

NXT – August 24, 2016: On Vacation

NXT

Date: August 24, 2016

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

This is the closest thing NXT has to a week off as we'll have matches taped before Takeover this past Saturday night. That means we'll be seeing some stand alone stuff in front of a white hot crowd, which should make these matches mean a lot more than they would otherwise. Other than that and a few interviews, this isn't the biggest show in the world. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Saturday night.

Opening sequence.

Tye Dillinger vs. Wesley Blake

Dillinger is treated like a face here and the announcers seem to treat him as one. Fans to Blake: "LET'S GO ZERO!" Dillinger easily takes him to the mat and does a cartwheel before giving himself a ten. A poke to the eye puts Tye down and we take a break. Back with Dillinger's comeback being cut off by a Backstabber but Dillinger hiptosses him into the corner. A few shots to the chest and back set up the Tyebreaker (fireman's carry backbreaker onto an exposed knee) for the pin at 11:18.

Rating: C. This is where NXT is a step ahead of WWE. Dillinger was getting huge face pops and was clearly one of the most over gimmicks on the roster despite being a heel. The solution: turn him face and accept the chants. Now they have a freshly over guy who could move up the roster under the right circumstances and all NXT had to do was start putting him against heels. Dillinger did almost all the work and everyone comes out ahead. Why is this so complicated for the main roster?

Quick clip of Bobby Roode winning on Saturday.

Roode says that was no surprise. Almas was a fine opponent but he's not GLORIOUS.

Clips of Austin Aries beating No Way Jose and Hideo Itami making a post match save.

Aries is made that he didn't get to leave with his hand raised. He's tired of being interrupted and people stealing his moments. Aries has already gotten rid of people who interrupted him (Baron Corbin and No Way Jose) and Itami will be no different.

Long recap of Asuka vs. Bayley. Have they made it clear enough that they don't have much tonight?

We get a video of Bayley's time in NXT, including her reading part of her essay from middle school.

Bayley says this time was different but Asuka was just better. Ember Moon comes up and says Bayley should be proud of her performance and says she's here because of Bayley.

We see Bayley's Raw debut.

Video on Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa vs. Revival.

Revival knows they're the best and unstoppable. Top guys out. Clink me.

Recap of Shinsuke Nakamura taking the NXT Title from Samoa Joe. Nakamura is back next week.

TM61 vs. Authors of Pain

The Authors jump them before the bell and it's a brawl to start with TM61 actually taking over and sending the big men to the floor. The opening bell brings the Authors back inside and it's the tattooed Author (still waiting on names so we'll call him #1) slamming Thorn. TM61 comes back with some double teaming and a leg lariat in the corner. #1 sends Thorn hard into the post though and TM61 slows down. Apparently the tattooed one is Akum and the other is Razar. I prefer Tokka and Razar but that's

just me.

Back from a break with Thorn hitting a jawbreaker on Razar and rolling over for the tag off to Miller. Nick speeds things up and gets two off a high cross body. That's enough for the Authors as they lift TM61 up for stereo powerbombs and slam their backs together. The Russian legsweep/clothesline ends Miller at 11:29.

Rating: C. I get the idea of paying dues but TM61 is looking more and more like a pair of jobbers every week. I'm assuming this sets up the Authors of Pain as potential challengers to the Revival but I'm really not sure how that's going to go. You don't often see heel vs. heel and I'm not sure how much Revival could do with guys this big. The Authors are certainly something different though and that's usually a good thing.

Overall Rating: D+. This was the usual post outside Orlando Takeover show and there's nothing wrong with that. They cobbled together whatever they could here and it was basically a week off as a result. I'm fine with them taking a break after all the effort they put in on Takeover and next week things will be back to normal. Just a week off here and that's fine.

Results

Tye Dillinger b. Wesley Blake – Tyebreaker

Authors of Pain b. TM61 – Russian legsweep/clothesline combo to Miller

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NXT Takeover: Back To Brooklyn: That Crowd Man

Takeover: Back to Brooklyn

Date: August 20, 2016

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

This might be NXT's biggest show of the year, especially after last year's amazing double main event that really turned Bayley into a star. This year's main event could be even bigger with Samoa Joe defending the NXT Title against Shinsuke Nakamura and Bayley trying to get the Women's Title back against the monster champion Asuka. Let's get to it.

We open with a look back at the opening of last year's show with HHH in the ring and the lights showing the huge crowd. That shot told you there was something different with this show and it was going to be something special.

Various people sit down for interviews, all looking a bit nervous. They all talk about where they were a year ago and how cool it is for them to move this far forward in such a short amount of time. Almost everyone says they take over Brooklyn. Bayley: "Tonight, I take over Brooklyn. Again."

Austin Aries vs. No Way Jose

Jose loves to have fun and Aries is serious. In the traditionally big NXT entrance, Jose comes out with a huge conga line around the ring. Aries hides in the corner to start and the very vocal crowd is all the way behind him. Jose accepts a left handshake but slaps Aries in the face. A BIG right hand knocks Aries outside and Jose follows with an ax handle off the apron. Aries finally gets an opening by dropping Jose throat first across the top rope but a few chops take him down again.

The Last Chancery out of nowhere has Jose in trouble but he crawls over for the break. Jose grabs a TKO for two, only to have Aries send him outside for the suicide dive. Back in and Aries' suplex is countered into something like a falcon arrow for a very close two. Jose punches him down again and is showing some great fire here. The running corner dropkick gets two for Aries and another Last Chancery makes Jose tap at 10:40.

Rating: B-. I think this is proof that Jose is just waiting on a serious gimmick to go somewhere. Jose felt like someone doing a serious version of a comedy gimmick and looked great here, including the more than good enough wrestling abilities. Aries needed this win a lot more though as he really hasn't done anything special since debuting way back in the spring.

Aries puts on another Last Chancery after the match but Hideo Itami comes out for the save and uses the GTS for the first time on NXT TV. That's a good idea as they both need a feud.

Ric Flair is here.

Billie Kay vs. Ember Moon

This is Moon's debut. Ember starts fast and shows off some awesome agility with a headscissors and a hiptoss before showing off red eyes. A spinning cross body gets two for Moon but she gets caught in an Eat Defeat to give Billie two. Billie bends her over the shoulder and chokes at the same time (picture a Gory Stretch but with a choke). Ember makes her comeback with a kick to the ribs and a butterfly suplex followed by a top rope Stunner (it looked better than it sounds) for the pin at 4:32.

Rating: C. I go back and forth on how much offense someone should get on a debuting wrestler here. You don't want it to be a squash but at the same time you want the newcomer to look like a threat. The eyes and the finisher looked great (though if that's botched, it's going to look HORRIBLE) and that's all that matters though. Moon could be the fresh blood that the division needs and that's a great thing going forward.

Earlier today, Bobby Roode insulted Brooklyn and said he was more Manhattan.

We recap Bobby Roode vs. Andrade Cien Almas, which basically means Roode debuted and needed a first victim.

Bobby Roode vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Roode's entrance gets the pop of the night and he comes out on a high podium which is lowered down to the stage. Oh and the entire crowd sings his entrance before starting a loud BOBBY ROODE chant. Poor Almas has to follow that and the lack of caring is just painful to see. Fans: "THIS IS GLORIOUS!" Roode takes him down a few times to start and the fans cheer him to no end with a GLORIOUS chant.

Almas finally gets to do something by knocking Roode to the floor and posing on the apron for a cute bit. That just earns him a crotching on the top though and we hit the chinlock. Back up and Almas dropkicks him off the top to set up a springboard corkscrew plancha. Almas has to backflip out of a German superplex but his Lionsault into a standing moonsault hits knees.

Andrade wins a slugout and kicks Roode into the corner to set up the running knee strike. Not that it matters as Roode kicks him in the face and scores with a spinebuster. A pumphandle slam (the Glorious Bomb, a good name for a not great move) puts Almas away at 10:28.

Rating: C+. I'll give Almas some credit here for trying to make something out of a match where he had no chance. The fans only wanted to see Roode here and it was clear that this was his showcase instead of anything else. It's easy to imagine Roode or Aries as the next challenger to the NXT Title as it's not like there's a better option for a non-Takeover challenger.

We get a video of a riot and anarchy with the word SANITY spray painted on a wall.

HHH and the guys from Orange County Choppers unveil the Cruiserweight Classic trophy. It's a black column with a globe on top. Uh, yeah. The finals will be on September 14.

Tommaso Ciampa throws Johnny Gargano a Do It Yourself shirt. I guess

that's their official name.

We recap Gargano/Ciampa vs. Revival. Gargano and Ciampa beat Revival and then Revival won the Tag Team Titles a few weeks later, meaning Gargano and Ciampa were the obvious first challengers.

Tag Team Titles: Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa vs. Revival

Dash and Dawson are defending. Dawson works on Ciampa's wrist to start but Tommaso sends him to the floor for a breather. Back in and the challengers take over with some double teaming (your heroes) until Gargano grabs an armbar. A chase sets up a four way staredown with the champs being knocked down to reset things a bit. The breather is short lived though as Gargano and Ciampa dive onto both of them to keep the champs in trouble.

Ciampa finally gets pulled into the wrong corner and Graves calls is clubberin. Wilder grabs a chinlock for a bit until Ciampa kicks both champs down. That's not enough for a tag though as Wilder is smart enough to pull Gargano off the apron. I love it when teams show thinking like that. We hit a bodyscissors on Ciampa with Dawson rubbing a forearm across his face. The referee doesn't see a tag to Gargano and the distracted referee also misses something like a Demolition Decapitator on Ciampa.

Dawson misses a charge into the post though and Dash crotches himself, allowing the hot tag to Gargano. Johnny cleans house and spears Dawson through the ropes for a near fall. Some heel chicanery allows Dawson to grab a DDT (which works more because he got a pin with it recently) for two. It's back to Ciampa though and Dawson gets caught in the flip over armbar, only to have Dash dive in for the save.

Everything breaks down and Gargano breaks up a double suplex to let Ciampa get two more off a small package in the very hot near fall of the match. Ciampa knees Dawson in the head but the Shatter Machine is broken up, leaving Dash to take the knee/superkick combo for three but Dawson put the foot on the rope. That earns Dawson a superkick to the floor but he pulls Ciampa outside, allowing Dash to chop block Gargano. That middle rope stomp to the leg that got rid of Big Cass wrecks the knee even worse

and a reverse Figure Four makes Johnny tap at 19:06.

Rating: A-. It's not quite their classic with American Alpha but the Revival is looking more and more like the best team in a long time every time they get in the ring. They just can't do anything wrong at this point which is even more important when you consider how basic they are. This leaves either TM61 or the Authors of Pain as the next challengers, assuming Gargano/Ciampa don't get a rematch due to the false finish. Great match.

Ciampa and Gargano get a standing ovation.

Sasha Banks, Becky Lynch and Charlotte are here.

We hear about the third official theme song for the show. I'm not even sure I get the idea of an official song for a show, let alone three for a show that isn't going to run two and a half hours.

We recap Asuka vs. Bayley in a rematch from their match in Dallas. Asuka was way too much for Bayley, despite Bayley dominating the first half of the match. It's taken some time to set up the rematch as Bayley wasn't ready to fight either mentally or physically. Tonight we're in the place where Bayley made magic once before and now she has to do it again.

Women's Title: Bayley vs. Asuka

Bayley is defending and there's a Hugger Section. You know that's killer spelled backwards (some of you might not get that one). Bayley expands the entrance this time with tube men at ringside, giving us a great surprised expression from the referee. The fans are split here as we're told Bayley's headband is from part of her gear at last year's Brooklyn show.

Bayley tries a rollup but dives into a knee to the face to send her outside. Back in and Asuka hip attacks her down, followed by more shots to the face. Asuka is hardly taking this seriously as she kicks Bayley in the face for another near fall. Bayley comes back with ten rams into the buckle though and a running knee drop gets two. The running hip attack is blocked for a change but Bayley misses a high crossbody.

Not that it matters as Bayley puts her in the Tree of Woe for a running elbow but Asuka grabs a Brock Lock of all things. An ankle lock makes things even worse for Bayley and Asuka fires off some kicks to the chest. Bayley goes with the Sting vs. Vader formula of telling the monster to hit her harder, earning herself a spinning backfist. A powerbomb doesn't quite work so Bayley switches to a Dominator (good save).

Asuka grabs the Asuka Lock out of nowhere but it's reversed into a Bayley to Belly for a very near fall. You could see Sasha and Becky jump to their feet on the counter. Back up and Bayley charges into the Asuka Lock in the middle of the ring but she flips over into a cover for two. That's fine with Asuka who kicks Bayley in the head to retain 14:10.

Rating: B. Good match here, assuming you can get by the referee telling them how much time they had left (happened in the previous match too) and telegraphing the finish. Asuka winning here makes sense and can we PLEASE send Bayley to the main roster already? There's nothing left for her to do down here and there's no reason to keep her down here, including helping to grow the division or whatever they've said for months now. Just let her go up there where they can have her babysit their "star" Eva Marie.

Asuka helps Bayley up and Bayley raises the champ's hand. Asuka leaves and Bayley gets the big THANK YOU chant which really feels like the sendoff. Bayley hugs her fellow Horsewomen before leaving.

We recap Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Samoa Joe. Nakamura debuted back in April and has taken the promotion by storm. Joe on the other hand is the NXT Champion and basically unbeatable. That sounds like a recipe for a big showdown. This gets the music video treatment.

Mick and Noelle Foley and Finn Balor are here.

NXT Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Samoa Joe

Joe is defending and a violinist plays Nakamura to the ring. They go right at it to start with Joe taking it to the mat but Nakamura holds him off before Joe can get in anything major. Joe's headlock keeps Nakamura in trouble but he comes back with knees to the chest. Good Vibrations

gets on Joe's nerves and they head outside for a chop out before barely making it back in.

Back in and Nakamura kicks him in the head, only to miss a knee drop on the apron to send the knee straight into the floor. That earns him a suicide elbow from the champ, followed by more heavy kicks and stomps to the ribs. We hit a dragon sleeper of all things as this really hasn't been the match I was expecting. It's not bad mind you but when you're expecting a knock down dragout fight and get a hard hitting match, it's a bit surprising.

Joe does the powerbomb into the Boston crab into the STF into the Crossface but Joe lets him up. Nakamura kicks the champ in the head and loads him onto the top rope for the running knee to the ribs. More knees to the head have Joe in trouble as we're getting into the hard hitting part now. The Rock Bottom out of the corner drops Nakamura but a middle rope kick to the chest puts the champ down again.

Nakamura grabs a triangle choke but can't get it on full, allowing Joe to reverse into a Cloverleaf. The Koquina Clutch goes on without the legs fully wrapped, allowing Nakamura to get to the ropes. The referee says go to the finish as Kinshasa is countered with a snap powerslam. A quick Muscle Buster gets two, followed by Kinshasa for the same with Joe holding his face. The middle rope knee to the back sets up another Kinshasa for the pin and the title at 21:14.

Rating: A. Was there really another option here? This wasn't quite the war I was expecting but they nailed the ending and went with the best possible choice to wrap up the show. Nakamura taking the title and remaining undefeated makes sense to give the show a special feeling. Joe likely stays around for a well deserved rematch but he'll be on the main roster by the day after Wrestlemania at the very latest, if not in the Rumble.

Joe has to be helped up the ramp as Nakamura celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. Somehow that's on the lower end of this series' spectrum. The main event and Tag Team Titles matches are both worth seeing and bring this one up into the realm of greatness though and

that's what NXT is all about. Nothing on here is bad, they set up some stuff for the future and gave us some great wrestling to go with it. Above all else though is the crowd. They basically had the same attendance that Summerslam will have tomorrow and that's impressive no matter how you look at it. I would tell you to check this out but does anyone not watch these shows? Great stuff, as expected.

Results

Austin Aries b. No Way Jose – Last Chancery

Ember Moon b. Billie Kay – Top rope Stunner

Bobby Roode b. Andrade Cien Almas – Glorious Bomb

Revival b. Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa – Reverse Figure Four to Gargano

Asuka b. Bayley – Kick to the head

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Samoa Joe – Kinshasa

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New Column: I'll Die Before I Dishonor Brooklyn By Going Back To Takeover Summerslam

Three previews in one, meaning my fingers are rather tired.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-ill-die-before-i-dishonor-brooklyn-by-going-back-to-takeover-summerslam/>

NXT – August 3, 2016: A Little Old And A Little New

NXT

Date: August 3, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're less than three weeks away from Takeover: Back To Brooklyn and a lot of the card seems to be set. Before we get there though, we have two big names back/returning tonight with Hideo Itami making his TV return after nearly a year and a half away and Bobby Roode making his TV debut. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Hideo Itami vs. Sean Maluta

Maluta was in the Cruiserweight Classic so Zack Sabre Jr., Drew Gulak and Tony Nese are in the front row. Hideo shoulders him down to start and kicks Maluta in the back before casually kicking him in the face. Something like a middle rope Codebreaker gives Maluta a near fall and

it's off to a bodyscissors. Itami comes right back up with his quick strikes to set up a hesitation dropkick in the corner. The running knee puts Sean away at 3:49.

Rating: C. Itami is the same guy he was back in the day and that's not the most thrilling person in the world. He has all the skills you could need but there's just not the kind of fire that's going to get me interested in seeing him come out. The barrage of strikes feels old hat now as there are so many people who do the same thing and that gets a bit tiresome. Still glad to have him back though as NXT really needs top names at the moment.

We look at the Authors of Pain beating American Alpha in Alpha's last match.

Revival says they're the best team in the world but here's TM61 to say the world is a big place. They've fought the best around the world so how about a title shot. Revival suggests that they go to the back of the line but here are Johnny Gargano and Tommaso Ciampa to say that their ticket says #1. Revival says the teams can figure it out amongst themselves.

Mojo Rawley vs. Chris Atkins

No time to talk as Samoa Joe comes in for the DQ at 23 seconds.

Joe says if Regal doesn't have to ask him who he's facing then he doesn't have to ask Regal when he can disrupt the show. Rawley tries to fight back and gets choked out with ease.

Bayley has been studying Asuka's matches and thinks she's ready. Asuka comes in to say not so fast.

Asuka vs. Aliyah

Bayley is on commentary but Asuka offers her a chair to sit down in the aisle. That's fine with Bayley but she would rather stand actually. Asuka cuts off Aliyah's early offense and nails a running hip attack. Aliyah gets up a boot to stop a charge but dives into a kick to the head for two with Asuka pulling her off the mat. The Asuka Lock ends the destruction at 2:30.

Bayley comes in to break things up and Asuka holds up the title.

We look back at Oney Lorcan beating Tye Dillinger in an upset last month.

Lorcan wasn't sure it was an upset but he knows the competition is going to get stronger. He needs to go back to his roots.

The universe is shifting vignette. It's for Ember Moon, who debuts at Takeover. That would be the recently signed Athena.

Here's Bobby Roode with his rather awesome theme song which keeps saying "GLORIOUS! I WILL DEFEND" in the chorus. Roode says the wait is over because he is NXT. A few months ago he was in Dallas for Wrestlemania weekend and he knew it was the place he needed to be. He was very lucky to be with those fans because they're just as much NXT as anyone else.

Roode is ready to take NXT to that next level but it needs him, just like everyone else here needs him. Now that NXT has found their new superstar, his face will be on billboards and TV campaigns so he can take the company to corporate America and Wall Street. Then this place will be filled with Presidents of Fortune 500 companies instead of people in cargo shorts and overly large shirts. He is a superstar from his watch to his socks because there has never been anyone like him. From now on NXT will be GLORIOUS. This was some combination of Rick Rude and Ric Flair and it was rather awesome.

TM61 vs. Revival

Non-title. Miller cranks on Dawson's wrist to start and a double shoulder gets two early on. Thorn keeps him on the mat with the wristlock but a hair pull gives Dawson some relief. A quick dropkick hits Dawson in the face and we take a break. Back with Thorn's shoulder being worked over like only an old school tag team can. Dawson hits a dropkick to a downed Thorn for two more.

Dash almost does the dive into two boots but is fast enough to catch himself, only to get kicked into the corner. The hot tag brings in Miller as everything breaks down. A spinebuster gets two on Dawson and it's time for a chase, capped off by Dawson grabbing a DDT on Miller for the pin at

11:16.

Rating: C. I'm liking the Revival more and more every time they're out there while TM61 continues to look like a team that is just kind of there. This was a fairly decisive victory but to be fair it was too early for them to give the Revival much of a fight yet. It's pretty clear that Gargano and Ciampa are the next challengers and they certainly should be after that recent win over the champs.

Post match Revival brags about beating a bunch of teams but here are Gargano and Ciampa to pick up some of the names Revival just dropped. That means teams like the Hollywood Blonds, Kermit the Frog/Miss Piggy and Pikachu/Charizard. Fans: "POKEMON! POKEMON!" Gargano: "Serious question: have you caught them all?" The challenge is issued but Revival goes to leave, triggering the brawl. Wilder is taken down and Gargano counts his own three count to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The women and the tag division got some major boosts here which they were really needing as neither feud was really on fire heading into Brooklyn. The two big names showing up were a nice way to make the show feel important but it's all about Brooklyn at the moment and we can really get more into those two in the coming weeks. Another good show here as we're firmly getting ready for the big show.

Results

Hideo Itami b. Sean Maluta – Running knee

Mojo Rawley b. Chris Atkins via DQ when Samoa Joe interfered

Asuka b. Aliyah – Asuka Lock

Revival b. TM61 – DDT to Miller

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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 backplash 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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NXT House Show – July 15, 2016

The wife and I took in the NXT house show in Highland Heights, Kentucky (ten minutes from downtown Cincinnati) on Friday night. I had wanted to go to one of these things for a long time and was almost more excited to see this than I was for Takeover: Dallas.

The arena held roughly 10,000 people but it was cut in half and the upper deck was tarped off, leaving only a few thousand seats. The place was just over half full as the floor seats were full but only the back

section (as in facing the screen) was anywhere near fall. We were on the first row of our section (maybe three feet above the floor) with our tickets running about \$33 each so it's not like they were overly expensive.

Before the show we saw some WWE Top Ten videos and the fans were allowed to pick a classic NXT match with options of:

Seth Rollins vs. Jinder Mahal

Sami Zayn vs. Neville

Sasha Banks vs. Bayley

The latter won by a landslide though it was only a highlight package, which really did make sense as you don't want to get the crowd that fired up before the actual show starts.

No Way Jose vs. Hugo Knox

Knox is a very muscular British wrestler, meaning the fans were chanting various British swear words at him. Jose is a lot of fun live and a perfect choice to open the show. He did all of his baseball slide, including running around the ring and touching all of the buckles into a dropkick. A legdrop of all things put Knox away at 8:12 for a really fun opener that did everything it was supposed to. Knox was nothing great but he would be fine as a Chris Masters type midcarder.

Angelo Dawkins vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Dawkins is from Cincinnati, earning himself his only reaction ever. This was the exact same problem that Almas had in the Dillinger matches: putting him in a match where there was no way he was going to be the most over guy and it really dragged things down. Almas really isn't the most exciting guy in the world though he played a subtle heel here, as was his only option. Dawkins won with a Sky High at 5:26 and they hugged after. This was nothing but the fans reacted to Dawkins for being the hometown guy.

Bayley vs. Billie Kay

This was a change in the card (which was shown on an old school wrestling poster which seems to be a normal thing for NXT house shows and were selling very well) as it was originally going to be Bayley/Asuka vs. Kay/Alexa Bliss. Billie did her closest thing to sexy in NXT stuff to start but Bayley laughed at her and stole some of her gear. Billie begged her not to so Bayley relented, only to point out to the crowd that Billie actually lost to Dana Brooke.

This started off as a comedy match with Bayley promising to hug her and then ambushing the referee with the hug instead. The match was your standard Bayley stuff with her having fun against the less talented Billie to start, getting beaten down and having her ribs worked over for a bit and then hitting the Bayley to Belly for the pin at 10:22. The fans LOVED Bayley and she received the pop of the night, save for maybe one name later. She's a total superstar down there though and I'm really scared that they're going to ruin her on the big shows.

Finn Balor vs. Bobby Roode

Roode's music is really awesome and one of the better songs they've done in a good while. Before the match, Roode called all of us fat out of shape losers and said he was going to be the new star of NXT. Even with all this stuff and insulting fans ala Ric Flair, the fans just would not hate him. Balor on the other hand was as revered as you would expect and we got a strong SEE YOU TUESDAY chant to start things off.

This was actually a pretty short match with Balor never being in any real danger. The Sling Blade and Coup de Grace finished Roode in about seven minutes and Balor took a bow before leaving. It's really clear that he's going and it's cool to see him getting a nice sendoff on the house show circuit after a great TV match.

Intermission.

Before we got back to the matches, the female host (who shared hosting duties with Tom Phillips for a very good pairing all night long) had a fan answer a question for a prize. The idea here was pretty simple: we saw a clip of something in WWE history and were given choices of what happened next. The clip was Vince walking down the hallway and getting

into his car on Vince McMahon Appreciation Night and the next scene was him being blown up. One problem here: THE KID WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD!

As soon as the clip started you could hear the crowd gasping and almost panicking because an eight year old, as in someone who wasn't alive when this aired, was playing a game involving attempted murder. Oh and to make matters even better, the fourth option was "The Undertaker takes Vince McMahon to" a very dark and scary place as the host put it, thankfully censoring the actual option.

So yes, since the WWE has NO OTHER CLIPS OF ANYTHING, an eight year old played a game involving seeing Vince McMahon blown up with the other option being Undertaker taking Vince to a place that had to be censored. This was so out of place and really felt like no one actually thought about it, which isn't something you expect from NXT, or anyone with a brain for that matter.

Hideo Itami vs. Beautiful Blonde Blake

This is Blake's new gimmick but there's really nothing different about him. If he hadn't been introduced under the new name, no one would have really noticed a difference. Blake also had a generic Titantron video with his name spinning around over a blue background, which is the same thing Dawkins and Knox had. They're not much but it's better than nothing. Itami got a pretty standard WELCOME BACK chant and is basically the same as when he left.

The match was comedy to start with Blake heading outside because he didn't like all the kicks and strikes. That didn't last long though as he called himself Black Belt Blake and tried to throw some kicks with a fairly obvious result. The fans got on Blake for his tasseled boots, saying that Bayley wanted her boots back. We also got a MURPHY'S BETTER/CENA SUCKS chant for a bit of a chuckle. Itami came back with his bunch of kicks and won with the shotgun kick at 10:07. This was longer than necessary and Itami still doesn't show much fire.

Women's Title: Asuka vs. Alexa Bliss

Alexa had her hair pulled back here for a new look. This was actually one

of the best matches of the night as Bliss has gotten way better in recent months and actually had a good match here. Asuka showed some personality here by dancing a lot when Bliss tried to get too fancy. The Asuka Lock retained the title at 12:14. This might have been the second best match of the night.

NXT Title: Samoa Joe vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

I'll give you two guesses who got the bigger pop than Bayley. Before the match Joe said he hated being here in Highland Heights and didn't like NXT having to lie about being in Cincinnati because that town sucks too. This wasn't going to be a title shot though because Nakamura beating Balor wasn't enough to earn himself a title shot. As he was talking, the Revival ran in for the beatdown but American Alpha came out for the save. Nakamura wanted to make it a six man against Joe and.....Nakamura to Jordan: "What their names?"

Revival/Samoa Joe vs. Shinsuke Nakamura/American Alpha

This was exactly what you would expect with the good guys doing a big, fast paced cleaning of the ring to start with suplexes and strikes to set up a big pose for one of the loudest reactions of the night. Gable played Ricky Morton for a bit before Jordan did the same, setting up the hot tag to Nakamura. Everything broke down and Nakamura pinned Dash with Kinshasa at 14:00. This was a lot of fun but the crowd was starting to get a bit burned out. The winners all did Nakamura's pose by the ropes to end the show.

Overall this was a very fun night with NXT knowing exactly how to give the fans a fun night. The faces won every match and you got to see every big name (Austin Aries being the biggest name missing and he's hardly a main eventer) on the roster. With cheap tickets and not a bad seat in the house, this was definitely worth going to and really well organized for a much more fun feeling than a lot of WWE house shows. Check them out if they're ever near you, in case you actually need that advice.

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<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01IH70904>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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NXT – July 6, 2016: Use Them While You Can

NXT

Date: July 6, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're picking up where last week's show left off with the tag team division getting the focus. Last week saw American Alpha saying they deserve a title shot so tonight it's Alpha vs. the Revival in a 2/3 falls match. These teams have some of the best chemistry you'll see in a long time so this has a lot of potential. Let's get to it.

Quick video on Alpha vs. Revival.

Opening sequence.

Bayley vs. Alexa Bliss

The fans are already into their songs as Bayley gets in an elbow to the back. Apparently Bliss isn't a music lover though as she catapults Bayley throat first into the bottom rope. Bliss stays on the throat with a clothesline and more choking. She skates on Bayley's back for a bit but Bayley just stands up and buckle bombs her to take over. Some running

elbows and knees in the corner get two on Alexa but she pops up with one heck of a right hand and we take a break.

Back with Bliss telling the referee that Bayley is fine before being pulled throat first into the middle rope. The psycho eyes leg sweep set up Bliss' knees to the ribs but Bayley breaks up Twisted Bliss. A super Bayley to Belly is blocked but Alexa's sunset bomb only gets two, meaning it's time for Bliss to freak out. I don't know why as she's more than holding her own and giving Bayley a good match. Bayley goes to the middle rope but gets her legs pulled out to send her head into the buckle. Not that it matters as Bayley to Belly puts Bliss away at 11:54.

Rating: B-. Bliss has gotten a lot better in the ring in recent weeks and she's actually closed the gap between herself and the top names in the division. Her offense looked a lot better this week and she even had Bayley in some trouble at times. I'm curious to see where this new Bayley road to redemption goes though as it would seem that she's ready for the main roster but this could lead to another big title shot. Unless Asuka beats her again, which would be a bit of a surprise.

Post match Bayley says she's still getting up but couldn't stand seeing Nia Jax getting her title shot at the last Takeover.

Video on TM61.

Blake and Murphy vs. Hype Bros

The announcers agree with me that these Blake and Murphy reunions are just getting sad at this point. They argue over a tag ten seconds in but RHYNO comes out and Gores Blake for the DQ at 54 seconds.

Rhyno gores everyone not named Murphy (who got out of the way) and poses a lot.

Long video on Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Finn Balor with people talking about how huge of a match this is because both of them are such important names to NXT and wrestling around the world.

Alpha says the longer their match goes, the better they get.

Samoa Joe is back next week.

Rhyno has no comment.

Tag Team Titles: American Alpha vs. Revival

Revival is defending and this is 2/3 falls. Dash and Chad get things going and Dawson has to pull his partner away from an ankle lock in the first thirty seconds. It's off to Dawson vs. Jordan with the latter spinning around Scott like he's not even there. Dawson takes a swing at Gable and everything breaks down for a bit with Alpha easily cleaning house as we take a break.

Back with the champs working on Jordan's leg with a knee to the hamstring and the leg being wrapped around the post. Gable gets lured in and Wilder gets in a few cheap shots on Jordan. I love old school tactics like that and they still work to this day. Jordan kicks away at the back to get out of a leg lock and the hot tag brings in Gable to take over with clotheslines and an exploder suplex for two on Dawson. Chad runs the ropes but Dash low bridges him to the floor for a nasty crash and we take another break.

Back with Dawson keeping Chad in trouble on the mat before he atomic drops Dash into a legdrop for two. The crowd loses some points with someone shouting "You can do it! You can do it all night long!" but Dawson makes it a bit better by sliding over to break up a hot tag to Jordan. Dawson's strong spinebuster gets two and the fans keep begging with Chad to make the tag.

Gable grabs a sunset flip but Dash doesn't let him get the tag again, which draws in Jordan so the champs can double team Chad in the corner. Again, classic old school tactics and they still work. The Trash Compactor gets two but Chad sends the champs into each other and crawls through the legs for the hot tag to Jordan. Of all the things Alpha excels at, the hot tag to Jordan is the best thing they do as he just goes nuts with right hands and suplexes for everyone.

Everything breaks down and Gable suplexes Dawson, setting up double ankle locks with Dash tapping for the first fall at 23:22. Dawson immediately

tries a top rope sunset flip but Jordan drops down into a cradle for two. Scott's DDT gets the same on Jordan and he grabs an inverted Figure Four to make Jason tap at 24:30. Dawson is smart enough to go for the same hold again but Jordan slips out and tags Gable back in for some near falls of his own. A blind tag brings in Jordan but the champs break up Grand Amplitude.

The Shatter Machine is broken up and Jordan's sunset flip gets two on Dawson. Scott kicks off the ankle lock and gets the inverted Figure Four again, only to have Gable dive off the top for the save. The double tag brings in Gable and Dawson who slug it out on the apron with Chad trying the German suplex until Dash makes the save, setting up the Shatter Machine on the apron for the third fall at 28:14.

Rating: A. This was a nice one two punch as the first fall was the long form tag formula stuff but it took the third fall to have the drama. That's part of the problem with these matches: the match isn't ending in the first fall so it's a little bit harder for the fans to get into the near falls.

It's still the best tag team chemistry anyone has had in years and I'm actually surprised that Alpha wound up losing the big blowoff match. It frees them up for one more match against the Authors of Pain before they head to the main roster for good and thankfully this was a fun one to wrap up their title picture time. Awesome TV main event here and that's all you could expect it to be.

Overall Rating: A. Great match tonight, set up another huge match for next week, have a good Bayley match to start it off and Rhyno is back. That's how you use fifty five minutes of wrestling TV and there are still so many more stories they have going on at the same time that weren't even covered tonight. They've turned on the jets again and are making the most out of this talent before it heads up to the main roster, which is all they can really do at this point. It's another great show with the tag division leading the way again.

Results

Bayley b. Alexa Bliss – Bayley to Belly

Blake and Murphy b. Hype Bros via DQ when Rhino interfered

Revival b. American Alpha – Shatter Machine to Gable

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NXT – June 29, 2016: Compelling Wrestling Television

NXT

Date: June 29, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're back to one of the things NXT does best as there's a major match in a few weeks and a few things in between to tide us over. Tonight we have Carmella vs. Alexa Bliss, which has the potential to be something interesting and then be a bigger match down the line. The tag division is heating up again as well so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Carmella vs. Alexa Bliss

Bliss takes over early on with a running shoulder but Carmella snaps off a headscissors. A bad looking snapmare puts Bliss on the floor and the fans aren't sure who to cheer for. Back in and Carmella takes her down with a headlock, only to get stomped on as we take a break.

We come back with Carmella fighting back with right hands and running clotheslines, followed by a superkick. The Bronco Buster connects but Alexa rolls out with a sunset flip for another near fall. They're not exactly lighting up the offense here. The Sparkle Splash is broken up and a Stratusphere gets two. A choke shovedown sets up the Sparkle Splash, now called Twisted Bliss, for the pin on Carmella at 13:08.

Rating: C. You really can see the line between the two levels of female wrestlers in NXT. Bayley, Asuka and Nia (to a lesser degree) are just on a different plain than these women, though the important thing is that these two have gotten better. The match was fine and they didn't screw up, but more importantly they have characters and there's a lot more to them than their looks. In other words, they're developing, like they're supposed to.

We see Finn Balor and Shinsuke Nakamura's initial segment from two weeks back.

Nakamura talks about traveling the roads with Balor and being very happy for him becoming an NXT star. But now Nakamura is here and he needs something to move him up to the next level. Before becoming a champion, he has to face the icons, including Finn Balor. He promises something special when they get in the ring. Nakamura's English was fine here

Bayley is ready to go after the Women's Title again but Alexa comes in and says she should get the next shot. If Bayley wants the shot, she can go through Alexa.

Noah Potjes vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Potjes is a somewhat creepy guy who we've seen before. Almas hits a quick dropkick to start and teases a pair of dives but stays in the ring both

times, kind of annoying the crowd. Back in and Noah kicks him in the ribs and puts on a chinlock. Almas gets in some kicks of his own though and the running knees in the corner give him the pin at 2:54. Still not much to see here.

Austin Aries doesn't like the idea that he isn't getting the respect he deserves around here. Someone like No Way Jose comes out here without ever having beaten anyone, dances a bit, and gets cheered. The fans chant Austin sucks? No, because they suck. From now on, the fans are getting what they deserve from Aries.

Balor talks about going to Japan when he was twenty four and Nakamura was the first person to really show him how things went over there. They're friends outside the ring and Balor was happy to help show him the way in this country. There's no animosity between them but now they're having to face each other. The fans are in for something special.

Bayley vs. Bliss is set for next week.

Tommaso Ciampa/Johnny Gargano vs. Hype Bros

Rawley sends Gargano into the corner to start and hits a three point stance tackle before bringing in Ryder, who eats a dropkick. Ciampa comes in, drawing a PSYCHO KILLER chant, and grabs a cravate. Johnny sends Ryder to the floor and hits a big old dive, only to have Rawley get in a hard clothesline as we take a break.

We come back with Rawley in control as we have dueling JOHNNY WRESTLING/HE AIN'T HYPED chants. Ryder adds a missile dropkick but Gargano breaks up the Hype Ryder. Tommaso gives Ryder a discus lariat for two but Ryder powerbombs both of them off the top. The Elbro gets two on Ciampa and Gargano's rollup gets the same on Ryder. Ciampa breaks up the Broski Boot and the running knee/kick to the head combo puts Ryder away at 11:17.

Rating: B. Well that was a surprise. Who knew the Hype Bros had something like that in them? Just having them as a basic power/speed team is a fine idea and I could easily see them as gatekeepers for the Tag Team Titles. Gargano and Ciampa get better every single week and I could really go for

a match between the two of them and Revival.

Post match Gargano and Ciampa say they beat the Revival a few weeks back. That sounds like they deserve a title shot but here's American Alpha to disagree. Gable says they're the former champions so if Gargano and Ciampa want a shot, it can be against them. They'll deal with the Authors of Pain later but right now it's time to take the titles back.

Cue the Revival to say they're driving the car and calling the shots. I love how Dawson holds the folded up belt in his hand. Dawson tells "Garganzalla and Chimpy" that they haven't earned a shot and American Alpha are more like the betas around here. This brings out William Regal and you can feel the fans smiling. Ciampa and Gargano will be getting a title shot soon, but first of all we need to decide who the best team is around here. Therefore, next week, it's American Alpha vs. Revival in a 2/3 falls match.

Gargano/Ciampa and Alpha shake hands and the former leave but the Authors of Pain run in to beat down Alpha. Gargano and Ciampa try to make the save but get beaten down as well, leaving Alpha to come back in. Jordan gets in a suplex but the other guy takes his head off with a clothesline. Gable takes that clothesline/Russian legsweep combo (sweet goodness that's underwhelming for two guys that big) and Paul Ellering comes out to watch to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. The last twenty minutes, or nearly forty percent, of this show was about the tag team division and I'm more interested in that 2/3 falls match than I was for anything at the last Takeover. Above all else, the reason I love NXT so much is how they can take a story so basic (former champions want a rematch, other team that beat the champions want a shot, third team is running around attacking people) and turn it into such compelling TV.

On top of that though, the matches have been excellent with the Hype Bros getting in a good performance tonight. The rest of the show was strong as well but I was totally into that last match and the following segment. As is always the case, NXT is able to build up anything to such high levels. Bayley vs. Sasha was the top story for a long time, then it was back to

the NXT Title and now it's the Tag Team Titles with Balor vs. Nakamura coming just a week after that. NXT is starting to find its groove again and that's a great thing.

Results

Alexa Bliss b. Carmella – Twisted Bliss

Andrade Cien Almas b. Noah Potjes – Running knees in the corner

Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa b. Hype Bros – Running knee/superkick combo to Ryder

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New Column: NXT Takeover: The End Preview

Do I still need a summary for this one?

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-nxt-takeover-the-end-preview/>

NXT – June 1, 2016: Trending Down

NXT

Date: June 1, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

It's one week before Takeover: Revenge/The End and the big stories are all set. Last week saw the addition of Austin Aries vs. Shinsuke Nakamura in what could be a show stealing classic to go along with the announcement of Nia Jax as the new #1 contender to the Women's Title. Expect a hard sell on the NXT Title match tonight. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's the Revival for an opening chat. They want to become the first two time NXT Tag Team Champions and they're going to hit American Alpha really hard next week. Dawson keeps talking until Tommaso Ciampa and Johnny Gargano interrupt. They want the titles too but Dawson tells them that they're just good hands.

Revival is going to take care of business but Ciampa wants to know if it's going to be like they took care of business in Dallas. That doesn't bother Revival because at least they've won something. They walk away but Gargano and Ciampa want to fight and it's a double dropkick to put Revival on the floor again.

Shinsuke Nakamura thinks Austin Aries will bow down to the king next week.

Tye Dillinger vs. Buddy Murphy

Murphy is alone here but has his first name back. Dillinger works on the arm to start and it's a standoff with Tye flashing tens. It's down to the

mat with Dillinger working on the arm even more. Back up and Murphy scores with an elbow to the jaw before cranking on a chinlock. We're told that Revival vs. Gargano/Ciampa will take place tonight before Tye gets in a Thesz press of all things. A superkick sets up ten (of course) punches in the corner followed by an AA onto an exposed knee to give Dillinger the pin at 5:10.

Rating: C-. Dillinger has the gimmick and the in ring ability so hopefully now he's going to get some wins. I'm not sure how Blake and Murphy are going to do as singles guys but they're not the most interesting in the world. Murphy seems to have more to him than Blake but it's clear that Alexa is going to be the big star from the group.

Earlier today Corey Graves sat down with Samoa Joe and Finn Balor. Finn can't believe the loss in Massachusetts happened and his world came crumbling down. It was his job to fight every night as champion though and he was beaten on that night. Joe says he finally got the title shot he deserved after all the hoops NXT made him jump through. Finn thinks that sounds like entitlement but Joe says he was Finn's partner in the Dusty Classic.

Indeed he was but then Joe wasn't willing to give him a title shot (yeah he was) so Balor brings up all the time they've spent together over the years with Joe, including being at his wedding. Joe says he's been successful everywhere but Finn interprets this as Joe thinking he hasn't done anything. Balor says he's coming for the title and a fight almost breaks out right here before we cut away. Good stuff here but this is something NXT is just awesome at every time.

Elias Samson vs. Austin Aries

Aries takes him down by the arm to start and puts his knee on Samson's face while working on an armbar. A dropkick gets two and it's right back to the armbar. Samson fights up and grabs a chinlock, only to get suplexed right back down. Austin sends him outside for a suicide dive before the running dropkick sets up the Last Chancery for the submission at 3:26.

Rating: C. As much as people like to think of Aries as someone with a

dangerous submission move, that's the first televised submission win he's had in over three years. Leave it to NXT to set up a big submission hold for him just a week before the biggest match he's had in the company while TNA basically said one win a few years ago was close enough.

Post match Aries says he's going to put the spotlight on himself next week.

Andrade Cien Almas vignette. He'll be at Takeover.

Revival vs. Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa

Dawson headlocks Gargano to start but takes some fast armdrags before it's off to Ciampa for a running kick to the head. Dash comes in for a slugout but gets sent to the floor. Ciampa goes after him and eats a hard clothesline as we take a break. Back with Dash working on Ciampa's leg before it's off to Dawson to stay on the injury. That lasts all of ten seconds before Ciampa breaks free and brings in Gargano for a kick to the head. Everything breaks down and it's Gargano and Dawson left in the ring. Dawson takes him up top for a superplex but Gargano locks their legs together on the landing to pin Scott at 10:29.

Rating: B-. I didn't like this as much as I was expecting to but the finish was a really cool surprise as Alpha now has their next challengers assuming they retain the titles next week. Gargano and Ciampa are growing on me after a slow start but it's pretty clear that Revival is on a downward swing now that they've lost the titles.

Post match Revival beats Ciampa down and load up the same move they used to hurt Big Cass' knee. American Alpha runs out for the save just in time.

It's time for the contract signing between Nia Jax and Asuka. Nia says she broke the heart of NXT and now she's going to break Asuka. She isn't scared of the champ and signs. Asuka says Nia talks too much and if she's not scared, she certainly should be. The fight is on and Nia plants her with a powerbomb to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This was just ok despite being a strong go home show.

You really can tell that the writer who helped cause a lot of NXT's success is gone as I can't imagine them setting up a match and then having it take place later in the night. There isn't a lot of energy going into this Takeover and a lot of that is due to it being built around rematches. There's about as much interest as you can have given that but NXT is actually trending down a bit at the moment, which you really don't see that often.

Results

Tye Dillinger b. Buddy Murphy – Fireman's carry backbreaker

Austin Aries b. Elias Samson – Last Chancery

Johnny Gargano/Tommaso Ciampa b. Revival – Small package to Dawson

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