

NXT – January 20, 2016: The Other Way

NXT

Date: January 20, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're in a bit of a weird point in NXT as it's still a few months before the next announced Takeover and we're just starting to set up the big feuds before we get to the really big feuds. Next week it's Baron Corbin vs. Samoa Joe vs. Sami Zayn for the #1 contendership so odds are they'll get some focus tonight. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Sami Zayn vs. Adam Rose

Sami works on a wristlock to start and spins around into an armbar. We're already well into the OLE chants but Rose cuts them off with a kick to the head. Some elbow drops set up a chinlock on Sami but he's quickly on his feet. Rose chops him right back down though and drops a top rope headbutt for two before choking on the ropes. Sami shrugs those off as well though and grabs a Koji Clutch out of nowhere for the submission at 5:27.

Rating: D+. If there's one thing Sami Zayn does better than almost anyone, it's taking a beating and making a quick comeback to win while keeping it realistic. Bringing Rose back for a loss like this is the right way to use veterans here because having the big stars come down and treating them like a bigger deal than the NXT roster isn't going to be accepted. That and Sami is a bigger deal than Rose anyway.

Johnny Gargano says he isn't intimidated by a bully like Samoa Joe. His solution: punch Joe in the mouth. As long as his heart is beating, Johnny Wrestling will not back down.

Chad Gable and Jason Jordan talk about not being nominated for Tag Team of the Year while Blake and Murphy were on the list. They know they're getting better and they're going to the top. Another word for top is alpha and they're both Americans, so they might as well be called American Alpha.

Tye Dillinger vs. Apollo Crews

Dillinger's entrance is even more energetic than usual here. They circle each other a bit to start until Dillinger takes him down with a wristlock. A headlock puts Crews on the mat and it's time for a quick victory lap with Tye giving himself a ten. That earns him a delayed vertical suplex with Crews only slipping a bit as Dillinger knees him in the head. It's a bit more impressive than when Lashley does it. Dillinger rolls outside but slide back in to hit a dive on Crews. Something like a Codebreaker gets two on Apollo but he pops back up and hits his lifting sitout powerbomb for the pin at 4:35.

Rating: C+. Better match than I was expecting here with Dillinger putting in more effort than I've seen from him in a long time. Crews continues to be an amazing athlete but I still haven't found a reason to connect with him yet. He's just a guy out there doing a bunch of cool looking stuff with nothing more to him. Talented for sure, but he needs some fine tuning.

Post match Crews says he's had something on his mind for a few weeks now. He isn't one to have a match end in a disqualification. Now he knows he hasn't earned a title shot, but he'd love to face Finn Balor one more time, even in a non-title match.

Alexa Bliss isn't happy with Blake and Murphy losing in London but she's going to lead by example tonight when she teams with Emma and beats up Bayley and Carmella.

We get a Vaudevillains vignette with the two of them looking very angry.

Stills of Kevin Owens appearing at the NXT Milwaukee house show.

Baron Corbin vs. Rich Swann

Swann is a longtime indy talent who recently signed with NXT. Corbin throws him into the corner to start and backdrops him into a 450. Off to something like a Tazmission from Corbin before Rich starts using some speed to avoid a few charges. A spinning kick to the face gets two on Corbin but Rich misses something off the top and charges into a big swinging Rock Bottom (called Deep Six) for the pin at 3:14.

Rating: C. Again a better match than I was expecting here with Swann looking solid in his debut. This isn't a match to judge him off though as he didn't have a character or anything like that. Then again that's how a lot of people have started down in NXT and turned out just fine so I wouldn't be worried. Corbin having a secondary finisher is a good idea as End of Days only works so well.

Bayley and Carmella are ready for their tag match tonight when Dawson and Wilder come in to say Carmella is a loser just like Enzo and Cass. Carmella is so upset that she's being driven bananas (her words) but Bayley says save it for the match.

Carmella/Bayley vs. Emma/Alexa Bliss

Dana is here with Emma/Bliss. Emma gets in a cheap shot on Bayley and the champ's ribs are damaged before the opening bell. Bayley starts anyway but is quickly dragged into the corner and stomped in the corner with the villains staying on the bad ribs. We take an early break and come back with Bliss holding Bayley in an armbar. Bayley gets up and hits a quick middle rope dropkick which only hurts her ribs even more. Emma breaks up the hot tag attempt and gets suplexed as a result, only to have Dana offer a distraction to prevent another tag attempt.

The Emma Sandwich (called a cross body in the corner) stays on the ribs and it's back to Bliss for another armbar, even though Bayley's hand is grabbing the ropes. Bliss drags her away and that's good enough for the referee for some reason. Bayley fights out of the corner though and tags in Carmella to take over on Bliss as things speed up. Carmella's little dance sets up a Bronco Buster and the leg crossface makes Bliss tap at 9:26.

Rating: C+. Standard formula tag match here with Bayley playing the

perfect face in peril until Carmella gets to make the comeback for the win. It makes a lot more sense to have Carmella get the win here as she needs to be built up before the title match and what better way to do that than by beating one of the many midcard heels?

Balor agrees to give Crews a non-title match.

Johnny Gargano vs. Samoa Joe

The fans start a JOHNNY WRESTLING chant which is such an awesome name. Joe drives him into the corner to start and grinds his forearm over Johnny's face before elbowing him in the jaw. Gargano snaps off a quick enziguri to put Joe on the floor, only to have him kick Johnny's leg out to take over again. The snap jabs have Gargano in trouble again and Joe kicks the leg out one more time, sending Gargano into a near 360.

Another kick puts Gargano on the floor but he dives in at nine with Graves ripping on him for going back to the beating. Back in and a quick enziguri and DDT stagger Joe but he kicks Gargano out of the air on a slingshot attempt. Gargano is already knocked silly so the Koquina Clutch puts him out of his misery at 4:30.

Rating: C+. Joe is the kind of guy who can work this physical ROH style and make it look good in short bursts. The Ciampa match was better but this was another hard hitting match where both guys came out looking good, even though this was pretty one sided for the most part. Gargano is another name that should be fine.

Overall Rating: B. This is where NXT continues to amaze me. They can have a week of nothing but storytelling and then the next week they do almost nothing but solid wrestling. The triple threat is looking better and you have another big match to build towards with Crews vs. Balor, even though it's non-title. As usual, they set up a goal and then they accomplish it, usually in the span of just a week. That's unheard of in today's wrestling and NXT does it nearly every single time. Well done, as usual.

Results

Sami Zayn b. Adam Rose – Koji Clutch

Apollo Crews b. Tye Dillinger – Lifting sitout powerbomb

Baron Corbin b. Rich Swann – Deep Six

Carmella/Bayley b. Emma/Alexa Bliss – Leg crossface to Bliss

Samoa Joe b. Johnny Gargano – Koquina Clutch

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