

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

NXT Takeover: Respect

Date: October 7, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

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

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

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

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

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

Buster to Wilder and Balor adds the Coup de Grace for the pin at 9:08 but Balor wrenched his knee again.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rating: B. I liked this one a lot with all the insanity at the end but the ending is a big surprise. I really would have bet on Gable/Jordan winning the whole thing and then they don't even make it to the finals? It's not the worst idea in the world but it was the last thing I was

expecting. Maybe they don't want to see Gable getting cheered on the same level as Balor but I'm still surprised at the ending.

Kevin Nash is here.

Video of Asuka.

Asuka vs. Dana Brooke

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

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

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

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

Breast cancer is bad.

We look at Balor injuring his knee again.

Nia Jax finally arrives next week.

Apollo Crews vs. Tyler Breeze

Crews powers him up against the ropes to start and knocks Tyler to the

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

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

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

Hideo Itami is here.

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

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

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

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

over. Balor's comeback is stopped with a Boss Man Slam for two but he comes back again with a Sling Blade out of nowhere.

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

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

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

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

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

Women's Title: Bayley vs. Sasha Banks

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

They stare each other down and there's no contact until a little over a

minute in. A lockup gets us to Sasha holding a headlock, followed by some rollups for two. Bayley gets some rollups of her own for two each and a pinfall reversal sequence gives us even more near falls. Sasha gets in the first big move with a dropkick to knock the champ into the corner but Bayley comes back with a Japanese armdrag to drop Sasha on her head for two. That looked bad but Sasha seems to be ok.

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

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

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

The double knees in the corner miss again and Bayley makes the comeback with ax handles to the face followed by an awkward looking spinning facebuster for two. The middle rope back elbow gets the same and Bayley's

hair is almost down. Bayley puts her in the Tree of Woe for a running springboard elbow as we have ten minutes left.

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

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

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

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

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

and I had a blast with it.

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

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

Results

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

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

Asuka b. Dana Brooke – Asuka Lock

Apollo Crews b. Tyler Breeze – Spinning powerbomb

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

Bayley b. Sasha Banks 3-2

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NXT Takeover: Respect Preview

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

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

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

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

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

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

That brings us to the more complicated match as Finn Balor/Samoa Joe face the Mechanics. It's no secret that Balor and Joe are going to be feuding at some point in the future. However, the question becomes do they lose

and argue over whose fault it was or do they win the whole thing and then fight over who was the more important member of the team? Or do they win the whole thing and then Joe gets a shot as a sign of respect? I'm not sure if they win the whole thing or not, but I do think they advance to the finals.

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

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

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NXT – September 2, 2015: One More For Dusty

NXT

Date: September 2, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves

The focus goes back on the tag teams tonight as we begin the Dusty Classic. This is a tag team tournament for a prize to be announced and with most of the participants to be announced as well. The idea is to have the past, present and future of NXT involved to honor the spirit of Dusty Rhodes. Let's get to it.

The opening video hypes up the tournament and talks about paying tribute to the Dream.

Opening sequence.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic First Round: Ascension vs. Rhyno/Baron Corbin

Rhyno runs Viktor over to start but Viktor rolls into a shoulder to put Rhyno down. Konor and Corbin come in but a quick double shoulder drops Baron. The double teaming doesn't last long though and Viktor is sent shoulder first into the post, allowing Rhyno to get some shots in. Back to Corbin as it seems the Ascension are the faces here. Konor gets the hot tag and cleans house on Baron before avoiding a Gore. Corbin breaks up the Fall of Man though and Rhyno Gores Konor for the pin at 5:39.

Rating: D. This was an awkward match with both teams looking a bit off. It's also very telling that the Ascension can't even get a win over a thrown together team where the members don't even get along down in NXT. They've just died since they got called up to the main roster and WWE has no issues with it.

Neville and Solomon Crowe are in the tournament. They're both excited but

Solomon freaks Neville out a bit.

Nia Jax is still coming.

Alexa Bliss vs. Blue Pants

Bliss takes Blue Pants down for a beating to start and throws her to the mat by the hair. Pants gets rammed into the buckle and a kick to the back sets up an armbar. Back up and Pants fires off some kicks and a northern lights suplex gets two. She misses a charge in the corner though and the Sparkle Splash gives Alexa the pin at 3:34.

Rating: C-. Total squash but that was exactly what it was supposed to be. Bliss is the evil mastermind and Blue Pants is nothing more than a cult favorite who can only win matches through interference. There's no point in having her win here when she just shows up for goofy appearances so everyone is fine.

Johnny Gargano and Tommaso Ciampa are in Regal's office when Tyler Breeze storms in. Tyler demands a spot in the tournament so Regal gives him Bull Dempsey to face Gargano and Ciampa next week.

Emma says the Divas Revolution isn't happening without her.

Apollo Crews vs. Martin Stone

Apollo starts fast with an armdrag but Stone clotheslines him down to take over. Off to a chinlock for a bit before Crews comes back with a standing enziguri. The gorilla press and standing moonsault put Stone away at 2:57. Crews looked good but he needs to do something besides just being all athletic and awesome.

Chad Gable and Jason Jordan say they'll get to write this tournament's history after winning the whole thing. Neville is flying too close to the sun and Crowe is going to be forgotten. Jordan finally says the Ready Willing and Gable line. Gable is money.

Finn Balor is ready to defend his title in Texas, but first of all he's in the Dusty Classic. His partner, Samoa Joe, comes in and says he wants to win it all. Balor shakes his hand and says he's ready. So I guess Joe

is going to be the next major challenger.

Eva Marie vs. Billie Kay

We get an Eva chant to start, which I don't buy as legit for a second. Eva fires off some shoulders in the corner and grabs a suplex for two. A seated abdominal stretch is countered by a small package but Eva comes back with a backsplash (that's WAY too common a move these days) for two more. Kay makes a quick comeback with a clothesline and suplex for two of her own, but the interesting part is the fans booing Eva out of the building for kicking out. That was awesome in a way. Back up and Sliced Red #2 beats Kay at 3:45.

Rating: D. Eva is gorgeous and looks great in her gear, has awesome presence, but above all else, she's just not that good in the ring. If they try to push her as a star in the division, the heat is going to be out of this world. The NXT fans simply do not want her in their company and it's not surprising in the slightest.

The Hype Bros and Enzo/Cass argued over what part of New York to celebrate in after winning last week.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic: Solomon Crowe/Neville vs. Chad Gable/Jason Jordan

Gable takes Crowe to the mat to start and easily rolls him around into a backslide for two. Back up and Crowe counters a leapfrog into a flapjack (nice move) before it's off to Neville for a very nice welcome home reaction. Jordan takes Neville down to the mat with some nice amateur stuff but Neville flips out of a suplex and sends Jason to the floor as we take a break. Back with Jordan throwing Solomon down just like he did to Neville before a wicked overhead belly to belly drops Crowe again.

Gable comes back in and mocks Solomon, even having Jordan fan him off while Crowe is on the floor. Jordan throws on a chinlock for a bit before Solomon adds a bow and arrow of his own. The hold is finally broken and Crowe dives over for the tag, allowing Neville to come in for his usual fast paced stuff.

Gable pulls Jason to the floor to break up the Red Arrow. That's fine with Neville as he dives on both of them with Crowe following with a dive of his own. Back in and Jordan catches Neville's next dive and throws him face first onto the mat. Crowe tags himself in and gets suplexed again, setting up the Grand Amplitude (the announcers don't know the name) for the pin at 12:48.

Rating: C+. Good match here and Crowe tagging himself in might lead to a heel turn for him, which probably won't save him but it's better than whatever it was he's been doing for the last few weeks. Neville really does come off as a star here and you can see what they're going for with the superhero idea.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked the show for the most part and they're making the tournament feel like a huge deal. That's exactly what something this important should be and I love the fact that they've made the whole promotion want to get involved with it. Good stuff here and what is hopefully the sign of good stuff to come.

Results

Baron Corbin/Rhyno b. Ascension – Gore to Konor

Alexa Bliss b. Blue Pants – Sparkle Splash

Apollo Crews b. Martin Stone – Standing moonsault

Eva Marie b. Billie Kay – Sliced Red #2

Chad Gable/Jason Jordan b. Neville/Solomon Crowe – Grand Amplitude to Crowe

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NXT – July 29, 2015: The Fruits Of NXT's Labor

NXT

Date: July 29, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We have a clear path towards Takeover: Brooklyn now with a main event of Finn Balor defending against Kevin Owens in a rematch from their Beast in the East showdown. Other than that it seems that we're going to get Bayley challenging for the Women's Title, but first she wants to get through Charlotte. However, Charlotte first wants to go through Dana Brooke, who she faces tonight. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

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

Cass keeps it simple here, just saying that you're S-A-W-F-T if you're not a certified G. Enzo and Scott get things going with Enzo taking it to the mat and walking over Dawson's back so he can do some dancing. Everything is about to break down when Dawson and Wilder realize that Cass is a foot taller than everyone else in the ring. Off to Cass, who seems to be a bit more over with the fans.

Back to Enzo for two on Wilder from a high cross body, only to charge shoulder first into the post. Wilder and Dawson start alternating as we get some NXT house show ads. The heels crank on the arm and Wilder stops Enzo from diving through the legs for a hot tag. A slingshot suplex (that's so appropriate for a team like these two) gets two on Enzo but

the bad guys collide, allowing for the hot tag to Big Cass. Everything breaks down and Enzo chases Wilder around the ring, only to be caught in a 3D into a Codebreaker (Shatter Machine) to give Wilder the pin at 6:39.

Rating: C. Well ok then. Unless they're going to do a quick turn around and put Enzo and Cass in the title match in Brooklyn, I can't imagine these two are going to be around NXT much longer. There's not much left for them to do in NXT if they're not going to win the titles, so let them go replace Santino on Raw.

Chad Gable and Jason Jordan say they're not your common team but they get things done when they need to. They're not as loud as the Hype Bros or Enzo/Cass, but they find a way to win. Jason doesn't want to say they're ready, willing and Gable.

We recap Charlotte vs. Dana Brooke, which is over Charlotte being in the Tap Out commercial, because Dana says Charlotte has been given all of her chances because of her last name. Dana wants a match to show her abilities and gets her chance tonight.

Baron Corbin vs. Jesse Sorensen

Yes that's TNA's Jesse Sorensen and he gets taken out by End of Days in 22 seconds.

Tyler Breeze comes in to Regal's office and yells about Regal not answering his Twitter, Facebook or Instagram messages. Regal: "I sent a carrier pigeon." Breeze will fight anyone from around the world but Regal says be careful what you wish for.

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable vs. Elias Samson/Levis Valenzuela Jr.

Jordan rides Levis down to start so it's off to Samson (who looks like Damien Sandow and Wade Barrett's lovechild) who wants Gable. Chad comes in and casually spins out of a wristlock before taking Samson down to the mat and cranking on the legs. Chad's smile as he does this is great stuff. Back up and Levis gets in a knee to Gable's back to take over before a slam gets two. Chad shrugs it off (because it's just a slam) and makes the hot tag to Jason, who quickly puts on the double belly to back

suplex (now called the Grand Amplitude) for the pin on Levis at 4:23.

Rating: D+. They've got something special here with Gable. The guy has that grin that is so cocky that you want to cheer him and see him get his face kicked in at the same time but can also get on the mat with anyone NXT has to offer. The finisher is great too and the pair have great chemistry together. Well done NXT as they develop more teams in a year than WWE has developed in the last ten years.

Dana Brooke is ready to conquer Charlotte, just like she's conquered everything else she's ever done. So she's the female Brock Lesnar?

We recap Bull Dempsey's struggles to stay in shape before seeing him trying to work out at the Performance Center. This goes badly, though some of it might have to do with his workout gear looking like it's made of trash bags. The tagline is "It's time to get Bull-Fit", which is kind of catchy. There's comedy potential here at least.

Charlotte vs. Dana Brooke

Charlotte shoves her down to start but has to go after Emma. The distraction doesn't work for once but Dana is able to pound Charlotte down in the corner for two. It's off to a bodyscissors on Charlotte until she lifts Dana up, only to have Brooke fall on top for two. Brooke cranks on an arm and a leg on the mat while shouting about Charlotte wanting to pose for Tap Out. A catapult sends Charlotte throat first into the bottom rope but she pops up with a neckbreaker and spear, followed by Natural Selection for the pin at 4:23.

Rating: C-. Not much of a match here as Charlotte shrugged off everything thrown at her and just beat Brooke up for the pin. Still though, that's kind of the point as Charlotte is on to something bigger and better while Brooke is just kind of there at this point. Emma could still do something entertaining though and that's all she needs to do, especially with so many of the NXT girls moving up to the main roster.

Samoa Joe is targeting Rhyno because they're both predators. Joe is going to choke Rhyno out.

Last week, Regal was upset that Kevin Owens ran him over, but Owens comes up and apologizes for going into fight or flight mode. Regal can't wait to see him take a beating.

Eva Marie says last week was just the beginning and she's coming for Sasha Banks and the title. They really can't be serious can right?

Kevin Owens vs. Martin Stone

Stone is a British wrestler who looks like a shorter Luke Gallows. Owens nails a clothesline to start and the backplash. Stone runs into a release German suplex, followed by the Cannonball, a swanton bomb and the Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 1:48. Total squash.

Owens gives Stone an apron powerbomb post match.

Video on Rhyno's time in NXT.

Tag Team Titles: Blake/Murphy vs. Vaudevillains

Blake and Murphy are defending. Fans: "DOWN WITH DUBSTEP!" Blake and Gotch fight over a top wristlock to start until Simon grabs a monkey flip into a cross armbreaker, followed by a dropkick for two. English comes in and stays right on Blake with a top wristlock of his own. Murphy comes in but both champions take Japanese armdrags as this is all Vaudevillains so far.

Back from a break with the Vaudevillains working on Murphy's arm some more. English throws both champs to the floor but Blake is able to kick him in the side of the head to finally take over. Running forearms in the corner set up a chinlock on Aiden but he fights up and dives over for a tag to Simon. Fans: "OH MY GOTCH!" Gotch cleans house and the Whirling Dervish is loaded up, only to have Bliss grab English's leg, allowing Blake to roll him up and grab the tights to retain at 10:18.

Rating: C. This was a squash until the ending which seems to be there to set up a rematch in Brooklyn. The Vaudevillains are ready to take the titles as Blake and Murphy feel like a glorified transitional team and have since they won the belts. Bliss is the star of the team but they're far from bad.

The Vaudevillains clean house until they're alone with Bliss. Fans: "CHIVALRY! CHIVALRY!" They hold the ropes open for her but Bliss slaps both of them and leaves with the champs to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This is one of the areas where NXT shines: they had a show here with almost no main event or top level story advancement, but they showcased their tag division with five regular teams, all of whom could be considered contenders for the titles (in addition to mentioning a sixth in the Hype Bros). On a one hour show, NXT has managed to build up a full tag division and made the title match feel like a big deal. It's a great illustration of what you can do when you treat things like they matter. Well done here on a show that got to brag about the hard work they've put in to get here.

Results

Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder b. Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady – Shatter Machine to Amore

Baron Corbin b. Jesse Sorensen – End of Days

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable b. Levis Valenzuela Jr./Elias Samson – Grand Amplitude to Valenzuela

Charlotte b. Dana Brooke – Natural Selection

Kevin Owens b. Martin Stone – Pop Up Powerbomb

Blake/Murphy b. Vaudevillains – Rollup to English with a handful of tights

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NXT – July 15, 2015: Their Own Worst Enemy

NXT

Date: July 15, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton

It's a title show as Charlotte came out last week to help Sasha Banks, in exchange for a title match tonight. These two have had some big showdowns in the past and this should be the same, especially after their debuts this past week on Raw. The other major story will be the return of Sami Zayn for an update on his injury. Let's get to it.

Chad Gable/Jason Jordan vs. Steve Cutler/Elias Samson

This is Gable/Jordan's debut as a team after Jordan spent weeks trying to find a partner and Gable saying they would work perfectly together. Gable quickly takes Cutler down for two and shows off some very nice technical stuff for some rollups. Cutler finally drives Chad into the corner and tags off to Samson for some right hands in the corner.

It doesn't last long though as Gable drives him into the corner for a tag to Jordan, who powers Cutler down with ease. In a very unique looking double team, Jordan lifts Cutler up in a belly to back but drops him into a bridging belly to back from Gable for the pin at 2:47. Cool finisher at least and Gable looked good.

Clip of the NXT girls debuting on Raw and cleaning house. No sign of Stephanie and suddenly this is WAY better. That triple submission is an awesome visual.

Samoa Joe vs. Axel Tischer

Axel is German. Joe peppers him with strikes in the corner to start, kicks Tischer in the face and hits the backplash, followed by the Rock Bottom out of the corner and the Muscle Buster into the Koquina Clutch for the tap out at 2:59. Total squash and that's a good idea for Joe at this point.

Video on Baron Corbin's athletic background. He boxed, did judo, won conference titles in college football and played in the NFL. At least he's accomplished something though, because most of the guys in NXT are popular on the internet after being paid in hot dogs and chips. Corbin is in NXT to destroy the internet's heroes. Well that came out of nowhere and tells us about 1.9 million times more about Corbin than we ever knew. Nice job there, as is always the case with these videos.

Here's Eva Marie to talk about how awesome she is and announce her in ring debut next week. Get your little signs ready! There's a chance that could be good, but oh man it's not going to be well received.

Blake/Murphy vs. Angelo Dawkins/Sawyer Fulton

Non-title. Blake and Murphy start by taking turns on Dawkins with Blake slapping on a chinlock. Murphy comes in for a chinlock of his own as the announcers talk about sandwiches for no apparent reason. Dawkins fights up but Blake is smart enough to pull Fulton to the floor. The brainbuster and frog splash are enough for the pin on Angelo at 3:03.

Rating: D+. Total squash in a night of them with the champions looking great. They're a pretty generic team but at least Alexa is nailing her role as the manipulative, stuck up boss. They should have a fun match against the Vaudevillains too and have made solid champions after looking like filler coming in.

The champs beat Dawkins down post match and flip Alexa into the air for the Sparkle Splash. Again, that looked cool.

Here's Sami, with his arm in a sling, for his big update. After the OLE chants finally die down, Sami talks about how great it is to hear that

the fans haven't forgotten about him. It's been a rough patch for him because he's gone from the best year of his career in 2014 to the worst year of his career in 2015 because he isn't likely back to close out the year.

He isn't finished by a long shot though because he has goals. Like being able to find a comfortable position to sleep in or come back and regain his NXT Championship. There's no greater motivator than revenge and Kevin Owens' career is going to be linked to his career forever. Owens better watch, because Sami is coming for him. Not much to be heard here, but Sami's charisma carried it everywhere it needed to go.

We look back at Charlotte being granted a title match.

Clip of Owens losing the NXT Title to Finn Balor in Japan.

At Comic Con, William Regal announced Owens' rematch for Takeover: Brooklyn. Both guys traded some shots at the press conference.

Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks

Sasha is defending. Charlotte starts slowly by shoving Sasha into the corner (too common a move) and throwing in a little Flair strut. The champ is sent down into the ropes and Charlotte nips up just because she can. A knee to the face and the double knees in the corner put Charlotte down for two as the momentum swing takes us to a break. Back with Charlotte getting choked in the corner (because where else would it be?), allowing Sasha to bust out the Flair strut.

We hit the chinlock with Banks' boots in the back, followed by a figure four neck lock. The fans misfire pretty badly here with a Sasha Banks chant to the New Day rhythm. It doesn't work for everything guys. Charlotte powers up into a powerbomb but both of them are down for a count of seven. It's Charlotte up first with a backslide, but instead of trying a pretty obvious failure, she drops to her knees for a backbreaker instead. That's a new one on me.

Banks gets two off a regular backslide but makes the mistake of ranting about how much better she is, thereby earning her a boot to the face. The

Figure Eight is countered into a VERY close rollup, only to have the hold go on with Charlotte losing some hair extensions in the process. Sasha makes the ropes but Charlotte rolls under the ropes with the hold still on in a cool visual. Back up and Charlotte's slam is countered into the Bank Statement. The hold stays on longer than it ever has before but Charlotte finally taps at 16:30.

Rating: B. This division is really becoming its own worst enemy as they're getting caught in their own success. With their classics at Takeover, even a really good match like this is considered a letdown. Banks and Charlotte are going to be great additions to the Divas' division and could easily carry the whole thing on their backs, assuming we can get the Bellas out of the way first.

Above all else though, this showed the difference between the Divas and the NXT girls. All night long, this match was treated as a major deal and as big as any showdown you'll see on Raw. The fans bought what the promotion was sending them though and that makes it seem like something special. I don't remember the last time any Diva has hooked the fans in, but this is proof it can be done if set up right.

They shake hands and hug for a cool moment to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was an interesting show as they started setting up Takeover: Brooklyn and reminded us that some people are around, followed by a good main event to cap things off. That's NXT in a nutshell: a big match and setting up stuff for the future. Good show here and the main event is worth checking out for some of the cool and unique offense.

Results

Chad Gable/Jason Jordan b. Steve Cutler/Elias Samson – Bridging belly to back suplex to Samson

Samoa Joe b. Axel Tischer – Koquina Clutch

Blake/Murphy b. Angelo Dawkins/Sawyer Fulton – Frog splash to Dawkins

Sasha Banks b. Charlotte – Bank Statement

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NXT – June 24, 2015: In Which Mojo Rawley And Sami Zayn Sit On A Couch

NXT

Date: June 24, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Rich Brennan, Corey Graves

We're getting closer to the big July 4th showdown for the title and that means Finn Balor needs to rack up a few wins. Up first we have the second half of the big sitdown interview with Balor, which is likely focusing on his time in New Japan Pro Wrestling. Other than that we might get some fallout from Joe vs. Owens from last week. Let's get to it.

We open with the roster on the stage and HHH talking about the loss of Dusty Rhodes. Dusty was family to everyone on this stage because he thought they were his kids. HHH, barely able to keep his voice together, asks for a moment of silence as the bell rings ten times.

Opening sequence.

Here's Hideo Itami for his first comments since being injured. He acknowledges that he'll be out another 3-4 months due to his shoulder injury but promises to come back and win the NXT Title. This brings out Kevin Owens, who is glad Itami will be in Japan for the July 4 show, but it's cute to hear Itami imply that Owens won't be leaving Japan as NXT Champion. Owens slips up on the word delusional but makes up for it by saying he sounds like Itami trying to speak English.

However, there are two things Kevin wants to make clear. First of all, he didn't hurt Itami because if he did, there's no chance Itami would be standing there. The other reason is because Owens wants an apology for Itami implying that Owens attacked him. Itami calls him a terrible human being, so Owens thinks that if he's going to be accused of hurting Itami, he might as well do it. Kevin comes to the ring but Balor comes out for the save, only to have Rhyno jump Balor and knock him off the stage.

Balor vs. Rhyno later tonight.

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Jason Jordan/Sylvester LeFort

The entrance sounds a bit faster this week but Enzo makes up for it by saying he sees two mushrooms from Mario's world in the ring: they're about to get flattened. Cassady's part didn't sound very smooth but he got the lines out well enough. I had been wondering what happened to LeFort. Colin puts Sylvester down to start and slams Enzo down on top of him for two, only to have Jordan tag himself in and catch Enzo in a slam. LeFort's cobra clutch doesn't get him very far so it's quickly off to Jordan, who gets rolled up for the pin at 2:32.

After last week's main event, Joe talks about hearing the people chant LET THEM FIGHT. He got the fight he wanted but he didn't get the fight he wanted (not a typo) because Owens is still walking. Joe wants Owens again.

Dana Brooke vs. Cassie

Brooke has Emma in her corner and Cassie is K.C. Cassidy. A quick rollup gets two on Brooke and a headscissors puts her down again. That's enough for Dana as she throws Cassie down and gets two off a slam. Dana cranks

on an arm and leg at the same time while advising Cassie to tap. Cassie comes back with something like a Thesz press and some clotheslines but Dana Whiplashes her off the top for the pin at 3:36.

Rating: D+. This wasn't quite a squash as Cassie got to show some spunk, which means she'll probably be pushed as something more serious when she gets some more ring time. Brooke is still definitely a work in progress, but if there's one thing NXT has shown it can do, it's take their girls and improve improve them about ten fold overnight.

Charlotte isn't worried about Dana.

It's time for part two of Balor's sitdown interview, which starts with some clips of Sami Zayn hanging out at his house. Balor likes to put jigsaw puzzles together (amen brother) and still plays with Legos while watching old pay per views. Suddenly I'm digging the heck out of this guy.

NXT head trainer Matt Bloom (actually called that here instead of Jason Albert) talks about meeting Fergal Devitt in Japan about eight years ago. We get some pictures of them hanging out over the years, including Bloom pulling Devitt's pants down as they posed for a picture. Bloom explains the concept of a young boy and we see some stills and videos of Fergal's time in new Japan. Prince Devitt was someone obsessed with trying to master the Japanese style and he felt more like Prince than Fergal over there.

Then WWE came calling right around the annual Tokyo Dome show and Fergal wasn't sure if he could do it or not. He had to try though because there was nothing left for him to prove in Japan so here he is, with Sami Zayn and Mojo Rawley sitting on his couch in the background. He calls it an incredible journey but it's still continuing. Next week: the NXT days.

Bull Dempsey has been trying to get in better shape without much success. This is shown through a series of Instagram shots of Dempsey falling asleep while trying to train. So he's narcoleptic instead of just fat?

Hype Bros vs. Sawyer Fulton/Angelo Dawkins

That would of course be Rawley and Zack Ryder. You know what? Why not? It's not like Ryder has ANYTHING better to do. Mojo runs Dawkins over to start and it's off to Ryder for a nice dropkick to Fulton. Back to Rawley for HAMMER TIME, allowing the amateur guys to take over with the old Benjamin jumping over Haas' back onto Mojo's back spot. A backdrop ends Angelo's offense and it's off to Ryder for all his usual stuff. The Broski Boot gets two and everything breaks down. Rawley holds Dawkins up for a middle rope Rough Ryder and the pin at 4:00.

Rating: C-. Ryder and Rawley have a weird chemistry together and I've always been a fan of Zack so it's cool to see him do something other than losing to Rusev in 45 seconds. Fulton, Dawkins and Jordan seem like the perfect choice for a stable along with Chad Gable but for some reason the Shoot Nation stable was called off. They're still fine for roles like this though and you can easily rally them together later.

Eva Marie wants a match but Regal needs proof that she has more than charm.

Finn Balor vs. Rhyno

Kevin Owens comes out and shoves Byron away from his chair to do commentary. Balor takes it to Rhyno to start and slugs him down in the corner. Rhyno gets sent out to the floor as Owens denies attacking Itami again. A big flip dive puts Rhyno down again and gets two back inside. Owens promises to win on July 4, even though he doesn't know what it is. "I'm Canadian so it doesn't mean anything to me. Independence Day? Will Smith? Good movie."

Rhyno gets in his first offense with a spinebuster and puts on a bearhug. Owens has completely taken over commentary by ripping on Brennan, because Kevin doesn't believe that Brennan has talked to anyone on the roster. "I've seen them running away from you." Owens now has his arm around Saxton and has pulled Byron's head onto his shoulder. We take a break and come back with Balor fighting out of a second bearhug.

Owens is annoyed at all the questions Brennan is asking him as Balor gets two off a dropkick to the side of the head. That earns him a northern lights suplex but Balor staggers him with a Pele Kick. The Coup de Grace

is loaded up but Owens comes down for a distraction, allowing Rhyno to hit the belly to belly. The Gore is countered by a kick to the face though and the Sling Blade sets up the Coup de Grace for the pin at 11:40.

Rating: C+. This was fine. The idea behind Rhyno is that he's intense enough to lose every big match he's in, beat some jobbers, and then come back for another loss to make someone look good. There's awesome value in that and it's something you can never have enough of. Balor vs. Owens is going to be awesome, especially if the demon shows up.

Owens comes in and double teams Balor until Samoa Joe comes in for the save, likely setting up a tag match next week.

Overall Rating: C. Not their best show this week but they did a good job of setting up Balor vs. Owens in less than two weeks. Other than that they have enough feuds and stories going on to set up a big non-Takeover show before we get to the REALLY big stuff down the line. Good effort this week, even though it was mainly a placeholder outside of the main story.

Results

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Jason Jordan/Sylvester LeFort – Rollup to Jordan

Dana Brooke b. Cassie – Whiplash

Hype Bros b. Sawyer Fulton/Angelo Dawkins – Middle rope Rough Ryder to Dawkins

Finn Balor b. Rhyno – Coup de Grace

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NXT – June 3, 2015: Recharging

NXT

Date: June 3, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

This is an interesting time for NXT as one of their biggest stories isn't taking place on NXT. Instead, NXT Champion Kevin Owens has been called up to the main roster and even defeated John Cena clean on pay per view in his debut match. It doesn't help that he's feuding with a bunch of people here in NXT as well. Let's get to it.

The opening video is all about Owens beating Cena at Elimination Chamber.

General Manager William Regal has an announcement tonight.

Tyler Breeze vs. Adam Rose

Fans: "WE WANT KRUGER!" Rose takes him into the corner to start and nails some loud chops, followed by a headlock takeover: rest hold. Back up and Breeze nails a great dropkick to put Rose on the floor. That goes nowhere as Rose backdrops him to the floor and we take a break.

Back with Rose putting on a sleeper for a good while until Breeze fights out and kicks him in the chest. Breeze, wrestling like a face here, nails some running forearms in the corner but gets caught in a spinebuster, which Rose transitions into a Boston crab for a nice spot. Breeze crawls

over to the ropes and comes back with the Beauty Shot for the pin at 12:01.

Rating: C+. Breeze is one of those characters who is going to be turned face just due to how well he works in the ring and there isn't much NXT can do to stop it. This was a much better match than I was expecting, especially considering Rose is way past his expiration date at this point.

Solomon Crowe is glad Joe was there last week and promises to be back and better than ever.

Dana Brooke has been at the Arnold Classic and will be back soon.

Eva Marie is brought to the stage for a chat and MY GOODNESS the fans do not want to see her. The YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chants stop her cold but she says she'll wait. Eva was at Takeover to watch the great women's wrestling and that's why she's here now. She wants to compete with the best and they're right here in NXT. I know she's been training more, but she has a huge hill to overcome to get anywhere.

Regal's announcement is that on the big 4th of July show with Brock Lesnar in action, Balor will challenge Kevin Owens for the NXT Title in Japan, and it will air live on the WWE Network. Oh man that could be awesome if they air the whole show but it sounds like just the NXT Title match.

Carmella vs. Alexa Bliss

Carmella goes right at her with three straight takedowns and right hands every time. Bliss manages to drop her face first onto the buckle for two before cranking on a cravate. Back up and Carmella hits some running forearms, only to get caught in a rollup with a hand grabbing the ropes to give Bliss the pin at 3:34.

Rating: D+. This is where NXT's logical booking shines. It's clear that they're setting up a six person tag and what better way to set it up than to have the girls getting there for a bit? Bliss has transitioned into this new role perfectly and the character change is so jarring that it

works very well.

Rhyno says he's back to go after the top contender in Finn Balor. Tonight he's a Gore away from being one step closer to being NXT Champion.

Video on Sami Zayn's shoulder surgery, which fixed a torn rotator cuff.

Vaudevillains vs. Jason Jordan/Marcus Louis

I had been wondering what happened to Louis. The crazy Louis starts with Gotch as the fans are very happy to have the Vaudevillains back. It's quickly off to English for a manly knee to the ribs (Fans: "THAT WAS MANLY!") but Jordan comes in for a suplex to take over. We hit the reverse chinlock on English to slow things down. Louis tags himself in, much to Jordan's annoyance, and puts on a chinlock of his own. English fights up and makes the hot tag to Gotch for a quick Whirling Dervish and the pin on Marcus at 5:16.

Rating: D+. So the Vaudevillains seem to be faces as well. That's not the worst idea in the world as you can put them against Blake and Murphy when Enzo and Cass are done with them. That's one of the places where NXT shines: they set something up for when the current feud is done and they can transition right into the new feud. I miss that kind of well done and planned out booking. The match was nothing special and was mostly spent in a chinlock. I'm assuming Jordan will go partner hunting for the next few weeks.

Video on Sasha Banks being all Bossy.

Finn Balor is ready for Rhyno.

Finn Balor vs. Rhyno

Feeling out process to start until Rhyno just runs Balor over with a shoulder. Rhyno goes up top but gets kicked out to the floor as we take an early break. Back with Rhyno putting on a body scissors to slow Balor down. Rhyno mocks Balor's signature pose before putting on a chinlock.

That goes nowhere as Finn comes back with a middle rope forearm but the reverse lifting DDT is countered into a spinebuster for two. Frustration

is setting in for Rhyno and the Pele makes it even worse. The Sling Blade connects but the Coup de Grace misses. The Gore misses as well though and Balor grabs a quick rollup for the surprise pin at 12:10.

Rating: C+. I liked this better than I was expecting to with Balor being able to adapt to Rhyno's simple yet effective power style. That's the perk of having someone like Rhyno around: he can work well with anyone and you can easily build him back up by having him squash jobbers, only to lose again to someone like Balor. Nice little match here.

Rhyno Gores Balor on the stage to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This show would best be summed up as recharging. You have the Vaudevillains returning and Breeze acting more like a face, along with setting up some feuds for the future. This is something you come to expect from NXT as they hit Takeover, have a week off, and then start getting back on track to the middle of the road feuds. Owens vs. Balor in Tokyo should be awesome and the fans are going to eat it up.

Results

Tyler Breeze b. Adam Rose – Beauty Shot

Alexa Bliss b. Carmella – Rollup while holding the ropes

Vaudevillains b. Jason Jordan/Marcus Louis – Whirling Dervish to Louis

Finn Balor b. Rhyno – Rollup

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NXT – April 1, 2015: April Fools Ole

NXT

Date: April 1, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

Wrestlemania has come and gone, but that really doesn't mean much in NXT. Last week we saw Finn Balor come up just short in his match against Kevin Owens for the NXT Title. That means we're in need of a new #1 contender as we wait on Sami Zayn to make his return to continue the war with Owens. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's the returning Sami Zayn to open the show. He's been overseas in Abu Dhabi for a great tour but the timing was interesting as he's had a lot of things to think about. It should have been the time of his life but all he can think of is Kevin Owens. The Kevin Owens that he was in the ring with isn't the same one he's known for twelve years.

He's changed as a human being and Sami could see it when he looked into Kevin's eyes. Sami has had time to think and formulate a plan, and here it is: use his rematch to get HIS NXT Title back, but the number one thing on his list is to give Owens the beating he deserves. Once those two are in the ring together again, it's going to be gold.

Rhyno vs. ???

Rhyno throws him across the ring with a belly to belly and the Gore is good for the pin at 25 seconds.

Post match Rhyno says he's here to make a statement by winning the NXT Title. It doesn't matter if it's Sami Zayn, Finn Balor or Kevin Owens, because it all ends with a Gore. This is the perfect way to use someone like Rhyno and the fans are still into him, so what's bad in this scenario?

Former bodybuilder Dana Brooke is here in two weeks.

Last week after the match, Kevin Owens says it only matters that he won because no one is taking his title away.

Bayley vs. Emma

This is called a Divas match. I really hope that's a one time line and not a trend. Last week Emma slapped Bayley for not turning her back on the fans. In other words, set it up one week and pay it off in the future. Emma still does all of her old shenanigans but pulls herself into the ring under the bottom instead of flipping in. She tries to clown around with Bayley before the match gets going and the first minute only sees them trade lockups.

Bayley gets annoyed with the slow pace and nails her with a running shoulder for two before walking into a clothesline. Emma still doesn't seem to want to fight that hard so Bayley sends her into the buckle a few times but gets caught in the Emma Lock. The Emma Sandwich (Graves: "The what?") gets two but Emma spends too much time posing and gets caught in a sunset flip for the pin at 4:12.

Rating: D+. The wrestling was nothing special here but it felt much more like a story being told than anything else. Emma as the jaded wrestler who has been burned by the main roster and not wanting Bayley to make the same mistakes is an interesting story but the matches need to be a bit better than this.

Emma smiles as Bayley leaves.

Becky Lynch wants to know when she gets her title shot. Could it be after you finally win a few matches? Sasha might not be bad, but she's certainly not this good. "Welcome everyone to N Becks T." I apologize for

making you read a line that horrible.

Blake and Murphy vs. Lucha Dragons

Non-title. You get a rare time slip from NXT as they talk about the Dragons being on Superstars and Main Event but obviously they can't know about the Raw appearance yet. Murphy and Kalisto get things going. Well at least I think it's Murphy as his tights say Murphy but the commentary says he's Blake. Either way both champions are sent to the floor for a big dive from Cara. Kalisto adds a huge moonsault and everyone is down for a few seconds.

Back in and Blake gets some help from his partner for two on Kalisto before we hit the chinlock. Kalisto fights up for a rollup for two but it's quickly back to Murphy (the commentary matches the tights) for another chinlock. That doesn't last long though and Kalisto finally rolls over for a tag to Cara. Everything breaks down and Cara kicks Buddy in the face, only to miss the Swanton. The referee gets distracted and Murphy gets in a cheap shot, setting up the suplex into a frog splash for the pin on Cara at 6:12.

Rating: C+. Nice basic tag match here with both teams looking fine. There's nothing left in NXT for the Dragons though and I have no issue with them going down in one of their last matches in NXT. Murphy and Blake aren't ready for the main roster yet but they're fine for around here. Nice little match.

Sami Zayn is in the back but Rhyno cuts him off. He doesn't care about Zayn's vendettas because the line for the NXT Title starts behind Rhyno.

Solomon Crowe video.

Tye Dillinger vs. Jason Jordan

Dillinger swings away to start but gets sent hard into the corner for a spear, followed by some elbows for two. We hit the chinlock early on as Jason has already taken the straps down on his singlet. Back up and Tye makes a comeback with some very basic offense but Jordan muscles him into the corner and finishes with something like a t-bone suplex at 2:58.

Jordan looked better but that's not saying much.

We recap Tyler Breeze vs. Hideo Itami. They've split matches so far and tonight Hideo has been granted a 2/3 falls match. It's a cool video but Brennan calling this historic is a pretty big stretch.

Hideo Itami vs. Tyler Breeze

2/3 falls. The selfie stick gets a chant before the bell rings. The chants change to a debate over whether Breeze is gorgeous or ratchet. Breeze drives him into the corner to start for some shoulders to the ribs but Hideo comes back with a running clothesline and a kick to the chest. A running dropkick and a running boot to the face give Itami the first fall at 2:21. Well that was fast.

The second fall starts after a brief break but no commercial. Breeze sits in the corner to get a breather but it's just a ruse so the Beauty Shot can connect for the pin at 3:42 total to tie things up. We take a break (with an ad for NXT at Wrestlemania Axxess next week) and come back with the third fall in progress with Breeze stomping away in the corner. Some forearms to the head get two for Tyler and we hit the chinlock. The hold stays on for a good while until Hideo fights up and avoids a dropkick.

The top rope misses but another kick to the face gets two for Hideo. They botch a fisherman's suplex into a small package before going into a pinfall reversal sequence. After the near falls they trade kicks to the face to start and get two each with Breeze getting control. He fires off some more kicks but Hideo screams at him. A running corner dropkick misses Breeze but he can't hit the Beauty Shot. Now the running dropkick connects but Hideo tries the same running boot to the face that won him the first fall, allowing Breeze to hit another Beauty Shot for the pin at 13:24.

Rating: C. This got better near the end but it was pretty dull stuff getting to that point. I really liked the ending with a callback to the first fall, but I really didn't need to see this as a 2/3 falls match instead of just having a long regular match. It's also interesting to see Breeze get the pin here as Itami got the tournament win on the big stage. Not bad but nothing special.

Overall Rating: C. After last week's double title match show, this was pretty much a filler episode instead of anything really that important. Sami coming back is a big deal though and getting a feud with Rhyno is fine enough for a filler while Owens is recovering from knee surgery. Not much to this show but it was hardly a disaster.

Results

Rhyno b. ??? – Gore

Bayley b. Emma – Sunset flip

Blake and Murphy b. Lucha Dragons – Frog splash to Cara

Jason Jordan b. Tye Dillinger – T-bone suplex

Tyler Breeze b. Hideo Itami – Beauty Shot

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NXT – February 25, 2015: It Had To Happen Eventually

NXT

Date: February 25, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Alex Riley, Tom Phillips

We're still living in Kevin Owens' NXT as he shows no sign of letting up soon. Last week he ran through former NXT Champion Adrian Neville, clearing more of the path to get to his showdown with Finn Balor. Other than that, we have the potential split of Carmella from Enzo Amore and Colin Cassady, which might be well received by the NXT fans. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Hideo Itami vs. Bull Dempsey

Dempsey elbows him in the face to start and drives another into Hideo's chest. A chinlock doesn't last long as Itami fires off elbows of his own, followed by kicks to the leg. That's fine with Dempsey who hits a running Vader style splash for two to regain control. When all else fails, just have the big guy run someone over. Itami comes back with a quick series of strike and a running basement dropkick in the corner. A running kick to the face is enough to pin Dempsey at 2:50.

Tyler Breeze superkicks Itami as he leaves. He stops to take a picture though and Itami gets up to chase him away.

Video on The Brian Kendrick, who is making a return tonight like Rhyno did last week.

Lucha Dragons vs. Tye Dillinger/Jason Jordan

During Dillinger/Jordan's entrances, Solomon Crowe hacks the feed and says he'll be NXT Champion. Jordan drags Sin Cara into the corner but Kalisto is pulled in, only to get face planted for his efforts. Off to Dillinger for a mocking bow to Cara as the fans chant NO ME GUSTA ("I don't like it!") and a slam to Kalisto.

It's quickly back to Cara who quickly takes Dillinger into the Dragons' corner for a tag back to Kalisto. That's quite the fast exchange.

Dillinger and Jordan (thank goodness for those letters on the trunks. To be fair I couldn't tell the Hardy Boys apart for years either) don't seem to agree on a tag so Tye tells him to relax. Cara slips over for a tag to

Kalisto as things speed way up. Jordan drops to the floor and walks out on the match, allowing the Salida Del Sol and Swanton Bomb to pin Dillinger at 3:31.

Rating: D+. This was angle advancement but I'm getting a little bored with the Dragons. We saw them win and lose the titles and they're still basically the same team. Those belts have always been defined by heel teams so the Dragons never did much for me with the titles. Nothing much to see here, especially considering Jordan and Dillinger haven't meant anything in months.

Finn Balor is ready for Kendrick tonight and isn't looking ahead to Owens.

After a break, Dillinger demands Jordan come out here. He doesn't care whose match is next because he can whip that man too.

Baron Corbin vs. Tye Dillinger

End of Days, 17 seconds. Corbin needs to move up the ladder a bit now. Give him a feud against someone not named Dempsey.

Charlotte says the title is coming back where it belongs next week.

Breeze says Itami will soon be squashed in his trap.

Quick video on Sami Zayn in Abu Dhabi.

Bayley vs. Becky Lynch

The fans are split on who to cheer for but the Bayley fans boo at the Becky fans. Becky charges into an elbow in the corner but avoids a splash, setting up a pumphandle suplex for two on Bayley. A hair whip legdrop gets the same and we hit the chinlock. Bayley fights up and takes Becky outside for a baseball slide through the corner ala Sami's running DDT.

Back in and the aggression comes out of Bayley with some running corner elbows, complete with the tightening of the hair band (as usual, far more adorable than it should be). Bayley tweaks her arm but shoves Becky away

and keeps going. A middle rope back elbow to the jaw gets two on Lynch. The Belly to Bayley is countered into a seated armbar out of nowhere and Bayley taps at 4:30.

Rating: C. As usual, this is miles ahead of the messes that the Divas usually put on. The Divas seem impressed when they manage a suplex. This was a four and a half minute match with different stages and even some psychology with the arm. It's so much better than listening to BRIE MODE or someone putting on lip gloss. You can still be a heel without makeup if that's believable.

Rhyno is back because he loves the intensity he sees here in NXT. It reminds him of the energy he has when he Gores people in half.

Jason Jordan did what he did and will give an explanation when he wants to.

Finn Balor vs. The Brian Kendrick

Owens is on commentary and says he'd love to face Balor anytime he'd like. Kendrick grabs a headlock to start but gets thrown off and dropkicked down. Brian claims an ankle injury but goldbricks to grab a small package for two. Back to the headlock on the mat but Balor kicks him off, sending Kendrick crawling away. It's even more goldbricking though as he grabs a hammerlock. Owens doesn't like something Riley says and leaves as Kendrick grabs another headlock.

Back from a break with Balor hitting a running forearm to the jaw to put Kendrick down. Finn charges into a boot to the jaw though and eats a tornado DDT for two. A kick to the chest drops Kendrick again though and the Sling Blade does the same. The top rope double stomp is good for the pin on Kendrick at 11:32.

Rating: C-. I like seeing Balor having a bit simpler match for a change but I've never been a fan of Kendrick. He's much more interesting on the mic than in the ring but it's continuing a cool idea of having people return to the show like this. Owens vs. Balor has real potential to tear the house down though and this was more build to that.

Post match Owens comes out and stares at Balor before throwing Riley over the announcers' desk. Balor stares him down from the ring and invites Owens to come fight him. The champ walks away to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This really didn't do it for me and was one of the weaker shows they've had in a long time. They're in a holding pattern until we get to Balor vs. Owens and then the big rematch with Owens vs. Zayn. Tonight's show felt like a filler episode but next week there's going to be a title match which NXT almost always does well. Not a bad show this week, but not one of their better episodes.

Results

Hideo Itami b. Bull Dempsey – Running boot to the face

Lucha Dragons b. Jason Jordan/Tye Dillinger – Swanton Bomb to Dillinger

Baron Corbin b. Tye Dillinger – End of Days

Becky Lynch b. Bayley – Seated armbar

Finn Balor b. The Brian Kendrick – Top rope double stomp

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NXT – April 17, 2014: Power vs. Speed

NXT

Date: April 17, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Renee Young, William Regal, Byron Saxton, Tom Phillips

The main story at the moment is Brodus Clay wanting a piece of the NXT Title and going after Adrian Neville to get there. Other than that we're looking forward to seeing Sami Zayn get his hands on Corey Graves after Graves injured him a few weeks back. The Divas division is also getting more and more awesome so let's get to it.

Colin Cassady vs. Aiden English

English kicks him in the ribs to start as Regal is already sucking up to Aiden. Big Cass hammers away as we hear about Aiden declaring himself an upper echelon talent in NXT. The SAWFT Boot to the face gets two but Aiden just hammers him down to take over again. A hard elbow to the head keeps Cass in trouble as Regal talks about how to throw the hardest punches. The Director's Cut is countered but Cass' spinning Rock Bottom is countered into a rollup with a handful of trunks for the pin at 4:10.

Rating: D+. English winning is always a good thing as he's ready to move up the ladder in NXT. I'm not saying he's ready for the main roster but English would be a great opponent for Neville once he's done with Brodus. The singing gimmick is just about perfect though and that's the important part.

Tyler Breeze has Devin read his names off a phone. He has nothing to say and just wanted her to read so he could make a gorgeous cameo. Awesome indeed.

We look at Paige winning the Divas Title on Raw.

Paige, holding both belts, doesn't buy the other Divas' congratulations on Raw. She's also ready for the BFFs here in NXT. Paige has studied every Diva on both rosters and will never get comfortable. This is the most she's ever talked and it wasn't half bad.

Camacho vs. Oliver Grey

This is Grey's return match after being gone forever with a knee injury. The fans chant KING HAKU at Camacho (Haku's son) in a cool moment. A dropkick and wristlock give Oliver early control but Camacho runs him over with a hard elbow. Some forearms to the back set up a Samoan drop for the pin on Grey at 2:00. This was just a squash, but to be fair did anyone care that Grey was back anyway?

Bo Dallas says his fans are law abiding citizens so they didn't do anything illegal last week. However the Bo Dallas Hotline is running wild so he knows the Bo Lievers will never stop Bo Lieving in him to get the NXT Title back.

Ascension vs. Wesley Blake/Cal Bishop

Blake tries some shots to the ribs but Konnor just ENDS him with a clothesline. A shoulder does the same and it's off to Viktor for some HARD chops on the floor. Back in and Konnor stomps away in the corner before the Fall of Man ends Blake at 2:19. Can we please move them to WWE, because they're basically Paige with slightly worse legs.

Charlotte talks over Sasha in the back and takes over the BFFs.

CJ Parker vs. Great Khali

Before the match, Parker says he can't sleep at night because he's wondering what this planet would be like without the NXT Universe. There would be no litter in his street or animals in

his zoos. Parker wants to know how people can boo a man that wants to change the world for the better but Khali's music cuts him off. They trade chops to start and I believe you can guess who wins.

We get the loud chops in the corner and a clothesline puts Parker on the floor. Back in and Parker gets in a shot to the knee to take over, drawing what might be the greatest chant in history. Parker: "I JUST WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD!" Fans: "GLOBAL WARMING! GLOBAL WARMING!" Khali fights back and the Plunge is good for the pin at 2:33. The fans' hatred of Parker is glorious.

Emma might have a partner to face the BFFs next week.

Sami Zayn insists that he's fine and says he'll be taking care of Graves soon.

Jason Jordan/Tye Dillinger vs. Baron Corbin/Sawyer Fulton

Jordan and Dillinger get an entrance and have similar trunks. I'll take it over the random pairings we usually get around here. The good guys use some decent double teaming on Corbin for two before it's Dillinger with some hard chops in the corner. Corbin comes back with a hard clothesline of his own before it's off to Fulton for some elbow drops for two. A suplex gets the same but Corbin goes to the middle rope, only to save himself from diving into Tye's boot. Baron misses an elbow drop though and it's hot tag to Jordan. House is cleaned and the MNM Snapshot is good for the pin on Baron at 4:27.

Rating: C-. Standard speed vs. power formula match here so it was really hard to screw up. Jordan and Dillinger aren't anything special but they're something new so points for trying at least. The Snapshot is a good finisher to bring back as well and makes for a good double team move. Nice little match here to debut the team.

Adrian Neville vs. Brodus Clay

Non-title. Adrian goes right at him and fires off kicks to the legs. Renee: "I'd run around him like Mario around Koopa!" A sleeper doesn't get Neville anywhere and he dives into a release fisherman's suplex for two. Brodus goes old school with a heart punch for two and we hit the nerve hold.

We also get the second and third versions of the hold before Neville fights out of a powerbomb attempt. Some kicks to the head have no effect on Brodus but an AJ Styles springboard forearm put him down. Neville rolls through a 450 but Brodus runs him over with a headbutt. They head outside where Clay misses a splash off the steps, allowing Neville to get a quick countout win at 6:23.

Rating: C-. Not much to see here but the ending leaves the door open for future matches. However, I'm not sure why we need a second match as the first one would have been a good enough win for Neville. The match not being for the title fits what Adrian said and we'll likely get an attack from Clay to set up a rematch.

Overall Rating: C+. This show was moving out there and it worked far better than the previous few episodes. A few things are set up for the next few weeks and we had some decent matches to get there. I like the idea of fast matches instead of long drawn out ones for a change as it's a breath of fresh air. Nice show this week and again I have hopes for NXT's future.

Results

Aiden English b. Colin Cassady – Rollup

Camacho b. Oliver Grey – Samoan drop

Ascension b. Wesley Blake/Cal Bishop – Fall of Man to Blake

Great Khali b. CJ Parker – Punjabi Plunge

Jason Jordan/Tye Dillinger b. Baron Corbin/Sawyer Fulton

Adrian Neville b. Brodus Clay via countout

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