

# Smackdown – August 19, 2022: More And More Often

## Smackdown

Date: August 19, 2022

Location: Bell Center, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

We're north of the border for the 1,200th episode and odds are that is not going to be the biggest deal. We are only a few weeks away from Clash At The Castle and now we should be in for some build to the show. There is a lot that needs to be done for the card and maybe we can get some of that done tonight. Let's get to it.

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

Commentary talks about the 1,200th show, with McAfee name dropping Jim Cornette doing commentary on the first show (or at least the pilot).

Ronda Rousey walks in front of commentary and gets in the ring where she says her fine is paid so Adam Pearce needs to get out here and lift her suspension. Cue Pearce, with security to say that's above his pay grade, so he asks her to leave peacefully. Pearce says that's what she did last week and now it's time to get violent. Security gets in the ring and gets beaten up. That's too far for Pearce, who has the police come out and arrest Rousey. As she is taken to the back, she asks if this is on Pearce's pay grade as she is put in the car.

The police car pulls away and Roman Reigns arrives.

Women's Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Natalya/Sonya Deville vs. Toxic Attraction

Zoey Stark is hurt so Toxic Attraction (Gigi Dolin/Jacy Jayne)

from NXT is taking her and Nikkita Lyons' place. As a bonus, Bayley/Iyo Sky/Dakota Kai sit in the front row to yell at commentary. Natalya rolls Dolin up to start and it's off to Deville for a spear of all things and a near fall. Jayne comes in and misses a charge into the post, allowing Jayne to hit a running flip dive to the floor.

We take a break and come back with Jayne loading up a Sharpshooter but getting knocked away by Deville. It's back to Natalya, whose Sharpshooter is broken up as well. Deville is sent into the barricade in front of Bayley and company for some yelling as Jayne tags herself in. Natalya doesn't notice and puts Dolin in the Sharpshooter, allowing Jayne to grab a rollup (clever) for the pin at 9:59.

**Rating:** C-. That's how the match should have gone as there is no reason for one of the most successful NXT tag teams ever to lose to a makeshift team like Natalya and Deville. Not much of a match, but they did the right thing with Toxic Attraction moving forward. At the same time, it does make me wonder why they weren't in the tournament in the first place.

Sami Zayn (hometown boy) goes in to see Roman Reigns, who asks how things have been going. Zayn talks about his recent issues with the Usos, especially Jey, who has been telling him to LEVEL UP. We hear about how Zayn took a Claymore for him last week and calls Jey ungrateful. Sami knows he went too far...until Reigns agrees with him. Reigns gets up and his phone rings, with Jey on the other end.

Reigns tells Sami to answer it, which doesn't seem to go well with Jey. Sami says he'll take care of it before hanging up. Apparently Jey was yelling about trouble at the border so the Usos won't be here tonight. That has Reigns looking nervous, but Sami offers his services. He does have a #1 contenders match for the Intercontinental Title tonight and Reigns thinks that title would look good in the Bloodline.

Sami goes to warm up but Reigns asks about Kevin Owens. Sami says they're still tight so Reigns says to tell Owens that Reigns doesn't owe anyone anything. As Sami leaves, Reigns glares a bit. This was interesting and some good character stuff, which you don't get enough of around here.

We look back at Gunther retaining the Intercontinental Title over Shinsuke Nakamura last week. Max doesn't like the interruption so Hit Row clears the ring quickly. Rapping ensues and goes on for a while. The good thing here is that Max is basically LA Knight instead of that not so great stuff he was doing for a few weeks.

Karrion Kross and Scarlett talk about what Drew McIntyre said about him on Raw. He still has his eye on Roman Reigns too. McIntyre and Reigns are his chosen ones.

Ricochet vs. Sheamus vs. Madcap Moss vs. Happy Corbin vs. Sami Zayn

For the Intercontinental Title shot at Clash At The Castle. The fans are WAY behind Sami with the OLE chants. The ring is cleared out to start, leaving Ricochet to hurricanrana Zayn. Corbin (in a t-shirt, jeans and tennis shoes, likely for reasons of a lost bag) cuts off a dive with a chokeslam to Ricochet and we take a break. Back with everyone brawling on the floor until Corbin takes Ricochet back inside.

Corbin hits the slide under the ropes clothesline on Moss and then knocks Zayn off the apron (Cole: "Sami looked like El Generico there." McAfee: "Oui."). Ricochet is back up with a springboard crossbody to Corbin and a springboard dropkick to knock Zayn off the apron as well. A running shooting star press gets two on Corbin as we see a NASTY bruise/cut on Sheamus' thigh. Sheamus' leg is good enough to hit Irish Curses on Moss and Zayn, though he does come up limping.

The ten forearms to the chest have Moss and Corbin in more trouble, followed by seventeen forearms to Ricochet's chest.

Zayn jawbreaks his way to freedom though and low bridges Corbin out to the floor. The big flip dive drops Sheamus and Corbin on the floor as we get some old school Sami for a change. Back in and a Michinoku Driver drops Ricochet and the Blue Thunder Bomb gets two on Moss.

Sheamus is back up to take out Ricochet though and a super White Noise sends Zayn outside, holding his arm. Moss gets in his own run but Ricochet cuts him off as Sami is helped to the back. Corbin Deep Sixes Sheamus and Ricochet clotheslines Moss, leaving everyone down as we take a break.

Back with Corbin pounding on Ricochet and dropping him with a torture rack neckbreaker. Corbin and Sheamus slug it out until Corbin gets clotheslined to the floor. A jumping knee gives Sheamus two on Moss but the Brogue Kick is countered into something like a Boss Man Slam. Ricochet Recoils Moss to the floor and hits a shooting star press for two on Sheamus, with Corbin making the save. Cue Sami for quite the reaction and a t-bone suplex on Ricochet. The Helluva Kick hits Ricochet but Corbin pulls Zayn out. Sheamus is back in with the Brogue Kick to finish Corbin out of nowhere at 22:22.

**Rating:** B-. The time helped here as it allowed the match to be built up instead of rushed. That allowed everyone a chance to show what they could do instead of flying through everything and trying to get a bunch of stuff in. The Zayn injury gives him a bit of an out instead of jobbing in his hometown so it was nice to see them cover that side. At the same time, it's good to see Sheamus winning, as he and Gunther could have a heck of a hoss fight. I could even see Sheamus getting the title so we might even have some drama.

Video on Drew McIntyre vs. Roman Reigns.

Video on the Viking Raiders. They have torches and face paint because a great battle awaits. Then they burn a bunch of New Day stuff.

We recap Liv Morgan and Shayna Baszler signing the contract last week.

Morgan's arm is out of the brace and into just tape but she isn't worried about Baszler. She can't start playing it safe now because she needs to get in the ring.

### Liv Morgan vs. Shotzi

Non-title. Before the match, Shotzi talks about how Morgan is getting too emotional and calls this match a bad decision. Liv slugs away to start and staggers Shotzi a bit, only to get knocked back with a shot to the face. Shotzi knocks her outside and we take a break. Back with Liv fighting out of trouble, setting up a brawl from their knees. Morgan hits a quick Codebreaker and Oblivion for the pin at 6:02. Not enough shown to rate but Morgan fighting through the pain and winning is the right way to go for her.

Post match Shayna Baszler comes in and knees her down before teasing the stomp on the arm but stomping and kicking Morgan down instead.

Ronda Rousey has been released on her own recognizance and Adam Pearce won't be pressing charges.

Drew McIntyre finds Karrion Kross' hourglass in his locker room and rolls his eyes.

Here is Roman Reigns (alone), who takes his sweet time getting into the ring. After being handed the microphone, Reigns talks about how he isn't here every week, meaning every once in awhile, people are going to come out here and say something stupid. If anyone ever comes out here and says they're the face of this company or the main event and it isn't him, they're LYING. The same thing is true if someone says they carry this company, including Drew McIntyre, who is beneath him.

Cue McIntyre to interrupt, saying that since Reigns isn't here very often, he doesn't represent the titles and doesn't deserve to be champion. Reigns is aghast but McIntyre says it's easy when Reigns has Paul Heyman and the Usos. Right now though, McIntyre sees fear in Reigns' eyes because Reigns is just a man and a man who McIntyre can tear apart.

The fight is on and Reigns gets suplexed but the Claymore hits....Sami Zayn, who runs in to take the shot. Reigns hits the Superman Punch but the Claymore cuts off the spear (despite the camera angle showing that McIntyre COMPLETELY missed by a good four inches) to end the show. McIntyre vs. Reigns feels like a main event, but I'm not sure I can see McIntyre taking the title off of him, even in the UK.

**Overall Rating:** B. There were only three matches but one of them was about ten minutes long and the other was over twenty so there was a nice amount of action on the show. Other than that, you had some good talking and character development, plus some stuff being added to or boosted for the pay per view. They did well here, with nothing dragging the show down and enough to make me want to see what happens next. Rather good show, and it's nice to be able to say that more and more often.

### Results

Toxic Attraction b. Natalya/Sonya Deville – Rollup to Natalya  
Sheamus b. Happy Corbin, Ricochet, Madcap Moss and Sami Zayn – Brogue Kick to Corbin  
Liv Morgan b. Shotzi – Oblivion

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# Smackdown – November 12, 2021: The Stupid Thing They Keep Doing

## Smackdown

Date: November 12, 2021

Location: Scope Arena, Norfolk, Virginia

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

We are nine days away from Survivor Series and it would be nice if they talked about the show a little bit more. The show has been acknowledged more than once, but the champion vs. champion matches have gotten almost no attention whatsoever. I'd love to see the show built up some more, but we have too many other things to get to first. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Here is Sonya Deville, with the Smackdown women's Survivor Series team: Shotzi/Natalya/Shayna Baszler/Aliyah, but they need a fifth. That would be the captain of the team: Sasha Banks. Shotzi isn't happy with this though and is ready to

fight Banks, but here is Naomi to come out and get in Sonya's face. Naomi hits Baszler and the fight is on.

### Sasha Banks/Aliyah/Naomi vs. Natalya/Shotzi/Shayna Baszler

Banks bulldogs Natalya down to start so it's off to Baszler in a hurry. That earns her some running knees from Banks and it's off to Aliyah, who gets taken into the corner for some alternating stomps. Aliyah gets a small package but has to fight out of a Kirifuda Clutch attempt. The tag brings in Naomi to clean house but Natalya gets in a tag of her own, allowing Baszler to knock Naomi outside.

There's a suplex to drop Naomi hard on the floor and Natalya does it again for good measure. Naomi gets sent hard into the barricade and we take a break. Back with Naomi caught in Shotzi's front facelock before Baszler comes back in to work on the arm. Naomi fights out of the corner, including a kick to the face to put Baszler on the floor. Natalya breaks up the tag again though, only to get rolled up.

The knockout sends her into Aliyah for the hot tag, meaning a high crossbody can get two on Natalya. Some Thesz presses and a neckbreaker get two on Natalya as everything breaks down. Banks hits the Meteora off the apron to drop Baszler and Naomi superkicks Shotzi. Back in and Natalya get the Sharpshooter on Aliyah, only to have Naomi shove it over to give Aliyah the pin at 12:48.

**Rating:** C. I can go for the idea here, but ultimately it is a little hard to buy that Aliyah, who still looked very nervous out there (fair enough) can pin Natalya by more or less leaning on here. There is also the Naomi factor, as you would think she would be on the team somewhere, but that might be too much for WWE to ask. At least they're giving the team some time. Granted it's time fighting among themselves, but it's something.

Sami Zayn is practicing his leadership speech in front of a



mirror but Jeff Hardy interrupts. Zayn asked what Hardy thinks, and Jeff says it sucked.

Aliyah is rather excited over her win but Sonya Deville comes in. Sonya asks how long Aliyah has known Naomi and then pulls her off of the team. No replacement is named and Aliyah is crushed.

We look back at Roman Reigns and the Bloodline attacking New Day last week, which has left Kofi Kingston on the injured list.

Kayla Braxton comes up to Roman Reigns and Paul Heyman. Reigns thinks it's either to acknowledge him or to flirt with the wise man. That makes Reigns laugh, so he tells Heyman to smarten her up. Heyman says that is going to be a hard task but promises that Reigns will make Xavier Woods acknowledge him tonight. If that doesn't happen, Reigns will take a knee. If Reigns breaks that promise, you can strip him of the Universal Title and ban him from Smackdown.

We look back at Happy Corbin and Madcap Moss getting into it with the Viking Raiders.

Moss has a new joke about Viking Raiders, which suggests that Erik is fat.

### Los Lotharios vs. Shinsuke Nakamura/Rick Boogs

Boogs busts out some air drums to start and gutwrenches Humberto up for a spinning suplex. Angel gets in a cheap dropkick though and some running knees in the corner give Humberto too. Angel's dropkick to the side of the head connects but Boogs muscles him up for a face first drop onto the buckle gets him a breather. The hot tag brings in Nakamura to clean house as everything breaks down. Angel posts Boogs and pulls Humberto out of the way of Kinshasa. Humberto uses an Angel distraction to kick Nakamura, setting up a springboard High/Low for the pin at 4:52.

**Rating:** C. This is the kind of result that is rather annoying. Why in the world would you not have Boogs take the pin here over the Intercontinental Champion? It makes all the sense in the world, but for some reason Nakamura takes a pin rather than his goofy sidekick. That's one of the (many) reasons why the title means nothing anymore and it's really annoying to see. Again.

NXT's Von Wagner is in Adam Pearce and Sonya Deville's office when Sami Zayn comes in. Zayn wants Jeff Hardy off of the Survivor Series team, so Pearce makes Sami vs. Hardy, with the loser off the team.

Video on the Wrestlemania tickets on sale party at AT&T Stadium. I'll be there so this is always cool to see.

Here is Charlotte for a chat. Charlotte says it's nice to see everyone before moving on to talking about her Survivor Series opponent, Becky Lynch. She talks about all of Becky's different monikers but they add up to making Becky a manufactured champion. Becky has had her great moments, like winning at Wrestlemania XXXV (with Charlotte's help) and beating Bianca Belair in 26 seconds. At Survivor Series, her new name is going to be Becky Uh Oh, because Charlotte is going to beat her.

Before Charlotte can move on, here is Toni Storm (hokey smoke I had forgotten she actually works here anymore) to interrupt. Toni wants to know about anyone getting an opportunity, so why not Charlotte vs. Toni for the title tonight? That's a no and Charlotte leaves as Toni glares a lot. Again: slight build for the pay per view and then we move on to something else.

Xavier Woods talks about what a rough week it has been for New Day but promises to make Roman Reigns bend the knee tonight.

Aliyah is on the phone to complain about being thrown off the team when Mustafa Ali comes in. Ali says he knew this would happen but Ricochet comes in to say Aliyah did well and to

keep her head up. Aliyah leaves with him and seems to feel better.

### Sami Zayn vs. Jeff Hardy

Sami goes after the arm to start but Hardy is back with a hiptoss, much to the pro-Hardy's crowd's delight. Hardy sends him face first into the buckle but Sami is back with right hands to take over. They head outside with Jeff sending Sami into the barricade but missing Poetry In Motion. We take a break and come back with Sami grabbing a chinlock. Hardy fights up and hits the basement dropkick for two, with the kickout being quite the surprise. Whisper in the Wind gets two more and there's the Twist of Fate. The Swanton finishes Sami at 9:13.

**Rating:** C-. There wasn't much doubt about the winner here as Sami is the kind of guy who can talk a lot but rarely backs it up in the ring. I'm not sure who is taking Zayn's place, but it would be nice to see someone fresh get the chance. This is supposed to be the new Smackdown, so let it be someone new for a change.

Post match Sami is all upset.

Hit Row raps about how awesome they are.

Jinder Mahal and Shanky rap about their own greatness. Eminem and Vanilla Ice references are made. Shanky also has to drop a beat for Mahal, setting up a rap about Hit Row. Well so much for Hit Row meaning anything.

Xia Li is coming.

Ridge Holland still thinks Sheamus is rather neat. Cesaro comes in to say he knows Sheamus well, because they didn't just set the bar, but they were the Bar. Holland says he and Sheamus will be a much more successful team when Sheamus is back next week.

Raw Rebound.

### Roman Reigns vs. King Woods

The loser takes a knee/acknowledges the other. Paul Heyman is here with Reigns but Woods is on his own. Reigns goes right after Reigns to start but gets knocked to the floor for a surprise. A dropkick through the ropes rocks Reigns again until he drops Woods onto the announcers' table.

We take a break and come back with Reigns hitting the rapid fire clotheslines in the corner. Woods gets in a shot of his own for a breather and a side kick to the face gets two. Reigns plants Woods coming off the ropes but the spear is cut off with a superkick. The Limit Break gets two...as the Usos pull Woods out for the DQ at 10:48.

**Rating:** C+. This was another good one as Woods continues to be on the roll of a lifetime. It would not shock me at all to see him turn this into a Day 1 challenge for the title in his hometown of Atlanta, as I've heard far worse ideas. Solid match here with the ending keeping Woods looking very strong.

Post match the big beatdown is on and the Usos put the crown on Reigns' head to end the show. Again: you can see how they have Big E. pulled into this but it still hasn't happened yet.

**Overall Rating:** C. The show had the same problem as Raw: there is almost nothing done to set up the matches at Survivor Series. There are some points where it feels like they are getting the teams ready, but the lack of personal issues is dragging things down. It's another case of WWE trying to build towards multiple things at once and as a result, nothing feels important.

### Results

Sasha Banks/Aliyah/Naomi b. Sonya Deville/Natalya/Shotzi – Rollup to Natalya

Los Lotharios b. Shinsuke Nakamura/Rick Boogs – Springboard

High/Low to Nakamura

Jeff Hardy b. Sami Zayn – Swanton Bomb

King Woods b. Roman Reigns via DQ when the Usos interfered

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# Smackdown – November 5, 2021: Recalibrating

## Smackdown

Date: November 5, 2021

Location: Ford Center, Evansville, Indiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

We're just over two weeks away from Survivor Series and it might be time to start talking about the show. Since it absolutely has to be Raw vs. Smackdown, it shouldn't be that hard to get things going. The show almost has to be better than last week's so at least they have a clear bar to clear. Let's get to it.

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

Here is the Bloodline to get things going. Roman Reigns talks about taking last week off after smashing Brock Lesnar, but now he's back so this tiny little no name town can acknowledge him. He was on a private island running around sans clothes last week (his wife loved it), but not everyone had a good time. Brock Lesnar got fined a million bucks, but there was one more thing.

Reigns asks Paul Heyman what happened to the Usos, with Heyman talking about how it was a non-title match. When flat out asked though, Heyman has to admit that the New Day won the match. Reigns likes the New Day, even though the Bloodline is better. He wants to know what happened, with both Usos blaming the other for taking the pin. Eventually it's Jimmy who admits he lost, so Reigns wants to know how he's going to fix it.

Jimmy promises to make everyone acknowledge the head of the title and the Universal Champion, but here is New Day to interrupt. Woods thinks the King is supposed to be at the head of the table, but Reigns hasn't stopped talking about sitting there for a long time now. Kofi thinks the table has been forgotten on Reigns' island of relevancy. As for tonight, Woods has an idea: Woods vs. Jimmy, and when Jey loses, he has to bend the knee to the King. Jimmy says the Bloodline bows to no one but Reigns accepts for him, with Woods having to bend the knee if he loses.

We look at Sonya Deville cheating Naomi out of a match with Shayna Baszler last week.

### Naomi vs. Shayna Baszler

In the back, Sonya Deville insists that it has been tough love on Naomi. They start fast with Naomi hitting a Thesz press and then kicking Baszler in the face. Baszler snaps off a German suplex though and they fight outside, with Naomi sending her into the apron. Back in and a good high crossbody gets two on

Baszler but she drops Naomi onto the apron.

We take a break and come back with Naomi hitting a Heatseeker onto the apron. A sunset flip gets two but Baszler switches into the Kirifuda Clutch. That's broken up with a rope break so Naomi grabs a rollup for the pin at 6:33. Hold on though because here's Sonya Deville to say that should have been a rope break, so restart the match. Cole: "WHERE'S JACK TUNNEY???" The Kirifuda Clutch finishes Naomi at 7:30.

**Rating:** C-. Yeah we know. It's the kind of story that we have seen over and over again: a corrupt authority figure does something to mess with a wrestler. The good thing here though is that it could bring Sonya back into the ring and that is certainly a positive. It has been a while since we've seen this so it's far from the worst thing, but they might as well have had a big NOPE sign as soon as Naomi got the pin.

Roman Reigns is ranting to the Usos about what happened last week, saying he took a week off and this place is almost as bad as Raw. Jimmy laughs so Reigns gets in his face, saying they don't lose.

Remember how Xia Li was coming? She still is.

Ridge Holland is here to meet his idol, Sheamus, because he would fight right in back home. He and his friends were all big fans and everything he knows he learned from watching Sheamus. That is bad news for everyone around here. Quite the interesting backstory.

We look back at Shotzi attacking Sasha Banks.

Shotzi talks about how she has lost everything, from matches to the support of the WWE Universe. That was her breaking point and she is going to run over everyone, even without the tank. This was a good example of someone writing a promo for a wrestler, even if it is not something that fits with their personality. Someone like Shotzi would never say "the support

of the WWE Universe” but that’s how WWE people talk so here we are.

### Los Lotharios vs. Mansoor/Cesaro

Mansoor takes Garza down by the arm to start but gets caught in a spinebuster as we get an inset interview from some bragging Lotharios. Carrillo comes in to punch Mansoor into the corner and a backdrop allows Garza to TAKE OFF HIS PANTS. The half crab goes on but Mansoor escapes and brings in Cesaro to start cleaning house. The springboard corkscrew elbow sets up the Swing but Carrillo makes the save. Mansoor breaks up the near fall and Cesaro gets knocked into Mansoor. Something like a Muta Lock from Carrillo sets up a basement dropkick from Garza (The Cero de la Silla?) for the pin at 4:59.

**Rating:** C. You can always use a team like Los Lotharios and they were doing their thing well enough here. The tag divisions have been dying for new talent so this is a perfectly fine addition. Now just let them win some matches and go somewhere with it and they might be on to something.

Aliyah hits on Jeff Hardy but leaves so Jeff can have his interview. Hold on though as Jeff goes over to Aliyah, who runs into Sami Zayn. Sami wants to help her out, so he has one suggestion: pants suit.

Here’s Drew McIntyre for this week’s open challenge.

### Drew McIntyre vs. Ricochet

Ricochet says Drew needs to watch his mouth or someone is going to come out here and slap him in the face. That’s what Ricochet does so Drew starts fast, including a heck of an overhead belly to belly. Drew is knocked outside but he catches a running hurricanrana and drops Ricochet onto the apron. Back in and another belly to belly has Ricochet sprawling into the corner.



We cut to Mustafa Ali, who seems interested because he and Ricochet have a lot in common. Back to full screen with Ricochet dropkicking McIntyre out of the air. A standing shooting star press is blocked though and a brainbuster gives Drew two. Ricochet hits some superkicks but a middle rope moonsault press is Claymored out of the air (DANG) for the pin at 3:41.

**Rating:** B-. WWE is getting the hang of these awesome short matches as of late, as they packed in so much stuff that I thought they had gone twice as long. I'm glad to see Ricochet on the show again and that finish looked great. Then there's the Ali stuff and while I'm still nervous, they might have shifted away from what it seemed to be in the first place.

New Day is ready for the main event and dancing ensues.

Mustafa Ali comes up to Ricochet and proposes a team. Ricochet turns him down though, because Ali complains all the time, was mean to his last partner, and is just a jerk. Ali isn't pleased.

It's time for Happy Talk, with Happy Corbin and Madcap Moss laughing about how they have no competition. That brings them to their guests this week, the Viking Raiders, who seem to impress McAfee. The Raiders say they aren't here to be guests but to raid this corny show. Corbin laughs at the idea of two guys in their Halloween costumes. Moss tells them a joke about how bad vikings smell so the set is wrecked.

### Viking Raiders vs. Happy Corbin/Madcap Moss

Erik powers Corbin around to start so it's off to Ivar to work on Moss' arm. A Corbin distraction lets Moss come back with a spinebuster to Erik though and it's time to stomp away in the corner. Ivar has to make a save of his own but Moss shoves him through the ropes for something you don't see very often.

Deep Six gets two on Erik but he knocks Corbin away and brings

in Ivar to start breaking people. A crossbody hits Moss for two and there's the seated senton in the corner. Ivar cartwheels away from Corbin (McAfee: "A VIKING DID A CARTWHEEL!") and drives Erik into the corner. Corbin is sent outside and Erik powerbombs Moss (after almost dropping him at first) but Corbin pulls Moss to the floor. The threat of an Ivar dive sends Moss and Corbin away for the countout at 5:41.

**Rating:** C-. This didn't have much time to go anywhere but they followed the formula so it wasn't that bad. The Raiders getting pushed again is a good idea and I could go for seeing them face the Usos for the titles. Corbin and Moss are more likely to get the push though, which isn't surprising and also not the most exciting. Odds are the rematch is next week and a Nakamura/Boogs cameo wouldn't surprise me.

Raw Rebound.

Hit Row runs into Sami Zayn, who is giving them some advice as the locker room leader. Zayn thought their entrance a few weeks ago sucked, but with some work, they could be stars. Top Dolla asks him to demonstrate a big entrance and the team is rather excited to see this.

Here is Sami Zayn, who is rather fired up during his entrance. With that out of the way, here is Hit Row, who seems to get a bit of a more positive reaction, to send Sami away in some shame.

The Usos ask if Roman Reigns is coming to the ring with them. Reigns asks how many of their mistakes does he have to fix.

King Woods vs. Jimmy Uso

Kofi Kingston and Jey Uso are here too and the loser has to bend the knee. Woods starts fast by knocking Jimmy outside to start. Back in and Woods dropkicks him out of the air for two but Jimmy drops him on the top. We take a break and come back with Jimmy stomping away in the corner before grabbing the

chinlock.

Woods fights back up and knocks Jimmy down for a change, setting up a heck of a top rope legdrop for two. Jey offers a distraction though and it's a super Samoan drop to give Jimmy his own near fall. The Superfly Splash hits raised boots so Jey offers a hand but the referee catches the cheating. Woods grabs a rollup (and pants) for the pin at 9:21.

**Rating:** B-. I was getting into this one by the end and they had me on a few of the near falls. Woods winning is the right call as he is getting some energy out of the crown, so you don't want him losing so soon. The match was good action with solid drama and that's not bad for a total midcard main event.

Post match Jimmy reluctantly starts to bend the knee but here is Roman Reigns to jump Woods and set up the beatdown. Woods' leg gets taken out and Reigns promises violence next week. New Day is going to need some backup, perhaps in the form of the WWE Champion, who is probably going to be facing Reigns at Survivor Series later this month anyway. That's some amazing timing.

**Overall Rating:** C+. Yeah last week was a one off as this was definitely a return to course after last week's near train wreck. This week had better matches and some good story advancement, so well done on getting things closer to Survivor Series. I want to see what happens when a serious Big E. comes after Reigns and Naomi get to beat up Sonya, plus wherever they are going with Drew McIntyre's open challenges. Good show here, and that's nice to see again.

### Results

Shayna Baszler b. Naomi – Kirifuda Clutch

Los Lotharios b. Cesaro/Mansoor – Assisted basement dropkick to Cesaro

Drew McIntyre b. Ricochet – Claymore

Viking Raiders b. Madcap Moss/Happy Corbin via countout

Xavier Woods b. Jimmy Uso – Rollup with a handful of pants

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# Smackdown – October 22, 2021: Welcome To The New Age

## Smackdown

Date: October 22, 2021

Location: Intrust Bank Arena, Wichita, Kansas

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

We're done with Crown Jewel and that means it is time to start getting ready for Survivor Series. The big story coming out of the show is Roman Reigns retaining the Universal Title as Paul Heyman managed to stay in the middle while still interfering in the match. That could mean more than a few things going forward so let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Roman Reigns retaining the Universal Title over Brock Lesnar, albeit with an assist from the Usos and a title belt shot.

Here are Reigns and Paul Heyman for a chat to get things going. Reigns isn't happy with Heyman, as he doesn't get why the title was thrown into the middle of the ring last night. Reigns: "Shall we work on this?" He demonstrates how to put the title in his hand and says that Heyman isn't good as his job. We hear Reigns' various monikers, including the greatest Universal Champion of all time (that has been a long five years). Reigns lists off all of the people he has smashed while champion, including Brock Lesnar.

Speaking of Lesnar, wasn't he supposed to be here tonight? Reigns has Heyman pull out his phone to read Lesnar's promise to beat up Reigns as soon as he arrives tonight. Reigns: "He's tweeting now!" That makes Reigns laugh and he wants Lesnar out here for his second beating in a row. He faces the Titantron but no one shows up, so Reigns thinks Lesnar must be scared. Reigns makes it clear: he isn't leaving the ring until Lesnar gets here.

We take a break and come back with Reigns and Heyman still in the ring, with the former talking about how great he is. The fans want Lesnar but Reigns says Lesnar is scared of him, just like everyone else. Reigns is ready to leave but here is Lesnar to cut him off. The fight is on with Lesnar knocking him to the floor but stopping to look at Heyman. One heck of a steps shot knocks Reigns silly and it's time to load up the announcers' table.

Cue the Usos for the save so Lesnar beats them up, allowing Reigns to get back up. Lesnar drives Reigns into the post and then steals a camera, which he throws at the post to break it into pieces. Someone gets sent over the announcers' table so

Adam Pearce sends out various wrestlers to calm Lesnar down but they're beaten down as well. Cesaro, Jeff Hardy and the Viking Raiders finally calm things down, leaving Lesnar to hold up the Universal Title. Now that was a hot angle and it felt like Reigns was running scared for the first time.

Post break, and post a bunch of replays, Adam Pearce gets in the ring to say Lesnar's actions were unacceptable. Therefore, Lesnar is suspended indefinitely. Cue Lesnar again and Pearce knows he messed up. Lesnar grabs him by the shirt and wants Pearce to say it again. Pearce, while struggling to breathe, repeats the suspension. Lesnar: "Is that right?" Lesnar hits an F5, hears his music start, and hits another F5, with Pearce's pants being ripped in the process. That's not enough for Lesnar, who grabs the mic and tells Pearce to say it again. Since Pearce can't move, Lesnar hits him in the face with the microphone to some rather strong praise from the crowd.

The locker room is worried about what happened and here is Naomi to get in Sonya Deville's face. Sonya yells at her and since Naomi is a face on the WWE roster, she calmly walks away without any rebuttal. Drew McIntyre pops in to say he's here to make a difference so it's open challenge time.

Here is Drew McIntyre in the ring and it is still open challenge time.

### Drew McIntyre vs. Sami Zayn

Sami has a new theme and says he's used to being forgotten around here. He is actually the longest tenured member of the Smackdown roster and he is kind of a locker room leader. McIntyre may be a former WWE Champion, but he's a newbie around here. Sami will accept the challenge and drops to the floor at the opening bell. McIntyre follows him outside and sends Zayn into the barricade for a big crash.

We take a break and come back with Zayn hammering away in the

corner but McIntyre snaps off an overhead belly to belly. Sami snaps Drew's throat across the top rope but the Glasgow Kiss gets McIntyre out of trouble. A charge hits post to put him back in trouble though and Sami sends him into said post again. The Helluva Kick, complete with the countdown, is cut off with the Claymore to finish Zayn at 6:50.

**Rating:** C-. It wasn't a great match or anything but they kept it short as they should have. I was expecting this to be bell, Claymore, bell and it was only just a little bit more than that. It was a good way to debut McIntyre on his new show and it worked out well enough. Zayn can lose over and over and talk his way right back into being fine so this worked out in a short span.

It's time for the official coronation of King Xavier Woods, with Kofi Kingston making the presentation. Woods comes to the ring and Kofi puts the cloak onto him, allowing the fans to hit a YOU DESERVE IT chant. Woods: "ME???" The scepter is presented, and that just leaves the crown. Kingston gives Woods a huge over the top introduction and puts the crown on his head to a rather positive reception. Woods promises it will be a fair and fun reign, with Kofi reading a proclamation and waving the robe behind him. Goofy fun here and it's great to see Woods getting the chance to do something on his own.

Becky Lynch isn't interested in trading titles with Charlotte, so maybe she should be Becky Two Belts again.

Xia Li is coming soon.

### Mansoor vs. Mustafa Ali

Rematch from Crown Jewel where Mansoor won. Ali misses a charge in the corner and walks into a backdrop. There's a clothesline to the floor and Mansoor backdrops him from the apron to the floor. Back in and a high crossbody gives Mansoor two but Ali is back in with a Batista Bomb for two. A tiger suplex of all things drops Ali but he is back up with a sunset

flip. That's fine with Mansoor, who sits down on it for the pin at 2:37. Mansoor was certainly energetic here.

Ridge Holland isn't surprise he made it here.

Aliyah is ready to give Smackdown a makeover.

Angel Garza and Humberto Carrillo say that winning is easy when you look this good.

Sheamus delivers nothing but bangers. These were short and to the point and a lot better than what I would have expected from introductions.

Here is Hit Row to rhyme about how great they are and now they need a big bag for all of their nice things.

#### Hit Row vs. Dustin Lawyer/Daniel Williams

Swerve takes Lawyer down in a hurry and hits a running elbow to the back. The backsplash gives Dolla two and it's a Wasteland/World's Strongest Slam to Williams and Lawyer at the same time. A side slam/running kick to the head finishes Lawyer at 1:12. Simple, to the point, get the idea over, wrap it up before you overstay your welcome. Not a thing wrong with that.

We recap Lesnar's destruction earlier, including that of Adam Pearce.

Sonya Deville says Pearce is going to be ok eventually and she told him what would happen. For now though, we have to keep going and she'll take care of things on her own.

#### Happy Corbin vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Non-title Champions Contenders match and Corbin thanks Nakamura for sending him into the downward spiral that eventually made him happy. Madcap Moss and Rick Boogs are here too as Corbin powers Nakamura into trouble to start. Nakamura



is back up with some shots in the face to take over and Good Vibrations (with Boogs accompanying on guitar) makes it worse. Back up and Corbin shoves Nakamura to the apron before dropping him face first...well close enough to the apron as we take a break.

Back with Corbin hammering away on the mat until Nakamura fights up and hits a running knee. Nakamura strikes away and hits the running knee in the corner for two. End of Days is broken up but the Deep Six gives Corbin two of his own. Boogs guitars Nakamura back to life and he knees Corbin down. Kinshasa is loaded up but Moss goes after the guitar, drawing Nakamura out for the save. Corbin sends Nakamura into the steps though and End of Days finishes Nakamura at 9:38.

**Rating:** C. Sweet goodness I can't stand that finish and it's the kind of thing that WWE loves to do. Not only did they not hide how the match was going to end, but a champ takes a fall to set up a title match which could have been set up any of about a dozen other ways. That's not how WWE likes to do things though, because why put in the work when you can be lazy instead?

Charlotte says Becky Lynch can hand over the title really easily. Just pretend it's Charlotte's suitcase that Becky carried for years. We aren't even done with the first "THE ROSTERS ARE FINALIZED" show and we already have a guest star from Raw.

Here are Becky Lynch and Charlotte, in their gear, to exchange titles. Sonya Deville tells them to hand it over but Becky drops hers. They trade the titles but Charlotte issues the challenge for winner take all. Cue Sasha Banks to call Charlotte a b\*\*\*\* so Becky leaves, saying she'll see one of them at Survivor Series. Sasha and Charlotte insult each other and Banks wins a quick brawl to end the show. Just like it was last year, this was hardly anything that helped the titles, but that is long past the point of mattering.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This felt like a new era and that appears to be what they were going for here. There were new people introduced doing new things and it made for a good way to set things off. I liked how they introduced a lot of new people and set things in motion, with a hot opening segment making it that much better. This might not have been a classic, but it was a good way to make things interesting for the future.

## Results

Drew McIntyre b. Sami Zayn – Claymore

Mansoor b. Mustafa Ali – Cradle

Hit Row b. Dustin Lawler/Daniel Williams – Side slam/running kick to the head combination to Lawyer

Happy Corbin b. Shinsuke Nakamura – End of Days

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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 – September 14, 2021: New And...That's All I've Got**

**NXT**

Date: September 14, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph, Wade Barrett

We have arrived as it is time for the all new NXT, featuring a lot of the same people and whatever angles need to be wrapped up. I'm almost terrified of what this is going to include as the usual suspects from Raw are in charge. We have a wedding and a vacant World Title to fill though so let's get to it.

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

We open with a quick recap of Samoa Joe vacating the NXT Title and the setup of the four way for the vacant championship.

Tommaso Ciampa doesn't care which NXT it is because he'll be champion.

Pete Dunne thinks it is time for a Bruiserweight Champion.

Kyle O'Reilly is ready to achieve a goal sixteen years in the making.

LA Knight knows Samoa Joe was scared of him and now three men are stuck in the same spot. Someone named Bron Breaker (better known as Bronson Rechsteiner) comes up to Knight and says he wants a chance to prove himself. Knight tells him to go out there and take a beating in a few minutes.

The arena and set are far brighter and the setup makes it look FAR bigger. The seats wrap around the ring for a unique look. It's actually quite the improvement.

LA Knight vs. Bron Breaker

Breaker shoulders and clotheslines Knight down and some suplexes have Knight in the corner. Commentary says Breaker has a Dog Faced Gremlin mentality for the first Steiner reference. Knight is back with a clothesline and the jumping neckbreaker out of the corner puts Breaker in more trouble. Some running shoulders have Knight back in trouble as we hear about Breaker's resume. Not his family history or anything,

but he did play football. Knight gets gorilla pressed into a powerslam for the clean pin at 3:42.

**Rating:** C-. So I guess they're starting with the rapid fire changes, as Breaker is suddenly thrown right into the spotlight. I'm still stunned that they didn't directly say he's a Steiner, but I guess that might be too much pressure? Either way, quite the surprise for the first match, but it doesn't do Knight much good.

Post break, Breaker gets congratulated by a bunch of unnamed wrestlers.

### Imperium vs. Brooks Jensen/Josh Briggs

Jensen powerslams Aichner to start so it's off to Barthel, who grabs an armbar on Briggs. That's fine with Briggs, who powers his way out in a hurry. Barthel strikes away but can't get in a suplex. Instead he hits a running kick to the chest but Briggs tosses him away without much effort. It's back to Jensen to clean house but Briggs gets knocked outside. The Imperial Bomb finishes Jensen at 3:18.

**Rating:** C. I can go for some new names being showcased, but I could go for less of Imperium. They have every bit of the in-ring acumen but egads they are incredibly dry. I know that's kind of the point, though it doesn't make things much better. Briggs continues to have something there, but it hasn't quite broken out yet.

Hit Row talks about how fabulous B Fab really is. She has trained with the best and now she is ready for her win.

### B Fab vs. Katrina Cortez

Fab kicks her away and shrugs off Cortez's comeback. A big kick to the face in the corner rocks Cortez and it's a neckbreaker for the pin at 1:14. They weren't out there very long and didn't look great while they were.

B Fab doesn't think much of Elektra Lopez getting involved in their business so here is Legado del Fantasma to interrupt. Lopez and B Fab insult each other with various threats...and we're just done with that.

Odyssey Jones and Cameron Grimes are trying to cheer up Johnny Gargano when Austin Theory returns. He even has a surprise: you can't have a wedding without a priest, so here is DAMIAN Priest to say the bar must be open. Grimes has the drinks covered and Theory and Gargano hug. The matching Dexter Lumis costumes help a lot.

Here is Carmelo Hayes, with Trick Williams (whoever that is) for a chat. After a break, Hayes talks about winning the Breakout Tournament three weeks ago. You aren't going to catch him off guard again so he called Williams, who insisted he was bout it bout it. Now Williams is going to be everywhere Hayes goes because he has the gift of the gab and the gift of the jab. Hayes is great, but Williams has a bone to pick with him. Williams describes being bout it bout it and Hayes says it is hard to be good and humble. When he shoots he doesn't miss, but if he chooses to pass, Williams will see it.

Duke Hudson comes out for his match and says Hayes got lucky in the Breakout Tournament. Williams comes in and hits a cyclone boot to Hudson's face. The beating is on and Hayes joins in. Some double teaming leaves Hudson laying. I have no idea what they said or what this was supposed to be.

Gigi Dolin and Jayce Jane compliment the NEW Mandy Rose, whose face we don't see.

### Kayden Carter/Kacy Catanzaro vs. Gigi Dolin/Jayce Jane

It's a brawl to start with Catanzaro dropkicking Jane to the floor so Carter can run Dolin over. A double arm crank has Dolin in trouble as we go split screen to see Pete Dunne and Ridge Holland taking out Kyle O'Reilly. Dolin gets armdragged into the corner for the tag to Jane. That's fine with Carter,

who hits her in the face from the apron. The 450/neckbreaker combination is loaded up but Mandy Rose, in a hoodie, comes in for the DQ at 1:57.

Post match the beatdown is on and Mandy is...a brunette. Sarray comes in for the save and clears the ring in a hurry.

Sarray/Kayden Carter/Kacy Catanzaro vs. Gigi Dolin/Jayce Jane/Mandy Rose

We're joined in progress with Sarray hitting a missile dropkick on Dolin and a fisherman's suplex gets two. It's off to Carter for a dropkick into a backsplash and Catanzaro comes in, only to fall for a distraction as she gets caught in the wrong corner. Mandy forearm her in the back and hits a slam for two.

A bodyscissors sets up a suplex for two and it's back to Jane to keep Kacy in trouble. Not that it matters as Kacy slips through some legs and brings in Carter to clean house. The basement superkicks drops Jane and everything breaks down. That means the Rose vs. Sarray showdown until Carter superkicks Mandy for two. Rose is back up with a jumping knee to Carter's face for the pin at 6:12.

**Rating:** C-. So that happened, as Blonde Bombshell Mandy Rose is now Evil Brunette Bombshell Mandy Rose. I don't know how much of a difference that makes but I'm kind of digging the heel trio. There is something there, though it might need a bit more of an explanation of what it actually is.

The bridal party is getting ready.

William Regal announces that O'Reilly is out of the way and...Von Wagoner will take his place. You're not supposed to know who that is.

Ridge Holland vs. Drake Maverick

Holland throws him around to start and runs him over with

ease. Some forearms across the face keep Maverick down and more forearms keep up the pain. Northern Grit finishes Maverick at 1:48. Total squash.

Tommaso Ciampa talks about how everyone is coming for the title and that is why we are here. It has been 908 days since he held Goldie and tonight he gets his redemption.

Tony Dangerfield is a former All American Greco Roman wrestler and he's coming to nXT.

Creed Brothers vs. ???//???

Brutus starts fast and shoves one of them over the top and out to the floor. Back in and Brutus drives them into the corner and Julius comes in sans tag. After the double teaming, Brutus plants the first one again before a slap brings Julius back in for a suplex. Julius makes one opponent tag the other and a dropkick just fires Julius up. A spinebuster plants the first one and a basement clothesline is good for the pin at 2:50. Total dominance and they have something with the Creed Brothers.

Post match Malcolm Bivens brags about the Diamond Mine's success and introduces the newest member of the team: Ivy Nile. She's in great shape and hasn't had a carb in sixteen years. Cue Kushida to say he is ready for Roderick Strong and the Cruiserweight Title match is set for next week.

NXT Title: Von Wagoner vs. Pete Dunne vs. LA Knight vs. Tommaso Ciampa

One fall for the vacant title. It's a big brawl to start with Wagoner clearing most of the ring until Knight gets to clean house. Dunne is back in to work on Wagoner's arm and it's time for the showdown with Ciampa. That means an armbar into a stomp to Ciampa's arm until Knight breaks that up. A clothesline sends Knight outside though and the brawl is on again. Wagoner comes in and cleans house as we take a break.

Back with the brawling continuing with Ciampa hitting the running strikes in the corner. The double clothesline takes down Dunne and Knight but Wagoner blocks the Fairy Tale Ending. Knight scores with Blunt Force Trauma for two. Another one sends Dunne outside but Ciampa scores with Willow's Bell for two, as Dunne makes another save. Ciampa hits the running corkscrew dive onto everyone else and is the only one left standing. Back in and Dunne snaps Ciampa's fingers, setting up the Bitter End. Knight tries to steal the pin but Wagoner cuts him off with an Angle Slam for a very close two.

Dunne and Ciampa take Wagoner and Knight out and the big slugout is on. A German suplex sends Ciampa outside and Dunne goes up top, only to have Knight grab a top rope superplex to bring him back down. Wagoner hits a double underhook slam for two on Knight with Ciampa making the save. The Fairy Tale Ending to Knight gives Ciampa the title back at 10:36.

**Rating:** B. This was all action and that's what you need for the title match. It didn't feel like an epic title win, but Ciampa is about as solid of a choice for the title as you can have. I was convinced that Wagoner was actually going to get the title, but at least they went with something that made sense. There are all kinds of ways to go for the first title feud too so this is a safe and smart choice.

Ciampa is rather happy to have won the title.

Video on Indi Hartwell and Dexter Lumis' road to the altar.

It's time for the wedding, with wrestlers in the wedding party. Indi Hartwell comes to the ring and Johnny Gargano gives her away, though only after he lists off his resume. Gargano asks if Austin Theory has the rings, with Theory saying they're in a ring. Ikemen Jiro has rings, inside his jacket of course. We get up to "speak now" and Dexter threatens anyone who says something with an ax.

Indi reads her vows to Dexter, whose middle name is Gaylord.



She says he is misunderstood and is glad that he's a freak. Lumis has to cut her off from a story about sneaking into her bed one night, with Gargano and Candice LeRae freaking out. Indi: "Dexter, you never lose a staring contest." Lumis' vow is a thumbs up, with the minister being confused about what is going on. That earns the minister a Silencer so there is no one to finish this.

The fans want William Regal...but Beth Phoenix jumps in the ring because she knew this would happen. That's why she became an ordained minister last night so she can handle things. Beth wants to cut to the chase, which draws up Andre Chase...who is taken out by Odyssey Jones. With that out of the way, Beth says her thing, making sure to say that any death doing them parting is hopefully not ax related. Indi says she does and Dexter...actually says I DO (Candice's shocked face is great). After the kiss, they pose together and no major shenanigans ensue.

Tommaso Ciampa is watching in the back when Bron Breaker comes up to say congratulations. A tense staredown ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. I have no idea what to think of this show and I don't think NXT knows what they were thinking with it either. We'll start with the good: the new look makes it feel like a much better show as they leave behind the cramped atmosphere. There were also fresh faces, which makes things seem like it is a brand new production. The wrestling wasn't bad either, with the title match being well put together.

The problem comes in two parts: who are these people and why are they here? There was no explanation from William Regal, no storyline explanation and really nothing at all about WHY this was the new NXT. We know that it is because they kept talking about it, but we were never told why it was happening. There are all of these new faces running around too, making for a rather confusing show at times. It isn't bad and it was the start, but dang I do not have any confidence in this show at

the moment.

### Results

Bron Breaker b. LA Knight – Gorilla press powerslam

Imperium b. Brooks Jensen/Josh Briggs – Imperium Bomb to Jensen

B Fab b. Katrina Cortez – Neckbreaker

Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter b. Jayce Jane/Gigi Dolin via DQ when Mandy Rose interfered

Mandy Rose/Gigi Dolin/Jayce Jane b. Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter/Sarray – Running knee to Carter

Ridge Holland b. Drake Maverick – Northern Grit

Creed Brothers b. ???/??? – Basement clothesline to ???

Tommaso Ciampa b. LA Knight, Pete Dunne and Von Wagoner – Fairy Tale Ending to Knight

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# NXT – September 7, 2021: The Ungrand Finale

## NXT

Date: September 7, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett

This is how it ends. We're wrapping up the original run of NXT this week as everything changes with the next show. I'm a mixture of scared, excited and scared excited as the idea of Monday Night NXT scares me to death, but NXT does need some changes. There are a pair of title matches tonight to finish things off. Let's get to it.

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

## Ember Moon vs. Kay Lee Ray

Feeling out process to start with Moon snapping off an armdrag. Back up and Ray hits a quick faceplant for two before taking Moon into the corner. Ray cranks on the arm and pulls Moon down into a cross armbreaker. That's reversed in a hurry and Moon is back up with a middle rope Codebreaker for two. The Crossface has Ray in more trouble and Moon rolls it into the middle to make it worse. Ray slips out so Moon pulls her into a triangle choke but gets rolled into the corner to break it up.

Back from a break with Moon getting two off a small package and tying her in the Tree of Woe for a kick to the face. A tornado DDT gets Ray out of trouble but Moon sends her outside for the big dive. Back in and Ray breaks up an Eclipse attempt with a hair mare off the top. Moon blocks a kick into something like a flipping One Winged Angel for two more. They fight into a pinfall reversal sequence with Ray trying a backslide but lifting Moon up into a Gory Bomb for the pin at

14:41.

**Rating:** B-. This was a good way to get Ray her first important win around here as Moon is still a name that means something. It helps that they had a good, hard hitting match with Moon continuing to being able to have a solid match with anyone. Ray is going to be a major player around here and that is something the division could use.

Oney Lorcan and Danny Burch are ready to win the Tag Team Titles. Ridge Holland and Pete Dunne tell them to get rid of MSK too.

We go to Indi Hartwell's bachelorette party where no one seems to like Dexter Lumis. This includes Indi's friend Persia, who is here to see Disney World rather than the party. Hartwell talks about how Dexter saved her but she owes so much to Candice LeRae. Candice gets to give a speech, which involves throwing bread at Kacy Catanzaro and Kayden Carter for being on Tik Tok. She didn't like Lumis either, but it has worked out well enough.

### Santos Escobar vs. Carmelo Hayes

Escobar has the rest of Legado del Fantasma with him. Feeling out process to start with Hayes working on a wristlock. Escobar starts kicking away and chokes on the rope before kicking Hayes outside. Hayes goes crashing over the barricade and we take a break. Back with Escobar sitting Hayes on top for a loud chop and grabbing a Crossface. With that broken up, Escobar takes him outside for a Boston crab on the steps.

Hayes fights back to escape some choking on the ropes and scores with a quick dropkick to the floor. Escobar is sent face first into the announcers' table, setting up a running knee back inside. Hayes' springboard is kneed out of the air but he's back with a Codebreaker and face plant for two. A DDT onto the apron plants Escobar again but Legado's distraction lets Elektra Lopez slam Hayes on the floor. That rocks Hayes

so much that the Phantom Driver can finish Hayes at 13:51.

**Rating:** B-. I liked the match for the most part, but being devastated by a simple slam is a bit much to take. The slam was pretty impressive but that's enough to stun Hayes long enough for Escobar to get the win? The finish wasn't clean so it's hardly some career killer for Hayes or anything, though I'm really not sure pinning him is a good idea.

Malcolm Bivens officially welcomes the Creed Brothers, both former amateur wrestling stars, into the Diamond Mine. Roderick Strong seems happy to have them.

William Regal announces a fatal four way to crown a new #1 contender next week, as Kyle O'Reilly, LA Knight, Pete Dunne and Tommaso Ciampa fight to get the first shot at Samoa Joe.

#### Creed Brothers vs. Chuckie Viola/Paxton Astall

Brutus starts for the Creed Brothers and wrestles Viola down with ease. Viola is sent outside and then suplexed back inside. Brutus slaps Julius in the face for the tag and Astall is powered into the corner. Something like a front facelock suplex plants Paxton and Julius brings in Viola. The Brothers slam them into each other and a basement clothesline finishes Astall at 2:18. That was a snappy squash and the Brothers looked rather good in dominance.

Ember Moon is tired of losing and feeling like this, so she knows what she has to do. Stay tuned.

Hit Row should have seen it coming when Legado del Fantasma jumped them and it's time to drop them like a \$10 pinata. B Fab is ready to take out Elektra Lopez.

#### Women's Tag Team Titles: Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter vs. Io Shirai/Zoey Stark

Shirai and Stark are defending. Catanzaro headlocks Stark to no avail to start as Stark flips away to escape. It's off to

Shirai, who stops to say something to Stark and gets dropkicked in the face for two. Catanzaro comes back in but gets kicked in the face as we take a break. Back with Shirai rocking Carter again and getting two off a missile dropkick. Shirai grabs the Crossface (third time in three matches) but Carter fights up and brings in Catanzaro off a blind tag.

After a few shots to Shirai, Carter tags herself back in and gets elbowed in the face. Stark comes in to kick Carter in the face for two but accidentally kicks Shirai down. A Downward Spiral drops Stark and Carter, after thinking about it for far too long, brings in Catanzaro for an elevated splash. Shirai makes the save so Stark knees Catanzaro in the face, setting up the Moon Over Moonsault to retain at 12:01.

**Rating:** C. Much like on the main roster, the Women's Tag Team Titles seem to be forgotten more often than not, making it really hard to care about them. It wasn't a bad match, but it was completely flat and there was no reason to get invested in anything they were doing. Catanzaro and Carter did their thing, but you just can't compete with partners who don't get along.

Post match Mandy Rose (now in a face mask, because covering up Mandy Rose's face is a good idea), Gigi Dolin and Jayce Jane come out to beat down Carter and Catanzaro.

Kyle O'Reilly doesn't care anymore because all he wants is the NXT Title.

It's time for Dexter Lumis' bachelor party, with Johnny Gargano saying he won't pay for a dime. Don't worry though because Cameron Grimes is here to pay for everyone. Everyone, including the zombie referee, gets out of the car and Lumis makes peace with Grimes. First up, go karts, with Indi Hartwell and Candice LeRae spying on them. Then they throw axes, with Lumis indicating he has experience with them and then winning the competition.

Odyssey Jones makes a bet with Grimes about being able to bounce Drake Maverick off a trampoline and wins easily. We wrap it up with lazer tag but Lumis punches one guy out so Gargano can get an easy score. That's not enough, so Lumis chloroforms another guy and Gargano scores again. Gargano fakes a handshake and wins for his team, though he can't bring himself to high five Lumis.

The zombie referee says that it's not that bad, but reveals that he is, in fact, Canadian. Jones shoves their hands together and we get a quick Lumis/Gargano montage. Hartwell and LeRae come in to say everyone is on the same page. Gargano: "Let's go have a wedding." Lumis seems to smile a bit. Dang it why did I have to like this a bit? Far better than the bachelorette stuff at least.

Robert Stone has gotten Frankie Monet a Women's Title shot next week to get Money and Jessi Kamea back in his good graces.

#### Mei Ying vs. Virginia Ferry

Ferry gets in a jawbreaker but walks into a Mandible Claw for the win at 47 seconds.

LA Knight is in his car and talks about how there are three challengers and one superstar. Next week he's going to take all three of them out and then he's coming for Samoa Joe.

Tommaso Ciampa says it has been a long time since he had Goldie but the greatest things in life are worth waiting for.

#### Tag Team Titles: MSK vs. Oney Lorcan/Danny Burch

MSK is defending and it's Burch driving Carter into the corner to start. It's off to Lorcan but Lee comes in as well to take him down in a hurry. A cheap shot from Burch comes in (and the fans approve) to put MSK back in trouble. Everything breaks down and a running dropkick in the corner drops Burch to the

floor as we take a break. Back with Carter caught in a chinlock but fighting up to strike it out with Lorcan. That doesn't go well for Carter, who is taken into the wrong corner to continue the beating.

Carter fights up and brings in Lee to clean house, including with a German suplex for two on Lorcan. The push moonsault gets the same as everything breaks down. Carter's Swanton hits raised knees and it's an ankle lock from Lorcan and a Crossface (erg) from Burch. That's broken up as well and it's the Blockbuster Hart Attack to retain the titles at 12:16.

**Rating:** C+. NXT's decline seems to go hand in hand with the decline of its tag team division. The NXT Tag Team Titles used to be one of the best things in all of WWE and now they mean about as much as the Raw Tag Team Titles do in a given week. Two teams had a title match and one of them won. That has been the case for far too long now and it was a bit of a dry match as a result. Much like the rest of NXT: Perfectly good, but not that interesting.

Post match MSK leaves so here are Ridge Holland and Pete Dunne to take out Lorcan and Burch, breaking up the group.

**Overall Rating:** C+. So that's it for NXT and I can see why they need to make a change. In something I almost never get to say about NXT, this was pretty boring. Nothing was bad and the first two matches were good, but there is absolutely no spark to any of this and I don't particularly care where these stories go. NXT has lost its soul somewhere along the way and as a result, none of this feels important. The show is lifeless and while the changes don't sound the most appealing, I'll go with them taking a chance on something new than this kind of a show.

### Results

Kay Lee Ray b. Ember Moon – Gory Bomb

Santos Escobar b. Carmelo Hayes – Phantom Driver



Creed Brothers b. Paxton Astall/Chuckie Viola – Basement clothesline to Astall

Io Shirai/Zoey Stark b. Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter – Moon Over Moonsault to Carter

Mei Ying b. Virginia Ferry – Mandible Claw

MSK b. Oney Lorcan/Danny Burch – Blockbuster Hart Attack to Lorcan

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# **NXT – August 24, 2021: On Borrowed Time**

**NXT**

Date: August 24, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph

Takeover has come and gone and I have no idea what to expect next. Everything is about to be turned upside down around here and there is a good chance that we are going to be seeing something completely different going forward. That might be a good thing, but it is certainly going to be an eventful thing. Let's get to it.

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

Ted DiBiase and Cameron Grimes arrive and we follow them into the ring. DiBiase talks about how people have wanted to see what he wanted around here. He is here because he saw something in Grimes, who kept getting back up. That is why he is now the Million Dollar Champion, which the fans seem to like. Grimes talks about how DiBiase drove him nuts when he got here, which DiBiase says was a test.

Instead of learning, Grimes got distracted by the money and the stuff, and now he has the accomplishment to back it up. At Takeover, the two of them took care of LA Knight and now he has the title to prove it. Now though, it is time to go TO THE MOON, and Cameron Grimes Bucks are launched at the crowd. Beth to Barrett: "You can buy a new gavel!"

We get the long Takeover recap video.

Ridge Holland vs. Timothy Thatcher

Pete Dunne and Tommaso Ciampa are here too. An exchange of shoulders doesn't get them anywhere so Holland goes with the slam to send Thatcher's legs into the ropes. Back up and a running elbow gives Holland two but a belly to belly gives Thatcher a breather. A knee to the ribs cuts Holland down again and it's time to work on the arm.

Holland grabs Thatcher's arm and grabs a clothesline though and we take a break with Thatcher on the floor. Back with Thatcher winning a slugout and hitting his own slam to send the legs into the ropes. The half crab goes on but a rope is

grabbed in a hurry. Holland knocks a jumping enziguri out of the air and Northern Grit finishes Thatcher at 10:36.

**Rating:** C+. I can go for watching these two beat each other up as they know how to make things look physical. Holland is a good power guy and Thatcher is someone who can work well with anyone. You could mix these things up into various combinations and that is the way to keep a story moving for a long time to come.

Post match Ciampa comes in to save Thatcher but Oney Lorcan and the returning Danny Burch runs in for the big beatdown. Holland hits Thatcher in the arm with his club and gets in a shot to the throat as well. This is feeling like the groundwork to WarGames.

Carmelo Hayes is used to facing bigger people but he dubs himself the overdog instead of the underdog. This is a long time coming and he has put in the work to get here. If he wins tonight, it is still one match at a time and he will wind up with gold. Hayes sounds confident on the mic and if he can back it up in the ring with some personality, he should be fine.

Indi Hartwell and Dexter Lumis are ready to get married and have been making sandcastles on the beach. Lumis pulls out a wedding invitation with the wedding set for September 14. Beth: "WE HAVE A DATE!"

#### Kayden Carter/Kacy Catanzaro vs. Jacy Jayne/Gigi Dolin

Dolin rolls Carter up for two start but gets kicked in the head. Catanzaro and Carter tease double dives to the floor but bounce back in for some dancing. Dolin takes Catanzaro into the corner though and the beatdown is on, with Jayne calling her a little girl. Another shot to the face gets two on Catanzaro but she manages to get over to Carter for the hot tag. House is cleaned for a bit until Carter takes Jayne over to the corner for the neckbreaker/450 combination for the pin

at 4:18.

**Rating:** C-. This was another fine win for Catanzaro and Carter, though calling them the Tik Tok Tag Team and showing their Tik Tok videos before the match doesn't give me the most hope. They have turned into a pretty nice team over the last few months though and I'm curious to see how their eventual Tag Team Title shot goes.

Raquel Gonzalez knows it isn't over with Dakota Kai because Kai is that tough. She has been waiting for Kay Lee Ray too and she can bring it. Cue Frankie Monet and company to say she doesn't wait in line. She's coming for the shine and the title.

Video on Kay Lee Ray.

We get a sitdown interview with Odyssey Jones, who knew he would get here one day. He just didn't know how well it would go once he got here. Taking off the football helmet is a big change and his name comes from his energy. He isn't thinking beyond tonight's title match because he can't look beyond Hayes.

### Kay Lee Ray vs. Valentina Feroz

Ray goes after the arm to start and lifts Feroz off the mat with the arm cranking. Some forearms have no effect and it's a gordbuster to drop Feroz again. Ray beats on her in the corner and Feroz's feathers are falling off. A dropkick slows Ray down but she is right back with a superkick. The Gory Bomb finishes for Ray at 2:53. As it should have been.

Mandy Rose offers Gigi Dolin and Jayce Jane some advance. They shrug and follow her.

Here is new NXT Champion Samoa Joe for a chat. Joe talks about facing the most dominant NXT Champion of all time and taking him down at Takeover. Now he is the first ever three time NXT

Champion but he is here to fight instead of celebrating. Someone needs to come out here and face him, so here is Pete Dunne to say he wants the next title match. Go get William Regal and have the match made.

Cue LA Knight to say Joe is running from the only megastar in NXT and it would have taken him 43 seconds to dust Karrion Kross. He wants to be the first challenger and that means he will be the last challenger. Dunne to Knight: "Take one more step and I swear I'll break every one of your fingers."

Now it's Kyle O'Reilly to say that Samoa Joseph, Peter Dunne and La (pronounced as one word, not two letters) Knight aren't here to get a title shot. He mentions winning the Undisputed Finale but here is Ridge Holland to jump him from behind. Dunne and Joe are about to fight but Tommaso Ciampa runs in to go after Dunne, though Joe grabs the belt first. Holland comes in to headbutt Ciampa and Joe takes out Knight. I could go for a lot of this.

Cameron Grimes and Ted DiBiase are leaving when Grimes tries to give him the title back. DiBiase says it belongs to Grimes and hands it back....but he switched it out for a replica and is keeping the real thing as he drives off. Grimes, with a smile: "That Ted DiBiase." That's a pretty perfect ending and hopefully they don't keep the title around now that Grimes has gotten everything he needs out of it.

Duke Hudson jumps Kyle O'Reilly in the back but O'Reilly fights back and they have to be separated.

### Breakout Tournament Finals: Carmelo Hayes vs. Odyssey Jones

William Regal is at ringside. The much smaller Hayes gets driven into the corner and sat on top for a bat on the chest. Hayes tries running the ropes but stops when he realizes what is waiting on him. Jones powers him into the corner again and a big toss sends him flying and then rolling out to the floor. Back in and Hayes scores with an enziguri but his springboard

is knocked out of the air.

We take a break and come back with Hayes working on the leg in the corner. Jones misses a charge and gets caught in a sleeper to slow the big guy down. The fans are split as Hayes scores with a pump kick and a springboard clothesline but can't put the big man down. An ax kick gets two on Jones but he is right back with a shoulder breaker. Jones misses a charge into the post though and a top rope ax kick puts him down again. Hayes can't hit it twice in a row and gets crushed with the splash. That's not quite enough though as Hayes grabs a crucifix for the pin at 10:32.

**Rating:** B-. Good showing here from Hayes, who looks very polished every time he is in there. Jones is going to be fine as he can go be an enforcer for just about anyone and make them look better. There wasn't a bad choice here and both of them will likely be around for a good while to come. NXT needs some fresh talent too so this is something they should be doing.

Post match Regal hands Hayes his contract for a future title shot. Hayes says Jones is no joke but he isn't sure who he is going to face first. He called his shot here and when he calls his shot, he doesn't miss.

Pete Dunne, Ridge Holland, Oney Lorcan and Danny Burch are ready to hurt Timothy Thatcher and Tommaso Ciampa.

### Boa vs. Xyon Quinn

Boa kicks away in the corner to start but stops to look up at Mei Ying. The distraction lets Quinn hit a forearm for the upset pin at 1:13.

Quinn is smart enough to leave through the crowd instead of walking near Ying.

Johnny Gargano is in William Regal's office and asks for a

favor: stop the Dexter Lumis/Indi Hartwell wedding. They get in an argument over Gargano going nuts and how to pronounce bananas. LA Knight comes in to yell a lot and Regal throws both of them out. Regal: "Buffoons."

Malcolm Bivens is overseeing a training session with Diamond Mine and the Creed Brothers. Next week, Roderick Strong is issuing another open challenge and he hopes Kushida is watching.

### Hit Row vs. Legado del Fantasma

Legado starts the brawl before the bell and Top Dolla is triple teamed until B Fab makes a save. Ashante Adonis and Swerve pull Raul Mendoza and Joaquin Wilde outside and the brawl is on. We settle down to Adonis hitting back to back monkey flips with Mendoza and Wilde being sent outside. A dropkick (which seems to miss) sends Wilde outside and it's a flapjack on the floor to make it worse.

Legado needs a breather on the floor and we take a break. Back with Swerve caught in the Legado corner for a series of running clotheslines. A suplex drops Scott again and something like the old McGillicutter gets two. Scott counters a sunset flip and gets in a stomp to the chest, allowing the hot tag off to Dolla. Everything breaks down and Dolla carries ALL THREE members of Legado around at the same time (e pluribus gads), setting up a World's Strongest Wasteland.

Adonis comes back in and gets caught with a double basement dropkick for two. Swerve and Escobar drawl in the ring as Dolla flip dives onto the rest of Legado. That leaves Swerve to 450 Escobar for two but Legado is sent outside. B Fab gets in a slap but here is Electra Lopez to hit B Fab with a pipe. Lopez throws the pipe to Swerve, but it's a swerve so Escobar can roll him up with tights for the pin at 13:57.

**Rating:** B. Some of that is for Top Dolla carrying around three grown men at the same time. The action was good throughout and

they evened the numbers in the end too. These teams are getting a nice feud going and they could be in for a pretty major match down the line. Keep this thing going, probably including the eventual title showdown with Escobar vs. Swerve.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This was still the traditional NXT, but there are some new faces showing up. That isn't a bad thing as NXT has really been needing a freshening up, but they need to get the transitional period down. Overall, a rather fun show with a mixture of stuff to make the two hours and change go by pretty quickly. They have the talent to make this work, but they are going to need to execute it really well over the next few weeks.

### Results

Ridge Holland b. Timothy Thatcher – Northern Grit

Kacy Catanzaro/Kayden Carter b. Gigi Dolin/Jacy Jayne – 450/neckbreaker combination to Jayne

Kay Lee Ray b. Valentina Feroz – Gory Bomb

Carmelo Hayes b. Odyssey Jones – Crucifix

Xyon Quinn b. Boa – Forearm

Legado del Fantasma b. Hit Row – Rollup with tights to Scott

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# NXT – August 17, 2021: Takeover Ahoy

## NXT

Date: August 17, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph, Wade Barrett

It's the go home show for Takeover 36 and the card is completely set. That might not be the best thing though as the show could use a few upgrades. As has been the case for a long time, Takeover has not had the sparkiest of sparks, even if the shows wind up being pretty high quality. Let's get to it.

The Diamond Mine (with Tyler Rust missing with no explanation from the team) is in the ring to start things off. Kushida isn't here tonight (due to not being cleared) to defend the Cruiserweight Title against Roderick Strong, so it's open challenge time.

### Roderick Strong vs. Ilja Dragunov

Strong grabs the arm to start but Dragunov kicks him away without much trouble. Back up and Strong chops him down, only to have Dragunov hit one of his own. Dragunov goes up top but has to bail out, leaving him to run Strong over again. Strong's leg gets knocked out but he is fine enough to knock Dragunov outside. Dragunov is sent face first into the steps and there's the Rock Bottom onto the steps as we take a break.

Back with Dragunov busted WAY open but being fine enough to fight out of an abdominal stretch. The German suplexes put Strong in trouble and an enziguri sets up a reverse t-bone suplex. Torpedo Moscow is broken up with a jumping knee but Dragunov pops back up for Torpedo Moscow and the pin at 12:09.

**Rating:** C+. I'd be curious to know if they went home a little

earlier than expected because of the cut. I didn't see when he got cut but there is something to be said about the added emotion that comes with seeing blood in a match. Dragunov winning here makes sense, though Strong losing is a little weird when he is scheduled for a title match whenever Kushida gets back. Still though, pretty good.

Post match, Dragunov calls out Walter but no one shows up.

It's time for the Prime Target on Adam Cole vs. Kyle O'Reilly (which I believe we've had for another match between them). They have fought before and now it is time for the big Undisputed Finale to blow the whole thing off for good. Now they hate each other and have made it personal, but they have to finish this.

Here is Hit Row for a chat. They aren't happy with Legado del Fantasma for taking the grill out of Isaiah Scott's mouth. Santos Escobar pops up on screen with the grill and says he should give it back to him. He would be there in person, but he doesn't trust Swerve's crew. Come meet him in the parking lot, where he has no one waiting with him. That's cool with Swerve, who heads to the back, where the rest of Legado pops up. Top Dolla runs in for the save but gets sent into a metal wall. B Fab makes the real save with a pipe and Legado is left laying.

LA Knight is working out in the gym with Cameron Grimes wiping him down. Knight isn't happy with him though and brings in Josh Briggs to face Grimes tonight.

Imperium, with Walter, doesn't like people like MSK and are here to get rid of people like them.

### Josh Briggs vs. Cameron Grimes

Ted DiBiase and LA Knight are on commentary as Grimes, in his tuxedo, gets beaten down to start, including a heck of a big boot in the face. DiBiase throws out a \$20,000 bet on Grimes

winning as Briggs drops him with a release side slam. A splash gets two but Grimes gets a boot up in the corner. There's a running forearm to drop Briggs and the running belly to belly gives Grimes two. The Cave In finishes Briggs at 2:07.

Post match DiBiase goes to collect on his bet but Knight punches him in the face. Grimes goes for the save and walks into Blunt Force Trauma on the floor.

Indi Hartwell brags to the Way about how much she has been seeing of Dexter Lumis. Candice LeRae: "They have a shirt now!" Indi: "We went hiking." Gargano: "Ew." Indi: "We went bicycling." Gargano. "Ew." Indi: "We went up in a hot air balloon." Gargano: "Ok that's pretty cool." Dexter pops up and has the same gloves as Indi, which has Gargano and LeRae even more annoyed.

Zoey Stark and Io Shirai talk about trying to be friends but Shirai says just focus on being partners. Stark thinks this might take time.

### Jessi Kamea/Robert Stone vs. Dexter Lumis/Indi Hartwell

Frankie Monet is here with Kamea and Stone. Hartwell copies Lumis' intro and walk to the ring, though she does bump into him at one point. The fans wish Hartwell a happy birthday as Stone dives at Lumis' leg to start. Everything breaks down in a hurry and Lumis and Hartwell hit stereo stomps in the corner. Monet grabs Lumis' leg and gets dragged in, which is enough for an ejection as we take a break.

Back with Hartwell fighting out of trouble and bringing Lumis in to clean house. The spinebuster plants Stone for two and Lumis sends him outside. Back in and Kamea grabs a half crab on Hartwell, who makes it over to the ropes. Everything breaks down and Stone misses a slingshot dive, landing in front of a staring Lumis. Stereo Silencers give Hartwell and Lumis the win at 9:17.

**Rating:** C. Total comedy match here and that is what you have to do in a situation like this. The wrestling wasn't the point at all here and Lumis/Hartwell are good in their roles. I'm curious to see where it goes from here and that is a nice feeling. I didn't expect to like this but they have made it work, which you don't get very often these days.

Post match, Beth Phoenix whispers some advice to Indi Hartwell, who pulls out a ring and proposes to Lumis. That's good for a quick nod of acceptance.

The Diamond Mine insists that Roderick Strong's loss to Ilja Dragunov doesn't count because Dragunov is not a cruiserweight. Therefore, Strong's title shot against Kushida still counts.

We get a split screen sitdown interview between Dakota Kai and Raquel Gonzalez. Kai talks about how she discovered Gonzalez but Gonzalez says she has become a superstar. How does Kai expect to win on Sunday? By bringing in the next Raquel Gonzalez? Kai says she can play all the roles she wants, but on Sunday, Kai is playing the role of champion. See you at Takeover, sidekick. This was short and to the point but you can feel the intensity.

#### Breakout Tournament Semifinals: Duke Hudson vs. Carmelo Hayes

The bigger Hudson goes with the headlock to start but Hayes slips out and grabs one of his own. A big shoulder drops Hayes, who is back with a springboard crossbody for two. Hudson tosses him outside in a heap and we take a break. Back with Hudson kneeling him in the face and hitting an overhead belly to belly out of the corner.

Hayes manages a quick scissors kick though and a slingshot DDT sends Hudson face first into the apron (geez that looked rough). Hudson catches him on top but the slam is countered into a small package for two. A Backstabber rocks Hudson again and Hayes goes up for the top rope Fameasser to advance at

8:57.

**Rating:** C+. Hayes has looked like a complete package since he debuted around here and this was no exception. This was a nice come from behind win as Hayes hung in there just long enough to pull it off, with Hudson getting a bit too cocky and not being able to keep up. The finals could go either way and Hudson has come off like a star, making this a pretty efficient tournament so far.

Post match Hayes said he called his shot to make the finals and that's what he did. That isn't enough for him though and now it is time to face the final boss. Hey Odyssey Jones, plot twist: Hayes is the final boss. Cue Jones to say the universe will sound the alarm next week. This was a perfectly fine jawing segment.

Jacy Jayne says a lot of people are just satisfied but that is not good enough for them. You have heard them silenced for too long and now it is time to break free. The plurals were strong with this one.

Ted DiBiase apologizes to Cameron Grimes in the back, with Grimes going into a rant to recap the whole thing. He dropped the ball for DiBiase but after Takeover, the two of them are going to be Million Dollar Champions going TO THE MOON! DiBiase is so impressed that he busts out the laugh. DiBiase: "THAT'S MY CAMERON!" I'm not sure how much DiBiase likes this stuff but he's the only person who would fit in this role.

Tag Team Titles: MSK vs. Imperium

Imperium is challenging. Lee takes Aichner into the corner for the slingshot dropkick, followed by the running Bronco Buster from Carter. Barthel brings himself in and armdrags Carter into a hammerlock. A hard uppercut rocks Carter but he fights out of the corner, only to get suplexed right back down. The beating doesn't last as long this time though as Carter gets over for the tag to Lee. Everything breaks down and the

champs' dives are cut off by stereo slams as we take a break.

Back with Lee fighting out of a chinlock but getting pulled into an ankle lock. Lee gets sent hard into the corner and we need a quick breather so the referee can make sure he's fine. The double dropkick in the corner gets two on Lee but he sends both of them outside. Cue Walter as the hot tag brings in Carter to clean house. The push moonsault gets two on Aichner with Barthel making the save. Walter's distraction looks to set up the European Bomb but here is Ilja Dragunov to cut Walter off. Lee makes the save and the Blockbuster Hart Attack retains the titles at 11:04.

**Rating:** C+. Imperium continues to be a problem for me in the tag division. They are technically sound and their gimmick makes perfect sense but I have yet to find myself invested in anything they do. They just aren't very interesting and it feels like no one can do anything to bring them up. MSK winning is the good move here, though I continue to not be sure who takes the titles off of them.

Post match the beatdown is on, with Walter destroying everyone in sight. Dragunov is taken out as well and Imperium stands tall.

Pete Dunne and Ridge Holland don't like Timothy Thatcher and Tommaso Ciampa ignoring them. Holland would fight through people just to get to a fight and he'll be seeing Thatcher next week.

Takeover rundown.

Here is Samoa Joe for the big face to face with Karrion Kross. Joe says it is time to verbally eviscerate Kross in front of the world but what's the point? He isn't here to hurt Kross' feelings because he is here to hurt Kross period. Cue Kross to say that this is about the future of this brand and Joe isn't coming in to beat him after a year off. Kross calls out security to protect Joe but Joe is ready to fight anyway. The

brawl is on, with Joe hitting the big dive to take everyone out. They fight over to the announcers' table and the big double knockdown ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This was a fine enough go home show, but it was far from a home run. There was nothing on here that really made me want to see Takeover, though I'm sure the show will wind up being another hit. Maybe it's the lack of anything interesting in Kross or Cole vs. O'Reilly AGAIN but I can't get myself to care about what they're doing. That being said, Walter vs. Dragunov II is going to be enough to carry a lot of the show and I'm really not worried. Good go home show, though I'm not entirely jazzed for Takeover.

### Results

Ilja Dragunov b. Roderick Strong – Torpedo Moscow

Cameron Grimes b. Josh Briggs – Cave In

Dexter Lumis/Indi Hartwell b. Jessi Kamea/Robert Stone – Silencer to Kamea

Carmelo Hayes b. Duke Hudson – Top rope Fameasser

MSK b. Imperium – Blockbuster Hart Attack to Barthel

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