

NXT – March 1, 2017: It Better Be Going That Way

NXT

Date: March 1, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Tom Phillips

It's the final night of the taping cycle and we've got a big title match to send us out. This time around it's the Authors of Pain defending the Tag Team Titles against the former champions DIY. These teams had a surprisingly good match back at Takeover: San Antonio so maybe they can pull it off again here. Let's get to it.

Preview for tonight's show, including Asuka defending the Women's Title against Peyton Royce.

Opening sequence.

Sean Maluta vs. Patrick Clark

Clark is your latest "flamboyant" wrestler so Maluta punches him in the face during his opening....shall we say prancing. Maluta gets two off a Shining Wizard but Clark gets all ticked off and hammers away in the corner. A suplex sets up a chinlock and of course Maluta makes a quick comeback. Clark will have none of that though and hits a bad looking Fameasser for the pin at 2:40. The fans didn't seem impressed though Clark has a really athletic and lanky body which could be used in a better gimmick.

Sanity wants Tye Dillinger to accept his fate and stop drowning in his own choices. Instead of dragging his friends down with him, Tye needs to face Eric Young on his own. Nikki Cross says if he doesn't, the whole world will burn.

Women's Title: Peyton Royce vs. Asuka

Royce won a triple threat last week to earn her shot. Feeling out process

to start with Nigel talking about other great female Japanese wrestlers (and managing to plug the Network at the same time). A shoulder just fires Asuka up and she forearm's Peyton down. Both of them miss big kicks and it's a standoff.

Back to back hip attacks put Peyton on the floor but she sends Asuka into the steps as we take a break. We come back with Asuka fighting out of a chinlock (as is customary) so Royce starts working on the arm that went into the post. A standing armbar only seems to tick the champ off and a suplex drops Peyton.

Asuka starts striking away but hurts the arm again. Instead it's a Shining Wizard for two on Royce but a spinning kick to the face gets the same on Asuka. That goes nowhere though as Asuka kicks the heck out of Peyton and spins her down into the Asuka Lock to retain the title at 11:20.

Rating: C+. They did a very good job here of making Asuka look vulnerable. One of the biggest problems is finding a realistic opponent for her and this was as good as it was going to get with either Royce or Billie Kay. Asuka wasn't in the greatest danger here but she also didn't squash Peyton, which made for a much better match.

Post match Billie Kay comes in for the double team but Ember Moon makes the save. Asuka holds up the title and Ember stares her down. There's Takeover.

We look back at Takeover: San Antonio where Shinsuke Nakamura's knee was injured. Kassius Ohno checked on him in the back.

Here the end of last week's episode with Kassius Ohno saving No Way Jose from Bobby Roode and getting in a fight with Ohno clearing house.

William Regal makes Roode vs. Ohno for the title in two weeks.

Paul Ellering gives the Authors of Pain a pep talk.

Wolfgang is coming.

Shinsuke Nakamura is back next week.

Tag Team Titles: Authors of Pain vs. DIY

DIY is challenging. Akum stares Ciampa down to start but Tommaso isn't the slightest bit intimidated. The double spear through the ropes drops Akum and some double clotheslines put the champs on the floor. Ciampa tries a dive through the ropes but gets sent hard into the post to put him right back down.

Back in and Ciampa gets caught in the wrong corner and runs into a backbreaker for two. Ciampa chops and slaps the heck out of Akum but gets caught in an assisted backbreaker to put him down again. The one sided beating takes us to a break with Ciampa in trouble. Back with Tommaso avoiding a charge and making the hot tag off to Gargano so things can speed up. A suicide dive drops Akum and a springboard moonsault does the same to Razar.

The double strike to the corner drops Akum for two and Ciampa grabs his flip over armbar. Razar makes the save and sends Gargano to the floor. Ciampa gets in a kick though and Gargano comes back in for a double powerbomb out of the corner. Razar saves his partner from the running double strike (which really needs a name) but it's time for the stereo armbars. Cue the Revival for the DQ at 13:25.

Rating: B. These matches are giving me a Sting vs. Vader vibe where the smaller guys do whatever they can to take down the monsters but then they get hit really, really hard. The ending was the right call as all three of them deserve to be in the title hunt and there's a chance that the title match will be outstanding. The Authors are a good choice here for the sake of mixing things up and that makes for a good dynamic.

Back to back Shatter Machines let the Revival stand tall to end the show. I can't stand them (triple threats, not the Revival) but this better set up a triple threat tag match for the titles at Takeover.

Overall Rating: B. Fifty minutes go by and we seem to have two title matches set up for Takeover. In two or three weeks we'll likely have the NXT Title match and you can probably pencil in either Young vs. Dillinger or a big tag match as well. This show flew by and gave us some good wrestling as a bonus while setting up the big card. Good stuff all

around, as usual.

Results

Patrick Clark b. Sean Maluta – Fameasser

Asuka b. Peyton Royce – Asuka Lock

DIY b. Authors of Pain via DQ when Revival interfered

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

NXT

Date: October 19, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

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

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

Opening sequence.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We look back at Glorious Ten splitting up.

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

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

Bobby Roode vs. Sean Maluta

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

Rating: D+. Just a squash here, which is a good role for some of the lower level cruiserweights. We've seen what they can do in the tournament so these wins are more impressive than the ones you see over the run of the mill jobbers. Maluta has a good look and can be pushed if the need ever arrives, just like so many of the other people NXT has been using lately.

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

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

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

Aries' mystery partner is.....the debuting Roderick Strong, who teamed with

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

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

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

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

Nikki Cross vs. Danielle Kamella

Cross is just as crazy as she used to be and throws Danielle with a suplex. After biting and scratching herself, Nikki ends this with a fisherman's neckbreaker at 1:20. Total squash.

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

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

Overall Rating: B. I had a really good time here as they covered almost everything that's likely to be taking place at Takeover: Toronto in less

than an hour. We had good tag wrestling, a debut, story advancement and a hot ending. In other words, things you rarely get on Raw and/or Smackdown and in even less time. NXT knows how to turn on the jets whenever they need to and that's exactly what they've done again here.

Results

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

Bobby Roode b. Sean Maluta – Implant DDT

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

Danielle Kamella b. Nikki Cross via referee's decision

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NXT – October 5, 2016: I Love

That Concept

NXT

Date: October 5, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

It's time to start a tournament as we have the first round of the Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic kicking off tonight. Last year's event was a lot of fun and set up the NXT Title feud for the next several Takeovers. The finals of this year's tournament will be taking place at Takeover: Toronto in November so let's get to it.

The opening video talks about the Dusty Classic returning this year.

Opening sequence.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic First Round: Bollywood Boyz vs. Authors of Pain

Harv and Gurv Shira dance a lot before the bell so Razar puts Harv on the top rope for some clubberin. Gurv comes in and gets beaten down as well, setting up the Russian legsweep and clothesline combination (now dubbed the Last Chapter) for the pin at 1:47.

Dan Matha arrives tonight.

Rich Swann vs. Patrick Clark

Clark looks like he's wearing Prince style gear. Even Swann looks confused here. Rich does some dancing punches in the corner until he gets caught in a spinebuster. The fans sing Swann's theme song and he makes a quick comeback with a running kick in the corner. A running moonsault puts Clark away at 2:58.

We look back at Cedric Alexander and Andrade Cien Almas facing off a few weeks back and joining forces in the tournament as a result.

Video of Asuka squashing Liv Morgan last week. After the match, Billie

Kay and Peyton Royce laughed at Morgan's loss.

Peyton Royce vs. Danielle Kamela

Kamela starts fast with a small package and cross body for two each. Peyton sends her into the corner for some long legged choking and forearms to the chest. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Kamela fights up for handspring elbow, only to get kneed in the head. A fisherman's suplex gives Peyton the pin at 3:44.

Rating: D+. The wrestling wasn't much but it was a good sign that they're actually trying to make some new names both in the division and in the promotion as a whole. Royce and Kay are fine as replacements for Dana Brooke and Emma as the heel team, though I can't imagine them being much of a threat to Asuka.

Bobby Roode is way too fired up for the first round match in the Dusty Classic. He doesn't want to talk about Sanity when everyone is talking about Glorious Ten. "It will be glorious when we're victorious." Roode rushes Dillinger out before he can say anything.

Dan Matha comes out (looking like a cross between Matt Morgan and Nathan Jones) for his debut but here's Samoa Joe to beat him down instead. Joe asks Regal how many more have to suffer like this one here.

Rich Swann and No Way Jose have teamed up due to a love of dancing.

Dusty Rhodes Tag Team Classic First Round: Andrade Cien Almas/Cedric Alexander vs. Revival

Non-title. Alexander and Dawson start things off with Cedric getting shouldered down. Everything breaks down and the Revival is dropkicked out to the floor and a backdrop does it all over again. A big flip dive from Cedric takes the champs down again and it's all Alexander/Almas in the first four minutes. Revival finally gets it together by suckering Almas into a blindside forearm as we take a break.

Back with Dawson getting two off a northern lights suplex as the champs start in on Almas' arm. The fans want Cedric and an enziguri from Almas gives them what they want. Everything breaks down again and Alexander

gets two off a sunset flip into a bridge. Almas has knocked out to the floor though and it's the Shatter Machine to send the Revival on at 12:40.

Rating: B. I liked this more than I was expecting to as Almas is looking better while Alexander looks like one of the most natural newcomers to WWE in a very long time. Revival has to advance here and that's the only possibly outcome they could have, especially in the first round. Someone almost has to take them out though as you have Gargano/Ciampa and the Authors of Pain looming for them.

Post match, Almas beats Cedric down and sends him into the post. Almas soaks in the YOU SUCK chants to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. Another fast paced show with every story hitting perfectly. Almas turning is long overdue and is another example of NXT seeing something not working and changing course as a result. That's close to blasphemy in WWE but down here, it's what you do when something isn't going right. NXT actually pays attention and fixes things because they listen to their audience. I love that concept.

Results

Authors of Pain b. Bollywood Boyz – Last Chapter to Gurv

Rich Swann b. Patrick Clark – Running moonsault

Peyton Royce b. Danielle Kamela – Fisherman's suplex

Revival b. Cedric Alexander/Andrade Cien Almas – Shatter Machine to Alexander

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NXT – July 20, 2016: Those Final Shows

NXT

Date: July 20, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're heading towards Brooklyn and it's going to be a few weeks before we can really feel the differences from the Draft. There are three matches scheduled for tonight with the headliner of American Alpha vs. the Authors of Pain in the Authors' first match on the show. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about all three big matches tonight: American Alpha vs. Authors of Pain, Bayley vs. Nia Jax and Rhyno vs. Samoa Joe.

Opening sequence.

Rhyno vs. Samoa Joe

Non-title. I love the fact that Rhyno is the exact same guy he was back in ECW. There's something refreshing about having someone where you know exactly what you're going to get and nothing more. Rhyno runs him over with a shoulder to start but Joe comes back with his corner charge and the enziguri. A hard whip across the ring puts Rhyno down again and it's off to the nerve hold. The backsplash misses and Rhyno gets in his belly to belly. Joe blocks a Gore with some palm strikes and the Koquina Clutch puts Rhyno away at 6:23.

Rating: C+. Two big and thick guys beating on each other for a few minutes with Joe winning off his submission move. Like I said, you know exactly what to expect from someone like Rhyno and that's exactly what you can get. The thing is he knows how to wrestle that style and make it work perfectly well.

Asuka would love to face either Bayley or Nia Jax.

We look at the NXT names being taken in the Draft.

American Alpha vs. Authors of Pain

The Authors jump them on the ramp and it's not clear if we're going to have a match. Back from a break with Alpha charging to the ring with a referee right behind them. The brawl is on and Alpha clears the ring as we're still waiting on names for the Authors. Jordan starts with the bearded one (we'll call him #1 though they're pretty much interchangeable) and hits the running shoulder in the corner and a double northern lights suplex gets one.

It's quickly off to #2 who catches a launched Gable in a bearhug so #1 can splash him from behind. #1 slaps on a bearhug but Chad quickly escapes and makes the hot tag off to Jordan for the house cleaning. A belly to back suplex gets one on #2 but Gable tags in again and runs over #2 before throwing him across the ring on a release suplex. The ankle lock has #1 in trouble and Jordan dives over the top to take out #2. Gable goes outside as well but gets swung into the LED board. Jordan is sent into the steps, leaving Gable to take the Russian legsweep/clothesline combo for the pin at 6:34.

Rating: B-. This was a good way to get rid of Alpha and let them go up to the main roster. Sure they went out on a loss but NXT was smart enough to not have it be clean. The Authors are another simple idea for a team but that doesn't mean it's an idea that can't work. I liked the idea of Alpha being able to suplex these guys though as it prevents the match from being a squash, which makes it a lot more interesting.

Revival takes credit for the Authors' win because they softened Alpha up. Johnny Gargano and Tommaso Ciampa come in to say they've beaten Revival

once and that the clock is ticking.

Austin Aries vs. Patrick Clark

Clark was on Tough Enough and I believe this is his TV debut. Aries gets caught in an early armbar but he forearmlocks Clark in the face and gives him a flip belly to back suplex. The Last Chancery is good for the submission at 1:53.

No Way Jose comes out and beats on Aries post match.

Bayley vs. Nia Jax

Nia throws her into the corner to start and grabs an armbar of all things. Bayley swings away but walks into Snake Eyes. Some elbows and shoulders to the ribs before Nia just throws her outside as we take a break. Back with Bayley's crossbody working as well as you would expect and Nia throwing her outside for nine.

Now it's Nia being sent outside where she misses a charge into the steps for a near countout of her own. Well if it's good enough for Bayley it's good enough for Nia. Back in and Bayley slips out of an electric chair and into a victory roll for two before Nia just plows over her. A Jackhammer of all things gets two more but Nia stops short before trying the legdrop. Instead Nia goes to the middle rope, only to get pulled down into a super Bayley To Belly for the pin at 13:36.

Rating: B-. These two work well together and this was another good one with Bayley knowing how to play the underdog. That being said, I don't think anyone really bought Nia as having much of a chance here. It's a formula that's always going to work but as is almost always the case, the more you do a match the less interesting it becomes.

Overall Rating: C+. You can really feel the Draft starting to take its toll here as two of these matches have been effected by the people being called up. You have to think that the next few weeks, at least until Takeover, are going to be the final shows for a lot of these people and it's going to be a hard transition to fix things. Still good here though and that's what matters for now.

Results

Samoa Joe b. Rhyno – Koquina Clutch

Authors of Pain b. American Alpha – Russian legsweep/clothesline combination

Austin Aries b. Patrick Clark – Last Chancery

Bayley b. Nia Jax – Super Bayley To Belly

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