

Takeover – San Antonio: Another Broken Streak

Takeover: San Antonio

Date: January 28, 2017

Location: Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Percy Watson, Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

For the first time that I can remember, NXT actually has its work cut out to make one of these shows work. The card just isn't all that strong this time around and it shows badly. The main event here is Shinsuke Nakamura defending the NXT Title against Bobby Roode, which really could go either way. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at all five matches tonight with a theme of change.

Tye Dillinger vs. Eric Young

During Sanity's entrance, the camera starts on Alexander Wolfe and pans over to the other members but goes one too far and pans over to air. Young gives Dillinger one last chance to join the team but gets left hands to the jaw for his efforts. A trip to the floor goes nowhere and Dillinger chops away again before whipping Eric outside one more time.

Eric finally sends him outside so Killian Dane (Big Damo) can get in a crossbody to really take over. Back in and Eric's top rope elbow hits Tye in the back before sending him outside again. A neckbreaker gets two on Tye but he dropkicks Young out of the air to put both guys down.

Back up and Tye grabs him by the beard to really start his comeback. Young runs up to the top so Tye charges up into a belly to belly superplex for two, which means crowd reaction shots have come to NXT. Cue Wolfe to the apron so Tye gives him a Tyebreaker, followed by a superkick to Dane. Another Tyebreaker hits Young but Wolfe puts his foot on the ropes. Tye goes after Sanity once too often and gets

caught in the wheelbarrow neckbreaker for the pin at 10:56.

Rating: B-. Good match here but the crowd is going to go INSANE when Tye finally wins a big match. He keeps getting closer and there's enough interference here to warrant a rematch or another big match of some sort. If they don't have him get that big win in Orlando over Wrestlemania weekend, I have no idea what to tell them.

Samoa Joe is here.

Andrade Cien Almas vs. Roderick Strong

Strong eliminated Almas in a four way for the #1 contendership so it's time for payback. Almas does his pose in the ropes to start before kicking at the arms. A cross armbreaker has Strong in trouble and a running kick to the head makes it even worse. This has been ALL Almas so far but he misses a moonsault and gets caught in an Angle Slam. Back up and they slowly chop it out before switching over to elbows, followed by a hard kick to send Strong into the corner.

Strong kicks him in the face again but gets pulled down into something like Rings of Saturn, sending Roderick's foot onto the ropes for a break. Almas gets caught on top and Strong drops him onto the turnbuckle with a backbreaker for two. Andrade gets in the double knees in the corner, only to have Strong get out of the hammerlock DDT. Another knee to the face sets up the Sick Kick for the pin on Almas at 11:44.

Rating: C+. Again, not bad here and it's one of Almas' better matches. I'm starting to get more into him but he came in so flat that it's really hard to care about him no matter what he does. The heel character is working far better though and having good matches will get him noticed faster than anything else. Strong getting the win is a good idea as he hasn't really established himself too well yet.

Video on Shawn Michaels winning the 1995 Royal Rumble.

Michael P.S. Hayes is here.

We recap DIY vs. the Authors of Pain. Akam and Razar, managed by

Paul Ellering, won the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic to become #1 contenders and now it's DIY trying to fight off the monsters to retain their newly won titles.

Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Authors of Pain

Johnny Gargano and Tommaso Ciampa are defending and unfortunately the Authors take off their jackets, meaning the name tags go away. Razar takes Ciampa into the corner and shouts at him a lot, drawing a PSYCHO KILLER chant from the crowd. Gargano tries the spear through the ropes and is casually swatted away. Everything breaks down and the champs just can't do anything with rights and lefts. Some running knees work a bit better though and the monsters are knocked to the floor for a suicide dive and running knee from the apron. Back in and Akam casually slams Gargano over the top and the beating is on. It's off to an over the shoulder backbreaker until Johnny slips down into an enziguri....which has no effect whatsoever. Gargano finally slips away and makes the hot tag off to Ciampa so house can be cleaned as well as possible. Some German suplexes take the Authors down and Paul Ellering is losing it on the floor. The referee tells Ciampa "six minutes left" as he chops away at Akam, who takes Ciampa's head off for two. The champs get two of their own off a double spear but Johnny gets knocked to the floor again, leaving Ciampa to get caught in a powerbomb/neckbreaker combination for two.

Johnny is back in to break up the Last Chapter and it's off to the double arm submission. Akam powers out of Johnny's crossface though and slams Gargano onto Tommaso to break the other hold. That's a really effective spot as the champs took their best shot and couldn't stop the raw power. They slug it out from their knees but the double strike is countered into the Authors' double powerbomb. The Last Chapter on Ciampa give us new champions at 14:27.

Rating: B. I'm kind of surprised here but at the same time not exactly. Coming in I didn't think this would happen but now that it has, it makes the most sense. That being said, I was very, very pleasantly surprised here as I was expecting a big drop off and got

the best match the Authors have ever had. It's a good match though and that's all you could ask for out of these guys.

Here's Seth Rollins to take over the ring and call out HHH, who he knows is here because HHH runs NXT. HHH comes out but walks to the back, sending security out instead. Rollins is taken out and the fans aren't happy.

We recap the Women's Title match. Asuka is unstoppable but has been dealing with the combined forces of Billie Kay and Peyton Royce. Nikki Cross has gotten in on things too and Asuka wants to fight all of them at once.

Women's Title: Asuka vs. Nikki Cross vs. Peyton Royce vs. Billie Kay

Asuka is defending and this is one fall to a finish. Billie and Peyton look terrified and bail out to the floor shortly after the bell. With Asuka and Cross circling each other, the Aussies come back in for little success before being tossed back out. Asuka German suplexes both of them at the same time and it's back to Asuka vs. Cross.

Nikki ducks Asuka's big kick and takes the champ to the floor for an elevated neckbreaker off the apron. Cross hits a big dive but the Aussies beat Nikki up the aisle while Asuka is down at ringside. Is there a reason they're not running back to the ring so one can get a fast pin on the other?

They actually take Cross to the announcers' area and double suplex her through a table in a rare big spot. Back to the ring with the Aussies double teaming Asuka instead of just doing something a bit less complicated, like LAYING DOWN FOR EACH OTHER. Billie kicks Asuka into a Widow's Peak for two but the champ shrugs it off and kicks them both down to pin Peyton at 10:02.

Rating: C-. Did I fast forward the last five minutes here? It felt like the last part of the match was missing as Asuka was in the first real trouble of her title reign and then retained the title about fifteen seconds later. Asuka retaining is fine but this needed a few more minutes to really sell her being in trouble.

Nikki raises her head and smiles at Asuka as the champ leaves.

Tyler Bate is here.

We recap the NXT Title match. Shinsuke Nakamura got the title back after winning the feud against Samoa Joe. Bobby Roode won a four way elimination match to become #1 contender and wants to make the title GLORIOUS.

NXT Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Bobby Roode

Roode is challenging and comes to the ring with eight rather attractive women in matching dresses. Nakamura rides to the ring on a platform for a rather unique entrance of his own. The fans sing Nakamura's song after the bell for a pretty intimidating atmosphere. They hit the mat to start with Nakamura getting caught in a headlock, only to send Roode off and tell him to bring it on.

Roode switches to the basics with an elbow to the jaw followed by a wristlock. Good Vibrations is broken up so Roode blasts him in the jaw to send Bobby outside. Roode is right back though and sends him into the steps, which seems to jar the champ's neck. Back in and Bobby goes right after the neck until Nakamura comes back with the strikes. Good Vibrations works this time as the pace picks up a bit.

Roode blocks the inverted exploder as he's had counters for almost everything so far. The running knee in the corner hits Roode's ribs and now the exploder works just fine. Nakamura loads up Kinshasa but Roode is out on the mat. It's playing possum though and Bobby gets two off a rollup. A backstabber gets the same and that perfect spinebuster gives Roode yet another near fall.

Roode's superplex is broken up and Nakamura scores with a middle rope kick to the chest. Kinshasa is blocked and Roode grabs a rollup with his feet on the ropes for two more. Nakamura starts no selling the chops and wants some more. The hard strikes come back and it's off to a triangle choke of all things. Roode reverses into something like a powerbomb which is countered into a sunset flip for two.

A sliding knee gives Nakamura the same so he goes to the middle rope for a jumping knee but both guys crash down to the floor. The

champ's knee is banged up though and Nakamura goes down after hitting Kinshasa. Roode is out and the referee brings the trainer in to check on the knee. Nakamura says he can go and Roode is sitting up in the corner.

Back in and Roode grabs the Glorious DDT for a very, very close two. Bobby slaps on a half crab and punches at the knee for extra damage before dragging it back to the middle of the ring. Cue Matt Bloom (Albert, the head NXT Coach) as Nakamura tries to reverse into another triangle. The knee gives out though and a second Glorious DDT gives 27:09.

Rating: A-. Much, much better match than I was expecting here though I'm not entirely sure where we go from here. I don't exactly see Roode vs. Nakamura II with Nakamura winning his third title as the best Takeover: Orlando main event but who else is there? Ohno? Dillinger? We can figure that out later though because this was a heck of a match as Roode stayed simple and was smart enough to take down the unpredictable and wild Nakamura.

Graves is THRILLED to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. And somehow, that's probably the worst Takeover ever. The show was a completely fine two hours and twenty minutes with the Women's Title being the worst match and still totally watchable. The talent drain has really hurt NXT and the two house shows instead of regular TV didn't do this one any favors. Still though, it's certainly a good show but when the bar is set that high, something like this is bound to happen.

Results

Eric Young b. Tye Dillinger – Wheelbarrow neckbreaker

Roderick Strong b. Andrade Cien Almas – Sick Kick

Authors of Pain b. DIY – Last Chapter to Ciampa

Asuka b. Billie Kay, Peyton Royce and Nikki Cross – Kick to Royce's head

Bobby Roode b. Shinsuke Nakamura – Glorious DDT

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NXT Takeover: San Antonio Preview

It's that time again as NXT will be taking over another Saturday night before we get to one of the Big Four pay per views. Unfortunately this show hasn't had the best build in the world and a lot of that is due to a combination of the talent being taken up to the main roster and the two weeks spent on international shows that could have been used on the build towards the matches. Today we're going to look at the build towards "Takeover: San Antonio" and see if it looks better on paper than it's looked on "NXT" TV.

Eric Young vs. Tye Dillinger

This feud has served two purposes: showing that Dillinger has a reason to still be in NXT and giving Sanity's leader his first major feud. The stable has the potential to be something special and Dillinger's TEN gimmick is getting over like almost nothing has in a very long time. The fans just want to cheer for the guy and he's more than made up for it in the ring. He's no Sami Zayn or anyone

near that level but he's doing enough to make it work.

That being said, there's no reason for Young to lose here. I could easily see Dillinger moving up to the main roster for the Royal Rumble alone while Sanity with Young at the helm could dominate NXT for a good while going forward. Young wins here as he's the only logical option along with deserving it (that was much easier to say than it should have been).

Andrade Cien Almas vs. Roderick Strong

I always forget that Strong is even in NXT as he just hasn't done all that much yet. Almas is in a similar place as he's barely established himself in the promotion. His in ring stuff hasn't done much to impress me and I'm still not sure why I'm supposed to care about him (though his heel work has been better than his face run). Strong is entertaining though and I've always been a fan of the guy.

I'm actually going to go with Strong in what could be considered an upset. Strong is a talented guy and can go with anyone in the ring but neither guy really has a strong personality. Both of them need something to do but I'd rather see Strong knock that smile off of Almas' face than anything else and that's enough to give him the nod here. I have next to no confidence in it but I'll go with Strong.

Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Authors of Pain

Now this is where things get a little hazy. DIY is on a roll at this point and is one of the best teams I've seen in a long time. However, the Authors of Pain have been treated as nearly unstoppable monsters and the logical move would be to see them steamroll the champions for the titles. At the same time though, I can't imagine DIY losing the belts that they spent so much time winning.

I see this one going along the lines of Sting vs. Vader in 1992: the Authors of Pain destroy the champs and then get disqualified or counted out for going a bit too hard. DIY will probably drop the belts to them later on but I don't think it happens just yet. They did too much great stuff against the Revival to lose them to a team like the Authors of Pain, at least this early on.

Women's Title: Asuka vs. Peyton Royce vs. Billie Kay vs. Nikki Cross

This one depends on where you think the title is going after the match as we get closer to the big Wrestlemania weekend show. Asuka has been running through the division for almost a year now and the only real idea is to have the three challengers in one match instead of lining them up one at a time.

That being said, I still think Asuka runs through them all with a fall on one of the Aussies. There's no reason to have her go over Cross yet but I could easily see the big showdown between Asuka and Ember Moon at the big show in Orlando. They could throw in a big curve ball and have the Aussies basically be the NXT version of Laycool but again, I just don't see it happening. Asuka retains.

NXT Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Bobby Roode

The more I think about this match, the more confused I really am about the whole thing. NXT has managed to book a match where it's hard to imagine either of them actually losing here. Roode has been built up as the big star but Nakamura is Nakamura, as in someone who requires a small cannon to finally put down. On paper this should be a squash it's hard to not buy into Roode's schtick.

At the end of the day though, I think it's going to be Nakamura retaining the title and setting up a showdown with.....well I have no idea actually (Kassius Ohno maybe?) but I don't think Roode wins here. He's the kind of guy who could get his heat back in the span of about five minutes so Nakamura goes over here after a match which far exceeds expectations.

I think I've talked myself into being excited over this show. If there's a single promotion that can make me believe they can pull off what feels like a lackluster card, NXT is the one. I'm not sure it's going to work but I'm more than willing to give the show a chance. If they can get most of the matches right and hit the ground running heading into Orlando, everything will be fine.

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new book, KB's Complete Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume V at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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NXT – January 25, 2017: Trouble Brewing

NXT

Date: January 25, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Corey Graves, Tom Phillips

It's the go home show for Takeover: San Antonio and that means we're in for the final push towards a card that isn't the strongest in the world. However, that seems to be where NXT shines. They just know how to turn something that might not look the best into something that's a lot of fun. Tonight's focus seems to be on the Women's Title match so let's get to it.

Ember Moon vs. Liv Morgan

They start faster than expected with some small packages getting two each. Morgan misses a charge into the corner though and Moon blasts her in the face with a jumping knee. It's off to a Crossface until Morgan fights up and gets a bulldog. A guillotine choke has Moon in more trouble than she's ever been in...so she throws Morgan over the top for a big crash. The Eclipse is good for the pin at 4:00.

Rating: C-. I've seen worse but I'm really getting behind the idea

of Moon vs. Asuka in Orlando over Wrestlemania weekend. Moon has been treated like an unstoppable force and that's the more than anyone else has been able to do in the division. Better match than I was expecting here and that's encouraging for Morgan.

Andrade Cien Almas is in the back when Roderick Strong says he's ready to go right now. Almas beats him down without much effort.

Long video on DIY vs. Authors of Pain.

No Way Jose vs. Kona Reeves

Jose dances out of a waistlock to start and the threat of a right hand sends Reeves into the corner. Reeves suckers him in with the offer of a dance and hammers away, setting up a Samoan drop for two. Some surfing on Jose's back doesn't really do much, allowing him to come back with a series of right hands. A pop up right hand finishes Reeves at 4:04.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here as the combination of somewhat goofy gimmicks didn't do a lot of good. You had a dancer against a surfer here and since this isn't GLOW, I'm not sure that's the best idea. Reeves hasn't shown me much and while Jose is one of my favorites on the roster, he needs something better than this.

Post match Elias Samson comes out with a song but Jose suggests something else and sings YOUR SONG SUCKS to the beat of his theme song. Samson gets punched in the face.

Chris Atkins vs. Eric Young

I've heard Atkins' music (something about putting your hands up if you're scared to fly) somewhere before but I can't place it. A Sanity distraction lets Young jump him from behind and the beating is on in a hurry. Young chokes in the corner and drops a middle rope elbow to the back. The wheelbarrow neckbreaker ends Atkins at 1:54.

Young shouts about choices and Damo crushes Atkins again.

We look at the Revival destroying Shane Thorn's knee. Thorn had surgery earlier this week and will be out seven to nine months. I love that WWE seems to be bringing back the idea of crediting someone with injuring wrestlers. Thorn was going to be out no matter

what so let Revival get some heat on it instead of just letting Thorn go on the shelf and be forgotten.

Video on Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Bobby Roode.

William Regal is here to keep an eye on the four way interview to hype up the Women's Title match. Billie Kay and Peyton Royce come out first and say you know what the two of them can do. Asuka has already taken a beating and Nikki is just crazy so there's no way both of them are losing. Nikki doesn't say anything and it's Asuka coming out for the big showdown with Cross. The Aussies jump them from behind and that goes as well as you would expect. Security is easily dispatched and Asuka kicks Nikki in the head. Security pulls Asuka to the floor and Cross dives on the pile. Billie and Peyton look terrified to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. They pushed the card as much as they could but I'm not sure it's enough. There isn't one match on the card that seems like it could carry the rest of the show and I'm not sure there's a way around the fact that the challengers all seem to have no chance. I've seen longer shots but I don't really buy anyone as having a chance against Asuka and Roode doesn't seem likely to win the title. Stranger things have happened and I'll never doubt Takeover's ability to surprise me but this is a long shot. They did what they could this week but I'm not convinced just yet.

Results

Ember Moon b. Liv Morgan – Eclipse

No Way Jose b. Kona Reeves – Pop Up Right Hand

Eric Young b. Chris Atkins – Wheelbarrow neckbreaker

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NXT – January 11, 2017: Asuka Cries

NXT

Date: January 11, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Corey Graves, Tom Phillips

We're back to Full Sail and that means it's time to hit the gas on the road towards San Antonio. The NXT Title match is already set up but now it's time to set up the Tag Team Title match. We know that the Authors of Pain are waiting on the champions but the question is who will be defending against them. That's what we'll find out tonight as the Revival gets their rematch against DIY. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of DIY vs. Revival, as you probably expected.

Opening sequence.

Earlier today, Billie Kay and Peyton Royce attacked Asuka in the back. I'm sure their destruction will be quick and imminent.

Billie Kay/Peyton Royce vs. Sarah Bridges/Macy Evans

Peyton offers an early distraction so Billie can run Evans over from behind. The Aussies take turns beating on her until a hot tag brings Bridges in for the hope spot. That lasts all of about fifteen seconds as Bridges gets double teamed, setting up the bulldog onto Billie's knee for the pin at 2:06.

Post match the Aussies get the mic and are told that Asuka will kill them. Cue Asuka, who is beaten down again, only to have Nikki Cross come in for the save. With Kay and Royce taken out, Cross kicks

Asuka in the face to leave the champ laying.

Sanity says they're taking over and it starts with Cross becoming the new Women's Champion. Big Damo watches from the shadows.

Elias Samson vs. Jonathan Cruz

Before the match, Samson sings about being around forever. With Graves ripping on Samson for general annoyances, Elias drives Cruz into the corner but gets rolled up for one. A clothesline drops Samson and that's about it for Cruz's offense as he gets his ribs bent around the post. Samson knees him in the ear (ow) and kicks him in the jaw, setting up the neckbreaker for the pin at 3:25.

Rating: D. Total squash here and Samson is starting to look better. The gimmick works very well but Samson is one of those guys who just doesn't click for some reason. He's got the look and the character but the in ring work really isn't all that great. Squashing people will keep him fresh in the audience's minds though and that's a good thing at the moment.

We take another look at DIY vs. Revival.

Andrade Cien Almas vs. Oney Lorcan

Almas now has pyro for his entrance. This is a rematch from Osaka where Lorcan won in an upset. Lorcan shoves him off a headlock but Almas just poses on the mat like the jerk that he is. A hard shot to the chest puts Andrade on the floor so Lorcan hits a Blockbuster off the apron. Back in and a clothesline cuts Oney off for the first time, setting up a slap to the face. Lorcan elbows him right back though and an Alabama Slam into the corner staggers Almas even more. Not that it matters as Almas does his pose on the ropes to buy himself some time, setting up the hammerlock DDT to put Lorcan away at 5:00.

Rating: C-. I still just don't get it with Almas. He's MUCH better as a heel than his disaster of a face run but that's not really saying much. Lorcan is an interesting case but his name and lack of much of a character hold him back. Their Osaka match was a lot better but that's probably due to them having five minutes this time

as opposed to over double that in Japan.

Almas says this will be his year.

Another look at the Toronto match.

In a sitdown interview, Shinsuke Nakamura says he's proud of being NXT Champion after a very hard series against Samoa Joe. That brings him to Bobby Roode, who he calls one of the best wrestlers in the world. Despite not being willing to appear on camera, Roode has a gift for Nakamura: Roode's ticket for last year's Takeover: Dallas, when Nakamura made his in ring debut.

Tag Team Titles: Revival vs. DIY

DIY is defending and the winners face the Authors of Pain in San Antonio. Gargano and Dawson get things going with Scott getting caught in an atomic drop. The champs come in and knock Dash and Dawson outside for an early break. Back with Gargano working on Dawson's arm as Graves plays cheerleader for the challengers.

Wilder makes one of those always great blind tags and the chop block puts Gargano down. That means it's time to pick apart a limb and the leg is wrapped around the post. Gargano gets tied in the Tree of Woe and they be clubberin on that knee. Johnny is sent outside and Revival is way too happy with a potential countout. Dash goes to get him but gets posted for his efforts, only to have Dawson tackle Gargano to break up a hot tag attempt.

Back from another break with the leg work continuing via a half crab. Ever the cocky heel, Dash slaps Johnny in the face and gets caught with an enziguri, allowing the hot tag to Ciampa. With a PSYCHO KILLER chant rolling, Ciampa cleans house with running knees and German suplexes. A hard knee to Dash's head gets two but Dawson just BLASTS Ciampa with a clothesline. Something like a Hart Attack is broken up with a superkick and Ciampa grabs the armbar.

Dawson gets smart by shoving Gargano onto them for the save in a great false finish. Gargano breaks out of an attempted leglock and suicide dives onto Dawson. Dash gets floored as well and it's back to Ciampa who walks into a DDT for another two. The champs unload

with strikes and the running knee/superkick to both Dawson and Wilder (who were hugging) at the same time retain the titles at 21:02.

Rating: B+. Somehow that might be the worst match these four have ever had together. Some teams just have outstanding chemistry and that's what these guys have. They just work so well together and that's something you either have or you don't. This was another brutal match and I'm curious to see what DIY can do with the Authors in San Antonio.

Speaking of the Authors, they run in and beat the champs down.

Regal makes DIY vs. the Authors for San Antonio. Wasn't that already announced? Also, next week it's Nakamura and Roode having a contract signing, which certainly was announced earlier in the night. Regal is almost done but Asuka comes in and demands to face Cross, Kay and Royce at Takeover to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was all about the main event and given how awesome that was, the rest of the show being this average wasn't going to bring it down. I'm curious about where they're going with that Roode ticket as that story needs to be more emotion based because not many people are going to buy Roode hanging in a slugout with Nakamura. Good show here, as expected.

Results

Billie Kay/Peyton Royce b. Sarah Bridges/Macy Evans – Bulldog onto a knee

Elias Samson b. Jonathan Cruz – Neckbreaker

Andrade Cien Almas b. Oney Lorcan – Hammerlock DDT

DIY b. Revival – Running knee/superkick

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NXT – October 19, 2016: I Love NXT and I Don't Know How Else To Say It

NXT

Date: October 19, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're getting closer to the second round of the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic and it's also the start of a fresh taping cycle. The other interesting story is the return of Shinsuke Nakamura to go after Samoa Joe. It's fairly obvious that they'll be facing each other again in Toronto. Let's get to it.

We open with a look back at Nakamura being laid out about a month ago but coming back last week to go after Samoa Joe.

Opening sequence.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic First Round: Rich Swann/No Way Jose vs. Tony Nese/Drew Gulak

It should be interesting to see this work so much better here than it would on Raw. Rich and Drew start things off as the fans aren't sure which good guy to cheer for. It's time for some fast flipping to start with Rich bouncing over Drew and handing it off to Jose for the big guy dancing. Nese comes in and eats a big flapjack (that sounds good) for two. Some quick kicks put Jose down for two but

it's back to Rich for some kicks to the chest. They head outside and it's Nese superkicking (of course) Swann as we take a break.

Back with Gulak and Swann clotheslining each other for a double knockdown. That means a double tag off to Jose and Nese with the dancing one turning Tony inside out off a clothesline. Gulak gets thrown into the air and punched right in the jaw (better than most Superman Punches) for two with Nese making the save. The full nelson slam ends Gulak at 10:40.

Rating: C+. I've said it before and I'll say it again: Jose is WAY too talented for this dancing party guy gimmick. He looked even more like a star than usual here as he was towering over the other three and was able to show off with the power game. It really is amazing how much more interesting the cruiserweights are when they're in front of a crowd that actually wants to see them.

Rich and Jose are ready for the Authors of Pain, who better not look past them. Dancing ensues.

Quick discussion of Hideo Itami's injury, meaning he's out of the tournament.

We look back at Glorious Ten splitting up.

Tye Dillinger has requested and been granted a match against Bobby Roode in Toronto.

Austin Aries would rather talk about potassium instead of his surprise partner. The tournament isn't for everyone, such as Hideo Itami. Hideo is out because an MRI revealed he doesn't have a spine.

Bobby Roode vs. Sean Maluta

Maluta actually grabs a rollup for an early two but Roode takes his head off with a clothesline. A hard whip into the corner makes it worse for Sean, followed by a spinebuster to break up his comeback. An implant DDT ends Sean at 3:07.

Rating: D+. Just a squash here, which is a good role for some of the lower level cruiserweights. We've seen what they can do in the tournament so these wins are more impressive than the ones you see over the run of the mill jobbers. Maluta has a good look and can be

pushed if the need ever arrives, just like so many of the other people NXT has been using lately.

Roode laughs off Dillinger's complaints because Tye was the one who begged Roode to team up for the Dusty Classic. All Roode wanted to do was bring Tye up to a GLORIOUS level. After a line about Klingons, Tye comes out and clears the ring. The fans, who went nuts over Roode's entrance, give Tye a huge TEN chant.

Liv Morgan is in the back when Peyton Royce and Billie Kay jump her from behind. Morgan is dragged out to the stage and laid out again, leaving Kay and Royce to brag about how this is their division.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic First Round: Austin Aries/??? vs. Tucker Knight/Otis Dozovic

Aries' mystery partner is.....the debuting Roderick Strong, who teamed with Aries to win the ROH Tag Team Titles as part of Generation Next. The announcers put Strong over hard, mentioning his matches against people like AJ Styles, Samoa Joe, Daniel Bryan and Kevin Owens. Otis throws Aries around to start before it's off to Tucker for some hard chops to Strong.

Everything breaks down and Aries has to break up a Vader Bomb from Otis. Aries and Strong start trying to chop down the massive Dozovic but he pretty easily suplexes them both at the same time. The hot tag brings in Knight for a double splash in the corner but he misses a charge and falls outside. Back in and the Sick Kick knocks Knight silly for the pin (ignore the shoulder being up at one) at 6:15.

Rating: B-. It's strange to see the smaller, faster guys as the heels but this was a better match than I was expecting. Dozovic and Knight are two big power guys and I'm always entertained by seeing guys their size chopped down. Aries/Strong vs. TM61 should be a lot of fun, which is the cool part about tournaments like this one.

Andrade Cien Almas attacked Cedric Alexander over a lack of respect. Now it's time to take the respect for himself.

Nikki Cross vs. Danielle Kamella

Cross is just as crazy as she used to be and throws Danielle with a

suplex. After biting and scratching herself, Nikki ends this with a fisherman's neckbreaker at 1:20. Total squash.

Nikki keeps beating on Danielle so the referee reverses the decision.

Here's Shinsuke Nakamura with a message for Samoa Joe. Nakamura confirms the rematch with Samoa Joe in Toronto because he'll beat Joe with no mercy. This brings out Patrick Clark, who wants the title shot for himself. Instead he gets a kick to the head, only to have Joe come out for the big staredown. Joe stays on the ramp while Clark eats Kinshasa to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. I had a really good time here as they covered almost everything that's likely to be taking place at Takeover: Toronto in less than an hour. We had good tag wrestling, a debut, story advancement and a hot ending. In other words, things you rarely get on Raw and/or Smackdown and in even less time. NXT knows how to turn on the jets whenever they need to and that's exactly what they've done again here.

Results

No Way Jose/Rich Swann b. Tony Nese/Drew Gulak – Full nelson slam to Gulak

Bobby Roode b. Sean Maluta – Implant DDT

Austin Aries/Roderick Strong b. Tucker Knight/Otis Dozovic – Sick Kick to Otis

Danielle Kamella b. Nikki Cross via referee's decision

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