

NXT – November 15, 2017: Not Since Alexa Bliss

NXT

Date: November 15, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

It's the last show before Takeover: WarGames and that means things could be getting very fun in a hurry. The big story tonight, aside from the build towards Saturday's main event of course, is Andrade Cien Almas and NXT Champion Drew McIntyre coming face to face. That match hasn't gotten a lot of attention so a good focus could serve it well. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Street Profits vs. Riddick Moss/Tino Sabbatelli

This has been built up in a culture clash feud over recent weeks. Sabbatelli drives Dawkins into the corner to start but a shoulder puts him down, allowing Ford to come in for a basement dropkick. That's about it for Ford's offense though as he gets double teamed in the corner, followed by Moss' hard belly to back. Ford is able to get over for the hot tag though and house is cleaned in a hurry. Sabbatelli avoids a splash in the corner but gets punched in the jaw...for the pin at 3:18.

Rating: D+. Well that was sudden. Alexa Bliss did that to Mickie James a few weeks back but you kind of expect it to be a long time (like years) before you see it happen twice. Sabbatelli has an incredible look but you have to wonder just how bad he is to not get a chance after all this time.

Recap of Velveteen Dream vs. Aleister Black, which is all over Dream wanting Black to say his name and doing whatever he can to get such attention. The best ending: Black is about to say his name and then kicks Dream in the face so Dream can't hear it.

Lars Sullivan vs. Raul Mendoza

Mendoza fires off some kicks to start before being run over in the corner. A powerslam and some crossface shots set up the Freak Accident (standing Boss Man Slam) for the pin at 1:50.

Post match Sullivan goes after Mendoza again but Kassius Ohno comes in for the save with no violence. Mauro makes a rare error by saying Takeover is one week from Saturday.

Johnny Gargano is in William Regal's office to say he can turn it around. Regal knows he can and puts Gargano in a UK Title match against Pete Dunne next week.

Long recap of WarGames with a look back at how the Undisputed Era arrived and took out everyone in front of them. Sanity stood up to them and Roderick Strong/the Authors of Pain are out for revenge. It's kind of a shame that British Strong Style can't be the third trio but Strong and the Authors are a fine choice.

Mercedes Martinez vs. Ember Moon

Last week, Martinez said Moon can't win the big one, which is pretty true so far. Martinez grabs a headlock to start and holds Moon down for a good while. Back up and a one footed dropkick has Martinez in trouble, followed by a double footed version to the side of the head for two. Martinez throws her outside though and we take a break. Back with Moon striking away but getting her skin chopped off for her efforts.

Three Amigos look to set up a fisherman's buster but now the enziguri connects to get Moon out of trouble. That means a big suicide dive to the floor, only to have Martinez come back with a Tower of London, much to Nigel's delight. Not that it matters as Ember kicks her down again and hits the Eclipse for the pin at 10:27.

Rating: C. This was a nice win for Moon as Martinez was turned into a big deal in the tournament but can put people over time and time again. The best thing about Saturday's match is how any of the four could conceivably win, which is where NXT shines. It keeps you from being bored

and waiting on the win as is so often the case on the main roster. Good tuneup for Ember here and I wouldn't be surprised if she won the title.

Here's McIntyre for the face to face meeting with Almas. Before Andrade comes out, Drew talks about how a plan came together. It was Zelina's plan but it was still a plan indeed. When the pressure is on Andrade though, will he be able to rise to the occasion? Vega has been talking about mountains but for Almas, Drew is the mountain.

Drew wants Almas out here if Zelina will let him off the leash. Cue both Zelina and Almas and the brawl is on in a hurry. Zelina tries a crossbody but gets caught without much effort. A chop block takes out the champ's knee though and Almas plants him with a hammerlock DDT. Zelina holds up the title to end the show. This was quick but it did its job.

Overall Rating: C+. Good episode that set up some stuff for Takeover, though most of the card was already set in stone anyway. It was nice to have the title match get some focus as, while it's a simple story, it hasn't gotten a ton of attention. Gargano vs. Dunne is a fine choice for an off week main event and then we can move on to the build towards Philadelphia in January. This show did its job though and that's what matters most for a go home episode.

Results

Street Profits b. Riddick Moss/Tino Sabbatelli – Right hand To Sabbatelli

Lars Sullivan b. Raul Mendoza – Freak Accident

Ember Moon b. Mercedes Martinez – Eclipse

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NXT – November 8, 2017: Undisputed Style

NXT

Date: November 8, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

Last week saw NXT turned on its head as we heard the announcement that WARGAMES is coming to Takeover with a three team, nine man match. Other than that it's time to get everything ready for the show, which is mostly set already. NXT is great at setting up the shows and that's what we're doing tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the end of last week's show with the WarGames announcement and the huge roar from the crowd.

Opening sequence.

Heavy Machinery vs. Chris Pain/Sean Maluta

Otis runs Chris over to start and Sean gets the same treatment. The big man actually hits a modified Worm before it's off to Tucker for a kick to the face. A springboard elbow (from the bottom rope) crushes Pain again and it's the Compactor for the pin at 2:22. Squash.

Ember Moon doesn't like what Mercedes Martinez said about her last week and will face her next week.

Kairi Sane vs. Billie Kay

Kairi bows to her to start so Billie runs her over with a shoulder. A headscissors and a dropkick get Kairi out of trouble but Peyton Royce gets up for a distraction. It works quite well though as Kay grabs a torture rack. Sane fights out with some chops in the corner before marching across the ring for the sliding knee for two in the corner. After an elbow dispatches Royce, the top rope elbow finishes Kay at 3:51.

Rating: C. Sane was clearly winning here but at least Kay got in some offense. The Iconic Duo are kind of stuck in limbo here as they have nowhere to go in NXT. They're not going to win the Women's Title and the main roster divisions could use some fresh blood so just send them up there as the new Laycool.

Kassius Ohno, in a Cesaro shirt for a wink at the smart fans, comes in to see William Regal. He wants in on the NXT Title hunt so he should start with Lars Sullivan at Takeover. Regal grants the match.

Video on WarGames with clips from most of the matches. Having people like Ric Flair and Arn Anderson in there to talk about the brutality is a nice addition.

Zelina Vega and Andrade Cien Almas have a sitdown interview to say Almas will win the title at Takeover. Vega won't let Almas answer a question about their relationship but she says they've known each other for seven years. Almas speaks Spanish and then in English says this is the new Andrade, who will be the new champion. Vega is excellent in this role and has made Almas a hundred times better in short order.

Velveteen Dream vs. Cezar Bononi

Dream wastes no time uppercutting Bononi into the corner and a spinebuster makes it even worse. The rolling Death Valley Driver (Death Valley Bomb) ends Bononi in 1:13.

Post match Dream says he's on Aleister Black's mind and he'll get what he wants at Takeover when Black says his name.

We look back at Ruby Riot's leg/ankle injury.

Earlier today, Ruby was told to rest her injury for a few more weeks. Sonya DeVille comes in to laugh at her. She tries to blame Ruby for not being in the title match so Ruby challenges her to a match when she's healed up. Sonya tells her to heal fast.

The Street Profits run into a guy in a suit and give him a cup. Tino Sabbatelli's dry cleaning is brought in and the Profits say it's theirs. As luck would have it. Sabbatelli and Riddick Moss come in to say the Profits can't afford this kind of suit. A match is set.

Ember Moon vs. Mercedes Martinez is set for next week.

Almas and Drew McIntyre will be face to face next week.

Roderick Strong vs. Adam Cole

They fight into the corner to start and head to the mat for a battle over a hammerlock. A good looking dropkick puts Cole on the floor and Strong hits a dive over the top to take him down again. Back from a break with Strong kneeing Cole down and dropping an elbow for two. Of course that means a chinlock with Cole whispering sweet spots into Cole's ear.

Strong fights up and grabs a backbreaker for a breather. A jumping clothesline rocks Cole again and another backbreaker gets two. Cole's enziguri gets the same and a superkick sets up the Last Shot for an even nearer fall. Cole takes him up top but gets reversed into a drop onto the turnbuckle...drawing out Fish and O'Reilly for the DQ at 12:04.

Rating: C+. This was getting good at the end but they were just waiting for the interference ending. That's how this should have gone though as there was no reason to have it be anything other than a run-in. If nothing else, it's nice to see a promotion smart enough to not have the participants of a huge match lose in a meaningless TV match.

Sanity and the Authors of Pain run out and the big brawl is on. Wolfe dives onto the Era (with Fish running over to help catch him) and Cole superplexes Strong onto everyone for the huge crash to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. The main thing here is I want to see Takeover more than I did when I came in. They built the matches up well and the go home

show should be entertaining. WarGames is clearly the top draw of the whole show and that's all it's going to need. The fact that the TV leading up to it is good is just a very nice bonus. Good show this week and I'm not surprised.

Results

Heavy Machinery b. Chris Pain/Sean Maluta – Compactor to Pain

Kairi Sane b. Billie Kay – Top rope elbow

Velveteen Dream b. Cezar Bononi – Death Valley Bomb

Roderick Strong b. Adam Cole via DQ when Bobby Fish and Kyle O'Reilly interfered

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NXT – November 1, 2017: Houston, We HaWARGAMES!

NXT

Date: November 1, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson

We're less than three weeks away from Houston and by now a lot of the card can be figured out in advance. The big story from last week is the addition of the Authors of Pain to the main event mix, making things even bigger than they already were. The major match for Takeover hasn't been announced yet but you know what's coming. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Andrade Cien Almas will officially challenge Drew McIntyre at Takeover. Their contract signing is later tonight.

Taynara Conti vs. Nikki Cross

They're not wasting time this week. Cross goes right after her and knocks Conti to the floor for some forearms to the chest. Back in and Conti uses the legs for some kicks to the arm, only to get dropped by a short arm clothesline. A Scorpion Death Drop sets up the swinging fisherman's neckbreaker to give Cross the pin at 2:38. Energetic while it lasted but you knew Cross wasn't losing this close to a title shot.

Mercedes Martinez blames her failures on Ember Moon.

Fabian Aichner vs. Johnny Gargano

Gargano takes him to the mat to start and grabs a rollup for an early two. A standing dropkick gets the same as Johnny is moving out there early on. Aichner sends him outside though and we take a break. Back with Johnny elbowing his way to freedom and scoring with a rolling kick to the face.

Aichner makes the mistake of sending Gargano to the apron and then charges into the slingshot spear for two more. The slingshot DDT doesn't put Aichner away either so he grabs a heck of a powerbomb for two. Gargano is back up with a running kick in the corner but the Gargano Escape is countered into a rollup to give Aichner the clean pin at 9:14.

Rating: B-. Aichner gets a big win and a huge upset but the more

interesting story here is Gargano, who is trying as hard as he can but still can't win a bit match. That has the potential to be a heck of a setup for when Ciampa returns (which should be in the next few months) and I'm really curious to see where they go with that idea.

Aleister Black vs. Velveteen Dream is official for Takeover.

Earlier today the Street Profits were admiring Tino Sabbatelli and Riddick Moss' very expensive car when Tino and Riddick showed up. Trash was talked but nothing gets physical.

It's time for the contract signing. Drew comes out holding the contract but Andrade jumps him and signs the contract. Zelina hands Andrade her gum, which he uses to stick the contract to Drew.

Peyton Royce and Billie Kay are upset about Billie not being in the title match when Kairi Sane, with her pirate wheel, comes up to scare them.

Tag Team Titles: Sanity vs. Authors of Pain

Sanity is defending with Alexander Wolfe and Eric Young representing the team. There's no Paul Ellering at ringside. Wolfe hammers away on Akam in the corner as Mauro talks about Wolfe starting "sports entertainment training" at thirteen. I get not calling it wrestling in a general sense but does ANYONE outside of Vince think that sounds natural or good? Just say training. Anyway Wolfe gets hammered down in the corner and the slow beating begins. We hit a chinlock and take an early break.

Back with Ra'zar holding Wolfe in a front facelock until a double clothesline allows the double tag to Young and Akam. Young cleans house in a hurry and gets two off the top rope elbow. Wolfe comes back in with a top rope clothesline but everything breaks down and the Authors hit the Super Collider. The Last Chapter takes Young down but the Undisputed Era runs in for the DQ at 10:28.

Rating: C+. This was getting good near the ending but you could feel the Undisputed Era interference coming (which isn't a bad thing). The Authors have gotten their title rematch out of the way and that's what matters most in all of this. Good main event, but bigger things coming after are

more important.

Killian Dain runs in but gets taken down as well. Roderick Strong comes out and puts on the Era's armband, only to lay them out a few seconds later. The Authors are back up and help Strong clear the ring. Cue William Regal to make the big announcement: a triple threat match at Takeover inside WARGAMES. The fans are stunned and the Takeover: Houston logo turns into Takeover: WarGames as a YES chant takes us out. Mauro: "Houston, we have a WarGames."

Overall Rating: B. Well that worked. I knew the WarGames announcement was coming and I still got excited when they finally said it. They're pushing a lot of stories at once here and I'm genuinely interested in how things are going to go in Houston. The Authors and Strong are the weakest of the trios and it's still entirely conceivable to have them win. Good show this week and a lot of stuff was advanced.

Results

Nikki Cross b. Taynara Conti – Swinging fisherman's neckbreaker

Fabian Aichner b. Johnny Gargano – Rollup

Authors of Pain b. Sanity via DQ when the Undisputed Era interfered

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NXT – October 25, 2017: An Undisputed Strong Battle

NXT

Date: October 25, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson

We're getting closer to Houston and that means things are about to get a lot more interesting. The card is going to be filled out in the upcoming weeks, starting with the fourth woman being added to the Women's Title match. There's also the issue between Andrade Cien Almas and NXT Champion Drew McIntyre. Let's get to it.

William Regal tells us that Nikki Cross will be in tonight's battle royal for a spot in the Women's Title match. On top of that, next week the Authors of Pain will receive their rematch for the Tag Team Titles. Only two members of Sanity will be allowed in the arena.

Opening sequence.

Tino Sabbatelli/Riddick Moss vs. Danny Burch/Oney Lorcan

Riddick offers Lorcan a free chop and skin is almost peeled off. One heck of a running dropkick staggers Moss and it's off to Burch. Sabbatelli comes in as well and eats a middle rope dropkick, only to cut Burch off with a clothesline. Fans: "YOU STILL SUCK!" Well at least they're honest about it.

Some running dropkicks in the corner keep Burch in trouble and we hit the chinlock. Back up and a missed clothesline allows the hot tag off to Lorcan so house can be cleaned. Moss actually cuts him off with a fall away slam into the corner before putting Lorcan in a Gory Stretch. Tino adds a running bulldog into a faceplant for the pin on Oney at 4:04.

Rating: D+. Well I wouldn't have bet on that. Sabbatelli and Moss have the potential to be a nice heel team and that's a good finisher to make it work even more. I'm also kind of shocked that Burch and Lorcan lost so early in their time as a team. Maybe they won't last long but it's still surprising.

Quick look at Taynara Conti costing Nikki Cross a chance to be in the four way.

Battle Royal

Vanessa Bourne, Bianca Belair, Sage Beckett, Mercedes Martinez, Rhea Ripley, Candice LeRae, Taynara Conti, Lacey Evans, Sarah Logan, Dakota Kai, Zeda, Abbey Laith, Santana Garrett, Aaliyah, Reina Gonzalez, Nikki Cross, Billie Kay

I think that's everyone. Cross goes right after Conti and gets rid of her in less than a minute. Conti pulls her under the ropes though and sends Cross into the barricade though, followed by Peyton Royce sending Nikki into the post. With Nikki still on the floor, various people are nearly eliminated but there's not much to talk about otherwise. That's kind of the point of a battle royal though and it's not the biggest surprise.

Belair picks someone up and swings them into Ripley for an elimination with Zeda being thrown out a few seconds later. Back from a break with Beckett dumping Kai as the ring is starting to clear out a bit. Gonzalez is out as well and Aaliyah has been knocked out off camera. Cross is back up though and dives onto everyone at once before tossing Bourne and Beckett. Garrett and Laith are the fourth and fifth victims for Cross, leaving us with Cross, Kay, Belair, Martinez, Logan, Evans and LeRae.

There goes Logan and we're down to six. Evans gets sent to the apron and Candice kicks her leg out for another elimination. That's all of Candice's good luck as Belair gorilla presses her out to the floor in a very impressive power display. Billie is sent over the top but grabs Belair BY THE HAIR to hold on. Kay gets back in so Belair whips her with the hair as we settle down a bit. Cross chokes Kay out to the floor (no elimination), leaving Martinez to chop away at Belair. They wind up on the apron and it's Nikki running in for the double elimination. Kay

misses a big boot and Nikki wins at 15:20.

Rating: C+. This was a heck of a battle royal where Cross was the favorite but you could buy the idea of a surprise getting in instead. They kept the pace very fast here and that makes for a solid effort. Above all else though, the future of the women's division is bright. Let these women get some experience and coaching and they could be some major stars.

Post match Ember Moon and Kairi Sane come out for the staredown with Cross and Royce.

Earlier this week, Zelina Vega came up to Drew McIntyre to ask why Andrade Cien Almas never received the contract for a title shot. Drew says if Andrade wants one, come up to him like a man.

Aleister Black comes out for a match but the Velveteen Dream jumps him from behind. Black gets tied in the ropes and Dream demands that Black say his name. Dream loads up a big boot but Black gets up a boot of his own. The threat of Black Mass sends Dream bailing.

Andrade Cien Almas vs. Roderick Strong

Before the match, Vega again complains about the lack of a match with McIntyre. A quick trip to the mat goes nowhere and the first backbreaker gives Strong one. Back up and Almas drops him onto the apron and we take a break. We come back with Almas in control and the fans asking him to take Strong down one more time.

A triangle choke over the ropes has Strong in more trouble and even gets a two count. It's off to an armbar for a bit until Strong comes back with a running clothesline. A pop up gutbuster drops Almas again and Strong slaps on the Strong Hold around the ropes (think a reverse Tarantula).

The back is banged up even more with a backbreaker on the apron and Almas is in trouble. A tiger driver is countered into a hurricanrana and Almas hits his running knees in the corner for two. Another knees attempt is countered into the Olympic Slam and a clothesline to the floor. Vega is right up with a hurricanrana to send Strong into the apron though, which

the fans REALLY seem to like. The hammerlock DDT gives Almas the pin at 12:19.

Rating: B. Good match here and Vega's involvement was a very nice addition. She's quite the good choice for a talker and manager and if she can throw in a good hurricanrana at the same time, so be it. Almas is pretty clearly next in line for McIntyre and the NXT Title so a win like this should do him a lot of good.

Post match Vega and Almas say they'll see McIntyre next week.

Still in the ring, Strong is looking upset but here's the Undisputed Era. Adam Cole throws him an Undisputed Era armband and says he needs to join the family. Strong takes it and looks at it as the team leaves without him.

Overall Rating: B-. As usual, NXT gets to showcase a lot of people at once with a good main event and a very strong battle royal. They did some good stuff on here and we're getting ready for Takeover. The NXT Title match is acceptable enough and the Women's Title needs some personal issues, which they have time to make. Other than that though, the show needs that one big attraction to make it work.

Results

Tino Sabbatelli/Riddick Moss b. Oney Lorcan/Danny Burch – Gory Bomb/Bulldog combination to Lorcan

Nikki Cross won a battle royal last eliminating Billie Kay

Andrade Cien Almas b. Roderick Strong – Hammerlock DDT

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NXT – October 18, 2017: One Step Down the Road

NXT

Date: October 18, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

It's the Undisputed night as the Undisputed Era are back in the ring this week. Tonight it's going to be the Undisputed Era vs. Sanity in a six man tag. The question though is how does this help us set up the upcoming Takeover: Houston and how the NXT Title will factor in. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick look at Sanity vs. Undisputed Era.

Opening sequence.

Sonya DeVille vs. Ember Moon vs. Ruby Riot

The winner is in the four way title match at Takeover. Riot hurricanranas Ember to start but gets lariated down by DeVille. Sonya is sent outside and it's Ruby flipping Ember around into a standoff. The springboard crossbody gets two on Sonya and a kick to the face gets the same on Riot. Ruby it sent outside and Ember gets kicked down and we take a break. Back with Sonya suplexing them both down, only to be headscissored into Ember for two more.

Riot and DeVille slug away at each other until Sonya is knocked outside.

It gets even worse for DeVille when she gets kicked out of the air by Ember. Moon is down as well though, only to have Ruby dive onto the two of them. She comes up with a horrible ankle though and things slow way down. Riot is still able to get inside, only to have DeVille slap on an ankle lock. The hold stays on for a good while until Moon comes in off the top with the Eclipse on Sonya and a pin on Riot at 11:34.

Rating: C-. I wasn't feeling this one for the most part as it felt disjointed for the most part. The injury at the end was fine and it seems that Riot's ankle is fine. It's not terrible but they didn't have the best chemistry and it showed. Ember or Sane is the best option for the title at this point and it makes sense to have Moon make the title match. If nothing else it means another chance to see the Eclipse.

The Undisputed Era talked to Roderick Strong outside the Performance Center but we couldn't hear what was said.

William Regal is about to announce how the fourth participant in the Women's Title match will be chosen but the Iconic Duo comes up to interrupt. Regal gets around to saying that there will be a battle royal next week.

Aleister Black vs. Raul Mendoza

Before any contact, cue the Velveteen Dream on the apron with Black's vest. The distraction lets Mendoza knee Black to the floor, setting up a running flip dive to the floor. A springboard Swanton gets two on Black but the rapid fire kicks take Mendoza down. Black Mass puts Mendoza away at 2:10.

Dream leaves with the vest with Black glaring at him.

Drew McIntyre had a sitdown interview and is thrilled with his title reign so far. It's everything he had hoped it was and he's been feeling pretty good. A few years back he was released from his dream job and it took him a long time to get things together. He was always a wrestler and even his father never understood things. Somewhere along the line his fire went out and now he's back here to build something special.

Cue Zelina Vega to take over the interview to say Drew and Andrade Cien Almas have a lot in common. She was Andrade's second chance and thinks Drew has been avoiding him. Drew suggests going to William Regal because he'd love to give Almas a shot. If Andrade is serious, come see the champ himself.

Kassius Ohno vs. Cezar Bononi

They strike it off to start until Bononi hits a dropkick for two. Another dropkick puts Ohno on the floor, followed by a suplex for two back inside. A third dropkick misses though and Ohno scores with his backplash. Ohno kicks him in the jaw and the rolling elbow is good enough for the pin at 3:05.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here but Ohno is always going to get a reaction from his theme song alone. Bononi seems like someone who is ready to become a big star if he's given the right push or character. You can last a long time on a look like that and Bononi hasn't even scratched the surface yet.

Sanity vs. Undisputed Era

Fish and Wolfe start things off with Fish striking away, only to get tossed into the corner. O'Reilly has about the same level of success and it's off to Dane to uppercut Kyle in the corner. The fast tags continue with Young adding a middle rope forearm to the chest for two. It's back to Fish, who scores with more kicks and right hands to Young as the beating takes us to a break.

Back with Cole grabbing a chinlock until his partners work on Eric's arms. O'Reilly gets two off a double suplex and some kicks keep Young down in the corner. Kyle is smart enough to kick Wolfe off the apron and bring Dain in, allowing him a chance to pull Young to the corner again. Not that it matters as Eric kicks O'Reilly away and makes the hot tag off to Dain.

That means it's time for the big man offense, including a hard running dropkick and some corner splashes. Fish and O'Reilly get tossed at the same time but Cole superkicks Dain in the back of the head for the save.

A belly to back suplex/neckbreaker combination puts O'Reilly down and Cole is quickly surrounded. Sanity takes him inside...and here are the Authors of Pain to jump Sanity for the DQ at 13:31.

Rating: C+. I liked this one, though it didn't hit the level I was hoping it would. The ending is interesting as it could set up a potential three way feud, which often means a heck of a story. The Undisputed Era wasn't destroyed here as there was a reasonable chance that O'Reilly and Fish could have gotten back into it for the save. Good stuff here but it's a step on a long path.

The Authors destroy Sanity as the Undisputed Era leaves to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The main event was the most interesting part of the show but more importantly we're starting to see the card for Takeover forming. That makes for some interesting shows as we're getting ready for the rest of the card. Just let us have a good special event and the TV feels even better than it already does. Solid show this week but nothing too great.

Results

Ember Moon b. Sonya DeVille and Ruby Riot – Pin on Riot

Aleister Black b. Raul Mendoza – Black Mass

Kassius Ohno b. Cezar Bononi – Rolling elbow

Sanity b. Undisputed Era via DQ when the Authors of Pain interfered

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NXT – October 11, 2017: Something About How NXT Is Good

NXT

Date: October 11, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

It's another pretty big show this week as we have a Takeover: Brooklyn rematch with Johnny Gargano vs. Andrade Cien Almas. The other big story continues to be Sanity vs. the Undisputed Era with Drew McIntyre watching over the whole thing. Roderick Strong is the other factor, as the Undisputed Era seems interested in adding him to their ranks. Let's get to it.

We open with a look at Asuka vacating the Women's Title and the process to crown a new #1 contender.

Opening sequence.

Peyton Royce vs. Liv Morgan vs. Nikki Cross

The winner is in the Women's Title four way at Takeover. Cross and Morgan yell at Royce to start and a double clothesline puts her on the floor. Nikki immediately goes after Morgan with a sleeper on her back but it's quickly broken. Royce is back in to yell at Morgan before kicking her down without too much effort. A modified Tarantula has Morgan in more trouble but Cross makes the save by pulling Royce out to the floor in a nasty looking crash. All three are back in now and it's Cross beating the heck out of both of them.

A crossbody takes Royce and Morgan down and a neckbreaker gets two on Morgan. Peyton throws Nikki down for a second but she takes too long trying for a superplex on Morgan, setting up the Tower of Doom. Cue the Undisputed Era of all people with Taynara Conti from the Mae Young Classic. She comes to the ring to trip Cross, though it doesn't really do much damage. Cross neckbreakers both Royce and Morgan but Conti pulls her out at two. The chase is on and Royce catches Cross in the fisherman's suplex for the pin at 7:16.

Rating: B-. I'm a bit surprised and I like the twist they threw in there. That being said, I'd be shocked if Cross didn't wind up in the title match somehow. She's one of the biggest stars the division has left and it could be interesting to put the title on someone as crazy as she is. The Undisputed Era potentially adding a female member is interesting and makes the team feel even bigger.

Lio Rush vs. Velveteen Dream

Rush slaps him in the face to start and is way too quick for Dream to catch up with. A pair of kicks to the head rocks Dream but he gets sent hard into the corner. Dream beats him down and keeps telling Rush to say his name. Rush spins around into a tornado DDT but gets caught in a Death Valley Driver. The Purple Rainmaker puts Rush away at 2:46. Rush looked good while he had the chance but this was WAY too short to be any kind of a showcase for him.

We look back at Lars Sullivan destroying Oney Lorcan two weeks ago.

Lars Sullivan vs. Danny Burch

Burch gets right in Lars' face and gets in a shot to the face, only to take a knee to the ribs to cut him off in a hurry. Lars runs him over with a shoulder and a delayed vertical suplex, followed by a clothesline to cut Burch off. The standing Boss Man Slam is good enough to put Burch away at 2:59.

We look back at the end of last week's title match with Drew McIntyre successfully defending against Roderick Strong. After the match they shook hands but the Undisputed Era spoke to Strong on the stage.

Street Profits vs. Damien Smith/Marcos Espada

The Profits are really starting to grow on me. Ford shouts a lot and gyrates at Smith to start things off. The Profits waste no time in hitting the World's Greatest Tag Team's (or the Beverly Brothers' for you older fans) jump over the back onto your opponent's back spot but Ford heads outside to bark. Dawkins splashes Smith in the corner and it's a spinebuster into the frog splash for the pin at 53 seconds. Well that worked.

The Profits celebrate in the crowd.

Next week: Ember Moon vs. Ruby Riot vs. Sonya DeVille in a Women's Title qualifying match.

Also next week: Sanity vs. Undisputed Era in a six man tag.

Johnny Gargano vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Takeover: Brooklyn rematch. Feeling out process to start as the announcers discuss what the name Johnny Wrestling means. I'd think it was pretty self explanatory but that's never stopped WWE before. Gargano grabs a front facelock so slow Almas down but they roll up to a standoff. An elbow and a shoulder have Johnny in some early trouble and Almas has a breather in the ropes.

It's WAY too early for the Gargano Escape as Almas is too close to the ropes. Back in and a dropkick gives Gargano a cover but not even a one count, which you don't see that often. We take a break and come back with Almas grabbing an armbar over the top rope and kicking Gargano in the side of the head for a rather cocky two. Johnny is right back with a DDT on the arm and it's off to a slugout. A tornado Flatliner of all things drops Almas but the spear through the ropes is caught.

Johnny sends him outside though and there's the suicide dive. Back in and Gargano kicks him in the head but his reverse tornado DDT is countered into something like an Iconoclasm for two. An arm trap German suplex gives Almas the same but the second armbar over the ropes is broken up with some kicks to the back. Another slugout sees Gargano get two off a

superkick and it's time to go up.

Almas shoves the referee into the ropes for a crotching but Johnny isn't about to take a super hammerlock DDT. Instead it's a clothesline off the top and a lawn dart to send Almas into the corner. The Gargano Escape goes on but Vega takes off her jacket to reveal the DIY shirt. The distraction lets Almas get to the ropes and Gargano goes to yell at Vega. A pinfall reversal sequence goes nowhere but Gargano is sent into the corner for the double knees to the back of the head twice in a row. The hammerlock DDT ends Gargano at 16:48.

Rating: B. I'm really curious about where this Gargano story is going as they have something with him not being able to get past the DIY stuff. They can fill in a lot of time until Ciampa is back for the big showdown and Gargano can pretty much lose everything until we get to that point.

Overall Rating: B+. Five matches in less than an hour is a rather impressive performance and yet I'm not even surprised they were able to pull it off. Anymore you're lucky to get two on any given Raw or Smackdown and yet NXT manages to pack more in and feel more entertaining at the same time. It's another good show this week as a lot of the stories have me wondering where they're going next, which is the polar opposite of the main roster right now. Good stuff, as usual.

Results

Peyton Royce b. Liv Morgan and Nikki Cross – Fisherman's suplex to Cross

Velveteen Dream b. Lio Rush – Purple Rainmaker

Lars Sullivan b. Danny Burch – Standing Boss Man Slam

Street Profits b. Damien Smith/Marcos Espada – Frog splash to Smith

Andrade Cien Almas b. Johnny Gargano – Hammerlock DDT

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Big, BIG Spoiler From NXT Tapings

This really is awesome. As announced tonight, WAR GAMES will make its WWE debut at Takeover: Houston in a three team, nine man double ring match. As usual, NXT continues to get me fired up about wrestling while WWE just kind of keeps going along. So excited for this one.

NXT – October 4, 2017: Just What Drew Needed

NXT

Date: October 4, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo, Nigel McGuinness

It's a big night this week as NXT Champion Drew McIntyre is putting the

title on the line against Roderick Strong. There's a good chance that this is going to be more about the post match issues as you can almost guarantee that the Undisputed Era will be getting involved. Let's get to it.

We open with a We Stand With Las Vegas graphic.

Quick recap of Strong vs. McIntyre which was just announced by William Regal two weeks ago.

Opening sequence.

Mauro gives a quick voiceover tribute to the late Lance Russell. That's very classy.

Ruby Riot vs. Billie Kay/Peyton Royce

Nikki Cross was supposed to be Ruby's partner here but is nowhere to be seen. Ruby sends Billie into the corner to start before working on Peyton's arm. It's back to Billie to send Riot into the corner and hammer away before Peyton comes in to do the same. The slow beating continues but here's Cross through the crowd to stand in the corner.

Peyton grabs a chinlock for a bit before a double faceplant puts both women down. Riot crawls over and makes the reluctant tag to Cross to clean house. A reverse DDT gets two on Billie with Peyton making the save. Peyton bulldogs Nikki onto Billie's knee but Riot pulls Peyton outside. Ruby comes back in with a double missile dropkick, followed by something like a Pele to end Billie at 7:03.

Rating: C+. Billie and Peyton are much better as a team than on their own but they shouldn't be beating a pairing like Cross and Riot. You could easily see the two of them in the four way for the Women's Title and it would be cool to see the two of them as focal points of the division, at least for a short time.

We look back at Lars Sullivan destroying Oney Lorcan until Danny Burch made the save.

Sullivan says everyone should be afraid and warns Burch to not face him

next week.

Zelina Vega isn't worried about Johnny Gargano getting a rematch with Andrade Cien Almas. Gargano's lifeline is dead.

We look at Adam Cole defeating Eric Young last week with some distractions at the hands of the Undisputed Era. In two weeks, it's a six man tag.

Lio Rush vs. Aleister Black

This is Rush's in-ring debut. Hang on a second though as Velveteen Dream comes in and drops Rush before going up top. After a quick hip swivel at Black, Dream drops the Purple Rainmaker on Rush. Black flips into the ring and Dream bails. Dream: "Hey Aleister. WHAT'S MY NAME! ACKNOWLEDGE ME!" No match of course.

Kairi Sane vs. Aaliyah

Sane rolls around to start before blasting Aaliyah in the face for two. Back up and Aaliyah bends Sane over her knee to work on the back, followed by a hard whip into the corner. A hard spear gets Kairi out of trouble and the sliding corner clothesline rocks Aaliyah again. The top rope elbow gives Kairi the pin at 3:12.

Rating: C. Just a squash here and that's all Sane needed to do. Aaliyah may not be the most successful woman on the roster but she's a name that people are familiar with, which is all you need in a moment like this. If nothing else that huge elbow is going to get Sane all the attention she needs.

Next week: Liv Morgan vs. Peyton Royce vs. Nikki Cross for a spot in the four way title match.

Also next week: Andrade Cien Almas vs. Johnny Gargano.

NXT Title: Drew McIntyre vs. Roderick Strong

Strong is challenging and headlocks the champ to start. That's thrown off by raw power and we take a break. Back with McIntyre kicking him in the

ribs and LAUNCHING him with an overhead belly to belly. Strong is right back up with a running knee from the apron as they're trading big shots. He's not done either as it's a big backbreaker onto the steps to really stun McIntyre for the first time.

Back in and Strong stays on the back before just hammering away at the head. Another suplex gets Drew out of trouble though and we take a second break. Back again with Drew scoring with a reverse Alabama Slam for two of his own. Strong's tiger driver is countered with more power and a spinebuster gives Drew another near fall.

Drew puts him on top but has to block a sunset bomb. Instead Strong settles for a corner enziguri and a superplex for the closest two yet. The fans are starting to get into these kickouts too. Now the tiger bomb gives Roderick two more but Drew is right back up. A super Celtic Cross still can't put Strong away so it's Claymore time.

That's blocked by three straight jumping knees to the face, followed by the Sick Kick for a very close two. They head outside with Strong trying a hurricanrana off the apron but getting powerbombed into the post. Strong is done so there's the Future Shock, followed by the Claymore to retain Drew's title at 23:44.

Rating: B+. Heck of a performance from both guys here, which is exactly what Drew needs. He's the guy who has been a bit left behind in this big Undisputed Era vs. Sanity feud so tearing the house down is a great way to remind us that he's still here. Strong is going to be around as well and would fit in as a fourth member of the Undisputed Era if they want a fourth member.

Strong leaves but runs into the Undisputed Era. They talk to him with Cole patting him on the arm. We couldn't hear what was said but Strong looks a bit confused.

Overall Rating: A-. Well that worked. Matches made for next week, Sane makes her debut and a heck of a title match to close it out. That's how you present an hour of wrestling television and I had a great time with the whole thing. I'm also curious to see where they're going with Houston, which has a lot of options at this point. Great show this week.

Results

Ruby Riot/Nikki Cross b. Billie Kay/Peyton Royce – Pele to Kay

Kairi Sane b. Aaliyah – Top rope elbow

Drew McIntyre b. Roderick Strong – Claymore

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NXT – September 27, 2017: There's the Name

NXT

Date: September 27, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

It's NXT bay-bay as Adam Cole is making his in-ring debut tonight against Sanity's Eric Young. While you can almost book the screwy finish from here, that doesn't mean it won't be entertaining along the way. Other than that we're starting to get ready for the next Takeover in Houston.

Let's get to it.

William Regal opens the show by announcing a four way for the vacant Women's Title at Takeover: Houston. Kairi Sane is already in the match and in two weeks, we'll be having three qualifying matches for the other spots.

Opening sequence.

Here's a ticked off Sanity to open things up. They wrote the book on showing up to make their mark and all that matters is the chaos. Tonight, Young is taking Cole to the edge of Sanity.

Lars Sullivan vs. Oney Lorcan

This should be hard hitting. Before the match, Lorcan says he doesn't like Sullivan coming in here like he owns the place. Lorcan gets run over to start but comes back with a dropkick. Sullivan easily shrugs it off though and sends Lorcan outside with ease. Back up and Sullivan gets sent outside again, where he catches Oney's over the top dive in midair like he's nothing.

Lars charges into an elbow in the corner so Lorcan hammers away, including some running European uppercuts. Those are shrugged off too though and one heck of a clothesline turns him inside out. The standing Boss Man Slam ends Lorcan at 2:54. This was a heck of a fight and Sullivan looked more like a monster than usual.

Lars goes after him again but Danny Burch pulls Oney out.

Ruby Riot is ready to face the Iconic Duo again but she is NOT friends with Nikki Cross.

Heavy Machinery vs. Demitrious Bronson/Patrick Scott

Scott and Knight start things off and I'll let you guess which one is tossed down. Knight lifts him up in a wristlock so it's off to Bronson, who gets run over with a double shoulder. Bronson gets in a good looking dropkick but dives into an overhead belly to belly. Otis even stops for a little dance and it's the Compactor for the double pin at 3:15.

Rating: D+. I like Heavy Machinery a lot as they're just a fun act. They don't come off as anything more than two big guys who can do impressive power stuff and there's no reason to try anything else. Not everything has to be some high concept and this is as entertaining as it can be for what it is.

Regal gave Johnny Gargano a rematch with Andrade Cien Almas in two weeks. He also has a special idea for Houston.

Roderick Strong is ready for his NXT Title shot next week. Drew McIntyre knows what he's in for. It may be business, but all business is personal. It's personal to him because he wants to be NXT Champion.

Liv Morgan vs. Vanessa Borne

Both of them say they'll be the next Women's Champion. Feeling out process to start until Liv gets two off a backslide. Vanessa's clothesline is avoided by a Matrix so Borne just slams her head into the mat a few times. A drop toehold sends Borne into the ropes and an enziguri makes things even worse for her. Back up and Borne lifts her up, only to get caught in a Codebreaker for the pin at 3:42.

Rating: D. As usual, Morgan makes sense on paper but she really isn't doing much for me. Then again I'm not sure how strong they're going to push her as there are far better options to go after the Women's Title. I could see her in the four way but she didn't really show me anything here. The same is true for Borne, who didn't stand out in the Mae Young Classic either.

We look back at Velveteen Dream interrupting Aleister Black last week.

Black doesn't want to see someone acting like they're special in this age of individuality.

Video on Fabian Aichner from the Cruiserweight Classic.

Fabian Aichner vs. Kassius Ohno

Ohno cravates him to the mat but gets caught in an armbar. A big boot sends Aichner to the floor but he comes right back with a tilt-a-whirl

backbreaker. One heck of a springboard dive to the floor takes Ohno down and there's the old NXT chant. The aggressive Aichner can't pick him up for a powerbomb (shocking) and Ohno grabs a small package for two. A powerslam drops Ohno but he avoids a double springboard moonsault. The Cyclone kick puts Aichner away at 4:49.

Rating: B. If he doesn't have one already, I'd be stunned if Aichner doesn't get a job out of this. He showed off a great mixture of power and speed here which isn't something that's done this impressively most of the time. Ohno getting the win makes sense but Aichner was definitely the star here.

Drew McIntyre is ready for Strong and whomever is next.

Video on Kairi Sane winning the Mae Young Classic.

Adam Cole vs. Eric Young

Cole's normally tiny arms are already starting to look bigger. Bobby Fish, Kyle O'Reilly and Sanity are all at ringside. Before the match, Cole asks how this place survived without him. You can feel the change in the air and the shock to the system is the three of them. Cole says they are undisputed and this is their era. So there's the name for the first time.

They stare at each other to start with Cole demanding that Young fight him. Young takes him down without too much effort and grabs a swinging neckbreaker. The guys get in a staredown on the floor though and Cole gets in a cheap shot to take over. Cole's chinlock doesn't last long so he enziguris Young to the floor instead.

Another staredown on the outside lets Cole knee him in the back and we hit the second chinlock. That goes nowhere so Young fights up and hits another neckbreaker. The fight on the floor finally breaks out so Young dives onto them instead of dropping the top rope elbow. Back in and a running knee to the face ends Young at 5:35.

Rating: C. The ending was actually a bit of a surprise as it's far more of a clean finish than I was expecting. You had to give Cole the upper

hand to end this one and him winning was the right call. Young didn't really lose clean anyway and it's not like this is heading anywhere other than a really big tag match, likely having Undisputed Era winning the Tag Team Titles at some point in there.

Overall Rating: B. The main event was actually one of the weaker matches on this show as the opener and Ohno vs. Aichner were both really entertaining. This was more about showing some of the new talents around here and setting up stuff for the future. They set up the NXT Title match next week as well, making this quite the use of an hour.

Results

Lars Sullivan b. Oney Lorcan – Standing Boss Man Slam

Heavy Machinery b. Demitrious Bronson/Patrick Scott – Compactor

Liv Morgan b. Vanessa Borne – Codebreaker

Kassius Ohno b. Fabian Aichner – Cyclone kick

Adam Cole b. Eric Young – Running knee to the face

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NXT – September 20, 2017: Where Do We Go From Here?

NXT

Date: September 20, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness

This week should be centered around the fallout from last week with the Undisputed Era attacking the British contingent, which could set up a heck of a six man tag somewhere down the line. Other than that we need to find out where the NXT Champion Drew McIntyre ties into this as well. Let's get to it.

In Memory of Bobby Heenan.

Opening sequence.

Johnny Gargano vs. Tino Sabbatelli

Gargano beat Tino's partner Riddick Moss last week. Tino drives him into the corner and messes with Johnny's head, earning himself a hard shot to the face. A dropkick takes Johnny down but the fans still think Tino sucks. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Johnny fights up and heads to the apron. The sunset flip is countered into a powerslam but Tino doesn't cover due to reasons of inexperience. The delay lets Gargano hit a superkick and grab the Gargano Escape for the tap at 3:48.

Rating: C-. Gargano getting a win here is the right call but it's an interesting idea to not have him mow through everyone as people tend to do around here. It was cool to see Gargano clear out some people, though I'm glad seeing Sabbatelli and Moss get some ring time. Tino looked better of the two and I'd like to see him make a few more appearances.

William Regal gives Roderick Strong a title shot in two weeks.

We look at Asuka vacating the Women's Title.

Sonya DeVille says she never fought Asuka because Asuka knew what would happen if they got in the ring. If anyone has a problem with that, they can put their hair up and square up. That's a really bad catchphrase.

Bianca Belair vs. Lacey Evans

Belair wastes no time in taking Lacey down and slowly stomping away with a good cocky attitude as a bonus. Evans bails to the floor so Belair pulls on the arms for a bit. Back in and Evans takes her down and gets two off a legdrop as the fans aren't the most interested in this so far. Some clothesline and a slingshot Bronco Buster have Belair in trouble and the backflip into a splash (kind of a moonsault minus the jump) gets two. Belair whips her with the hair (still not liking that) and hits an Alley-Oop (powerbomb but she drops Evans backwards onto her face) for the pin at 4:18.

Rating: C. This was just a step above a squash for Bianca and that's far from surprising. She looked great in the tournament and I could see her going quite far around here, especially with the hair thing. Evans has a gimmick but I'm not sure she has enough to back it up in the ring, at least not that we've seen so far.

Here's Aleister Black (rocking the heck out of a suit) for his first promo in the NXT arena. Fifteen years ago, he started a journey that brought him here to NXT. He's seen a lot of things and he's put a lot of them on his skin to remember them by. His journey in NXT is just beginning...and here's Velveteen Dream to cut him off.

Dream says everything that fades to black will one day come to life. Even with all this light surrounding the Dream, he doesn't see anything in Black. In Black, he sees a man full of woe and skin covered in lies. Black must be afraid of the light but Dream knows that he has a heart, even if it's in the wrong place. Black kicks him in the face and sits down, only to have Dream drop to his knees right in front of him. Dream crawls backwards to quite the reaction.

We look at Lars Sullivan attacking No Way Jose more than once.

Dakota Kai is new around here but wants to be Women's Champion.

No Way Jose vs. Lars Sullivan

Jose goes right after him to start but his crossbody has no effect. Some knees to the ribs have Jose out on the floor and Sullivan drives him ribs first into the apron. Back in and we hit the neck crank as this is a squash so far. Jose fights up and jumps on his back for a chinlock but one heck of a shoulder takes him down. Sullivan adds a top rope headbutt, followed by the standing Boss Man Slam to end Jose at 3:11.

Rating: D+. They might have something with Sullivan though it's a shame that it came at Jose's expense. I know he might not be the most popular guy in the world but the dancing gimmick is an anchor around him. Sullivan could be great as a wrecking ball and built up as someone to be slayed later on. Good performance here.

Trent Seven/Tyler Bate vs. Kyle O'Reilly/Bobby Fish

Kyle and Bobby have Adam Cole in their corner. Bate and O'Reilly start things off as we hit the MOUSTACHE MOUNTAIN chant. Tyler spins out of a wristlock and hits a good looking dropkick into a nipup. It's off to Seven vs. Fish but Kyle won't let Trent try a big dive. The distraction lets Bobby run him over and it's time for the knee strikes. Seven's arms get cranked at the same time and a double kick to the chest gets two.

Trent finally gets in a kick of his own but Kyle breaks up a hot tag attempt. Like any good villain, Cole offers a distraction so Fish can drive Seven into the barricade. Back from a break with Seven still in trouble but being able to escape a fireman's carry. A hard clothesline is enough for the hot tag to Bate, who comes in with a springboard European uppercut.

Kyle charges into a t-bone suplex and a standing shooting star gets two. Everything breaks down and a belly to back suplex/powerbomb combo (cool) is good for two more on Kyle. The Tyler Driver 97 is countered into a guillotine choke though as Fish takes care of Seven. The unnamed Chasing the Dragon gets two on Bate thanks to a foot on the ropes. A second attempt doesn't work as well as Bate sends them into each other and makes the desperation tag. Seven grabs a half crab on Kyle but Cole takes out Bate. Something like Total Elimination ends Seven at 12:32.

Rating: B. This was the good match you probably expected it to be and that's all you can ask for. Assuming this story continues, it's all about the addition of Cole and Pete Dunne, which could turn into one of the most entertaining six man tags in a very long time. Of course that's assuming Cole isn't busy fighting McIntyre for the NXT Title.

Speaking of McIntyre, here he is to chase off the Undisputed Era. The trio stands in front of a curtain and that can't end well. Sanity walks through said curtain and the trio bails while Drew stands in the ring to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a great example of putting a bunch of stories into one show and capping it off with a big match at the end. They have a bunch of ways to go for Houston and that makes for a much more interesting show in a way. Cole could get the title shot but at the same time it's hard to imagine Black not getting into the title hunt very soon. Then again it's hard to imagine Drew being champion for very long as he seems to be a much better fit on the main roster than around here. Anyway, good effort this week and I'm interested in where this stuff is going.

Results

Johnny Gargano b. Tino Sabbatelli – Gargano Escape

Bianca Belair b. Lacey Evans – Alley-Oop

Lars Sullivan b. No Way Jose – Standing Boss Man Slam

Kyle O'Reilly/Bobby Fish b. Trent Seven/Tyler Bate – High/Low to Seven

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