

NXT – July 10, 2013: With One Of The Best Heels In Wrestling

NXT

Date: July 10, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Brad Maddox, Tom Phillips

Last week's show ended with the start of a very interesting four way feud over the NXT Title with champion Bo Dallas seeing challenges from Antonio Cesaro, Leo Kruger and Sami Zayn. This could make for some very exciting television but odds are that story will be saved for a later date.

Tonight the focus is likely on the Wyatt Family vs. Graves/Neville which should be entertaining in its own right. Let's get to it.

Theme song opens us up.

NXT Women's Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Emma vs. Summer Rae

The winner gets Paige for the title in two weeks. Rae gets a quick two off a face plant and a snap suplex gets the same. The fans are WAY behind Emma here as Rae wrenches back on her arm with her feet in Emma's face. Emma comes back with some rollups but gets caught in a chinlock. Back up and Summer misses a charge in the corner, giving Emma a two count via a sunset flip. A running cross body to a seated Summer gets two but Rae comes back with a sunset flip, only to have Emma roll forward into a cradle for the pin at 4:26.

Rating: C-. There wasn't a lot of action in this but the ending picked up a lot. Emma's popularity continues to rise which goes to show you how goofy gimmicks can still get over. It's also a pleasant surprise to not get the seemingly obvious matchup of Paige vs. Summer for the title.

Summer beats Emma down post match but Paige makes the save.

Bayley is in the back with Dusty Rhodes. He wants to know why she hugged Alicia Fox after losing to her in the tournament. Bayley gets very excited and nervous because Ric Flair and his daughter walk in. Flair's daughter is debuting next week and Bayley volunteers to be her first opponent. Bayley gets one WOO for the road.

Leo Kruger vs. Sami Zayn

Feeling out process to start with Kruger bailing to the ropes. Zayn armdrags out of a wristlock and the fans chant Ole. Maddox: "But he's from Montreal." Some more armdrags put Leo down and Zayn rains down punches in the corner, only to be caught in an atomic drop. Sami comes back with a forearm to send Leo to the floor but his dive is blocked by a shot to the head as we take a break.

Back with Kruger pounding Sami down in the corner before getting two off a snap suplex. Leo works the arm with a hammerlock and knee drops followed by a spinebuster for two. Zayn comes back with some dropkicks for two and a high cross body gets the same. Sami charges into a knee in the corner and Kruger sends him shoulder first into the post. A Fujiwara Armbar has Zayn in deep trouble but he gets his feet in the ropes. Zayn comes back again with a blue thunder bomb for two but gets caught going up. A superplex sets up a DDT on the arm followed by the GC3 for the submission from Zayn at 10:42 shown of 14:12.

Rating: B. This was good old fashioned back and forth action and it still works well. There's something so sweet about a basic good vs. evil dynamic and it's very difficult to screw it up. Both of these guys have talent and will wind up on the main roster someday soon. Nice match here and the fans love Zayn.

Neville, Graves and Regal are ready for their six man later tonight against the Wyatts. Regal takes the time to hit on Renee Young and says

he's been fighting from the day he was born and broke the doctor's fingers for slapping him. If the Wyatt Family knows what's good for them, they'll take their beating and stay down. It's Graves/Neville vs. the Family for the titles next week.

Mason Ryan vs. Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore

Enzo runs his mouth about how Ryan has a problem with this handicap match. "See, 1+1=3.14. Time to eat your pie." No tags are required here but Ryan throws them around anyway. Cassady finally gets in a boot to the face to slow Mason down but he picks Colin up anyway, only to be chop blocked by Enzo, giving Cassady the pin at 1:35. So they're doing the Rhodes Scholars vs. Sheamus feud but with less talented people?

Dusty says next week it's Kruger vs. Zayn vs. Cesaro for the #1 contendership.

Corey Graves/William Regal/Adrian Neville vs. Wyatt Family

Bray wants to know why Graves and Neville keep fighting because he's the wolf raised by lambs and time belongs to him. All three Family members are a combined weight of 581lbs? I want to see the NXT scales. Neville starts by dropkicking Rowan and driving him into the corner for the tag off to Regal. William pounds away before it's off to Graves who is taken down by a back elbow. Tag off to Harper but Graves scores a quick dropkick and hooks a figure four neck lock over the ropes.

Regal comes in to get some cheap shots behind the referee's back before distracting the referee so Neville can do the same. Nice touch. We take a break and come back with Neville backflipping over Harper in the corner and dropkicking the knee out for two. Wyatt comes in to run over Adrian and stand on his chest to keep him down. Back to Harper who slams Adrian down by the hair and brings Rowan back in for a hard slam. A pumphandle backbreaker gets two and Erick stands on Adrian's head for a bit.

Back to Bray who misses the corner splash but counters a crucifix into a Samoan drop for two. Luke comes back in to slam Adrian down again before putting on a chinlock. Neville knees his way out of a vertical suplex and dives over to tag Regal. William cleans house and hits the Knee Trembler on Harper but Rowan makes the save. Graves sends Erick to the floor and Neville dives on both guys. Harper takes Regal down and Bray comes in for Sister Abigail to knock Regal out for the pin at 10:50 shown of 13:40.

Rating: B-. This was the six man formula played to the letter and it worked perfectly. Regal coming in there works very well as he's respected enough that a win over him means something so everybody looks great. It also keeps the challengers looking strong before their upcoming title shot.

Overall Rating: A-. This is one of the best shows I can remember in a very long time. In an hour we had a decent Divas match, a title match set up, a very good singles match, an amusing heel promo from one of the best heel characters I can remember in a long time (sidebar: I mean Amore. The guy is so universally unlikeable that he's perfect as a heel), and a very good six man tag. For an hour long show, that's remarkable. Great show here and NXT's best in awhile.

Results

Emma b. Summer Rae – Cradle

Leo Kruger b. Sami Zayn – GC3

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Mason Ryan – Chop Block to Ryan

Wyatt Family b. William Regal/Corey Graves/Adrian Neville – Sister Abigail to Regal

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NXT – June 12, 2013: Who Better Than Langston?

NXT

Date: June 12, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Tony Dawson

It's a big week here on NXT with Bo Dallas finally getting his title shot against Big E. Langston. Last week Langston sounded as serious as he ever has in NXT and the match was well set up. Dallas however still comes off as a lame imitation of a good heel rather than someone we have a reason to dislike. Other than that we should get another Women's Title tournament match. Let's get to it.

The opening video recaps the battle royal which earned Dallas his title shot.

Welcome Home.

Sami Zayn vs. Antonio Cesaro

This is a rematch from Zayn's debut three weeks ago when he beat Curt Hawkins and Antonio Cesaro in one night. Cesaro charges to the ring and runs Zayn over with a clothesline. They head to the floor with Sami being sent into the barricade before the bell. Sami says he can go so Cesaro hits a running European uppercut for two as the match officially begins. Zayn springboards off the bottom rope to jump over Antonio but Cesaro spinebusts him right back down to stop the comeback.

Sami fights out of a chinlock and gets two off a leg lariat but Cesaro takes over with some HARD chops in the corner. Back up and Zayn's leapfrog is countered into a tilt-a-whirl slam for two as we take a break. We come back with Cesaro hitting a double stomp to the ribs for a series of two counts before stomping on Zayn's fingers. Back to the chinlock for an extended period before Zayn fights up with a spinning sit out belly to back suplex into a powerbomb. A big European uppercut and the gutwrench suplex get two each for Cesaro and the frustration is setting in.

Cesaro pounds away in the corner but Zayn hooks a bodyscissors to catch Cesaro off guard. A headscissors sends Antonio to the floor and Sami hits a big flip dive over the top to take both guys down. Back in and Zayn dives off the top into another uppercut for two. Cesaro looks for the Neutralizer but Sami hits a running sunset bomb for two. Zayn tries the same thing he used to win the first time by rolling through a suplex into a cradle but Cesaro kicks out at two. Cesaro hooks a hard standing chinlock which is enough to set up the Neutralizer for the pin on Zayn at 10:00 shown of 13:30.

Rating: B. This was a solid back and forth match which told a good story. Zayn was trying every speed move he could but Cesaro was too strong and too skilled to get caught off guard a second time, which makes both guys look good. A serious Antonio like this could be a big deal in WWE if he wasn't fed to every top star on the roster so often. Zayn continues to look good as well.

Baron Corbin/Travis Tyler vs. Scott Dawson/Garrett Dylan

Sylvester LeFort introduces Dawson and Dylan and again is far more interesting than the team. Dawson and Tyler start things off with Tyler grabbing a headlock. Scott takes it to the corner and brings in Dylan to stomp on Travis in the corner. Dawson and Dylan tag in and out to pound on Tyler with both guys slamming the back of Tyler's head into the mat.

The beating continues with Dawson dropping a leg and kicking at Tyler's back. Tyler finally gets in a kick to the face and makes the tag off to Corbin who cleans a few rooms of the house. Corbin hits the ropes and walks into a spinebuster from Dawson followed by a middle rope ax handle to the face from Dylan (the combination is called Southern Pride) for the pin at 4:27.

Rating: D+. Dawson and Dylan aren't interesting but their in ring work isn't horrible. They're kind of a throwback team reminiscent of the Andersons in the 80s. The problem though is there's no reason to care about them. All we've been told is they're from a trailer park in the south. In other words, they're a slightly better Cade and Murdoch, which doesn't make them anything to care about.

NXT Women's Title Tournament First Round: Bayley vs. Alicia Fox

Bayley is innocent enough to offer a handshake but Alicia says no. Instead Bayley hugs Alicia to freak her out and earn Bayley a whip into the corner. A quick northern lights suplex gets two for Fox and it's off to a chinlock. Fox takes her into the corner for a slap and Bayley goes NUTS, taking Fox down with a bunch of clotheslines and a knee drop for two. An exploder suplex gets two on Alicia but she pops back up and hits an ax kick to pin Bayley at 3:26.

Rating: D+. Bayley looked good and Fox was her usual self, meaning this wasn't much to look at. It does help to have a former Divas Champion move on in the tournament as the eventual winner will look better having beaten a top level Diva. Not the best match in the world but it did its job well enough.

Here are the tournament brackets:

Paige

Alicia Fox

Sasha Banks

Summer Rae

Emma

Aksana

We recap Dallas winning the battle royal to earn his title shot tonight.

NXT Title: Big E. Langston vs. Bo Dallas

Langston easily throws Dallas down before leapfrogging over Dallas (you read that right) and running him over with a shoulder. Bo goes after the leg and is immediately booted out of the building. The champion is sent to the floor but comes back in to throw Dallas into the corner to take over. Langston hits five hard shots to Dallas' ribs as this is one sided so far. A big splash hits Dallas and he rolls out to the floor for a breather.

Back in and Langston tells Bo what a bad decision this was for him. Another splash misses and Bo fires off some clotheslines to little effect. Big E. charges into a knee in the corner and Dallas runs the corner into a bulldog for two. Langston comes back with a belly to belly and looks to be perfectly fine. Five knees to the chest have Dallas in trouble and Langston runs him over for good measure. Dallas blocks the Big Ending and sends Langston into an exposed turnbuckle two times. That and a belly to belly suplex gives him the belt at 7:46.

Rating: C-. The match was basically a squash for Langston with a surprise ending. I have no idea what WWE sees in him, but Bo Dallas is the least interesting guy being pushed to the top of a promotion that I've seen in a very long time. He's neither a dominating nor a convincing heel and the fans absolutely hate him. His arrogant attitude due to being on the main show a few times doesn't hold up either as several people on NXT have

been around longer than he has. This didn't work and wasn't the best way of getting the title off of Langston.

Dallas says he's going to Disney World to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This episode didn't do much for me. The opening match was great but everything after that was lame. Dawson, Dylan aren't guys that show promise but they're being pushed pretty hard. Langston will likely get a rematch but the shine is off of him now. What WWE sees in Dallas is beyond me, but they're going to have to push him hard as a heel in a hurry unless they want the fans to ruin every segment he's in.

Results

Antonio Cesaro b. Sami Zayn – Neutralizer

Garrett Dylan/Scott Dawson b. Baron Corbin/Travis Tyler – Southern Pride to Corbin

Alicia Fox b. Bayley – Ax Kick

Bo Dallas b. Big E. Langston – Belly to belly suplex

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NXT – May 22, 2013: O!e!

NXT

Date: May 22, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tony Dawson, William Regal

We're a week away from the big NXT battle royal but tonight's main event is Corey Graves vs. Bray Wyatt, as the Wyatt Family is apparently targeting people like Graves and Kassius Ohno for reasons yet to be named. This seems to be another filler episode before we get to next week where things start all over again, but that isn't necessarily a bad thing. Let's get to it.

Welcome Home.

Curt Hawkins vs. Sami Zayn

Sami is independent mainstay El Generico minus a mask. The fans immediately start chanting OLE which is Generico's trademark chant. Hawkins has short hair now, in case you're not up to date on your Curt Hawkins news. Zayn takes him down with a set of armdrags and some chops in the corner for good measure. Hawkins elbows out of the corner and hits a quick enziguri for two.

Off to an early chinlock by Hawkins but an OLE chant gets Sami back up to his feet. Hawkins misses a forearm in the corner and gets caught in a belly to back suplex for no cover. A dropkick gets two but Hawkins comes back with a very excited slam. For the first time ever, we get a Let's Go Hawkins chant but he can't hook what looked to be a powerbomb. Instead Zayn grabs his wrist and runs up the corner into a tornado DDT for the pin at 4:14.

Rating: C. This was pretty much a squash but Zayn looked good out there. He has a solid presence to him and even though he's a smaller guy, his offense comes off like it has some force behind it. Hawkins is as generic of a wrestler as you'll ever find, but then again he has something resembling a resume and isn't terrible in the ring so he makes for a good jobber. Good debut here for Zayn.

Video on Corey Graves, explaining why he has so many tattoos. There's a CM Punk vibe to this and he closes with a good line: "I'm not here to leave a mark. I'm here to leave a scar."

Antonio Cesaro vs. Yoshi Tatsu

Ok, Cesaro HAS to be able to beat Tatsu right? I mean, it's Yoshi Tatsu. EVERYBODY beats Tatsu. Cesaro pounds him into the corner but gets caught by a quick cross body for no cover. Yoshi fires off some kicks but gets caught by a vicious European uppercut and the Neutralizer ends this in 52 seconds.

Post match Cesaro wants to know if that was the best competition he can get. There's no one on any show that can challenge him, but here's Sami Zayn to disagree. He speaks multiple languages, including Arabic which Cesaro doesn't understand. Zayn goes to French instead and the match is on right now.

Antonio Cesaro vs. Sami Zayn

Cesaro quickly powers him down to start but gets spun around as Zayn leverages his way out of a test of strength. A springboard wrist drag sends Cesaro to the floor as take a break. Back with Zayn holding an armbar but being dropped throat first on the top rope. Zayn is whipped hard into the corner for two before it's off to a chinlock. Sami fights up and tries a sunset flip but Cesaro does the DX crotch chop of all things before stomping onto his chest for two.

Off to another chinlock before Zayn comes back with a rollup out of the corner. A high cross body is caught by Cesaro in a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two and a running European uppercut gets the same. Off to some rights and lefts in the corner by Antonio before he loads up a suplex, only to have Zayn slide down his back and roll up Cesaro for the pin at 5:00 shown of 7:20.

Rating: C. Nothing of note here but it was good to see Zayn get such a solid push to start. He was in trouble for most of the match but it makes sense that a guy as strong as Cesaro could throw Sami around like he did. This is a really good debut for Zayn and I really liked what I've seen so far.

Emma is in the back but she's apparently taking Audrey Marie's interview time. Emma keeps screwing up Audrey's name and suggests Audrey dance to relieve stress. Audrey says get out before I take you out. Emma: "Can we go to lunch? I haven't eaten today." She dances off and smacks Audrey in the head as she goes.

Video on Bray Wyatt which looks more like the old ones.

Here's some guy named Enzo Amore to talk. Enzo is from New Jersey and has almost every stereotype you can think of. He sees a bunch of fake tough guys in NXT and talks about people being a bunch of G's.

Enzo Amore vs. Mason Ryan

Ryan throws Amore around like he's not even there before chopping him down. Running snake eyes sets up a running clothesline by Ryan before a torture rack neckbreaker ends Amore at 1:26. Ryan is still nothing of note.

The Raw ReBounce talks about Ryback demanding an ambulance match.

Stephanie McMahon will be here next week for an announcement.

There's also a #1 contenders battle royal next week.

Corey Graves vs. Bray Wyatt

Bray shoves him around to start and still has that gray mask on his face. Graves takes him into the corner and pounds away a bit before putting on a front facelock. The Wyatt Family looks concerned as Bray is in some trouble early on. Graves gets the mask off of Wyatt so Bray heads to the outside. Not that it matters as Wyatt puts the mask back on and pounds away on Graves back in the ring.

Graves gets up a knee to stop a charging Bray before putting on a figure four neck lock over the top rope to slow Wyatt down again. Bray is fine with that though as he hits a running cross body as we take a break. Back with Wyatt holding a chinlock, only to get up and miss a charge, sending him out to the floor. Graves misses a baseball slide though and Bray sends him into the steps. Bray kicks him in the chest a few times before taking it back inside for another chinlock.

There's the splash in the corner but Graves escapes the dancing into a rollup for a close two. The mask comes off again so Bray hits another cross body to put Graves down. Back up and Corey punches the exposed face and makes a good comeback, sending Bray reeling. A clothesline in the corner staggers Bray and a chop block puts him down. The Family is knocked down and there's the Lucky 13 leg lock, but Harper breaks it up via a distraction by Rowan. Sister Abigail ends Graves at 8:41 shown of 12:11.

Rating: C. I was digging Graves here as his comeback was working well, but the Family getting the win was probably the right idea. There's only so much you can do for Graves here without making the Family look weak, so the cheating was probably the right call. Graves looked good though.

Post match Kassius Ohno returns to try to make the save but gets laid out by the Family. Bray talks about being a monster to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The wrestling here wasn't great but they did a good job with the storytelling here. Next week we'll have a new #1 contender to Langston's title so we can have a new main event feud to build around.

I was really impressed by Zayn tonight and he seems to have a feud set up with Cesaro already. Good show here but for different reasons than usual.

Results

Sami Zayn b. Curt Hawkins – Tornado DDT

Antonio Cesaro b. Yoshi Tatsu – Neutralizer

Sami Zayn b. Antonio Cesaro – Rollup

Mason Ryan b. Enzo Amore – Torture Rack Neckbreaker

Bray Wyatt b. Corey Graves – Sister Abigail

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