fourteen year journey and tonight is another sad chapter.

Zoey Stark comes up to Io Shirai to ask for some partner bonding time. Shirai doesn't seem convinced but eventually gives in.

Mandy Rose talks to Gigi Dolin and Jayce Jane until she has to throw the cameras out.

Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter vs. Jessi Kamea/Frankie Monet

Robert Stone is here with Kamea and Monet. Kacy takes Kamea down for an early two and brings in Carter for a rollup. Monet comes in for a DDT out of the corner to take over on Carter, including the running knees in the corner. Rights and lefts keep Carter in trouble, with Monet getting to shout. Hold on though as Stone throws in his purse (yes purse) to get her attention. The distraction lets Carter hit a pump kick, setting up the neckbreaker/450 combination for the pin at 3:29.

Rating: D+. I get what they're going for with the story but egads did they need to have Monet take a fall here? There was no way to have this set up Kamea taking a fall? Or anything

but Monet taking a pin? That feels like something they would do on Raw and that is not a good thing these days.

Wade Barrett had a sitdown interview with Malcolm Bivens and Roderick Strong. The Diamond Mine was perfect for Strong, because he was tired of the drama of the Undisputed Era. Bivens talks about how great of a talent Strong is and anyone, including William Regal, can understand that. Barrett asks about the Cruiserweight Title and Bobby Fish, so Strong promises to end Fish next week.

We look at Dakota Kai turning on Raquel Gonzalez.

Kai leaves without saying a word.

Hit Row vs. Imperium

Ashante Adonis and Top Dolla for Hit Row. Adonis starts with Marcel Barthel, who takes him into the corner. It's quickly off to Fabian Aichner, who gets dropped with a neckbreaker for one. Dolla comes in for a jumping knee to drop Aichner and Adonis comes back in for a dropkick. Another neckbreaker is countered into a belly to back suplex but B Fab breaks up the double dropkick in the corner. Adonis uses the distraction to take Aichner down again and we take a break.

Back with Adonis having his spine bustered but he kicks Barthel away anyway. The ankle lock cuts off the hot tag though and Aichner adds an elbow to the back for two. The beating continues, including Barthel grabbing a butterfly suplex for two of his own. Adonis finally manages a backdrop though and the hot tag brings in Dolla to clean house. Dolla knee lifts Aichner and a side slam putts him down again. Adonis plants Barthel but here is Legado del Fantasma to take Adonis out. Dolla chases them off and the European Bomb finishes Adonis at 12:23.

Rating: C. Not the best match but you're not going to have Imperium in there for something energized. I'm not wild on Hit

Row losing but at least it wasn't a clean loss. Hit Tor vs. Legado will be pretty awesome once we get there and Hit Row isn't going to lose any kind of momentum as long as they can keep talking.

Post match Legado comes in for the beatdown until Swerve makes the save.

The Way is looking for Austin Theory, with Johnny Gargano saying he ran away from home. Indi Hartwell gets a present, which is a drawing of Dexter Lumis with the Way. Gargano freaks out and says no way, even as Hartwell asks them for a chance. Gargano: "NO CHANCE!" A match is set up with Gargano vs. Lumis, with Lumis' inclusion in their lives seemingly on the line. Hartwell goes to find Lumis.

It's back to the golf course where the Grizzled Young Veterans pop up to ask if they can pick up the pace. Just let LA Knight hit the ball into the woods again so we can move on. Cameron Grimes makes another bet on who can get it into the hole next, with \$20,000 on the line.

Knight hits the ball into the water again, so Grimes busts out a gold ball and, after hitting Knight low with the club, knocks it into the hole with one shot (and hits Knight in the head with the club on the way back). Grimes blames Knight for the club shots so the Veterans bail in the golf cart. As usual, this feels like Knight and Grimes were given a script saying "hijinks on a golf course" with a few bullet points and told to fill in the gaps. It's the best thing on this show because it doesn't feel forced. This is how these two would act on a golf course and it works as a result.

Adam Cole vs. Bronson Reed

Reed runs him over to start and sends Cole flying with ease. That lets Reed sit on his chest for two, and then stay there despite the referee not counting due to a foot under the rope. A superplex is loaded up but Cole slips out and kicks the

knee. We take a break and come back with Cole working on the knee, including a dragon screw legwhip.

Reed gets up and runs Cole over again to get a breather. A suplex drops Cole and Reed punches him in the corner, only to get kicked in the face for two. Reed chops away until Cole gets in a shot of his own. The Panama Sunrise gets two and Cole is stunned by the kickout. Back up and Reed blasts him with a clothesline to set up a powerbomb. The Tsunami misses though and the Last Shot gives Cole the pin at 11:19.

Rating: B. Another power vs. speed match here, with Cole being just smart enough to make the difference. Cole is primed for a huge match against Kyle O'Reilly at Takeover and Reed seems likely for the main roster. The good thing for Reed is that his size and that splash are going to be more than enough to carry him anywhere he needs to go, so this loss doesn't do much damage.

Post match Cole poses, but here is Kyle O'Reilly to chair him down. A brainbuster onto the steps leaves Cole out cold to end the show. I'm not sure how popular that made O'Reilly.

Overall Rating: B+. The wrestling was good here and the antics on the golf course made it even better. This show felt much more NXTesque as they seem to know where they want to go and are taking steps to get there. Not only did stuff happen on this show, but stuff happened that advanced the stories and got us closer to a Takeover card. That's where NXT shines and it is great to have that feeling back, even if it is just for a week.

Results

Oney Lorcan/Pete Dunne b. Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher – Bitter end to Ciampa

Carmelo Hayes b. Josh Briggs – Top rope Fameasser

Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter b. Frankie Monet/Jessi Kamea – 450/neckbreaker combination to Monet

Imperium b. Hit Row – European Bomb to Adonis
Adam Cole b. Bronson Reed – Last Shot

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NXT – June 15, 2021: Homecoming

NXT

Date: June 15, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett

We're past a pretty lackluster Takeover and that means it is time to start getting ready for the rest of the summer. I'm not sure what that is going to include but William Regal was teasing some kind of a big change. That could mean multiple things, though there are some rumors of what it could mean, most of which are rather intriguing. Let's get to it.

[Here is Takeover if you need a recap.](#)

We open with a recap of Takeover.

Here is a serious looking William Regal for a chat. Regal talks about being with NXT from the beginning, including starting at the commentary desk for the first Takeover. NXT has grown throughout the last few years and they have gone around the world, including to his hometown of Blackpool. Regal gets a bit emotional as he talks about everything that NXT has done for everyone involved here. He thanks everyone who took them to San Jose and Houston and Brooklyn and Portland, but now there is so much chaos around here.

Regal doesn't think he is capable of giving us what we deserve anymore, so it is time for....him to be interrupted by Karrion Kross and Scarlett. Kross says he knew this was coming because he was going to control NXT with chaos and violence. He wants Regal to leave and admit that Kross has won....and here is the returning Samoa Joe.

That makes Kross look a little worried and Regal says Samoa Joe should be the new General Manager. Joe understands what is going on but he is absolutely not accepting the job. Regal has cast a large shadow for seven years and Joe made his job a nightmare. Now though, he would like to make sure that Regal receives the respect that he deserves.

Regal finds this intriguing, but says Joe cannot be a competitor and cannot lay his hands on anyone....unless he is provoked. Joe accepts, and asks why Kross is still in this ring. Joe: "Tick tock, young champion." The fans sing the Goodbye Song as Kross and Scarlett leave. This is quite the nice moment, as Joe is a great way to counter Kross, especially if he can have a match one day.

The Grizzled Young Veterans are ready to take out Tommaso Ciampa and Timothy Thatcher.

Imperium vs. Breezango

Barthel shoulders Breeze down to start but a quick jawbreaker gets him out of trouble. It's off to Fandango for a dropkick but Aichner pulls him into an armbar. Some chops in the corner look to set up a sunset flip so Fandango is back with a legdrop. Breeze loads up a bit dive but only hits mat, allowing Fandango to hit his own big flip dive. Back in and Fandango gets crotched on top and it's an uppercut off with Aichner.

We take a break and come back with Aichner hammering away at Fandango and planting him with a slam. Barthel comes back in and grabs a cobra clutch but Fandango kicks him away. A backdrop allows the hot tag off to Breeze to...get dropped with a clothesline. Not that it matters as Breeze grabs a small package for the pin at 10:26.

Rating: C. I'm a bit surprised by the finish but Breezango continues to be one of the weakest teams around. I'm not sure what Imperium is going to be doing, though the wrath of Walter seems to be a real possibility. I can't imagine MSK having to worry about either team, but at least we got a decent tag match here.

Post match Imperium lays out Breeze and drapes an Imperium flag over him.

Regal is breaking up a fight between Kyle O'Reilly and Adam Cole and says they can fight at the Great American Bash. Until then, they can pick their own opponents to fight next week. Joe comes in and gets shoved away by Cole, who is promptly choked out. With that broken up, Joe says that when Cole wakes up, he can give Mr. Regal an answer.

We see an image of a battery charging and it reaches 1%.

Santos Escobar does not like Bronson Reed putting him through a wall. Reed has revealed a weakness but now it is going to be one on one. This time, he'll pick Reed up and let gravity do the rest on the way to the title.

Cruiserweight Title: Kushida vs. Trey Baxter

Baxter, better known as Blake Christian, is challenging and promises to show that he is all heart. Feeling out process to start with Baxter grabbing a rollup for two. A running hurricanrana sends Kushida to the corner and there's an enziguri in the corner. Kushida gets draped ribs first over the top rope and sent to the floor for a big dive. Cue Kyle O'Reilly to watch from the stage as we take a break.

Back with Kushida scoring with an atomic drop but missing a running kick to the face. An enziguri doesn't miss but Baxter hits a handspring kick to the face. Baxter is back with a Spanish Fly into a springboard 450 for two more. They head up top with Kushida hitting a super flying armbar, setting up the Hoverboard Lock to retain at 10:27.

Rating: C+. Another good open challenge title match here but Kushida vs. O'Reilly should be a heck of a match whenever we get there. That is the kind of a match which could tear the house down in a hurry, though I'm not sure how much of a chance that Kushida would have to keep the title. O'Reilly needs to win something, but it's still the Cruiserweight Title. That is something that works great for someone new like Baxter (because his name is Trey Baxter) and he got a good rub out of this one.

Post match Kushida shakes Baxter's hand but O'Reilly gets in the ring to say he wants to face Kushida next week. Kushida is ready.

Frankie Monet is going to be back in the ring next week but she goes over to Jessi Kamea and Aliyah, saying they would have won their most recent match if Robert Stone hadn't gotten involved. Stone comes in and Monet says the team would have won if they had listened to Stone a bit more.

Mercedes Martinez talks about how she got taken down by Tian Sha but she isn't going to be held down. If Boa wants to come

after her, come get her. She and Xia Li are 1-1 so come on for round three.

Here is Ted DiBiase to present the Million Dollar Title to LA Knight. DiBiase shows us a video on Knight, who arrives in a rather nice car. Knight comes to the ring and loads up LET ME TALK TO YA but cuts himself off. Instead he would rather talk to DiBiase, because it is rare that you get to meet your heroes. Knight watched DiBiase growing up and he always wanted to be DiBiase when they were wrestling in the backyard. He needed DiBiase here tonight just to say thank you and they shake hands.

It would be the honor of Knight's life to have DiBiase officially crown him the Million Dollar Champion. DiBiase puts the title on Knight's shoulder and they take turns laughing. The fans still want Cameron Grimes but Knight says he has everything that he wants. Now it's time to get rid of everything he doesn't need, and he decks DiBiase. Knight shouts that this is his title and now he is the only true Million Dollar Champion. Cameron Grimes makes the save and clears Knight out in a hurry.

Dakota Kai and Raquel Gonzalez are ready for to get the Tag Team Titles back.

The battery is now at 11%.

Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez vs. Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter

Carter sends Kai into the ropes for a double knee to the face. Kacy holds Kai in place for a running dropkick to the side of the head. It's off to Gonzalez to pull Carter by the hair but some double teaming puts Gonzalez on the floor. Carter hits a huge dive onto both of them and we take a break. Back with Gonzalez working on a backbreaker on Catanzaro, setting up Kai's running knee in the corner. A running pump kick sends Catanzaro to the floor but she gets over for the tag off to Carter a moment later.

Carter gets to clean house and a nasty running kick to the face gets two on Kai. Gonzalez hits a messy spinning side slam for two on Carter and an assisted Codebreaker gets the same. Everything breaks down again and Catanzaro's hurricanrana off the apron sends Gonzalez face first into the apron. Back in and a neckbreaker/450 combination gets two on Kai with Gonzalez making the save. Carter is sent hard into the barricade and the GTK finishes Catanzaro at 12:27.

Rating: C-. This was a bit too much on the sloppy side and that hurt what they had going on here. Catanzaro and Carter are a fine team for a spot like this as Gonzalez and Kai needed a win to build them up a little bit. It wasn't exactly a red hot match, but it did what it was supposed to.

Ever-Rise isn't happy with Hit Row breaking their house on the Takeover Kickoff Show but they have rebuilt.

The battery is now at 21%.

Here is Io Shirai to say that she is back. She says that her next target is...and here is Candice LeRae to interrupt. Candice talks about how she is no longer an uncrowned champion and Shirai picked the wrong time to come back. Cue Indi Hartwell to jump Shirai from behind and the beating is on. The announcers' table is loaded up but here is Zoey Stark for the save.

William Regal and Samoa Joe are leaving but are asked about how they feel tonight has gone. Regal....is cut off, as we jump to MSK eating popcorn as Tommaso Ciampa and Timothy Thatcher are on their way to the ring. Thatcher comes back and angrily steals some popcorn.

The Diamond Mine is opening next week.

William Regal and Samoa Joe are trying to give an update on the evening when the Way comes in to mock the JOE chants. They're glad he's here but Joe tells them to get out. Pete

Dunne comes in for a heck of a staredown with Joe.

Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher vs. Grizzled Young Veterans

Tornado Tag. It's a brawl to start with Thatcher and Ciampa taking them down into stereo forearms to the chest. The stereo holds send the Veterans to the floor and the chase is on. Back in and the Veterans get in some cheap shots to take over, meaning the beating can be on. Thatcher is sent face first into a light tower but he is fine enough to come back in for a standing sleeper on Drake.

That is broken up but Ciampa is back in with a chinlock of his own. Ciampa is taken outside for a whip into the barricade, leaving Thatcher to get taken down in a belly to back suplex/neckbreaker combination. Ciampa is back up to send the Veterans into the barricade, setting up a running hip attack into the two of them. Back in and Thatcher and Ciampa hit some running shots to the face in the corner as we take a break.

We come back with Thatcher getting knocked into the Koji Clutch so Gibson can stomp away. Ciampa makes the save (after unloading on Drake's head that is) but accidentally kicks Thatcher in the face. A Doomsday Device is broken up though and Ciampa hits a super Air Raid Crash on Gibson as Thatcher has Drake. Somehow Gibson kicks out so it's Ciampa and Drake chopping it out on the apron.

The running Doomsday Device on the floor plants Ciampa so it's time for Thatcher and Gibson to slug it out inside. An exchange of holds doesn't work but Drake is back in for a running boot in the corner. A Backstabber hits Thatcher so Ciampa runs in for the save. The Veterans double team Ciampa on the floor and put him (mostly) through the top of the announcers' table. Ciampa is back up with the Air Raid Crash to drop Gibson onto said table. Back in and some hard slaps set up Angel's Wings into an ankle lock/armbar combination for the tap at 17:27.

Rating: B. This was a fight and that's exactly what they were shooting for here. What mattered here was it felt like they wanted to win at all costs, which is not something you see enough of in wrestling. I'm a bit surprised at the result as the Veterans really need to win something at some point, but at least they had a pretty awesome showing in defeat. Thatcher and Ciampa moving up the card works too, so this was a pretty solid match all together.

William Regal is pleased with Samoa Joe's first night around here. Joe says that was the first night of many as Regal gets into his car and.....drives off with no problem to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. The return of Joe was the big story here and the rest of the show was build around it. What matters is they have something fresh which might make people interested, which has been lacking around here as of late. It's a good show with a solid main event, plus some things being set up for later. NXT still has some work to do, but this was a nice start.

Results

Breezango b. Imperium – Small package to Aichner

Kushida b. Trey Baxter – Hoverboard Lock

Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez b. Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter –
GTK to Catanzaro

Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher b. Grizzled Young Veterans –
Ankle lock/armbar combination to Drake

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NXT – June 8, 2021: They Can Make It Work

NXT

Date: June 8, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph

It's the go home show for In Your House and there is not exactly a lot of hype around this one. It isn't a good sign when they have a main event of five people in the title match, which feels about as un-NXT as you can get. Hopefully they have something to build up the show tonight, because it needs the help. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of the NXT Title match, plus a look at some of the rest of Takeover.

Austin Theory vs. Oney Lorcan

This is "my friend is better than your friend" and Theory dropkicks him into the corner to start. Lorcan is back up with a headlock takeover to put Theory down for a bit. They get up and exchange forearms with Theory getting the better of things. Lorcan is knocked down for a slingshot stomp into a suplex, which has commentary a bit too impressed. Back up and Lorcan hits a heck of a chop to knock some skin off of Theory

and a knee lift puts him on the floor.

A suplex puts Theory down again outside and here is Pete Dunne to watch as we take a break. Back with Johnny Gargano at ringside too and Theory sending Lorcan into the barricade a few times. They get back in for a fall away slam to send Lorcan down again. Lorcan is set up top for a running springboard Spanish Fly and another near fall. Another trip to the floor sees a double clothesline, sending Gargano and Dunne into a brawl. As the two of them are ejected, Lorcan hits a half nelson slam for the pin at 12:35.

Rating: C+. They hit each other pretty hard here and it was nice to see Theory getting to do something nice in the ring instead of having everything be all wacky comedy. Lorcan is the same as he can get in there and have a good match with anyone. All in all, this was a fine match, though I'm not sure how much it did to build towards Takeover's title match.

We go to LA Knight's house to show his Million Dollar Legacy. This involves having some women join him in the hot tub with some champagne so he can talk about how he'll take out Cameron Grimes on Sunday. Then he gets in a rather expensive looking car (with one of the women closing the door) and drives off. This is the kind of vignette that we need to see more of because they are a great way to build someone up in a hurry.

Here's your weird flashback of the week as Dok Hendrix joins us for an In Your House Slam Jam.

Here is Legado del Fantasma to call out Bronson Reed. Cue Reed to look at him running over Santos Escobar last week so the brawl is teased. Cue MSK to chase them off, so Escobar throws out the challenge for a six man tag with all titles on the line. Deal, but first we see Escobar getting squashed again last week. Hold on though as here is Hit Row to stare down the champs.

Isaiah Scott vs. Killian Dain

The rest of Hit Row and Drake Maverick are here too. Dain works on the wrist to start and Scott can't get around him to start. Scott gets sent outside but it's too early for the big dive. The distraction lets Scott sneak in from behind for some cheap shots but Dain runs him over again. Another distraction lets Scott get in a cheap shot, setting up the running kick from the apron.

Back in and a kick to the face rocks Dain but he unloads in the corner to stagger him again. One heck of a shot to the head drops Scott again, setting up a running crossbody for two. Scott rolls away from another clothesline and the rolling Downward Spiral gives Scott two of his own. Dain is back with a splash in the corner as the brawl breaks out on the floor. Top Dolla catches Maverick with an AA on the apron so Scott kicks the distracted Dain off the ropes. A running kick to the head finishes for Scott at 6:40.

Rating: B-. There is something so cool about the way Scott moves as he looks so smooth out there. This was a rather fun match and the two of them both looked good the whole time. Hit Row has hit the ground running as they are already feel like one of the bigger deals around here. I would be surprised if they don't have some titles by the end of the summer and that is a good thing.

Candice LeRae is annoyed at Poppy being here tonight but Indi Hartwell runs off to find Dexter Lumis. Candice: "Why does this keep happening? They were never even a thing."

And now, Cameron Grimes' Million Dollar Legacy. We start with Cameron hitting a cannonball into a pool and coming back up to talk to the camera while looking between a woman's legs. Grimes fires up a Cuban cigar with a \$100 bill but chokes on the smoke. Some liquor makes him cringe as well so it's time for a massage. Then Grimes gives the woman a massage and seems to have a better time. Then he jumps in a less expensive looking car and drives off.

Mercedes Martinez comes out for a match but Xia Li jumps her from behind and the big beatdown is on. Martinez fights back and sends Li over the barricade. Back in and ring the bell.

Mercedes Martinez b. ???

Air Raid Crash finishes in 16 seconds.

Breezango talks about Imperium coming after them and doesn't like the propaganda videos that they have been seeing. Maybe Imperium is a little scared because Breezango beat them once before.

HHH and William Regal are in the back with Poppy, who has put together an NXT soundtrack. HHH asks when the album drops so Poppy pulls out her phone and hits a button. Poppy: "Right now." The album is plugged and here's Dexter Lumis with a drawing for Poppy. She hugs him and here's Indi Hartwell to scream.

Cameron Grimes and LA Knight arrive at the same time and a guard comes in to say that Ted DiBiase is waiting in the ring for them. After Knight can't tip the guy and Grimes won't, we cut to DiBiase in the ring asking them to join him. Cue Grimes and Knight so DiBiase can say that they need to climb the ladder to success. A solid gold ladder comes down from the ceiling and Knight seems cool with all of this. He promises to run over the hillbilly to get here but Grimes doesn't like the name.

Instead Grimes talks about how he can do everything in between these ropes, he cannot be beaten. You can take his clothes and his legacy but he is taking the Million Dollar Legacy to the moon! Grimes starts climbing the ladder and asks what is he reaching for. DiBiase is glad he asks and tells the guys to bring it in. Two goons bring in a case containing...the Million Dollar Title. Well that was kind of obvious and I really don't need to see a ladder match, but it does make sense in this case. DiBiase's laugh makes up for a lot of it though and

Grimes' promo was fire.

Kyle O'Reilly and Karrion Kross have to be held apart in the back when a ticked off Regal comes in to say cool it.

Ever-Rise is going to host the Takeover Pre-Pre Show!

Grizzled Young Veterans vs. August Grey/Ikemen Jiro

Grey/Jiro are a regular team on 205 Live. Gibson takes Grey down by the arm but Grey is back up with a running hurricanrana. Jiro, who wrestles in a jacket, hits a forearm to the head but gets sent to the apron. That's fine with Jiro, who slingshots in with an ankle scissors. Gibson is fed up with this and goes after Jiro but makes the mistake of touching the jacket.

Everything breaks down and Drake comes in to clean house, including Gibson kicking Jiro in the face. A shot to Jiro's leg puts him down and a slam sends him legs first into the ropes. Cue Timothy Thatcher and Tommaso Ciampa to watch the match and the distraction lets Grey come in off the hot tag. House is cleaned, including a spinning high crossbody. So Much Prettier (Unprettier running up the corner) is broken up and it's the Ticket To Mayhem to finish Grey at 5:00.

Rating: C. This is where 205 Live can be a bit of a benefit to NXT, as Grey and Jiro have won a few matches in a row on the show. Now that wasn't exactly focused on here, but at least the Veterans won clean in the end despite the distraction. It wasn't exactly a great match but they did it fast enough that it didn't hurt anything.

Post match the Veterans shout at Ciampa and Thatcher about wanting the titles, but Ciampa says the title shot goes through them. That's cool with Gibson, who issues the challenge for a tornado tag match next week. Ciampa says they love tornadoes and they don't need tags, so let's do it right now. The Veterans run from the right.

We look back at Pete Dunne and Oney Lorcan injuring Bobby Fish's arm.

Fish is training in the back and says he isn't done with Lorcan.

Here is a ticked off Candice LeRae to talk about how annoyed she is with Poppy. Indi Hartwell ran off crying because of Poppy so now it is time for Poppy to learn. So either come out here right now or be introduced to the parking lot. Cue Poppy, who doesn't seem interested in fighting, but here is the returning Io Shirai who is glad to do it.

Dok Hendrix gives us the Slam Jam for In Your House, still as the best promo on the show.

During the break, Poppy and Xia Li ran into Raquel Gonzalez and Dakota Kai.

Dakota Kai vs. Ember Moon

Raquel Gonzalez is here with Kai but there is no Shotzi Blackheart. They both kick the other in the arm to start so they take turns driving the other into the corner. Kai knocks her down for two and a whip into the corner sets up a running kick to the face for the same. Back up and Moon hits a running kick to the face into a basement Downward Spiral for two of her own. Kai gets sent to the apron but manages a forearm to the back and sends Moon into the post as we take a break.

Back with Moon hitting the middle rope Codebreaker, followed by a superkick. A flipping Stunner gives Moon two and she grabs something like a dragon sleeper of all things. That's reversed into a spinning faceplant to give Kai two and a running kick in the corner gets the same. Moon is back up to reverse a victory roll into a powerbomb for two and Kai needs a breather on the floor. Gonzalez's cheap shot doesn't work so Moon hits a suicide dive to take them both out. That's enough for Gonzalez, who comes in for the DQ at 12:34.

Rating: C. Moon has improved a good bit in recent weeks and is now starting to feel more like the version that made her a star in the first place. I'm not sure why you wouldn't have her get the pin over Kai here but it could have been worse. Still though, not a bad match and Moon busted out some new stuff here so she feels like a bit more of a threat to the title on Sunday.

Post match the beatdown is on but Moon counters the lifting powerbomb into a Stunner. The Eclipse leaves Gonzalez laying and Moon holds up the title.

Karrion Kross says the four challenges have been given the opportunity to face him tonight. They don't have to wait until Sunday to feel what it is like to be flatlined though and now is their chance to find out what it is like. Tick tock.

William Regal is in the ring with Karrion Kross and Scarlett. Regal rants about how he is the GM around here and Kross isn't taking over the show. Kross says this place has been out of control for a long time now so he wants the four challengers out here right now. Cue Kyle O'Reilly to say that Kross has the thinnest skin he has ever seen and it is a matter of time before he snaps.

Cue Johnny Gargano to stand on the announcers' table and talk about how Kross shouldn't let a guy in a jean jacket talk about him that way. Kross isn't Johnny Takeover but he should go choke O'Reilly out right now. Kross calls Gargano a mark and offers him a beating of his own. Cue Pete Dunne to say he is tired of waiting and promises to win the title on Sunday.

Adam Cole pops up on the video screen to say he beat the unbeatable Kross (verbally) last week. Kross is scared to face Adam Cole bay bay because Cole can beat any of the rest of them (again) to become NXT Champion (again). He'll see you on Sunday and goes away. O'Reilly: "Clearly Adam Cole is too much of a b**** to be here tonight." He gets in Kross' face and the

beatdown is on with security getting beaten up as well.

Security winds up holding Kross so the other three can score on him a bit. Kross is back up to run O'Reilly over though and stands tall...until Cole runs in for a superkick to the back of the head and the Last Shot. Cole stands tall to end the show, again looking like the biggest star on the show by a mile. This segment was effective enough, but egads it felt tacked on, much like the entire title match. I could see this not headlining if there was anything else worthwhile to put in the top spot, but that just isn't the case this time.

Overall Rating: B-. This show did a good job of building up Takeover but at the same time, the show isn't exactly jumping off the page. Nothing on it feels must see and it comes off more like a Takeover that is happening because it has to, not because they have the material to have one. The wrestling tonight was good enough and they added a match/adjusted another, though I'm still not sure how much I need to see the show. That being said, Takeover has a reputation like no other and if anyone can pull it off, it's NXT.

Results

Oney Lorcan b. Austin Theory – Half nelson slam

Isaiah Scott b. Killian Dain – Running kick to the head

Mercedes Martinez b. ??? – Air Raid Crash

Grizzled Young Veterans b. Ikemen Jiro/August Grey – Ticket To Mayhem to Grey

Ember Moon b. Dakota Kai via DQ when Raquel Gonzalez interfered

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NXT – May 4, 2021: The Stars Go To War/May The Force Be With Them/Other Star Wars Puns

NXT

Date: May 4, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph

The big story this week is the return of Finn Balor for the first time since he lost the NXT Title to Karrion Kross back at Takeover: Stand & Deliver. That alone should be interesting as we get to see what is next for him. In addition, the Women's Tag Team Titles are on the line as Ember Moon/Shotzi Blackheart defend against the Way. Let's get to it.

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

The opening recap sets up tonight's Women's Tag Team Title match, plus Isaiah Scott vs. Leon Ruff.

Isaiah Scott vs. Leon Ruff

Falls count anywhere. Ruff charges into an elbow to the face to start but he's right back up with a failed crucifix bomb attempt. Instead Scott knocks him down but the JML Driver is countered with Scott being knocked to the floor. The suicide dive is blocked as well and Scott slams him back first into the apron. Scott sends him into the barricade and hits a heck of a delayed top rope superplex for two (Ruff being small can make for some great crashes).

Ruff is sent outside where he counters a kick from the apron to tie Scott's legs in the ropes. That means a running dropkick to knock Scott to the floor as well, but Scott is fine enough to chop Ruff out of the air. Scott whips out a toolbox and we take a break. Back with Ruff hitting a flip dive off the stage to take Scott down again. They go back into the ring with Scott reversing another superplex into the super crucifix bomb for two.

To get even scarier, Ruff busts out a poisonrana off the apron to the floor. Scott catches him against the barricade though and hits the Confidence Boost on the floor for two. Ruff comes back with a toolbox shot to the knee and puts on a kneebar with I believe a wrench to crank on the leg even more. That's broken up so Ruff hits the great looking spinning cutter out of the corner. Scott is sent outside again and another diving cutter connects but Ruff climbs up onto the set. The big dive lands on....AJ Francis, who catches Ruff and throws him down rather hard. Back in and the JML Driver finishes Ruff at 15:24.

Rating: B. This got some time and had the right result, with Ruff getting in everything that he could for a long time. Ruff is someone who has made the absolute most out of his TV time as he has gone from a guy who was just there to a former North American Champion who can put on some rather good matches. I had fun with this and Ruff got to showcase himself again

before the right person won.

Post match, Ruff celebrates with his entourage, including Francis and an unnamed man and a woman.

The Way comes in to see William Regal, but he's busy talking to Scarlett. Austin Theory looks at her and says those are the biggest he's ever seen and knows they have to be real. Her nails of course.

Asher Hale vs. Cameron Grimes

Hale is Anthony Henry of Evolve fame. Grimes runs him over to start and goes to the hard strikes in the corner. Hale's kick to the leg earns him an uppercut back down but a dragon screw legwhip slows Grimes down. A missile dropkick gives Hale two but Grimes knees him down. The swinging sitout Side Effect sets up the Cave In to finish Hale at 3:04.

Rating: D+. Not quite a squash here but what matters here is Grimes getting more TV time and capitalizing on his momentum from the Ted DiBiase stuff. I'm not sure what is coming next from the two of them but at least Grimes is getting to do something great. I love NXT making something for him and turning it into something interesting, which you don't get to see very often.

Kayden Carter and Kacy Catanzaro aren't worried about Tian Sha because they want the Tag Team Titles. Frankie Monet comes in and thinks they're so adorable.

Cameron Grimes celebrates with Ever-Rise. They aren't thrilled when he goes to the VIP room. NXT has a VIP room?

Grizzled Young Veterans vs. Timothy Thatcher/Tommaso Ciampa

Before the match, the Veterans rants about how much they don't like Thatcher or the shoes off deal. Thatcher and Ciampa interrupt the catchphrase though and we're ready to go. Ciampa and Drake lock up to start with Ciampa taking him down for a

headscissors. Thatcher comes in to send Drake into the corner for the tag off to Gibson, who comes in to lock up for a bit.

That means Thatcher can take him to the mat and start working on the shoulder before switching to a chinlock. Drake's save is cut off and Ciampa takes him down, meaning the rapid fire forearms to the chest put the Veterans on the floor. We take a break and come back with Drake pulling on Thatcher's ear and handing it off to Gibson for a cravate. That's broken up and it's back to Ciampa for the chops in the corner (with Thatcher holding the tag rope in the air and standing on the apron like a statue).

Ciampa hits a running knee to Drake's head for two, steps on and bites his finger, and hands it back to Thatcher. Everything breaks down again with Drake and Thatcher crashing out to the floor. Thatcher wins a strike off with Gibson but can't get the Fujiwara armbar. Instead, Gibson plants Thatcher with a DDT for two but someone steals Barrett's shoe somewhere in there and throws it inside. Ciampa offers a distraction and Thatcher hits Gibson in the head, setting up the Fujiwara armbar for the tap at 14:27.

Rating: C+. Good fast enough paced match here with both teams looking good, even if the shoe thing was a bit of an eye roll inducer. I could go for Thatcher/Ciampa as a high level team as it isn't like they can't hang in the ring. There are enough teams out there to make things interesting and hopefully both of these teams get some more TV time in the near future.

Joseph to Barrett: "Your shoe's off! YOU HATE GIBSON!"

The Way yells at William Regal about the upcoming North American Title defense against Bronson Reed. It's still on, as is Austin Theory vs. Karrion Kross next week.

Isaiah Scott and company brag about his win and leave the building.

Video on Sarray and Zayda Ramier.

Here are Karrion Kross and Scarlett for a chat. Kross says he isn't going to be afraid of anyone and wants to give the people what they want. Let's give them a fight so we'll start next week against Austin Theory. Cue Kyle O'Reilly to say Kross is the NXT Champion and that is the match O'Reilly wants. He thinks Kross wants it too...but here is Pete Dunne to interrupt. Dunne asks if they are having a laugh and starts to throw his hat in the ring but here is Finn Balor to cut him off as well.

Balor goes after Kross and gets knocked down so Dunne goes after Kross as well. Kross sends him outside and kicks O'Reilly into the corner. Balor shotgun dropkicks Kross into O'Reilly in the corner as security comes in. A Kross clothesline drops Balor and a security guard gets suplexed. Kross is left alone but here is the Way to jump him from behind. Theory gets suplexed but some superkicks put Kross down for a few seconds. Gargano adds a belt shot to finally leave Kross laying. This did a rather nice job of making Kross look like a monster and lining up the challengers.

During the break, Gargano and Theory (favoring his shoulder) left, despite Indi Hartwell and Candice LeRae having a match later.

Zayda Ramier vs. Sarray

They trade headlocks to start with Sarray knocking her down off a running dropkick. Back up and Sarray gets pulled into an STF to put her in some trouble. That's broken up and Sarray pulls her into something like a Muta Lock. Since that can't last long, Sarray hits a running dropkick against the ropes and a missile dropkick puts Ramier down again. Sarray snaps off a hard t-bone suplex for the pin at 4:39.

Rating: C. This was a much more impressive match from Sarray, who didn't exactly impress me last week. They had more of a

squash this time around with Ramier only getting in a little offense before getting crushed in the end. What matters is Sarray looked better, though there is still a long way to go with making her a star around here.

Walter yells at Imperium via video in German. Alexander Wolfe isn't happy and walks off.

The Diamond Mine is still coming.

Sarray checks on Zayda Ramier when Toni Storm and Zoey Stark get in a staredown. Storm storms off and Stark checks on Ramier as well.

Jake Atlas vs. LA Knight

Knight says the fans just saying his catchphrase doesn't make them cool. As for Atlas, Knight is going to hit him so hard that Atlas is going to need an atlas to tell him where he is. Knight gets taken down into an armbar to start but sends Atlas into the corner for some stomping. Atlas nails a running dropkick to send Knight outside but the suicide dive is cut off with a forearm. A slingshot shoulder drops Atlas but he is back with a German suplex for two. Atlas kicks away but Knight ducks a big one and hits the bulldog driver for the pin at 3:05.

Rating: C-. Not much to this one but Atlas got in some offense before Knight won, as he should have. Knight has all of the charisma that you could need and he is backing it up well enough in the ring. All they need to do is having him talking and doing well enough with the wrestling, which is what we got here. In addition: NXT is smart enough to put people on shows like this and keep them in fans' minds until they have something to do. That can be rather important long term and it doesn't happen enough today.

Indi Hartwell is panicking over not getting Dexter Lumis back but Candice LeRae hides a drawing he has left her. She also

closes the blinds because Dexter is looking in (into the women's locker room that is).

Toni Storm talks about how Zoey Stark is the flavor of the month but she is rapidly losing that flavor. Storm bought her into this business and now she is going to take her out. I miss these "talk to the camera" promos as they don't happen enough these days.

Here is Legado del Fantasma for a chat. Santos Escobar talks about tradition and says last week was part of a premonition. He is going to regain his Cruiserweight Title and he's doing it soon. Joaquin Wilde says MSK won the Tag Team Titles but they didn't beat Legado del Fantasma. Raul Mendoza issues the title challenge but here is Kushida on screen to issue a challenge to Escobar for a Cruiserweight Title match next week. Escobar says he's on. It's great seeing Kushida finally getting to do something.

We get a sitdown, split screen interview between Raquel Gonzalez and Mercedes Martinez. Raquel says the title means she is the baddest woman in this division and she has pure power. Martinez talks about how she has been around for a long time but Gonzalez isn't intimidating her (Gonzalez: "Not yet.").

They promise to beat each other up next week and Martinez says she paved the roads that Gonzalez has come down. Gonzalez: "Am I not gritty?" Martinez calls her cookie cutter but Gonzalez says she has accomplished in a year than Martinez ever did. Gonzalez says Martinez is the next challenger, but she won't be the last. That was a good closing line and Gonzalez sounded a lot more natural than Martinez here.

Shotzi Blackheart and Ember Moon find Frankie Monet's dog in their tank. The dog is sent on but the tank is now unusable due to, uh, various things now in it.

Cameron Grimes is going to the VIP room but he isn't on the

list. The entire room has been rented out, and here's a long white limo. Ted DiBiase gets out and says he has bought the whole club. DiBiase hits the catchphrase and laughs before going inside. Grimes: "THAT WASN'T EVEN FUNNY!" It was a little funny.

Next week: Kushida vs. Santos Escobar for the Cruiserweight Title in a 2/3 falls match, plus Raquel Gonzalez defends the Women's Title against Mercedes Martinez.

Women's Tag Team Titles: The Way vs. Ember Moon/Shotzi Blackheart

The Way is challenging in a street fight so they start fast, with Barrett saying where we're going with this one, we don't need rules. They go straight for the weapons, with LeRae pulling out a bunch of chairs but Moon (in street clothes for some reason) kicks her down. Some trashcans are thrown in and Indi is double teamed in the corner. A basement dropkick sets up Blackheart's running backplash and Moon puts a trashcan over a seated Indi.

That sets up the stereo basement dropkicks for two with LeRae making the save. Candice gets dropped with a double trashcan lid shot and it's time for another table. Hartwell breaks that up and drops Blackheart onto the apron before setting up four chairs at ringside. Moon puts her face first into the chairs and Hartwell is set in a chair on the four chairs. Blackheart's dive is cut off with a blast from a fire extinguisher though (as it could have been rather nasty otherwise) and we take a break.

Back with Moon dropkicking LeRae down and sending her shoulder first into the post. The Dominator/sliding neckbreaker combination gets two on Hartwell and LeRae is laid onto a ladder bridged between the ring and apron. Blackheart's top rope backplash drives her through, leaving Moon to drive Hartwell through a table in the corner for two. Back up and

Hartwell kicks a ladder into both champs and then holds up a ladder with Blackheart laid across.

That lets Candice hit a Lionsault onto Blackheart onto the ladder but Moon is back up to kick away. A spinebuster onto the ladder plants Moon for two but Blackheart is back up to send Hartwell into the barricade. Hartwell is put onto the announcers' table for the BIG splash off of the tower and they're both done. LeRae plants Moon back inside and Hartwell is somehow back up to put Moon through a table on the floor. That leaves LeRae to hit Blackheart with brass knuckles. The Wicked Stepsister onto a chair finishes Blackheart for the pin and the titles at 15:38.

Rating: B. This was a wild fight and that's what they needed to do here. The women's tag team division isn't a strong one in the first place so going with the title change here was the right move. Moon and Blackheart were thrown together for the tournament so there was no need to keep them together long term. The Way at least feels like a regular team (they even have a name) so let them get a bit more established to build up the titles somewhat. Also, well done on not having Dexter Lumis involved here. He and Hartwell are kind of interesting, but this wasn't about that story.

Overall Rating: B. The opener and main event were both very good, stuff was announced for later, and the two not so great matches were about three minutes long each. This is where NXT tends to shine: building up a lot of different stuff, almost like a buffet, rather than one big main course and hoping that's enough. Nothing stands out above the rest, but it makes for a better show with a solid average throughout rather than being so up or down. Rather effective effort here, as they used the tried and true NXT formula.

Results

Isaiah Scott b. Leon Ruff – JML Driver

Cameron Grimes b. Asher Hale – Cave In

Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher b. Grizzled Young Veterans – Fujiwara armbar to Gibson

Sarray b. Zayda Ramier – T-bone suplex

LA Knight b. Jake Atlas – Bulldog driver

The Way b. Ember Moon/Shotzi Blackheart – Wicked Stepsister onto a chair to Blackheart

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NXT – April 27, 2021: The Understudies Special

NXT

Date: April 27, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph, Wade Barrett

The Tuesday escapades continues with the return of Adam Cole for the first time since his loss at Takeover. That could be interesting, though if nothing else it is kind of a relief

that he is not heading up to the main roster. Other than that, we have a pretty big six man tag to fill out the wrestling side of things. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Dakota Kai vs. Mercedes Martinez

Raquel Gonzalez is here with Kai. Martinez gets taken to the mat to start but bounces out of a headscissors and slaps her in the face. Back up and Martinez hits a spinning spinebuster (it seems like we get three of those per show these days) for two but Kai grabs a Rock Bottom backbreaker for the same. The running boot in the corner misses though and Martinez hammers away.

Something like a Razor's Edge Dominator out of the corner gets two but Martinez gets drop toeholded into the corner. The running boot sends Martinez outside and we take a break. Back with Kai sending her outside again and hitting a kick to the ribs on the way back in. A Codebreaker through the ropes drops Martinez again but she is back up with a running shot in the corner.

Martinez takes her down with a delayed butterfly suplex and cranks Kai down by the arm. Kai rolls outside so Martinez throws her back in, where Kai grabs the referee's leg. That lets Gonzalez take a swing but Martinez knocks her down instead. Back in and Martinez puts Kai in a fireman's carry but Gonzalez comes in for the DQ at 12:28.

Rating: C+. This was a fine way to set up Gonzalez vs. Martinez down the line as Martinez beat up Gonzalez's friend. That should make for a fine big time TV match as Martinez can have a good enough match with anyone. She certainly did here too as the power was a good way to keep Kai from running around with all of her kicks. The wrestling was fine but the

storytelling was more important, and better.

Post match the beatdown is on with Martinez being laid out.

Shotzi Blackheart and Ember Moon have to worry about the Robert Stone Brand tonight and then they can deal with the Way. Hold on though as here is a delivery woman with some flowers for both of them. Frankie Monet comes up and introduces herself before reading the card, which says they're from Dexter Lumis. Moon and Blackheart try to give each other the flowers.

Earlier today, Cameron Grimes went to look at a ring (as in jewelry) for a special someone (Grimes: "ME!"). The jeweler says he has something special for him...and we'll see it later.

Here are the Grizzled Young Veterans for a chat. They accuse MSK of ducking them in a regular tag match because the Veterans need the titles. Cue Timothy Thatcher and Tommaso Ciampa to interrupt, with Ciampa says they're grizzled and veterans. After dubbing himself Toothless Timmy, Thatcher mocks the IF YOU HATE GIBSON SHOES OFF chant and the fight is on, with the Veterans being cleared out.

Drake Maverick and Killian Dain are ready for their match tonight against Imperium, but Maverick is convinced that Dain is turning on him to join Imperium. Dain says you gotta have faith, and Maverick is stunned at the George Michael reference.

Quick Tian Sha vignette.

Shane Strickland says if Leon Ruff wants to play this game, they can play it for his life.

Toni Storm vs. Zayda Ramier

Before the match, Toni talks about how Zoey Stark is going to be a footnote in her legendary career. Tonight, every time she slaps this rookie, she is going to imagine that it's Stark.

Storm throws her around by the hair to start and Ramier is in early trouble. There's a backbreaker with Ramier being bent over the knee, followed by a German suplex to make it even worse.

Cue Stark for a distraction though, allowing Ramier to get in a quick knockdown. A shooting star press (which lands perfectly despite Storm being in the middle of the ring, to the point where I thought Ramier was going to leave it two feet short) finishes Storm for the huge upset at 3:27.

Rating: C-. This was a squash until Storm slipped on a banana peel at the end. Storm isn't going to be hurt by a dirty loss and the angry promos on Stark should be good. It isn't likely to lead to Ramier becoming a bigger star, though stranger things have happened in NXT. I'm not sure if she should try the shooting star from that distance again, but it worked out in the end.

Bronson Reed runs into Johnny Gargano and Candice LeRae on the way to the ring. Austin Theory pops up and asks why they're standing in the dark.

LA Knight saw a twinkle in the eye of Indi Hartwell and knows that means she had a twinkle in her loins. He has references and after Dexter Lumis lets her down, come talk to him, because that is just a fact of life. Knight leaves and Ever-Rise comes up to ask if the interviewer has a question about their social media event. She doesn't.

Austin Theory vs. Bronson Reed

If Reed wins, he gets another North American Title shot. The rest of the Way is here and Indi Hartwell is completely not in this. Barrett: "Don't go around breaking young girls' hearts." As commentary is astounded at the Billie Jean reference, Theory gets knocked to the floor with straight power. Back in and Theory's jumping shoulder is swatted out of the air, followed by another shoulder to leave Theory hanging from the

bottom rope by his feet.

Theory crashes to the floor as Reed goes after Johnny Gargano, allowing Theory to come back with a dropkick inside. Reed is knocked outside this time so Theory fakes an injury, leaving Gargano to add a superkick. One heck of a dive takes Reed down and a missed charge sends him into the steps.

We take a break and come back with Reed caught in a chinlock. That's broken up in a hurry and Reed tosses him around again, setting up the splash in the corner. Theory is back with a neckbreaker for two as commentary points out Hartwell not being interested in the match. For some reason Theory tries a Samoan drop, which goes as well as you would expect. Reed's version gets two but Theory manages a TKO for two of his own.

They're both down so here is Dexter Lumis, with Hartwell walking away (because of the flowers to Blackheart and Moon). Lumis gets on the apron with Hartwell saying he talks too much. Lumis shoves Hartwell out of the way of a charge and takes the shot himself. Reed knocks Theory over and hits the Tsunami for the pin and the title shot at 12:24.

Rating: C. There was a lot going on here but what matters the most is Reed getting another shot. I was surprised when he lost the first time so giving him the title in the rematch could make up for things. That Tsunami looks great (and Barrett's call makes it even better) and it should be enough to carry him to the title as it isn't like Gargano needs the thing anymore. As much as I'd love to see Theory get a push of his own, he works well as the clueless moron who happens to be crazy athletic.

Johnny Gargano is nervous.

MSK thanks Kushida for his help and tonight they're taking out Legado del Fantasma.

The Way blames Dexter Lumis, Shotzi Blackheart and Ember Moon

for the loss. Indi Hartwell gets rather annoyed and storms off, with the team thinking she is going to deal with this.

Finn Balor is back next week after recharging in Mexico.

Imperium vs. Killian Dain/Drake Maverick

Alexander Wolfe is here with the team. Drake refuses to walk in front of Dain out of the possibility of pain and agony. Dain starts fast with a clothesline to send Barthel outside. Back in and Maverick hits some dropkicks to Barthel's leg but Maverick gets sent into the wrong corner. With Dain being held out of the corner, some double teaming puts Maverick down and we take a break.

Back with Maverick still in trouble as Barthel sneers down at him. Maverick kicks him in the leg but Aichner comes in to swing him around by the jeans. A shot into the corner gives Maverick a chance but Barthel pulls Dain off the apron, meaning there is no one for the tag. Maverick looks crushed and a kick to the back of the head makes it even worse. Dain comes in and starts wrecking things but gets knocked outside...where Wolfe won't hit him with a chair.

Barthel doesn't like the indecision but here's Maverick to hit a dive. Dain throws Maverick at Aichner but Wolfe won't let Dain send Barthel into the post. Instead Dain gets sent into the steps as Maverick hits a high crossbody on Aichner...who rolls through, setting up the European Bomb for the pin at 12:16.

Rating: C. Imperium as a whole is a great concept and something that works well. Imperium without Walter is a team that is good at everything they do but the interest and spark aren't there. It has shown badly every time they are out there without him, including here as it just wasn't that engaging of a match. They are more than fine with everything else, but it was hard to care at all about what they were doing.

Pete Dunne says no one is talking about him because he has everyone shaken. Kushida stepped to him and got taken out. If he wanted to be Cruiserweight Champion, it wouldn't take long. Or maybe he gets on a plane and goes back to the UK to take his title back from Walter. The North American Title could be interesting too, and then there is Karrion Kross. Dunne isn't scared of Kross because he doesn't need smoke and mirrors to get the job done. Everyone should fear him. Rather awesome promo here, as Dunne can bring the intensity.

Back at the jewelry store, Cameron Grimes buys a watch, but it isn't ticking (Grimes: "Karrion Kross would hate this!"). He'll take it anyway, but here is someone with the same watch. That would be....TED DIBIASE, who laughs at Grimes and leaves, causing Grimes to scream a lot. Yep that was great.

Jessi Kamea/Aliyah vs. Shotzi Blackheart/Ember Moon

Non-title and non-match as we get some more flowers and cupcakes delivered to the champs...so here is the Way to jump them from behind. The beatdown is on and Robert Stone holds up the Women's Tag Team Titles.

We get a sitdown interview with Adam Cole talking to a Sports Illustrated reporter. After being told that the interviewer is waiting on Cole to get off the phone, Cole talks about how he has been better, like during his 403 day reign as NXT Champion. It wasn't him who forgot what the Undisputed Era was about but people will remember him. Kyle O'Reilly was back not long after Takeover and wrestled in the main even that night, which Cole finds interesting.

O'Reilly has been here for four years and people are just now starting to notice him. As for the NXT Title picture, Karrion Kross is good, but is he great? He got injured during his first title win. Was that a freak accident or is he just not ready? Kross hasn't had to deal with Cole yet and when he does, that title is coming home. Cole berates the interviewer

for making him sit outside in the heat and making him wait before leaving. We see Kyle O'Reilly watching on a monitor and shaking his head.

We see what looks like a UFC style training montage for something called the Diamond Mine.

Next week: the Way challenges Ember Moon/Shotzi Blackheart for the Women's Tag Team Titles in a street fight and Leon Ruff vs. Isaiah Scott in a falls count anywhere match.

MSK/Kushida vs. Legado del Fantasma

Joaquin Wilde takes Kushida down to start but stops to dance, allowing Kushida to grab him by the arm. Lee comes in and gets taken down for a double basement dropkick as Legado takes over. Back up and Lee manages a dropkick of his own, allowing the tag to Carter to take over on Mendoza. MSK cleans house with Escobar being knocked outside as we take a break. Back in and some double teaming into a basement dropkick hits Wilde, setting up the handspring kick to the face to send him outside.

We take a break and come back with Carter in trouble for a change, including being taken down to the mat by the arm. Carter gets kicked down into the corner and a snap suplex gets two. A belly to back suplex is escaped though and Kushida comes in to clean house, including a basement dropkick to Wilde. Everything breaks down and the push moonsault gets two on Wilde as Mendoza makes the save.

Kushida holds the ropes so MSK can hit stereo dives but Escobar sends Kushida into the steps. A powerbomb puts him through the announcers' table and a whip sends Carter into the steps. That leaves Lee on his own and the triple teaming is on in a hurry. A moonsault gives Wilde two but Lee manages to avoid a dropkick and send Wilde and Mendoza outside.

Escobar misses a frog splash as the medics check on Kushida.

Lee kicks all three down as Carter is back up on the apron for the hot tag. Carter is knocked down and it's Kushida coming back in and getting dropped with the Phantom Driver. The Russian legsweep/running boot combination finishes Carter at 13:27.

Rating: B. This started slowly but got a lot better in the end to make it a heck of a main event. I'm surprised that they actually went with it as the big finale to the show, but it isn't like there was anything bigger going on. That's a good sign for everyone and you have two more title matches set up immediately. They cranked up the violence and intensity here, which was more than I would have expected from this match. Nice job with this one and it did what it needed to do.

Post match Legado holds up the titles to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. The main event picked this one up a little bit, but what matters most here is the fact that they did this without most of their main event stars. Cole had an interview and O'Reilly just nodded after said interview ended, meaning this was mainly a show built around the lower level stories. That is not a bad thing whatsoever and it is a great sign to see these people manage to make the show work so well.

Results

Mercedes Martinez b. Dakota Kai via DQ when Raquel Gonzalez interfered

Zayda Ramier b. Toni Storm – Shooting star press

Bronson Reed b. Austin Theory – Tsunami

Imperium b. Killian Dain/Drake Maverick – European Bomb to Maverick

Legado del Fantasma b. MSK/Kushida – Russian legsweep/Running boot combination to Carter

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NXT – April 20, 2021: I'm Too Sleepy To Come Up With A Way To Say Good Show

NXT

Date: April 20, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph

They are going to have a hard time topping what they did last week but NXT can figure it out as well as anyone else. The big story tonight is the return of Kyle O'Reilly for the first time in a long thirteen days, though it isn't clear what he'll be doing. You could easily put him into the title picture with Karrion Cross but he might be dealing with Adam Cole for a bit longer. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Here is Kyle O'Reilly.....in a jean jacket, a hat and sunglasses. Kyle talks about what a great time he is having and asks if we can turn the lights up. Oh never mind as it's just the sunglasses making things seem dark. Anyway, he is so happy because Adam Cole isn't here and that makes things better. Now it is time to move on, but what is next for him? At Takeover, he learned that you need that killer instinct to succeed. He needs to go after a title, but which one? Should he try for the workhorse title with the North American Title? Or should he go after Karrion Kross and the biggest evil NXT has ever seen?

Cue Cameron Grimes to interrupt, because he knows that O'Reilly can deliver. Grimes likes Cool Kyle and thinks they could have some merchandising options. O'Reilly joins him in TO THE MOON and of course he loves the idea. After thanking Grimey for the Dogecoin tip, O'Reilly starts wondering about his first opponent tonight. He can't get the sunglasses to work but realizes that it's Grimes, who he drops with a right hand. I think I really like this O'Reilly, as goofy as it is.

Sarray arrived earlier today but Zoey Stark, her opponent for later, interrupted. Starks would like to face her, and Sarray agrees to the match. This was announced in advance but at least there is a quick explanation. I'm not sure it needed one, but it was there.

LA Knight is ready to take out Dexter Lumis, because tonight they're going eye to eye.

LA Knight vs. Dexter Lumis

Knight takes him into the corner as commentary tries to figure out Lumis' psyche. Lumis knocks him down and the threat of the Silence sends Knight outside in the hurry. Back in and Lumis scares him into the corner and knocks him outside again. They head back inside and Knight grabs a jumping neckbreaker, meaning it's another trip to the floor.

We take a break and come back with Lumis grabbing a spinebuster, followed by the belly to back suplex for two. Lumis knocks him outside again but Drake gets in a drop toehold into the steps. Hold on though as here is Indi Hartwell on the others side of the barricade to distract Lumis. Knight gets in a cheap shot and yells at Hartwell, allowing Lumis to hit a slingshot dive. Lumis looks at Hartwell again though and it's a bulldog driver (ignore Lumis' head not hitting the mat) for the pin at 9:51.

Rating: D+. I wasn't feeling this one but the right person won. Knight still has a long way to go but getting a win here while the other two get to do the angle should serve him well. Lumis and Hartwell is the first mildly interesting thing Lumis has done so far in NXT so maybe they have a bit of an idea for him for a change.

Post match Hartwell gets on the apron and seems ready for a kiss but here is the Way to take her to the back.

Leon Ruff asks Isaiah Scott if he liked getting sent into a locker last week.

Beth Phoenix sits down with Io Shirai and asks about the beginning and ending of her title reign. Shirai is ready for the title rematch but for now, her body needs some rest. Cue Franky Monet (with dog of course) to introduce herself to Shirai and be a bit in awe of Phoenix. Since Shirai is taking some time off, she is willing to fill Shirai's spot. That earns her some yelling in Japanese, which Monet does not understand. Shirai: "I LIKE CATS!" Monet kisses her dog as Shirai leaves.

Breezango vs. Grizzled Young Veterans

Breezango are in British palace guard gear this week (yes this includes the large hats). The Veterans don't like it but get knocked to the floor in a hurry anyway. We settle down to Gibson hammering on Breeze but getting pulled into an armbar.

Drake dives into the corner to prevent Gibson from crashing, meaning Fandango can be taken down into a chinlock. That's broken up in a hurry with the Veterans being sent outside for the stereo dives.

We take a break and come back with Drake being sent into the ropes and seeming to hurt his knee. The referee checks on him and Gibson uses the distraction to poke Fandango in the eye in some quality cheating. Gibson rips at Fandango's face but it gets broken up in a hurry, allowing the hot tag off to Breeze. Everything breaks down and Breeze hits a Russian legsweep for two. Drake's rollup gets a close two and it's a blind tag back to Gibson. Ticket to Mayhem finishes Breeze at 9:01.

Rating: C. Pretty to the point match here as Breezango continues to be that team who doesn't do much but are former champions so they are in a nice enough place. The Veterans should be the next challengers to MSK and I'm assuming they are going to have the match sooner rather than later. If nothing else, it means we might be seeing more of the creative cheating.

The Way cuts off an Indi Hartwell interview but here's Bronson Reed to say let love love. Reed talks about the North American Title but Austin Theory gets between them and says Johnny is Papa John. The only way Reed is getting another title shot is by beating Theory, which sounds good to Reed. Gargano points out that Reed beat Theory last week, which seems to be a surprise. Theory is great in this role.

Cameron Grimes is happy to have bought a Ja Morant (NBA) NFT...but it seems that there was a huge bid after the auction so someone else has bought it instead. That someone: TED DIBIASE! Grimes: "TED DIBIASE!!!!!" The cameo will be excellent.

Sarray vs. Zoey Stark

They fight over a test of strength to start but Stark can't

break the bridge. Sarray is back up with a dropkick to the knee and a lot of screaming before tying up the leg. Stark's legs are tied up for a Muta Lock but she makes the rope in a hurry. A basement clothesline gets two on Sarray and some elbows to the neck get the same. Sarray fights up and drives Stark into the corner. Stark is knocked to the apron and a dropkick to the knee puts her on the floor.

Back in and they strike it out with Sarray getting the better of things. A running basement dropkick against the ropes rocks Stark and a fisherman's suplex gives Sarray two. Stark is right back with a suplex into a sliding knee for two of her own. A 450 (which was a Swanton and would have missed by two feet anyway) misses Sarray so Stark's kicks her in the head for two instead. Sarray hits her own kick and a high collar suplex finishes at 7:13.

Rating: C+. Sarray was energetic but she didn't exactly blow the doors off here. I'm not wild on Stark losing just after she got her big win over Toni Storm but odds are she'll be back. They had a good enough match though, despite being a bit sloppy at times. Sarray seems to be the next big thing in the division and I've heard worse ideas.

Respect is shown post match but here is Toni Storm to jump Stark. Sarray clears her off.

Dakota Kai and Raquel Gonzalez are asked about Io Shirai wanting the Women's Title shot. Kai says you can't always get what you want, including her not getting to study witchcraft at Hogwarts. She also DOES NOT like the suggestion that she wants the Women's Title though.

Candice LeRae wants Indi Hartwell to talk to William Regal but Dexter Lumis pops up again and Hartwell leaves with him. LeRae doesn't notice and goes to Shotzi Blackheart and Ember Moon to challenge them for the titles. Now LeRae gets it and is dragged into a locker room for the beating.

Video on Kushida becoming the new Cruiserweight Champion last week.

Here is Kushida, who is giving out a title shot of his own.

Cruiserweight Title: Oney Lorcan vs. Kushida

Kushida is defending. They go to the mat to start with Kushida working on a headscissors but Lorcan reverses into something like an STF. A missed kick to the head lets Lorcan grab a pretty aggressive headlock. That is broken up as well and Kushida kicks him to the floor as we take a break. Back with an exchange of strikes in the middle until a running uppercut gives Lorcan two.

Lorcan grabs an abdominal stretch before planting him for two. They strike it out again but this time the chops just fire the champ up. Some running shots in the corner have Lorcan in trouble and there's the top rope knee to the arm. Lorcan blocks the Hoverboard Lock though and a running Blockbuster gives Lorcan a pretty late two. Back up and Kushida goes after the arm again, setting up the cartwheel into the basement dropkick. More kicks to the arm set up the Hoverboard Lock to retain the title at 9:24.

Rating: B-. I was liking this one and it is nice to see Kushida getting to showcase himself again. This has been more of the old Kushida, who was awesome in his New Japan days and is now getting to show a bit more of that. He isn't going to be his entire old self, but at least we got a good one here. Lorcan can hang with almost anyone and he got to show off again here.

Post match here is Legado del Fantasma to jump Kushida. MSK comes in for the save to clean house.

Mercedes Martinez thinks Raquel Gonzalez is ducking her. That's cool, because Martinez can take out Dakota Kai and it can be one on one for the title.

Candice LeRae is rather banged up but comes up to see the Way. Indi Hartwell pops in to say she and Dexter Lumis made eye contact! Oh and she talked to William Regal, who has given the Way a Women's Tag Team Title shot. Johnny Gargano is happy but Candice can't even put her hands in for the celebration.

Imperium vs. Ever-Rise

Fabian Aichner/Marcel Barthel for Imperium, with Alexander Wolfe in their corner. Barthel beats on Chase Parker to start and it's quickly off to Aichner for more of the same. Cue Killian Dain and Drake Maverick for a distraction though, allowing Matt Martel to grab a rollup for two on Aichner. That's enough for Imperium, who finishes Martel with the European Bomb at 1:53.

Kyle O'Reilly comes to the ring for the main event but runs into Karrion Kross and Scarlett in the back. Sneering ensues.

Kyle O'Reilly vs. Cameron Grimes

O'Reilly goes right for him to start and grabs an armbar. That's reversed into one from Grimes but O'Reilly is out in a hurry. It's time to start the strikes, including the running knee against the ropes. Some kicks to the ribs and leg have Grimes in trouble but he chops his way to freedom. O'Reilly counters a sunset flip into another armbar so Grimes rolls into the ropes to escape. A suplex drops O'Reilly on his head and we take a break. Back with Grimes whipping him hard into the corner and grabbing the chinlock.

O'Reilly breaks that up and knees Grimes in the ribs to put him down. The series of strikes drops Grimes again but it's too early for a heel hook. Instead O'Reilly grabs a guillotine to knock Grimes mostly out, followed by a running knee to the chest. Grimes is right back up with a swinging Side Effect for two of his own. They're both down for a bit before getting to their feet again for the strike off. Grimes hits his flipping powerslam for two but O'Reilly flips him inside out with a

clothesline. A brainbuster plants Grimes and the top rope knee finishes for O'Reilly at 13:29.

Rating: B. This was feeling like a standard not quite squash for O'Reilly and then turned into a much better than expected back and forth match. Grimes can hang with anyone and it is nice to see him being the steady hand who can be put into this spot. They were trading bombs there at the end and while I didn't exactly believe that the upset was coming, it wasn't as cut and dry as I would have expected. Well done on a good main event.

Overall Rating: B-. Two matches carried this show and that is not exactly surprising. The main focus was on the Way this week and a lot of the major stars were nowhere to be seen, or at least not doing anything important. What we got worked out well though and it was a very quick two hours, as NXT tends to be. Another good show here, which probably shouldn't be a surprise.

Results

LA Knight b. Dexter Lumis – Bulldog driver

Grizzled Young Veterans b. Breezango – Ticket to Mayhem to Breeze

Sarray b. Zoey Stark – High collar suplex

Kushida b. Oney Lorcan – Hoverboard Lock

Imperium b. Ever-Rise – European Bomb to Martel

Kyle O'Reilly b. Cameron Grimes – Top rope knee to the back

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