

# Dynamite – September 2, 2020: They Have The Benefit Of The Doubt



IMG Credit: All Elite Wrestling

## Dynamite

Date: September 2, 2020

Location: Daily's Place, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Excalibur, Jim Ross, Tony Schiavone

It's the go home show for All out and the show is mostly set. That being said, AEW knows how to add some matches to the card at the last minute. I'm not going to argue with how they build their pay per views in a hurry as they certainly know what they're doing so far. Hopefully that is the case again this time around. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

### Santana and Ortiz vs. Best Friends

The Best Friends jump them during the entrances with the fight being on outside. Chuck avoids a double suplex on the floor and Trent hits a big dive off the platform. Santana has to save Ortiz from a suplex onto the steps so the Best Friends

send him over the barricade. Trent spears Ortiz down as Chuck sets up a big pile of chairs near the platform. That takes too long though and Santana is back up to send him through the whole thing.

Now the bell rings and it's Trent hitting running double knees to Santana but a double suplex takes Trent down for two. A tornado DDT gets Trent out of trouble and the hot tag brings in Chuck to clean house. The big running flip dive lets Chuck mug for the camera and it's Soul Food for Santana back inside. A Falcon Arrow gets two with Ortiz making the save.

Santana charges into a knee to the face in the corner and the hot tag brings in Trent. That just earns him a trip to the floor and a powerbomb onto the steps. Back in and Trent slips out of the Street Sweeper and grabs the belly to back piledriver on Ortiz. Santana puts Ortiz's hand on the ropes just after three and then throws Chuck over the barricade. The metal baton to the back sets up the Street Sweeper to finish Trent at 6:54.

**Rating:** C+. Well at least they didn't stop to hug. The match itself wasn't all that long but there was an extra five minutes of brawling before the bell to make up for it a little bit. If you cut out a lot of the goofy stuff that the Best Friends do and have Trent be the focal point of the team, it's a lot easier to put up with them. That and having Santana and Ortiz get the win.

MJF's lawyer has locked himself in his locker room so Wardlow kicks the door in and drags him out. MJF gets in the lawyer's face and says he has done everything he can to become a World Champion. It is all he has ever wanted and he isn't having someone lose his chance for him. So either go out there, or be sent into a f\*\*\*\*\* woodchipper. Which monster do you want to face?

SCU/Private Party vs. Young Bucks/Jurassic Express

The winning team has a regular tag match at All Out. Kazarian and Jungle Boy go with the technical exchange to start before it's off to Marq Quen to take Matt down. Isaiah Cassidy hits a springboard hurricanrana to put Matt on the floor, where a fan is holding a "HANGMAN DRINK MY BEER" sign. Matt doesn't care for that and pours the beer out, though he might want to be more concerned about the fan next to him reading a book.

Back in and the Bucks take over on Daniels until he sends them into each other. A belly to back suplex allows the double tag to Kazarian and Boy as everything breaks down. Daniels moonsaults onto the Bucks on the floor as Boy takes Kazarian into the corner. Back in and Daniels comes in to send Boy face first into Kazarian's raised boot as we take a break. Back with Boy hitting an Angle Slam neckbreaker to Cassidy and bringing in Luchasaurus to clean house.

Private Party dropkick him down so Luchasaurus does the Undertaker situp and kicks them in the face. The moonsault takes SCU down on the floor but Matt tags himself in. We get a double frog splash/standing moonsaults onto Private Party but SCU comes back in for their powerbomb/neckbreaker combination for two on Boy. Matt superkicks Boy by mistake and the BME hits Boy, followed by Quen's shooting star press. Luchasaurus makes his own save and tosses Quen into a spinebuster from Boy. Matt tags himself back in and the BTE Trigger finishes at 14:13.

**Rating:** C. This was a bit longer than it needed to be and was your usual insane spot fest, which can start to run together when they do them week after week. That has been the case with most Bucks matches and it didn't help that you knew the Bucks weren't being left off of a pay per view. It was entertaining, but it makes the FTR vs. Private Party match from a few weeks ago stand out even more because it was different, unlike this one.

Jake Hager comes in to see Orange Cassidy because Chris

Jericho wants Cassidy at ringside for his match tonight. Violence is implied.

Tully Blanchard tells FTR that they accomplished half of their goals and now it is time to go complete everything by winning the Tag Team Titles. They can be sore on Sunday and on Saturday they are fearing the revelation.

Here's Kenny Omega for a chat, sans Hangman Page. Tony Schiavone recaps Page being thrown out of the Elite, which Omega describes as a mistake that Page has made. Omega says FTR fooled Page but Omega and Page will defend FTR again because they will be bringing their A game. Cue Tully Blanchard and FTR with the cooler with the team saying they're looking forward to having a great tag team match.

They offer a toast and even have a chocolate milk for Omega. That's fine with Omega, but he isn't going to drink with a double of censoreds like them. If they want to do it right now, Omega is fine with 3-1 because he can get in a few good shots. Just do him a favor first: keep the old man away from him because he can smell him from here. Cue Hangman Page with FTR talking about how Page got inside his own head.

They didn't do a thing because Page wanted to do this all along. Page has to be held back with Omega telling him that they're just trying to get in his head. FTR grab the titles and then drop them in front of Page. That's enough for FTR so Page holds out the title to Omega, who is already on the floor and staring back in. This worked well enough, and it's nice to see them doing something with the story after a good while. Now they need to change the titles though.

Chris Jericho asks Alex Marvez when he last experienced something for the first time. Like kissing a woman for example. That's how fans are feeling about the Mimosa Mayhem match because he is happy to have turned Orange Cassidy into a main event star. On Saturday, there is going to be a little

bit of the bubbly and a lot of Le Champion.

### Chris Jericho vs. Joey Janela

Jake Hager is here with Jericho and Orange Cassidy comes to the ring, carrying a backpack. Jericho, in a white Orange Cassidy shirt (get the liquids ready), jumps Janela, with his hand in pigtails, to start and then hits a running clothesline in the corner. More shots to the face put Janela down again and Jericho stands on his hair. Janela gets in a few shots for his comeback but springboards into a Codebreaker. The Walls finishes Janela at 3:14.

**Rating:** D+. Just a squash here to show that Jericho is serious going into the match with Cassidy on Saturday. That's a nice idea, but you can only get so far when you have a match built up around throwing someone into a big vat of orange juice. Granted there is something to be said about watching Janela being beaten up so it could have been worse.

Post match Jericho takes off a turnbuckle pad and sends Janela face first into the steel to bust him open. The blood goes on the Cassidy shirt and Cassidy finally comes in for the brawl. Hager comes in for the save but Sonny Kiss runs in for the save. Cassidy pulls out A Little Bit Of The Bubbly from the backpack and pours it out (second time tonight they've done the pour out a drink deal, not counting the time where FTR's cooler was thrown down).

Video on Sammy Guevara vs. Matt Hardy.

Back from a break with Matt near the top of the building shouting down at Sammy Guevara as they engage in a battle of signs.

Here is Team Taz for a chat. Taz promises that either Ricky Starks or Cage will win, whether Darby Allin, Jake Roberts or Lance Archer like it or not. Cue Roberts and Archer, with the former promising that no one is busting a nut around here.

Jake sees a great pair of blue jeans in the ring but here are Eddie Kingston and company to talk about how none of them are winning. Jake: "You've been drinking. You must have been drinking."

Shawn Spears and Tully Blanchard come out to watch as well and the fight is on, with the Gunn Club and Darby Allin running in as well. Some wrestlers jump the barricade and are cleaned out in a hurry. Cue the Inner Circle and the Best Friends to get in on this as well. The brawling takes us to a break and we come back with the big brawl continuing...and now it's a vignette on the Dark Order.

Video on the Dark Order's success as of late, including Brodie Lee squashing Cody to win the TNT Title. They will meet Scorpio Sky/Matt Cardona/Dustin Rhodes/QT Marshall at All Out.

#### Serena Deeb vs. Thunder Rosa

Rosa's NWA Women's Title isn't on the line. Deeb takes her to the mat to start but a shot to the face just makes Rosa mad. Rosa comes back with her own shot to the face and a dropkick but Deeb grabs a neckbreaker. With Rosa's arm trapped, Deeb slams the knee into the mat and grabs a half crab. That doesn't last long and we take a break.

Back with Rosa grabbing a waistlock and then putting on a cross arm choke. Deeb reverses into a Backstabber and they're both down. A quick rollup gives Deeb two but Rosa hits some running knees in the corner. The running dropkick against the ropes gets two and a Death Valley Driver is good for the same. Rosa hits a running knee to the face for two and then the Thunder Driver is good for the pin at 9:53.

**Rating:** C+. Well they certainly had some time. I'm not sure who in the world thought someone they are treating as a big deal needed to go about ten minutes before heading into her title match was a good idea, but at least Rosa won. Granted it was after some near falls and after Deeb kicked out of some

big stuff, but at least Rosa won.

Jon Moxley is ready to hurt MJF on Saturday.

Big Swole talks about being ready to beat some revenge into Britt Baker during Saturday's Buy In. Cue a woman with a pizza for Swole, but she isn't quite buying it (or paying for it). Swole jumps her but here is Baker from behind to hit her with a pole. Baker shoves the pizza in Swole's face and puts on the Lockjaw.

Here's what's coming up this weekend, including a Friday Dark and the All Out card.

### Mark Sterling vs. Jon Moxley

Non-title and Wardlow is here with the lawyer as JR promises it is going to be bowling shoe ugly. Sterling's name graphic says he is MJF's inattentive lawyer, but he was attentive to his color scheme as he is covered in red white and blue and has an MJF campaign sign on his back. Moxley offers Sterling a free shot and has to show him how to make a fist. The punch misses and Moxley knocks him down with a slap. A breath sends Sterling outside, where he shows some great bumping abilities for someone who found out he was debuting a week ago.

Back in and Sterling's next free shot misses and he goes sailing outside again. Sterling pokes him in the eye back inside (Excalibur: "Maybe Mark is a smart mark after all.") but Moxley clotheslines him back to the floor. Sterling is covered by barricades and chairs before Moxley steals his shoe to beat him up even more. Back in again and Moxley has a seat in a chair before getting up and offering a handshake. That doesn't work so it's the Paradigm Shift for the pin at 5:03.

**Rating:** D+. What is there to say here? The point was to have Moxley beat up the lawyer and he did that for a good while. I'm really not sure if this was the right way to go for the go home angle before a pay per view title match, but at least

they got through this point. The match has been well built, but it felt a little weird to go here for the big final push.

Post match Wardlow comes in to beat on Moxley and here's MJF on his walker. The neck brace comes off and MJF beats him down. MJF loads up the diamond ring and knocks Moxley cold, including busting him open. A bite of the cut makes it even worse and MJF holds up the title to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This was a bit of a weird show as the main stuff on the card was set up and there wasn't a lot on here that enhanced Saturday's matches. It was a fine enough show, but they didn't do the best job of getting in a final push towards All Out. What we got here was good enough but it's an AEW pay per view: they have built up more than enough of a good reputation to make me give them the benefit of the doubt.

### Results

Santana and Ortiz b. Best Friends – Street Sweeper to Trent

Young Bucks/Jurassic Express b. Private Party/SCU – BTE Trigger to Quen

Chris Jericho b. Joey Janela – Walls of Jericho

Thunder Rosa b. Serena Deeb – Thunder Driver

Jon Moxley b. Mark Sterling – Paradigm Shift

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## NXT UK – August 20, 2020 (Superstar Picks): I Had Fun



IMG Credit: WWE

### **NXT UK**

Date: August 20, 2020

Host: Andy Shepard

We're back to something a lot more interesting than Greatest Hits here as we have Superstar Picks. In other words, it's time to crack open the WWE video vault and see what we can find involving UK wrestlers. This is what they have been needing to do for a long time now as they are long past the point of good stuff for Greatest Hits from NXT UK. Let's get to it.

Andy has finally changed rooms. He can still throw it to someone to pick a match though, with Ridge Holland getting the

first honor.

From Prime Time Wrestling, October 8, 1985.

### Bret Hart vs. Dynamite Kid

It's the rare blue and black Hitman attire here. Bret wants Dynamite's boots checked and then hides in the ropes to start. Dynamite shoves him down and Bret chills on the floor for a bit. Back in and we get a catapult to send Bret chest first into the buckle. That means another breather on the floor but this time Bret comes back in and is promptly atomic dropped. There's the snap suplex for Dynamite and we hit the chinlock. They fight over a hammerlock until Bret is sent outside to break it up, much to the fans' delight.

Back in again and Dynamite spins out of a wristlock but gets pulled down by the hair. Bret grabs the hair again and slams him down, setting up the middle rope elbow. The headbutt hurts Bret's own head so he throws Dynamite outside for a change. A slam on the floor and a backbreaker give Bret two back inside but Dynamite's sunset flip gets the same. Dynamite grabs a backbreaker of his own but can't follow up, allowing Bret to tie him in the ropes.

The charge only hits said ropes though and they're both down again. Dynamite gets in a headbutt and hair slam to the mat of his own (nice little callbacks) and a knee drop gets two. A middle rope knee gets two more but Bret trips him face first into the ropes. Another trip sends Dynamite through the ropes (another callback) but this time he comes back in with an O'Connor Roll for the pin at 12:30.

**Rating:** B-. They were telling a nice story here as Bret had to find a way to slow Dynamite down and started smothering him. He couldn't control the energy eventually though and Dynamite got to make the comeback, including doing the same things that Bret did to him earlier for a nice bonus. These two probably wrestled each other 500 times in some combination and you can

see it here.

Post match Jim Neidhart runs out to complain about Dynamite pulling the tights but Davey Boy Smith runs in for the save.

Video on the NXT UK women's division, including showing how many countries are represented.

Piper Niven sends us to the 2017 Mae Young Classic.

#### Second Round: Serena Deeb vs. Piper Niven

Niven powers her into the corner to start and falls on Deeb in a slam attempt. Well to be fair that was just kind of dumb. A hard belly to back suplex breaks up Serena's headlock and there's a splash for two more. With the holds not working, Deeb opts for just punching her in the face for a change. A middle rope Codebreaker (or maybe something like a monkey flip) drops Niven and a neckbreaker gets two.

Deeb is right back up with a modified Diamond Cutter for two more as the fans are split again. A charge misses in the corner though and Niven drops a Vader Bomb...for two. Dang I would have bet on that one. Niven heads up top (uh oh) and misses a splash, only to grab the Michinoku Driver to put Deeb away at 7:12.

**Rating:** C. What in the world was that ending? Niven missed the splash to seemingly give Deeb a hope spot but she was up less than five seconds later and hit the finish for the pin. I looked away for a second and my head swung back because I thought the video had skipped. They were trying to get into the Sting vs. Vader formula here but that ending REALLY knocked them back.

Dave Mastiff sends us to...Uncensored 1996???? I just stopped having the flashbacks to this show!

#### Belfast Bruiser vs. Lord Steven Regal

That would be Fit Finlay and William Regal (with Butler Jeeves, as played by Bill Dundee) of course. Jeeves it's dumb enough to stick around for this and bails to the back as Finlay jumps Regal to start. Regal grabs a

hiptoss for one (with the forearm going into Finlay's face) and hits an uppercut so Finlay knees him in the face. A hard clothesline gives Finlay two as they are beating the heck out of each other here. Regal gets in a kick of his own and we hit the cravate on the mat.

Dusty Rhodes uses terms like stomping a mudhole and Bobby Heenan is incredibly confused, though that could just be from trying to understand anything Dusty said. Finlay knees him in the face and takes it to the floor, where Regal is dropped face first onto the barricade. Regal's arm is pulled into the post and we hit an armbreaker back inside. That's broken up and Regal kicks him in the face as we hear about Pedro Morales doing Spanish commentary. Dusty is VERY pleased with this, calling Morales "the greatest athlete to ever put on a pair of tights." I'm going to assume that's some kind of a rib and move on.

Regal's dropkick gets two but Finlay is right back with another crank of the arm. That's broken up and Regal punches him down again, allowing for the choke with the leg while arguing with the referee (always a great one). Finlay headbutts him down and we hit the chinlock. Even that's rough as Finlay hits him in the face at the same time. Regal glares up at him while getting choked but fights up, earning one heck of a clothesline to give Finlay two more.

Finlay drives him face first into the apron but Regal manages a suplex over the apron and down onto the floor. An elbow off the apron crushes Finlay again and we hit a headlock back inside. As Bobby and Dusty argue over United Kingdom geography, Finlay kicks him hard in the back so Regal distracts the ref and gets a good low blow. Finlay isn't about to be sunset flipped so he puts his knee on the back of Regal's head and drives him face first into the mat instead.

Regal is back with an armbreaker, with a knee on Finlay's face of course. That's broken up and Finlay hits a kind of backdrop but Regal counters a Boston crab attempt and sends Finlay face first into the apron (Heenan: "Right in the corned beef and cabbage."). Finlay punches him in the face and that looks like a broken nose (apparently with a broken cheek for a bonus). Back in and Regal kicks him over the top as commentary tries to explain that the fans are too worn down to cheer. Regal runs him up the

aisle for a ram into the Doomsday Cage and here are the Bluebloods (Regal's friends) to pound on Finlay for the DQ at 17:30.

**Rating:** B. I've seen this match several dozen times (had the VHS and watched it over and over as a kid) but it's the first time I've seen it in a long time. This was a blast as they beat the heck out of each other for a LONG time (probably a bit too long actually) and it was a very different and much more physical match than you would expect from 1996 WCW. It's Finlay's element but Regal was right there with him the whole time. If you like physical, hard hitting stuff, make sure you check on this one.

Post match Regal gets in a heck of a slap as Finlay is held back.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Now this is the kind of show that I've been wanting to see from this series and I'm hoping that we get a lot more of it. NXT UK hasn't been around all that long and they have already gone through a lot of their matches. It's ok to crack open the vault every now and then and I would love to see them do it for a long time to come. Give us something different every now and then. It isn't going to hurt all that much.

## Results

Dynamite Kid b. Bret Hart – O'Connor Roll

Piper Niven b. Serena Deeb – Michinoku Driver

Fit Finlay b. Lord Steven Regal via DQ when the Bluebloods interfered

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# Mae Young Classic Episode Five: No Mercy Lives!

## Mae Young Classic Episode #5

Date: September 4, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jim Ross, Lita

The fast paced shows continue as we have four more episodes being released today before we get ready for next week's live finale. We're down to sixteen competitors to go and for the most part, I'm coming into this blind on the spoilers. It's hard to say where some of these matches are going to go so let's get to it.

Mauro handles the opening recap again.

The remaining entrants are on stage.

Video on Abbey Laith, who has wrestled for years and is here now.

Video on Rachel Evers, who was originally scheduled to lose in the first round but Marti Belle was so horrible that they changed plans mid-match.

Kassius Ohno is here.

[Second Round: Abbey Laith vs. Rachel Evers](#)

The fans sound split here as Rachel shoves her down to start, only to get wristdragged to the floor. Back in and a Stunner of all things puts Abbey down but they hit stereo bicycle kicks for a double knockdown. Abbey sticks with the kicks, including a high one off the side of Evers' head to send her straight down. She's up fast enough to catch Abbey on top with a super powerslam of all things for two. Cool looking move if nothing else. Evers tries another kick but gets dropped with a powerbomb, setting up the Alligator Clutch for the pin at 4:51.

**Rating:** C-. This started off a bit awkward but got better as things went on. Laith feels like someone they're ready to push pretty hard, especially given her background on the indy scene. Evers just needs a lot more ring time, though she has the look and pedigree to make a pretty nice run for herself one day.

Video on Serena Deeb, who is very aggressive and will work hard.

Video on Piper Niven, who wants to be tough but with a big smile.

#### Second Round: Serena Deeb vs. Piper Niven

Niven powers her into the corner to start and falls on Deeb in a slam attempt. Well to be fair that was just kind of dumb. A hard belly to back suplex breaks up Serena's headlock and there's a splash for two more. With the holds not working, Deeb opts for just punching her in the face for a change. A middle rope Codebreaker (or maybe something like a monkey flip) drops Niven and a neckbreaker gets two.

Deeb is right back up with a modified Diamond Cutter for two more as the fans are split again. A charge misses in the corner though and Niven drops a Vader Bomb...for two. Dang I would have bet on that one. Niven heads up top (uh oh) and misses a splash, only to grab the Michinoku Driver to put Deeb away at 7:12.

**Rating:** C. What in the world was that ending? Niven missed the splash to seemingly give Deeb a hope spot but she was up less than five seconds later and hit the finish for the pin. I looked away for a second and my head swung back because I thought the video had skipped. They were trying to get into the Sting vs. Vader formula here but that ending REALLY

knocked them back.

Video on Princesa Sugehit, who may be a veteran but needs to win this tournament.

Video on Mercedes Martinez, who has waited a long time for this opportunity.

Kalisto is here.

### Second Round: Princesa Sugehit vs. Mercedes Martinez

Sugehit, in Wonder Woman themed gear, takes her down by the arm and tries a quick rollup for two. Another rollup, this time into the corner, gets the same on Martinez but she's right back with Two Amigos into a draping swinging neckbreaker. Princesa grabs a Codebreaker but has to block a superplex attempt. Instead it's a tornado DDT (now a big spot on the indy Bingo card) for two on Martinez and both of them are spent less than five minutes in. One heck of a Fujiwara armbar has Martinez in more trouble but she pops up and hits a fisherman's buster for the pin at 5:09.

**Rating:** C. What is with these sudden endings? Sugehit was dominating and then got caught by one move, seemingly out of nowhere, for the pin. Mercedes winning certainly isn't a surprise but they could have done a better job of laying the match out. You have almost all the time you want and there's no need to cut them down this fast.

Video on Bianca Belair, whose hair whip thing is still stupid.

Video on Kairi Sane, who is perhaps the most awesome thing ever.

### Second Round: Bianca Belair vs. Kairi Sane

Kairi gets taken down to start and we hit a headlock as JR continues to brag about how awesome of an athlete Belair is. Back up and Belair blows her a kiss, only to have Sane grab it out of the air and stomp it on the mat. One heck of a forearm drops Belair but she hits the hair whip (So you can use it to whip people but get yelled at for pulling it?) to take over.



A delayed vertical suplex with some squats gets two and we hit a seated full nelson. So she's a No Mercy fan? Some ground and pound of all things has Kairi down but she gets her knees up to stop a splash. Kairi does those rapid fire chops in the corner that probably don't hurt much but they're done in Japan and therefore they must be awesome.

A seated double arm choke (another No Mercy move) has Belair in trouble until she fights up and gets in a double chickenwing slam. One heck of a 450 gets a red hot near fall on Sane and Bianca is stunned. Kairi kicks her down and hits a running corner clothesline, followed by the top rope elbow (which she almost completely misses as her hip makes contact instead) to eliminate Belair at 10:00.

**Rating:** B. I'll give this one a higher rating for the No Mercy based offense and the hair thing being gone. Sane is clearly the top star in this whole thing and I'd be surprised if she doesn't win the whole thing. Belair is a heck of an athlete and that 450 looked awesome. She'll be a big deal in NXT for a good while and then on the main roster assuming she has any kind of talking ability.

A recap wraps things up.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Now we're getting to the fun part where they're having big names face other big names. The wrestling is getting better too and that can make for some sweet matches. I'm looking forward to where things go from here and the rest of the tournament, assuming it's given time, should be a lot of fun.

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# Mae Young Classic – Episode One: It's Ladies Month

## Mae Young Classic Episode #1

Date: August 28, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jim Ross, Lita

It's finally here. In the tradition of last year's Cruiserweight Classic, this is a thirty two participant women's tournament held down in Florida. The field is comprised of an international group of talents, some of whom you probably haven't heard of before. There are four shows up today with the finals taking place live on September 12. Let's get to it.

The opening video, narrated by Stephanie McMahon (because of course), talks about the history of women's wrestling and how the biggest stars have helped lead us here. The result was the Women's Revolution and it's allowed something like this to be possible.

Opening sequence.

One note: I'm not familiar with most of the names in this so if I miss something big about one of them, I apologize in advance.

Video on Kay Lee Ray, a Scot who describes herself as a hardcore daredevil.

Video on Princesa Sugehit (pronounced sue hay). She was the only woman in her gym in Mexico and is here to win the tournament.

First Round: Kay Lee Ray vs. Princesa Sugehit

Sugehit starts with the kicks and a big one to the chest gets two. They trade some trips until Ray grabs something like a Gory Stretch. That's reversed into a sunset bomb for two as the crowd is WAY into this so far. Sugehit drops three elbows for two but gets kneed in the face for the same. Back up and Kay chops her in the corner as Lita laments never wrestling in a mask.

A reverse DDT sets up a Koji Clutch on Sugehit for a few moments and the fans stay split. Sugehit gets out and rolls her around the ring into a cradle before a hard kick to the head gets two. More kicks are countered into something like a Gory Bomb for a slightly delayed two on Sugehit. Ray misses a splash though and a Fujiwara armbar makes her tap at 5:58.

**Rating:** B-. Good choice for an opener here with two easy to identify styles and Sugehit being the more polished of the two. It wasn't a classic or anything but it was the right idea: get the crowd into things (shouldn't be that hard) and something like a masked woman kicking another one in half was an easy choice.

Video on Serena Deeb who has a lot of history in WWE as part of the Straight Edge Society and a long stint in developmental. She had a bit of a drinking issue though and left the company, meaning she had to earn her way back.

Video on Vanessa Borne, who used to be a cheerleader for the Arizona Cardinals and a dancer for the Phoenix Suns but now she's here to be the star instead.

Naomi is here.

### First Round: Serena Deeb vs. Vanessa Borne

Of note: Jessika Carr, the new female full time referee, is working this match. Feeling out process to start as the announcers focus on Deeb's previous issues that sent her away from the ring for two years. Some armdrags have the rookie Borne in trouble but she headbutts her way out.

The aggressive style doesn't seem to sit well with the fans, who are notably more silent for this match (though to be fair these could have

been taped out of order). A sliding headbutt gets two on Deeb and we hit the chinlock. Serena fights up with some left hands and a neckbreaker but she goes shoulder first into the corner. A flip neckbreaker and Samoan drop give Borne two each but Deep is right back up with a spear for the pin at 6:06.

**Rating:** C-. There's your first story of the tournament and it's a good one with Deeb's road to redemption. She never was the biggest star in the division as she barely wrestled singles matches for the company but it's an easy story to tell. It's easy to imagine her making a long run in this thing as she's one of the more experienced names in the field and that could help her go a long way.

Video on Zeda, who learned martial arts to deal with bullying as a kid. She didn't have a hero to look up to so she became one herself.

Video on Shayna Baszler, a former UFC fighter with a long career. She's here to try something new now but the style will be the same. Baszler has wrestled in Shimmer so she's not coming into this as a rookie.

Ronda Rousey is here to cheer on her former Four Horsewoman teammate.

#### First Round: Shayna Baszler vs. Zeda

Lita and Zeda were in the same judo club, albeit many years apart. Shayna won't shake hands but the fans know Zeda is going to die anyway. An early cross armbreaker doesn't work on Zeda and it's back to a standoff. A ZEDA chant goes nowhere and Baszler easily strikes her into the corner. Zeda gets in some elbows and a monkey flip is good for two but Shayna is done playing around. A suplex backbreaker into a choke makes Zeda tap at 2:21.

Baszler poses with the Horsewomen.

Video on Jazzy Gabert. She grew up in Germany and throws people all around. It's like a demon comes out in the ring when she hurts the little girls. You might remember her from a few matches in TNA as Alpha Female.

Video on Abbey Laith, who is better known as Princess Kimber Lee.

#### First Round: Abbey Laith vs. Jazzy Gabert

Gabert is rather intimidating looking with a very blonde mohawk. It's also odd hearing JR talk about Chikara, where Abbey was Grand Champion. Abbey slugs away to start but gets thrown down by the hair. A Jazzy chant starts up as she throws Abbey down into the splits. That's fine with Abbey who has a ballet ground for some great flexibility. We hit something like an Anaconda Vice of all things as Abbey is being completely overwhelmed here.

Back up and Abbey is sent into the turnbuckle as the dominance continues. It's off to a chinlock before a rolling forearm knocks Abbey's block off. Abbey slips out of something and grabs a Tarantula into a choke on the ropes. Some kicks to the chest stagger Jazzy and some bicycle kicks make things even worse. There's a dropkick into the corner and a Swanton gets two on Gabert. One heck of a clothesline puts Laith down but she rolls off Jazzy's back -into an Alligator Clutch (a rollup used by Mae Young) for the pin at 7:12.

**Rating:** C+. I liked this one more than I was expecting to as they seemed to be going with a squash and then turned it into a better story with Laith winning in the end. There's a good chance that they're going to be sending her pretty far in the thing. Good idea here as Laith looks like a star now and should get a nice reception as a result.

Gabert shakes her hand post match.

We wrap it up with a quick recap of the night's events.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Good start for the tournament here as they showcased four names and we're already getting a good chunk of the second round ready. They should be flying through this pretty easily and that makes for a fun tournament. I also like having four episodes released at once as we can get through the first round in a single day instead of stretching it out for months. Lita was completely acceptable on commentary and seemed to be starting to get the hang of it more as the show went on. Good show here and that's a positive sign.

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