

# NXT – March 24, 2021: The NXT Special

## NXT

Date: March 24, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph, Beth Phoenix

We are two weeks away from Takeover and that means it is time for NXT to do what it does best by hammering home the big push towards the special. This time around that means we are going to be seeing William Regal dealing with Adam Cole and Kyle O'Reilly for getting into a fight earlier in the week. I think you know where this is going. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Karrion Cross attacking Finn Balor, his partner last week, and setting up their Takeover main event for Balor's title.

Adam Cole came to work today, flanked by security.

Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez vs. Zoey Stark/Io Shirai

Gonzalez shoves Stark away to start and says this is her house. The armbar goes on to keep Gonzalez in control until Stark flips her way to freedom. Stark works on her own armbar and hits a running kick in the corner, followed by a knee to the face. Gonzalez isn't having that and blasts her with a clothesline and hands it off to Kai, who is dropped onto Stark for two.

Stark takes her down for some right hands to the head though and Shirai comes in for the first time. Kai's pump kick misses and Shirai stomps her down in the corner, setting up the slingshot double knees to the chest. Gonzalez's distraction

lets Kai roll her up a few times, only for Shirai to show her how it's done with her own near fall. It's back to Stark for a running uppercut in the corner but Kai pulls her down by the hair. Gonzalez comes back in but gets kneed in the chest in a hurry. Kai tags herself in for a reverse powerbomb/enziguri combination for two.

We take a break and come back with the double tag bringing Kai and Shirai, one of whom cleans house (I'll let you guess which). There's a pair of 619s to the villains and a missile dropkick puts Kai down. Stark adds a springboard dropkick of his own, followed by Stark's slingshot dive onto Gonzalez. Stark posts her as well but misses a 450 back inside. Instead, Gonzalez powerbombs her down, knocks Shirai off the apron and hits another powerbomb for the pin at 11:50.

**Rating:** C. They accomplished a few things here, including making Gonzalez look like a killer. Shirai is going to be in trouble she she has to defend the title and that is a good thing for Takeover. Stark continues to look very good in the ring just by rubbing elbows with stars but she is going to have to win something at some point.

Post match Gonzalez and Shirai pull themselves up for the staredown. Kai offers a distraction though and Gonzalez lays her out with a big boot. The powerbomb onto the announcers' table leaves Shirai laying.

We look at Adam Cole coming to Kyle O'Reilly's Brazilian jiu jitsu training center and getting in a fight. William Regal has promised punishment.

O'Reilly arrives with security and Roderick Strong tells him to take out Col. O'Reilly doesn't seem to want the help or advice. Strong looks sad and says O'Reilly and Cole can both go to h\*\*\*.

LA Knight isn't worried about Bronson Reed tonight because Reed made a mistake last week.

Jordan Devlin knows tonight's match is huge because it involves someone who has been a top star in Japan, England and America and is universally respected. That is quite the star, and tonight he is facing Kushida! Devlin likes Kushida, but he is going down tonight.

### Bronson Reed vs. LA Knight

Reed shoves him around to start and then sends Knight flying with a backdrop. A powerslam sets up the chinlock on Knight and there's an elbow to the face to take him down again. The chinlock keeps Knight in trouble before Reed switches to a double arm crank. Make that a waistlock but Knight fights up and makes it over to the apron. There's a neck snap to slow Reed down and Knight stomps away.

Knight's rhythmic pointing takes us to a break and we come back with Reed fighting out of a chinlock. That's broken up so Knight stomps him down into the corner and slowly hammers away. A missed charge into the corner lets Knight hit a jumping neckbreaker for two more. Reed fights up again and shrugs off a kick to the face, meaning it's time to run Knight over again. The chokeslam plants Knight again but he's up in time to break up the Tsunami. Reed shoves him off though and finishes with the Tsunami at 12:09.

**Rating:** C-. It's interesting that they are having Knight lose so soon, but more important than that is Reed, who is looking like a heck of a monster face. That Tsunami is one of the best looking splashes I've seen in a long time and I'm curious to see where Reed can go from here. He needs a big win, but giving him this kind of a squash is a good sign for his future.

We look at Danny Burch's injury, causing the Tag Team Titles to be vacated. As a result, MSK, the Grizzled Young Veterans and Legado del Fantasma will face off for the vacant titles at Takeover.

Video on Walter, who is a monster and coming to NXT, at least for the time being. Other wrestlers talk about how worried they are because of him.

### Oney Lorcan vs. Karrion Kross

Kross has Scarlett with him and Lorcan goes straight at him to start. Lorcan gets in a few shots to the face and they head outside, with Kross driving him into the barricade. Back in and Kross kicks him outside again, this time for a suplex on the floor. They head back in again with Lorcan's chops earning him...a third trip out to the floor, just in case the first two didn't connect.

Lorcan manages to dropkick him into the corner but Kross explodes out of the corner with a clothesline for two. We take a break and come back with Kross firing off shoulders in the corner. A cross armbreaker doesn't get Lorcan anywhere as Kross breaks out and hits a t-bone suplex out of the corner.

The neck crank goes on as Kross talks about being glad Danny Burch was hurt last week. Lorcan gets fired up and avoids a charge to send Kross shoulder first into the post. A DDT on the arm has Kross panicking a bit so Lorcan wins a slugout by taking out the leg. The Blockbuster misses though and Kross kicks him in the face. The Doomsday Saito into the running elbow to the back of the head finishes Lorcan at 9:17.

**Rating:** C+. This was the perfectly logical match to have and as usual, Lorcan's offense can work on anyone while still looking good. That is what we had here and Kross survives anyway, as he also gets a boost on the way to Takeover. I'm really not sure what they are going to do with Kross, but I am starting to get the praise.

Post match Kross says he would like to take a moment to address the actions of Finn Balor. Last week, Balor's actions included malice. Kross promises pain because there is no stopping what is next, which is him. Cue Finn Balor, who says

Kross showed him his weakness last week. Balor says Kross fight with emotions last week and that makes him sloppy and vulnerable. At Takeover, Balor is going to exploit those weaknesses and walk out NXT Champion because Balor can't control himself and will drown without emotions. The staredown is on.

William Regal announces his plans for the North American Title match at Takeover. Next week there will be a twelve person battle royal with the final six remaining going on to a gauntlet eliminator match at Takeover Night One. The winner of that will move on to get the shot at Gargano on Night Two.

Kushida has accepted Jordan Devlin's challenge for tonight.

Yesterday, Drake Maverick got on Imperium's nerves and got a match with Walter as a result.

#### Walter vs. Drake Maverick

Non-title and Walter hits a powerbomb into the half crab for the immediate stoppage at 27 seconds.

Post match Imperium poses but here is Tommaso Ciampa to interrupt. Ciampa isn't wasting time and challenges him to a UK Title match at Takeover. The brawl is on and Walter takes Ciampa's necklace, which incenses him. One heck of a chop leaves Ciampa laying and Walter accepts the challenge.

Pete Dunne is ready to dominate the locker room and wants the North American Title.

Jessi Kamea is injured so Robert Stone pays off Mercedes Martinez to take her place. Mercedes agrees but wants the other half after the match. Stone agrees, but after Mercedes leaves, admits he has no more money. Oh dear.

A panicked Johnny Gargano goes to see William Regal and recaps the NXT Title situation for Takeover. Regal tells him to chill.

## Women's Tag Team Titles: Shotzi Blackheart/Ember Moon vs. Mercedes Martinez/Aaliyah

Martinez and Aaliyah are challenging and have Robert Stone in their corner. Martinez throws Moon around to start but she snaps off a headscissors. Blackheart gets in the figure four necklock over the rope but Stone gets up on the apron to throw a quick fit. That's enough for Martinez to get in a clothesline on Shotzi, followed by a fireman's carry gutbuster.

Aaliyah comes in and even kicks Moon off of the apron without much trouble. It's back to Martinez, who is quickly send into the corner, allowing the hot tag. House is cleaned in a hurry and a powerbomb gets two on Aaliyah. Blackheart plants Martinez with a tornado DDT and the Eclipse finishes Aaliyah at 4:02.

**Rating:** C-. I'm not sure what you were expecting here but it was only so good. This was mainly there to give the new champs their first defense. It wasn't exactly a great match and the Eclipse at the end didn't look great, but they kept it moving and didn't try to stretch out into some unnecessary drama.

Cameron Grimes comes in to see Roderick Strong and suggests they restart the Undisputed Era. Strong hits him in the face.

Ember Moon and Shotzi Blackheart are proud of their win when the Way comes in. The challenge is issued and accepted.

Takeover rundown.

## Jordan Devlin vs. Kushida

Non-title. Devlin takes him down in a hurry and hits a standing moonsault for an early two. That's fine with Kushida, who hiptosses him into a basement dropkick before starting in on the arm. Kushida cranks on it with his feet and then his arms before sliding between Devlin's legs to the floor, Devlin is

waiting with an Asai moonsault (that was as crisp and well timed of a sequence as I have seen in a good while). We take a break and come back with Devlin holding a chinlock but getting caught with a jawbreaker. Kushida hits him in the face and bulldogs the arm down but the Hoverboard Lock is countered into a cradle for two.

Devlin nails his slingshot cutter, though he is still badly favoring the arm. Said arm gives out on the Devlin Slide attempt so Kushida goes up top. Devlin catches him with forearms but here is Legado del Fantasma for the distraction. Kushida gets in a kick to the head and superplexes him into the cross armbreaker. Legado pulls Devlin to the floor, which isn't enough for a DQ. Devlin dives back in and sends Kushida into Legado, setting up a bridging O'Connor roll (meaning no need to use the bad arm) to pin Kushida at 9:26.

**Rating:** C+. Is it any surprise that these two could have a good match together? This was a rather nice display from both as Kushida took apart the arm but Devlin is on another level at the moment and took out the cruiserweight legend. I'm really not sure where they go with the unification match, but Devlin winning would not surprise me as he seems to have a lot more upward potential.

Post match Kushida goes after Legado and takes down Wilde and Mendoza. Santos Escobar gets in the ring for the staredown with Devlin...and we have a Shawn Michaels. He slides a ladder in the ring and points, leaving both guys to hold up their titles.

Adam Cole runs into Shawn as he leaves and glaring ensues. I'd be down for that.

We get the big showdown between Adam Cole and Kyle O'Reilly, with William Regal in charge and a lot of security. Regal rants about everything that has gone on between the two of them, even down to having the police involved. He has a

contract for the two of them to be in an unsanctioned match in the co-main event for Night Two of Takeover so he would like them to sign in peace.

Cole takes the pen but has a story first. He asks Regal to imagine he was blind but then one day could see everything. That is what you call a revelation and Cole had one of those when he saw O'Reilly joining forces with Finn Balor. He thought O'Reilly had lost his mind but then it all came clear.

O'Reilly is just a lapdog on the sidelines but that is not Adam Cole. He is nothing like O'Reilly, who has lost sight of what the Undisputed Era was about. The team was about being the best and that is Cole. Does O'Reilly think he would be here without Cole? There is no team without Cole because he had the title run and sold the shirts and without him, O'Reilly is nothing. Everyone but O'Reilly knows that Cole wins at Takeover so Cole signs.

O'Reilly says they have known each other for a long time and didn't care who they stepped over on their way to the top. Then O'Reilly grew up and started taking some accountability for his actions. There are no more sneak attacks or 4-1 beatdowns and since then, the team became better. They became stars but only one of them became a better person. Cole is the same a\*\*\*\*\* who came here three and a half years ago and that makes O'Reilly believe the Undisputed Era meant nothing. He wants to believe they can be cool again but now he won't hesitate to put Cole down for good.

Cole used his friends to get to the top and O'Reilly is not surprised. No one is going to be surprised.....LOOK ME IN THE EYES....when O'Reilly beats Cole into a pulp. O'Reilly goes to sign, with Cole calling it a death warrant. The contract is signed and the table it turned over but they are held apart to end the show. Awesome promos from both guys with both of them making sense and selling how much they want to hurt the other.



**Overall Rating:** B. They hit the gas on the build towards Takeover here and that is the kind of show where NXT tends to shine. There are a lot of things to cover on the way there with a pair of shows but this one did a nice job of setting things up in a hurry. Next week will be the big hard sell for the shows, but they did a rather nice job here of making me want to see Takeover. Well done, as this was right in NXT's wheelhouse.

## Results

Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez b. Io Shirai/Zoey Stark – Powerbomb to Stark

Bronson Reed b. LA Knight – Tsunami

Karrion Kross b. Oney Lorcan – Running elbow to the back of the head

Walter b. Drake Maverick via referee stoppage

Shotzi Blackheart/Ember Moon b. Mercedes Martinez/Aaliyah – Eclipse to Aaliyah

Jordan Devlin b. Kushida – Bridging O'Connor roll

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# NXT – March 17, 2021: Maybe Next Time

## **NXT**

Date: March 17, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph

We're on the road to Takeover and this time around that means we have twice the usual amount of matches to set up. The end of last week's show set up a pair of matches for Takeover and I'm curious to see what else they have for the show. Throw in a few more title matches to be set up and we could be in for a nice pair of shows. Let's get to it.

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

The opening recap looks at last week's main event, followed by Kyle O'Reilly laying out Adam Cole and Karrion Kross confronting Finn Balor. There are your Takeover main events.

Here is Finn Balor, who says he is still champion. He has defeated everyone and at Takeover, Karrion Kross' time is up. Cue Kross and Scarlett, with Kross saying this could never happen until they settled their other affairs. This had to be one on one because that is all that matters around here. The people need to know who the real champion is around here, as do the two of them. Balor says Kross doesn't have what it takes to beat him so Kross promises to choke him out.

Scarlett says that she has already seen this in the cards: two

champions, both draped in gold clashing. Cue Oney Lorcan and Danny Burch to say that Pete Dunne is going to be champion anyway because he's the best in the world. Scarlett issues a challenge for the Tag Team Titles tonight but the champs don't seem sure. That's fine with Scarlett, who talks them into the match and we have a main event.

### Austin Theory vs. Dexter Lumis

During the entrances, the rest of the Way talk to Theory on a tablet, with Johnny Gargano reminding him of what Lumis said about Theory's abs. The bell rings and we take a break less than thirty seconds in (gah). Back with Theory hitting a fall away slam but having to elbow his way out of the Silence. Lumis is right back with a spinebuster and the jumping legdrop gets two.

A pop up uppercut rocks Theory again and there's a slingshot suplex to make it worse. Lumis misses a dive off the top though and Theory hits a running forearm for two. What looks like a powerbomb is broken up and Lumis offers him a hand up. They stare each other down and Theory hugs him, earning himself the Side Effect into the Silence for the knockout at 9:49.

**Rating:** C-. This was the next step on the way to Johnny Gargano vs. Dexter Lumis at Takeover and in that vein, it worked out fine. It wasn't a particularly good match but Lumis was doing a bit better with the storytelling here. You can do that in silence perfectly well, but Lumis is rarely the strongest in that area. I'm still not wild on him, though at least this was a bit better.

Tommaso Ciampa does not like Imperium jumping him last week and suggests that he took out Alexander Wolfe. The team won't be standing after tonight.

Here's Adam Cole for a chat. Cole is sick of Kyle O'Reilly, who he used at first but now O'Reilly is completely worthless.

Last week O'Reilly came at him so Cole calls O'Reilly out here right now. Cole gets William Regal instead and it turns out that O'Reilly is not here due to his neck getting hurt again last week. O'Reilly pops up on the screen to say that he will deal with Cole in time, because Cole tried to end his career. This is not the Cole that he has known for eleven years and revenge is coming. Cole says if Regal won't tell him where O'Reilly is, he'll find him on his own.

We recap the Women's Tag Team Titles being awarded and lost last week.

Shotzi Blackheart and Ember Moon still can't believe they're the champions but now it's time to take care of business. The Robert Stone Brand comes in to challenge them for next week and it's immediately accepted.

Jordan Devlin arrives in a very nice car.

#### Breezango vs. Legado del Fantasma

Fandango and Mendoza slug it out to start with Fandango hitting a clothesline to the back of the head. Another one to the front lets Breeze come in for two but Mendoza is back for a knee to the face. It's off to Wilde into a basement crossbody for two but Breeze is right back to send Wilde into the corner. A jawbreaker rocks Fandango though and there's the mocking of the dance. Fandango reverses a superplex attempt into a super gordbuster, only to get kicked out to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Fandango making the hot tag to Breeze to clean house via a stream of forearms. A half crab has Wilde in trouble and pulling it back to the middle makes it worse. Wilde escapes so Breeze catapults him over the top but Fandango misses a dive onto Mendoza. The Supermodel Kick gives Breeze two with Mendoza making the save. The Unprettier is broken up though and the Russian legsweep/running kick to the face finishes Breeze at 9:52.

**Rating:** C. Breezango continues to feel like such an unimportant team despite being former Tag Team Champions. This should wrap up the feud though as Jordan Devlin being back should let Legado need to be there to help Santos Escobar. The match was fine too with most of the action working well enough.

Post match Santos Escobar asks where Jordan Devlin is. Cue Devlin to say this is what a champion looks like. Escobar can drop his replica because the real champ is here to call him out. Escobar talks about redefining what it means to be a cruiserweight time after time. Devlin only has that title because everyone has forgotten about him. The challenge is made and Devlin hits a headbutt into the Devlin Side.

Adam Cole is going to find Kyle O'Reilly.

Cameron Grimes is on vacation, including swimming underwater while taking pictures and still wearing his hat.

Sarray is coming. I believe that has been in the works for about a year now.

### Zoey Stark vs. Dakota Kai

Raquel Gonzalez is here with Kai. They fight over a lockup to start and take it to the mat before fighting over a top wristlock. Kai flips out but can't get out, instead getting taken into a headlock. Stark takes her down into a hammerlock to crank on the arm. Back up and Kai sends her into the corner for the running knee to the face and two of her own. Stark jumps over her in the corner and sends Kai outside for the big slingshot dive. We take a break and come back with Kai hammering away for two but Stark grabs a neckbreaker.

A half nelson suplex lets Stark nip up but Kai catches her with the pump kick. They head to the apron with Stark hitting her own kick to the face. Kai gets sent inside, where she is able to superkick Stark out of the air. The running boot in

the corner gets two off a heck of a kickout but Stark is back with a knee to the face. That lets her go up top, only to get kicked back down. The Go To Kick finishes Stark at 12:37.

**Rating:** C+. I like both of these two a good deal and it was interesting to see Kai do this well without Gonzalez getting involved. Stark continues to have a lot of potential and having her in there against some bigger names helps a lot. She needs to win something, but there is still a lot of time to get to that.

Post match Gonzalez and Kai yell at Stark but here's Io Shirai to stare at Gonzalez and hand her a contract.

William Regal is interrupted because of something that has happened with Adam Cole.

The Grizzled Young Veterans say that MSK made a mistake and vengeance is coming.

#### Tommaso Ciampa vs. Marcel Barthel

Ciampa jumps Fabian Aichner at ringside to start as Barrett thinks Alexander Wolfe and Timothy Thatcher have gone fishing. The bell rings and Ciampa hammers away but gets taken down into a headlock for some shots to the face. Ciampa fights up but Barthel steps on the knee to make it a chinlock. Back up and Barthel goes up, only to get dropkicked out of the air. Ciampa fights up and makes the comeback, including knocking Aichner off the apron. A running forearm drops Barthel and Willow's Bell is good for the pin at 4:31.

**Rating:** C-. This was all about getting the two sides in the ring for a change. Ciampa vs. Imperium with Timothy Thatcher thrown in somewhere could be rather interesting. It is a different kind of feud for him and if it gives us some fresh matches and a way to get more Imperium on a bigger stage, everything will be fine.

Post match Ciampa is pleased...until Walter arrives. The rest of Imperium goes after Ciampa but alter walks him out with a chop into the powerbomb.

William Regal goes to the parking lot where Kyle O'Reilly is being arrested. Adam Cole shouts that O'Reilly tried to run him off the road but is being arrested too.

LA Knight is ready for his debut so he can prove that he is a megastar. Bronson Reed glares from behind.

### LA Knight vs. August Grey

Knight runs him over to start and hits a slingshot shoulder. Grey's O'Connor roll is broken up and Knight nails a powerslam. Cue Reed with Knight's jacket, which he tears apart while trying to put on. The distraction lets Grey get a rollup for two and a neckbreaker puts Knight down again. Grey's springboard spinning crossbody misses and a headlock driver finishes Grey at 2:22. Knight did his thing and the charisma alone will carry him a long way.

Raquel Gonzalez is happy with the contract to face Shirai but Dakota Kai comes up to say they need to face Shirai and Zoey Stark last week. They have lost twice in a row as a team and need to remind everyone who runs this place. How much running can you do of a division with about four teams that has been around for a few weeks?

Xia Li says resistance will not be tolerated and obstacles will be removed.

William Regal is ticked off and has a solution for Adam Cole and Kyle O'Reilly next week.

### Tag Team Titles: Karrion Kross/Finn Balor vs. Oney Lorcan/Danny Burch

Kross and Balor are challenging and have Scarlett with them. Kross throws Lorcan to start so it's off to Burch, who is

slammed face first into the mat. The bearhug goes on but a shot to the head breaks that up. The champs try a double suplex but Kross suplexes both of them instead, with Burch landing HARD on his shoulder. The referee checks on him and Kross has to just stand there as we take a break. Back with Balor armdragging Lorcan and grabbing the armbar.

Lorcan fights up and sends Balor into the corner for some chops. We hit the chinlock as we see the medic looking at Burch on the floor. Balor fights back but Lorcan is up to knock Kross off the apron. Some chops put Lorcan outside for the Sling Blade on the floor and there's the John Woo dropkick, sending Lorcan crashing into Scarlett. Kross grabs Balor and sends him into the barricade before throwing him inside. Lorcan hits the running uppercut for the pin on Balor (who was out on his feet) at 10:59.

**Rating:** C+. This was much more angle than match and given how things went with Burch, this was fairly impressive. The entire point was to have Kross attack Balor and Scarlett served as his trigger. I didn't think they would change the titles as it would be very un-NXT to do so, but now I don't know where the titles are going if Burch is badly hurt.

Post match Kross destroys Lorcan before destroying Balor even worse. Kross chokes him out and drops the title on him to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. Definitely not their strongest show but you can see where a lot of Takeover is going. They only have a few weeks left to set the show up and that is the kind of schedule that usually works well for NXT. This was a pretty off week for them, but given the amount of Coronavirus cases, that might not be the biggest surprise.

## Results



Dexter Lumis b. Austin Theory – Silence

Legado del Fantasma b. Breezango – Russian legsweep/running kick to the face combination to Breeze

Dakota Kai b. Zoey Stark – Go To Kick

Tommaso Ciampa b. Marcel Barthel – Willow's Bell

LA Knight b. August Grey – Headlock driver

Oney Lorcan/Danny Burch b. Finn Balor/Karrion Kross – Running uppercut to Balor

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# **NXT – March 3, 2021: They're Ready**

**NXT**

Date: March 3, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph

The big story around here continues to be the complete implosion of the Undisputed Era after Adam Cole turned on the team and left them laying. Finn Balor is involved as well and that could make for some interesting situations. On top of that, the Women's Tag Team Titles are on the line tonight as Shayna Baszler/Nia Jax are defending against Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of last week's brawl between Adam Cole, Kyle O'Reilly and Finn Balor.

Last night, Oney Lorcan and Danny Burch got into an argument with Tommaso Ciampa and Timothy Thatcher, setting up a non-title match for tonight. This is due to Wes Lee's broken hand, meaning MSK's Tag Team Title shot is being postponed.

### **Oney Lorcan/Danny Burch vs. Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher**

Non-title. Thatcher and Burch start things off with Thatcher taking him to the mat for an armbar. Back up and Thatcher takes him right back down into another armbar, setting up an elbow drop to the arm. They get up again and this time it's an exchange of uppercuts, with Thatcher knocking him into the corner for the tag off to Ciampa. Lorcan comes in as well and they strike it out as well until Lorcan grabs him by the head.

A headlock takeover is countered with a headscissors, followed by a running knee to send Lorcan outside. Burch gets knocked outside as well and Thatcher uppercuts the heck out of him. Back in and a heck of a discus lariat drops Lorcan, followed by a flapjack into Thatcher's uppercut.

Thatcher grabs a chinlock but Lorcan goes to the eyes and the knee to put Thatcher down for a change. A clothesline sends

Thatcher outside, where he grabs his neck as we take a break. Back with Thatcher (whose neck seems fine) fighting out of Lorcan's half crab and kicking Burch away, allowing the hot tag to Ciampa. House is cleaned in a hurry and it's back to Thatcher for the uppercuts. Ciampa fires off chops and Thatcher comes in again for some forearms.

Everything breaks down and stereo forearms to the chest have Lorcan and Burch bailing to the floor. Burch hits Thatcher in the head though and there's the half and half suplex from Lorcan. Everyone goes down again and the NXT chants are on strong. Thatcher crawls over to Ciampa but here's Imperium on the stage. Ciampa is knocked down and the elevated implant DDT finishes Thatcher at 13:14.

**Rating:** C+. This got some time and the Imperium deal has me interested, but it wasn't the most thrilling match in certain parts. Thatcher and Ciampa are fine as a team and it's nice to see the champs getting a win, even if it wasn't exactly clean. Good opener though, and about as good of an option as they had given the injury to Lee.

Post match Ciampa does not look happy with Thatcher.

Here is a ticked off Roderick Strong to call out Adam Cole. He gets Finn Balor instead, who says that Cole isn't coming out here for him. Strong blames Balor for the team falling apart but Balor says the title is what split them up. Balor knows how to get Cole out here and challenges Cole for a title match next week. That doesn't bring Cole out, so Balor tells Strong to get a killer instinct. The fight is on until referees break it up.

It's time to go to a psychiatric hospital where the Way is having group therapy. Johnny Gargano says Dexter Lumis has been affecting all of them, with Austin Theory not even being messed up by Lumis kidnapping him. Theory says nothing happened because it was just two dudes hanging out.

Gargano asks Indi Hartwell what she is doing on the notepad, which would be doodling the words "MRS. INDI WRESTLING LUMIS". Gargano snaps, demanding to know why Lumis isn't in jail. The therapist thinks Gargano has some deep seeded issues, sending Gargano into a complete meltdown. Gargano is thrown out but he'll be outside if anyone needs him. More on this later.

Cameron Grimes wants to change the name of the CWC into the Cameron Grimes Auditorium, which he can absolute afford. William Regal comes in to say he has a potential lawsuit on his hands. Regal tells Grimes to chill and tonight it's Grimes vs. Bronson Reed. Grimes is not pleased and offers Regal money because...everybody has...a price. Grimes: "THAT D\*\*\* TED DIBIASE!" Oh man that is going to be a great cameo when it happens.

### Aliyah vs. Ember Moon

Jessi Kamea, Robert Stone and Shotzi Blackheart (with tank) are here too. Moon works on the arm to start but Aliyah flips up and hits a forearm to the jaw. That gets a rather annoyed look from Moon, who lets Aliyah try it again. That earns her a belly to back slam and it's time to go to the floor. Moon...I believe kicks her in the face but the rapid camera cut makes it hard to see.

Either way it gets two back inside (with the replay showing that it was a dropkick which hit clean, making the camera cut pretty pointless) but Aliyah gets in a shot of her own for two of her own. We hit the chinlock with a knee in Moon's back but she's right back up with a spinebuster. Stone and Kamea's interruption earns them a double clothesline from Blackheart and the Eclipse finishes for Moon at 4:53.

**Rating:** C. I can go for both the Eclipse being back and Moon/Blackheart staying friends after the tournament ends. The women's tag team division could certainly use some more depth so why not let them see what they can do. Aliyah continues to

astound me as she has barely progressed whatsoever in years now. She's passable in the ring but you would think that being in developmental this long would mean a little more development no?

Timothy Thatcher and Tommaso Ciampa say what happened with Imperium is in the past, where it is going to stay. How long has Ciampa had hair on his head?

Video on Io Shirai vs. Toni Storm before their title match next week.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Nia Jax/Shayna Baszler vs. Raquel Gonzalez/Dakota Kai

Kai and Gonzalez are challenging. Jax throws Kai around with ease to start and there's a running splash in the corner to make it worse. Baszler comes in for a pat on the head, which does not sit well with Kai. It doesn't seem to matter to Baszler, who takes her down to the mat, only to miss the stomp to the arm. Baszler knocks Kai down again and out to staredown as we take a break.

Back with Kai hitting the running kick to Baszler's face in the corner. Baszler takes her down by the leg though and hands it off to Jax for the power. A gorilla press drop leaves Kai thudding onto the mat so Baszler can get two. Kai kicks out the leg though and the hot tag brings in Gonzalez for a big dropkick. A powerslam gets two on Baszler but the powerbomb is broken up. That means Jax comes in for the showdown and they go straight to the slugout.

Jax gets the better of things and it's back to Baszler for two off a forearm. The Kirifuda Clutch is broken up though and Gonzalez kicks her in the face. Kai hits her own kick to the face for two more but something like a GTS is blocked. The Kirifuda Clutch has Kai in trouble but she crawls over for the tag off to Gonzalez. The referee gets bumped as Gonzalez goes after Jax and the two go over the announcers' table. Baszler

grabs the Kirifuda Clutch on Kai as Adam Pearce sends a second referee in to call the knockout at 13:15. Commentary makes a big deal out of Kai not being legal.

**Rating:** C. There wasn't much drama to this one but the action was good enough. That's kind of the problem with having these NXT teams challenge for the titles: it is almost impossible to imagine an NXT star beating the main roster wrestlers, especially when Jax and Baszler are already scheduled to defend the titles against Lana and Naomi at some point in the future. For a one off match, it was fine enough though.

It's back to therapy, with Theory thinking Lumis wants a friend and Hartwell wanting to be that friend. Candice LeRae doesn't buy it, even as Gargano texts her what to say to the therapist. The therapist checks the door and here's Gargano to ask if anyone wants something from Uber Eats. That's enough of Gargano, so the therapist wants to know what really happened when Lumis abducted Theory. Things get tense and we'll be back later.

We go to Isaiah Scott's recording studio, where he wants to talk about life opportunities. Leon Ruff had a North American Title shot handed to him but Scott had to scratch and claw to get his shot. This is NXT in the CWC and that makes it Swerve's House. Ruff doesn't want to go to war with someone who cares less than him because Swerve is just different. He doesn't care anymore.

Here's LA Night for his in-arena debut. Knight has waited way too long to step into this ring, look into that camera and say "let me talk to ya". He isn't going to stand out here talking about childhood dreams because he's the one man revolution. Some people might say he's the Tom Brady of wrestling but Brady wishes he was half the man that he is. Just like old Tommy Boy, Knight isn't a first round draft pick but bet every dollar you have to your name that he will be the one setting trends and records.

Knight has been looking around NXT and sees your Johnny Gargano, Kyle O'Reilly, Adam Cole and Finn Balor. They all have their kicks, flips and dives so bring all of them to your front door. He isn't here to do anything fancy and while you might not like the way he does it, he gets the job done. Knight is the last of a dying breed (ugh) and some people might be saying that he is the best of all time.

When his coronation takes place, don't call him the GOAT. No, call him LA Knight, and that is just a fact of life. Bronson Reed comes out for his match and Knight isn't pleased about being cut off but leaves in peace. I've always liked Knight's promos but please not another last of a dying breed. There have been way too many of them in wrestling over the years.

#### Bronson Reed vs. Cameron Grimes

Grimes throws his money around during his entrance and offers Reed a payoff. That earns him a shot to the face so Grimes has to try and pick up his money (smart man). The powerbomb is broken up but Grimes is thrown outside as we take a break. Back with Grimes nailing an enziguri and managing the flipping crossbody for two. A crossface doesn't last long on Reed so Grimes knees him in the head.

Reed fights up again and hits something like a Thesz press minus the press. Grimes hits a Superman punch but gets knocked down by a clothesline. That's enough for Grimes so he tries to leave, only to get taken down by a suicide dive (ouch). It's enough to knock Grimes' hat off so here's LA Knight for a distraction and a crotching. Grimes hits the Cave In for the pin at 8:28.

**Rating:** C. These guys are both doing rather well right now and it's nice to see Grimes getting a win, even one like this. He has struck gold with this money deal and while it won't last forever, it is one of the best things going in wrestling today. Reed vs. Knight could be interesting as Knight could

use a first feud. Just let Knight talk a lot and he'll be fine.

William Regal is yelling at Adam Pearce over the ending to the Tag Team Title match.

Kayden Carter isn't happy about what Xia Li did to Kacy Catanzaro and it's time for revenge.

We look at Karrion Kross destroying Santos Escobar and Legado del Fantasma last week.

Back to therapy where Theory talks about being in a really small room with Lumis. Theory ate cereal and watched cartoons all day because Lumis isn't a bad guy. The therapist doesn't get how Theory can imagine Lumis as a nice guy because she talked to Lumis this morning. She couldn't make him stop talking and Lumis said he couldn't wait to get rid of Theory.

Lumis found him rude, loud, and obsessed with cutting off the bottom half of his shirts to show off his average abdominal muscles. Theory runs out screaming and crying but the Way brings him back in. Gargano yells at the therapist but then thanks her for making everything work after the rest of the team leaves. Gargano tells Theory that they're going to Chuck E. Cheese to calm him down.

### Ever-Rise vs. Breezango

Breezango is still around? Actually hang on as Legado del Fantasma jump them during their entrances (astronauts this time around) and leave them laying. Legado chases Ever-Rise off too so Santos Escobar can jump both of them from behind. Escobar beats them both up and gets inside, saying do not mistake last week for weakness. If you do that, then this is what awaits you. No match if that wasn't clear.

Here is what's coming next week, including the Women's and NXT Title matches.



Video on Finn Balor vs. Adam Cole.

In response to the ending of the Women's Tag Team Title match, William Regal promises a game changing announcement next week.

### Finn Balor vs. Roderick Strong

Non-title. They lock up to start and go to the mat with Balor grabbing a quickly broken chinlock. Back up and Strong goes for the arm but Balor blocks it for a good bit. Balor grabs the arm as well but Strong manages a backbreaker to send us to a break. Back with Strong sending Balor into the buckle and chopping away. Balor kicks him down though and stomps away before cranking on the arm even more. A big crank has Strong on the apron for a breather but Balor is right back with the armbar.

Balor pulls on the arm even more until Strong comes back with a powerslam. Another backbreaker connects for two but Balor comes back with something like an Anaconda Vice. Strong gets out and hits a running clothesline, setting up the belly to back faceplant. The running forearms against the ropes set up Strong's Angle Slam into a tiger bomb for another near fall.

Strong goes for the Strong Hold but has to counter Balor's counter into a rollup. The fireman's carry gutbuster is loaded up but Balor spins into a double stomp to the chest to put Strong down again. A Pele knocks Strong into the ropes and there's the shotgun dropkick into the corner. The Coup de Grace into 1916 finishes Strong at 13:46.

**Rating:** B. This worked well as they took their time getting going but then picked up the pace really well. Balor is money right now and he is helping to bring everyone else up with him, which is one of the best things that the champion can do. I liked this match a lot and Strong looked, well, strong, in defeat.

Adam Cole comes out for the staredown to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Good show this week as it did the most important thing by building up next week's big show. I'm looking forward to the two title matches and we got a solid enough show setting things up. NXT has figured out how to make this work far better in recent weeks and I want to see where these things go. I'm not sure where this leaves April's Takeover, but I can live with a big time weekly show

### Results

Oney Lorcan/Danny Burch b. Tommaso Ciampa/Timothy Thatcher – Elevated implant DDT to Ciampa

Ember Moon b. Aliyah – Eclipse

Nia Jax/Shayna Baszler b. Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez – Kirifuda Clutch to Kai

Cameron Grimes b. Bronson Reed – Cave In

Finn Balor b. Roderick Strong – 1916

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