

NXT LVL Up – October 21, 2022: He Definitely Adds Something

NXT LVL Up

Date: October 21, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Byron Saxton

It's the second week of the Saxton Era and that means...well very little really, as Saxton isn't as well versed as Nigel McGuinness and not quite as good of a commentator as him either. That more or less leaves the wrestling to carry things and that is a hit or miss bet around here at best. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Ikemen Jiro vs. Myles Borne

Borne grabs a headlock to start but gets reversed into a cravate. Another headlock slows Jiro down but Borne hurts his knee on a leapfrog. Jiro is right on that knee with a leglock sending Borne over to the rope. The half crab has Borne in more trouble until he crawls over to the rope. The jacket punch rocks Borne but the reverses the Ikemen Slash into a small package for the pin at 5:20.

Rating: C. This was a different way to go from most Borne matches and it was quite the win for his career. Borne has gotten better than I would have expected him to be able to do and it's nice to see his success. At the same time, Jiro was acting more heelish, which is quite the weird way to go for someone with his kind of charisma.

Javier Bernal is ready for Andre Chase because he learned at the school of hard knocks.

Bryson Montana vs. Duke Hudson

Montana grabs him in a front facelock to start and Hudson has to bail to the rope. Hudson elbows away without much trouble but Montana runs him over with a clothesline. A Michinoku Driver gives Montana two but Hudson is back with a snap German suplex. The big boot finishes Montana at 3:53.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to go anywhere and Hudson continues to be quite the charisma vacuum once the bell rings. Montana seems to be one of NXT's next projects and that isn't a bad thing. He has the size and look to go somewhere so let him see what he can do when he gets his feet a bit wetter in the ring.

Andre Chase vs. Javier Bernal

Thea Hail is here too. Chase takes him down by the arm to start and Bernal is sent outside, where Thea Hail yells at him. Back in and Chase shoulders him down before hammering away in the corner. Bernal manages to get in a knee lift and hammers away, only to get caught with a middle rope sunset flip for two. Some kicks keep Chase in trouble but he comes right back with a suplex. Chase slugs him down and the spelling stomps have Bernal in trouble. The high crossbody finishes Bernal at 6:41.

Rating: C. Chase has become one of the biggest stars around this show and that is one of the things that can make him into a special treat. The fans go nuts when he comes out and while it would be nice to see him doing something bigger in NXT, it might be easier to take the moments on the smaller stage like this one. If it means less of Bernal being boring on the main show too, so be it.

Overall Rating: C. There was a bit more energy to this show,

though that might just be the reactions to Chase being in the ring. The show is still completely skippable and I don't see that changing anytime soon, but at least it was a fun use of half an hour. I'm still not sure why they stopped sending one slightly bigger name down here a week but maybe they found it beneath those stars. For now though, ok show, especially for the short run time.

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NXT LVL Up – October 7, 2022: I Got It Right This Time

NXT LVL Up

Date: October 7, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Matt Camp, Nigel McGuinness

We are back to the show that changes so little week to week that I didn't even realize I watched the same episode twice. Odds are there are going to be a lot of the same things this

week as tends to be the case around here. That should mean some ok stuff, but I wouldn't get my hopes up for anything spectacular. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Indi Hartwell vs. Sloane Jacobs

Hartwell grabs a headlock takeover to start as we hear about Hartwell's time in the Way. Jacobs slips out and hits a basement dropkick, only to get slammed down for two. A cravate goes on but Jacobs fights up and kicks her in the face a few times. Not that it matters as Hartwell hits the spinebuster for the pin at 3:17.

Rating: C-. As has been the case for the last several weeks, Hartwell continues to be little more than just kind of there and that doesn't seem to be changing. I don't know what happened to her over the last few months, but part of it might be that she is just ok in the ring most of the time. Jacobs is still figuring out what she is supposed to do in the ring, which could take her a long while.

Arianna James and Kiana James say don't underestimate them.

Myles Borne vs. Guru Raaj

Borne wrestles him down to the mat without much effort before going after the arm. Raaj pulls him over with a headlock but gets reversed into a headscissors. That's broken up as well and Raaj hits a pair of dropkicks for two. A top rope ax handle gives Raaj the same and we're off to the chinlock. That lasts a bit longer than expected and Borne is back up with a dropkick of his own. There's a suplex for two on Raaj, who is back with a running boot. Raaj goes up but dives into a Downward Spiral to give Borne the pin at 5:34.

Rating: C. I think we can write off Borne's awful debut match

as a one off as he has come a long way in just a few weeks. Borne has the technical side down and if he can get some charisma to go with it, he'll be fine. Then you have Raaj, who is also good enough with the in-ring stuff but has almost nothing to set him apart. Fix that and he could be around for awhile too.

Respect is shown post match.

Sol Ruca/Fallon Henley vs. Arianna Grace/Kiana James

Henley shoves James down without much trouble to start and drops Grace with an early right hand. Ruca comes in for a cartwheel into a moonsault for two on Grace but a quick pull of the hair lets James hit a running shoulder in the corner. We hit the seated abdominal stretch to make Ruca yell a lot until she fights back up. James cuts off the tag with a front facelock but a quick leg trip allows the hot tag to Henley. Everything breaks down and Henley hits a Shining Wizard to finish Grace at 5:05.

Rating: C. Grace and James are supposed to be something of a heel duo but I'm not sure what kind of a future they have together. On the other hand you have Ruca, who looks crazy athletic but is still brand new, and Henley, who has more charisma than she know what to do with most of the time. There is potential here though and this was by far the most exciting thing on the show.

Overall Rating: C. Yep, this was indeed an episode of LVL Up, meaning two mostly nothing matches and a decent main event. The lack of bigger names was a problem here though and it didn't exactly make me want to see where these people go next. Part of that problem is they aren't going anywhere other than this show, which is the high point for a lot of the people who appear here. For now though, ok enough week, even if nothing on it was particularly good.

Results

Indi Hartwell b. Sloane Jacobs – Spinebuster
Myles Borne b. Guru Raaj – Downward Spiral
Fallon Henley/Sol Ruca b. Arianna Grace/Kiana James – Shining Wizard to Grace

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NXT LVL Up – September 30, 2022: Let's Watch Two (And I Did)

NXT LVL Up

Date: September 30, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Sudu Shah

It's another week of the NXT B show, which says a lot as NXT is a C show at best. That doesn't leave much to get excited about around here, but they do things fast and have found a

formula that works well enough. I don't know what to expect this week but you can probably guess a lot of the names. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Javier Bernal vs. Ru Feng

Bernal grabs a headlock to start but gets punched back without much trouble. Feng is back with an armdrag into an armbar as the fans chant for Mortal Kombat. That's reversed into a whip into the corner and Bernal is back with a hard clothesline for two. The chinlock goes on, followed by an elbow to the face for two on Feng. We're already off to the second chinlock but Feng fights up and kicks away. A missed charge into the corner lets Bernal grab a jumping Downward Spiral for the pin at 5:32.

Rating: C-. I'm still not sure why Bernal got called up to the main NXT show as he is one of the most uninteresting guys in the ring. There is nothing to him to set him apart and yet he gets a promotion for whatever reason. Other than that you have Feng, who is your standard martial arts guy from about 1986. What were they expecting from this one?

Guru Raaj and Ikemen Jiro are ready for tonight's main event and say so via subtitles.

Valentina Feroz vs. Thea Hail

Hail takes her down by the arm to start but Feroz is right back up to drop Hail hard. Some suplexes give Feroz two and we hit the cravate. Hail fights up again and gets a breather but Feroz pulls her into a sleeper. That's fine with Hail though, who backflips into a rollup for the pin at 4:37.

Rating: C. Hail is growing on me and she is great as the overly enthusiastic college girl who happens to be kind of

smooth in the ring. It worked well here and the win over Feroz is probably something of an upset. I don't know how far either of them are going to go in NXT, but Hail being attached to Chase U at the moment should take her pretty far.

Edris Enofe/Malik Blade vs. Ikemen Jiro/Guru Raaj

Blade runs Jiro over but a nip up means a comparison of jacket vs. vest. It's off to Enofe for a headlock but Raaj comes in off a blind tag and hits a basement dropkick. Enofe is back up and sends Raaj to the floor for a dive before taking it back inside. Raaj is sent into the corner and Blade/Enofe don't seem to be overly worried. Enofe misses a dive in the corner though and it's Jiro coming in to clean house. Jiro hits a slingshot dropkick to the side of the head and adds a Swanton for two on Blade. The Ikemen Slash misses though and the Climax gives Blade the pin at 6:52.

Rating: C. This was a completely watchable tag match and I'm glad to see Enofe and Blade being treated as a decent team for once. Jiro is always smooth in the ring and Raaj was fine here as well. They even had a story with Enofe and Blade getting too cocky to get them in trouble. Good enough for a main event here.

Overall Rating: C. Another run of the mill show here, which is the case far too often. It is so run of the mill most weeks that I watched last week's show again, thinking it was this week's and never noticed the difference. They need something to make this show stand out more and I have no reason to believe they will be doing so anytime soon. As usual it's not worth getting annoyed over a 28 minute show, but do something to spice it up a bit, please.

Results

Javier Bernal b. Ru Feng – Jumping Downward Spiral

Thea Hail b. Valentina Feroz – Rollup

Edris Enofe/Malik Blade b. Ikemen Jiro/Guru Raaj – Climax to

Jiro

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NXT LVL Up – September 23, 2022: Back To It

NXT LVL Up

Date: September 23, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness, Matt Camp

The low level roller coaster continues with this show as I'm not sure what to expect. There have been some minor stories to set up some matches, plus a few appearances from bigger names. Then again, given this show's track record, all of that will be dropped as soon as possible. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Dante Chen vs. Bryson Montana

The rather strong Montana runs him over to start so Chen grabs a headlock and hopes for the best. Some takeovers give Chen some momentum and there's a dropkick to stagger Montana. That's about it for the offense though as Montana runs him over and hammers away on the mat. A Michinoku Driver gives Montana two and we hit the bearhug. Chen fights out and hits a clothesline, followed by a boot to the face. The double chop finishes Montana at 5:42.

Rating: C-. I still have no idea what they see in Chen but he keeps sticking around here and keeps getting wins. Chen is completely average in the ring and does nothing that makes me want to see whatever he is doing next. Montana might not be much, but at least he has a good look, which puts him ahead of Chen.

Myles Borne, with a VERY mumbly voice, is ready for Andre Chase. Don't let him talk again.

Indi Hartwell vs. Valentina Feroz

They fight over wrist control to start until Hartwell powers her down to the ground. Back up and Feroz grabs a sunset flip into a headlock but Hartwell slips out without much trouble and grabs a nerve hold. A suplex sets up a double arm crank on Feroz, who powers up and hits a crossbody. That's too far for Hartwell, who hits a spinebuster for the pin at 4:34.

Rating: D+. Hartwell has fallen so far in the last few months and it is kind of sad to see. She is a talented wrestler but there is only so much room for her without anything to do. The Dexter Lumis stuff going away more or less took her legs out and I don't see that getting better anytime soon, especially with a not so great match like this one.

Andre Chase vs. Myles Borne

Borne wrestles him to the mat to start but Chase slips out for a standoff. Chase takes him down by the arm and cranks on a hammerlock. Back up and Borne hits a dropkick before taking him down by the arm as well. With that broken up, Chase hits the spelling stomps and a high crossbody finishes for Chase at 5:36.

Rating: C. Borne is someone who can do some nice things on the mat, but there is nothing more to him than amateur style. That is going to get your foot in the door, but you need something better than that to make an impact. I haven't seen that from him yet and until that changed, he isn't going much further than this. On the other hand you have Chase, who could break through to the next level but I'm almost scared to see him try.

Post match Chase shakes Borne's hand, which might be a bit of recruiting.

Overall Rating: C. Yep, so much for anything having staying power around here, but at least they did keep the interviews between the first and second match. It isn't much, but it does add the slightest bit of flavor to what we're seeing here. LVL Up is still little more than a warmup show for the real NXT broadcast, and that doesn't exactly make for a great show. Until that changes, it's going to be little more than filler programming and that isn't overly interesting

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NXT LVL Up – September 16, 2022: They're Doing The Good Things!

NXT LVL Up

Date: September 16, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

I actually got a bit of hope last week as we had a slightly bigger name in the main event to make it feel a bit better. Then again there is always the chance that they are going to completely drop it and switch back to the normal way of doing things. That would be the LVL Up way so let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Ivy Nile/Tatum Paxley vs. Sloane Jacobs/Erica Yan

Paxley takes Yan down to start and she seems a bit surprised. Back up and Paxley pulls her to the mat for a hammerlock before it's off to Nile for some more arm cranking. Yan tries to roll out and gets hammerlocked again as this is one sided so far. An escape over to the corner brings in Jacobs, who is kicked down just as fast.

Paxley flip splashes onto her but stops to glare at Yan, allowing Jacobs to grab her own armbar. A spinning middle rope

crossbody gives Jacobs two and we hit the neck crank. Paxley elbows her in the face for a breather though and the hot tag brings in Nile to wreck things. Everything breaks down and Ivy Iconoclasms Paxley into a twisting splash for the pin on Jacobs at 5:19.

Rating: C. This was the kind of faster paced and above all else different match that that it needed to be. Just mixing things up a bit makes the show feel that much better and that is what they have needed to do around here for the better part of ever. I'm not sure what took so long, but I'm assuming that a lack of caring had something to do with it.

Bronco Nima and Lucien Price talk about going to school together and then reuniting after losing contact. Duke Hudson comes in to mock the idea so they say get a partner. That's not going to work for Hudson, so he'll face Nima one on one. See what they did here? They set up a quick story and gave us a bit of a backstory for a new team. This took about two minutes and did SOMETHING that has been lacking around here for years. Do more of this, even on a small scale.

Bronco Nima vs. Duke Hudson

Lucien Price is here with Nima as they take turns powering each other into the corner. Hudson hits a knee to the ribs and grabs a headlock but Nima comes back with a grab of the hair. A Samoan drop plants Hudson but he hits Nima in the throat and stomps away. The chinlock goes on until Nima fights up and hits a corner splash. A dancing forearm takes too long though and Hudson hits a German suplex. There's a belly to belly suplex into a big boot to finish Nima at 5:41.

Rating: C. This was close to a hoss fight and I'm glad to see Hudson get a win as I still think there is something to him. Other than that, it was weird to see someone like Nima, who seemed to be getting a bit more established, to lose like this. Granted some of that was due to taking too long to set

something up so maybe he can get some experience out of this.

Indi Hartwell vs. Amari Miller

Miller goes for the arm to start and la majistral gets two on Hartwell. The headlock takeover keeps Miller in control as the fans get behind Hartwell. Back up and a slam into an elbow gets two on Miller, followed by the chinlock. Fans: "SHE'S IMPRESSIVE!" Miller fights up and grabs a rollup for two but walks into a spinebuster for the pin at 5:12.

Rating: C-. Not much to see here but it was nice to have the fans into someone like Hartwell, who they will at least know. Hartwell has fallen a long way since the Index thing ended and that was pretty clear again this week. Miller has all the charisma she could ask for, but she is still pretty basic in the ring and that is going to need to change.

Overall Rating: C. The main thing here is that, in the same vein as the main roster shows, it feels like there is a new energy here. This show featured some bigger NXT names (in perspective that is) and it made the show seem that much better. What we got here was a show that didn't exactly light things up, but it was a lot more interesting than so many of the dry, dull LVL Up/205 Live shows over the last few years. Do more of the new stuff and see what you can do with this show, even if it is as low on the totem pole as you can get.

Results

Tatum Paxley/Ivy Nile b. Erica Yan/Sloane Jacobs – Twisting splash to Jacobs

Duke Hudson b. Bronco Nima – Big boot

Indi Hartwell b. Amari Miller – Spinebuster

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NXT LVL Up – September 9, 2022: More Than I Expected

NXT LVL Up

Date: September 9, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

Last week's show was hardly inspiring, meaning the trend continues around here. The show has once again become little more than a collection of matches without much rhyme or reason and that makes it hard to figure out what you are going to see from week to week. Maybe this week can be an upgrade so let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Bodhi Hayward vs. Charlie Dempsey

Chase U is here with Hayward and this is a much bigger match than I would have expected. Hayward goes right after him to start and knocks Dempsey into the corner before taking him

down by the wrist. Commentary says that Dempsey is a second generation star but doesn't mention the first generation.

Dempsey powers up and hits something like an AA but Hayward stays on the wristlock. With that not working, Dempsey fights up and pulls him down into something like an STF. We'll make that a regular armbar but Hayward is back up with some forearms, including the running version. Dempsey pulls him into a Fujiwara armbar though, which he shifts into a Regal Stretch for the tap at 7:41.

Rating: C. If this is what we could be getting on this show going forward, I'll be much happier. This was a match that actually tied into what they have been doing on NXT as of late and that's a lot better than I would have bet on. It's good to see Dempsey get a win, as he is the kind of wrestler who will always have a spot because he's that good at the grappling, so well done here.

Valentina Feroz vs. Sol Ruca

The rather athletic Ruca (Nigel: "She takes after her grandfather, Argentina Ruca!" Shah: "I don't think that's true.") grabs a headlock to start. Back up and Ruca cartwheels forward and grabs the headlock again but Feroz fights up and takes her into a wristlock. An exchange of arm cranking on the mat goes to Ruca as she pulls Feroz into the air. That's reversed into a choke until Feroz pulls her down into a backslide for the pin at 5:53.

Rating: C. Ruca is fine enough at what she does, but there are so many athletic blondes that it is going to take something special to make her stand out. The cartwheels and flips will get her somewhere but I don't think that is going to be enough so far. Then again she is on the way to the main NXT show next week so apparently she has done something right.

Stacks vs. Ikemen Jiro

Tony D'Angelo is here with Stacks. They fight over a lockup to start and take turns driving each other into the corner. Jiro works on the arm and snaps off some armdrags but Stacks PULLS OFF JIRO'S JACKET! That doesn't work for Jiro, who takes it right back and sends him outside. Back in and Stacks drops him again before working on a cravate. That's broken up and Jiro comes back with the jacket punches into a falling jacket punch for two. An Iconoclast out of the corner sets up a missed Ikemen Slash and Stacks kicks him in the face for the pin at 5:16.

Rating: C. The D'Angelo guys are still not exactly awesome but it's amazing how much better they are when they aren't talking. Stacks is about as generic as you can get in the ring but Jiro is someone who can make anyone look ok at worst. Jiro isn't likely to win anything important either so this went about as you would have expected.

Overall Rating: C. This was actually a bit of a step up over previous efforts, with the main thing being that opener that managed to tie into a story. With as many teams and partnerships as they have around here, that shouldn't be hard to make work most weeks. Even if there isn't some kind of a team aspect, just do a match and then have someone talk about their current feud. It shouldn't be that hard, but NXT manages to make it difficult for whatever reason.

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NXT LVL Up – September 2, 2022: These People Have Hope

NXT LVL Up

Date: September 2, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

We're reaching another point where I am running out of ways to talk about this show. One of the only things of note is that Javier Bernal, a regular around here, is now on NXT as a more annoying version of himself. At least that gives me a reason to believe that we might be seeing some of these people on a bigger stage sooner rather than later. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Duke Hudson vs. Myles Borne

Hudson takes him down to start but spends too much time posing, allowing Borne to pull him down. With that not working for Borne, he grabs an armbar to put Hudson down instead. The armbar stays on Hudson's arm but he catches Borne on the middle rope to take over. A loud chop in the corner sets up a shot to the ribs but Borne comes back with some dropkicks. The straps come down and Hudson's high crossbody gets two. That's too much for Hudson, who hits a big boot for the pin at 5:47.

Rating: C. I've always liked Hudson but it doesn't seem like he has the greatest future at the moment. You can only do so much when you are stuck around here after a pretty uninspiring NXT run. Maybe Hudson can find something else to do, but it isn't quite working here. Then you have Borne, who is at least starting to turn it around a bit after a very dull start to his career.

Dante Chen is ready for Xyon Quinn because he has Singapore in his corner.

Arianna Grace vs. Erica Yan

Grace armdrags her down to start but Yan comes back with a snapmare and does a little...gesture? That's broken up and Grace gets her to the mat and stomps away. Yan's rollup gets two but Grace kicks her to the mat and grabs an arm crank. Yan fights up and hits an atomic drop, setting up a facebuster. Grace gets sent into the corner though and it's a Wasteland for the pin at 4:46.

Rating: C-. This was a bit sloppy in parts but it seems that Grace is going to be the next star in the division. I still don't get the appeal of her and the beauty pageant stuff isn't working, but maybe NXT sees some value in a Santino Marella cameo. Yan hasn't been around in a bit so it was nice to have her back, even in defeat.

Dante Chen vs. Xyon Quinn

Quinn starts fast and drops Chen face first onto the top turnbuckle and hits a backbreaker. A splash to the back gets two and Quinn whips him hard into the corner. The bearhug goes on for a bit, followed by Quinn picking him up for an even bigger bearhug. Chen fights back and hits a kick to the head for two but a Death Valley Driver cuts him down. The running punch finishes for Quinn at 5:55.

Rating: C. I still like Quinn but at the end of the day, this

is about as good as he is going to be doing for the time being. You would think that he would get somewhere because of his great look but that still isn't getting him very far. Hopefully he gets a chance at some point, but it really doesn't seem to be happening anytime soon.

Overall Rating: C-. This was more along the lines of a show built wrestlers who should be something but just aren't there yet for whatever reason. The problem at this point is that they just aren't very good or didn't do well in their first chance around here. I'm not sure if they are going to get better, but for now, this is really all they're going to be able to do.

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NXT LVL Up – August 26, 2022: It'll Do For Now

NXT LVL Up

Date: August 26, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness, Matt Camp

The show continues and I'll go with the faint hope here this week. There have been a few stories going on and with Hank Walker on NXT, maybe it means he won't be around here to bring the show down again. It's likely going to be another show that is all over the place this week so let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Edris Enofe/Malik Blade vs. Bronco Nima/Lucien Price

Blade gets tossed into the corner by Nima to start and then tossed right back out to keep things balanced. Nima gets taken into the corner to cut him off though and the good guys start taking turns on the arm. Enofe has to knee his way out of the corner to drop Price but Nima gets in a cheap shot from the apron to take over.

To really crank things up, Nima RIPS OFF BLADE'S SWEATER VEST and STOMPS ON IT before tossing him down again. A double running forearm in the corner rocks Blade and we hit the neck crank. Blade flips out of a suplex though and the hot tag brings in Enofe to pick up the pace. Something like a Sling Blade hits Price and a top rope elbow gets two. Price comes back in and walks into the Climax for the pin at 5:58.

Rating: C. Even though there is nothing to suggest that they're going anywhere, I still see potential in Blade and Enofe. They're smaller guys who can move well in the ring and that is always going to work in one way or another. Putting them over a young power team was a good way to go here and it would be nice to see them move (or level) up soon.

Nathan Frazer looks up to Ikemen Jiro but he's ready to win tonight. He is here because of soccer, though someone throws

him a basketball by mistake.

Amari Miller vs. Kiana James

James shoves her down to start and brags about being smart, which rarely goes well. Miller grabs an armbar and drops down into her smiling pose. A missed elbow frustrates James again and Miller rolls her up for two. That's enough for James, who sends her into the corner and starts stomping away. Something like a gutbuster gives James two and we hit the chinlock with a knee in Miller's back. Trash talk lets Miller sneak in a rollup for two and a basement Downward Spiral gets the same. Back up and James gets in a shot, setting up something like a reverse Sling Blade into an X Factor for the pin at 4:59.

Rating: C. These two both need work but you can feel that bubbly personality in Miller and James comes off as a bit of a killer. I could go for more of them, but they are going to need a lot of development each. What matters is that NXT is trying to actually turn them into something, which is where ring time will help. Get them on the NXT house show loop and get something out of them, because this version is just potential and nothing more.

Ikemen Jiro vs. Nathan Frazer

Jiro grabs a wristlock to start but gets reversed into a headlock as they're still in first gear. Frazer hits a very fast running dropkick before armdragging him into an armbar. Back up and Jiro elbows him in the face but Frazer rolls him into a Boston crab. Make that an STF and then a bulldog choke as Frazer does a decent Samoa Joe impression. Jiro bends the fingers for the escape and hits the Jacket Punches, only to get caught with a springboard missile dropkick. Another kick to the face sets up the Phoenix splash to finish Jiro at 6:32.

Rating: C+. Frazer continues to be fun to watch and Jiro can work well with anyone. That's all you need for a good match a lot of the time and they did by far the best stuff on the show

this week. I still don't know if Frazer has breakout star potential, but he is going to feel like a bigger deal than most of the names you see on this show.

Respect is shown to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Slightly better than normal this week as the action was good and they had enough variety. There was nothing in the way of angles or stories, but at least we had watchable matches, which isn't always the case. Cycling in a bigger name here or there would be nice, but that might be another ship that has long since sailed around here For now though, a passable enough week.

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NXT LVL Up – August 19, 2022: A Hope Spot

NXT LVL Up

Date: August 19, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

The show continues its usual path of almost nothing sticking around from week to week but there is something interesting about having random matches with people popping up every so often. The problem is that a lot of the wrestlers on this show aren't exactly grabbing me most of the time but maybe we can have some surprises. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Dante Chen vs. Javier Bernal

Well at least we're getting rid of both of them at once. They shake hands to start before a wristdrag gives us an early standoff. Chen armdrags him down but Bernal hits him in the face rather than shake his hand again. Back up and Chen hits him in the face as well before getting taken down for some shots to the head. A sliding lariat gives Bernal two but Chen sends him into the corner. Chen is taken down again and Bernal rolls to the floor, where a "fan" starts taking a lot of pictures. Cue Hank Walker to pull the fan back, with the distraction letting Chen take over again inside. The double chop gives Chen the pin at 4:30.

Rating: C. Every time I give up on the idea of any angles or stories taking place on this show, they surprise me with something like Walker. Granted it would be nice to have it be ANYONE (ok maybe not anyone) other than Walker be involved but I'll take it over the same stuff over and over. Bernal and Chen are regulars here and I can't picture either of them going anywhere, but at least there is a little something going on.

Axiom is ready for his test against Xyon Quinn tonight, though he wishes there was a comic book test in high school. He has

an equation to deal with Quinn. I had forgotten Axiom was a thing and this made me think I made the right decision.

Ivy Nile vs. Arianna Grace

Before the match, Grace talks about her unlimited potential. She dedicates the upcoming win to the fans as a thank you for their overwhelming support, but the fans don't seem to buy it. Grace grabs some rollups to start and grinds away with a hammerlock. That's enough to send Grace bailing to the ropes before trying a catapult into the corner.

Nile holds onto the ropes for the save and stomps down onto the sternum, only to have Grace get in a shot to the face to take over. The arm trap chinlock keeps Nile down, at least until she fights up and strikes away. A running dropkick in the corner gets two on Grace and the dragon sleeper makes her tap at 4:25.

Rating: C-. Grace still isn't doing anything interesting so it was nice to see Nile shut her down without much trouble. Nile continues to feel like someone who should be the next big thing but she hasn't even been around that much in recent weeks. Granted it might be the slow game, but I could go for seeing her shrug off everything Mandy Rose throws at her and choke the title reign out.

Axiom vs. Xyon Quinn

Feeling out process to start as commentary hypes up Axiom's intelligence, which is usually a heel characteristic. Quinn gets knocked outside so Axiom hits a quick dive, only to get dropped by a heavy shot. Back in and Axiom grabs a small package for two but gets planted by a backbreaker for the same.

Axiom seems to load up a satellite DDT but is thrown down onto his mask instead. A hard clothesline gives Quinn two more and, after shrugging off Axiom's guillotine choke, something like a

rolling Death Valley Driver gets another near fall. Axiom comes back with the rapid fire strikes into a dropkick and the Golden Ratio (jumping basement superkick) finishes Quinn at 6:10.

Rating: C. Axiom seems like a great example of something that sounded good on paper but isn't exactly working in reality. Having a superhero style character works, but a math based superhero character feels like something that you would see in a bad fourth grade class. A-Kid is a good star in his own right, but this isn't exactly working, which is why he's on LVL UP and not regular NXT. Quinn...my goodness that is an impressive miss, as his look alone seemed to be enough for a bodyguard spot on the main roster at worst.

Overall Rating: C. I'm not sure what it was but there was a bit more energy to this show. The action wasn't exactly great, but having Axiom as some fresh blood, Grace talking before her match and what might be the start of a small angle in the opener made this feel like a better show than most. I have no reason to believe that it is going to continue, but at least they did a little something different for a change around here.

Results

Dante Chen b. Javier Bernal – Double chop
Ivy Nile b. Arianna Grace – Dragon sleeper
Axiom b. Xyon Quinn – Golden Ratio

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NXT LVL Up – August 12, 2022: The Fun Kind

NXT LVL Up

Date: August 12, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

We're back for another show and while I didn't like the main event of last week's show, I do like the fact that we might be seeing some curve balls here and there. That can make all the difference in the world, especially on a show where very little of note ever takes place. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Ikemen Jiro vs. Myles Borne

Borne drives him into the corner to start but Jiro keeps nipping up. A side slam drops Borne for a change but gets dropkicked out of the air for a quick two. Back up and an overhead belly to belly gives Borne two, followed by some rolled suplex for the same. Borne talks too much trash though and gets caught with a spinwheel kick as the comeback is on. A dragon screw legwhip takes Borne down again and some jacket punches make it worse. The Ikemen Slash finishes for Jiro at 5:10.

Rating: C. Jiro might not be the most serious guy in the world

but he is able to have a smooth match against just about anyone. That was the case here, as Borne was able to power Jiro around a bit before coming up short in the end. I don't see either of them going anywhere, but at least they had a fine enough match.

Sol Ruca knows she is in for a test against Elektra Lopez but she's ready to turn Lopez's world upside down.

Sol Ruca vs. Elektra Lopez

Ruca rolls her way out of a wristlock to start but Lopez takes it to the mat with a headlock takeover. Ruca gets creative by walking on her hands to escape but a clothesline cuts her right back down. A neck crank keeps Ruca in trouble until she powers out and hits a running shoulder. Lopez walks into a dropkick but gets her knees up to block a standing moonsault. The Blue Thunder Bomb gives Lopez the pin at 3:53.

Rating: C-. Ruca is one of those people who hasn't had the chance to showcase herself very much but there is some potential there. At the same time, Lopez continues to feel like someone who should be a star but has never really gotten close. I'm not sure how that is going to improve, but the tools are there. Getting away from Legado/D'Angelo could help a bit though.

Chase U vs. Bronco Nima/Lucien Price

Nima takes Chase into the corner to start but Chase is right back on the arm. Hayward comes in to stay on the arm as we hear about Hayward's family getting full rides to Chase U. Nima gets in a shot of his own though and the tag brings in Price for even more power. Hayward's running knee is cut off and there's a double elbow to drop him again. The chinlock goes on until Hayward suplexes his way to freedom, allowing the tag back to Chase. A high crossbody sets up the spelling stomps and the Fratliner finishes Nima at 6:17.

Rating: C+. I'm running out of ways to say how much fun Chase U is at anything they're doing. The team is just a blast to watch and their energy is so strong every time they're out there. Nima and Price didn't get to showcase themselves very well here, but I'm sure they'll be around again given their looks and athleticism.

Overall Rating: C. Not exactly a great show, but what matters here is that they kept the show moving and nothing was too bad. The weakest match was in the middle and it didn't even break four minutes. At the same time you have Jiro and Chase U so they were having a good time here and it showed well enough.

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