

Wrestlemania Pre-Show Match Announced

It's the Tag Team Title fourway. No shock there and it's a good choice to fire up the crowd.

Thought of the Day: Wrestlemania Title Stat

Even if you stretch this holds up. In the 29 Wrestlemanias, there has never been a show where the world, IC/US and tag all changed hands.

And before anyone tries to correct me:

Warrior didn't lose the IC title at Wrestlemania 6

Pre-Show matches aren't part of Wrestlemania, meaning they don't count.

Thought of the Day: Samoa Joe Lives On His Reputation

This came from a discussion on WrestleZone and me watching the latest One Night Only show. Samoa Joe might be the most

overrated guy in TNA at the moment. Think about this for a minute.

Joe owned the world in 06/07, didn't win the world title until WAY after his peak and had a forgettable world title reign in the summer of 2008. What of note has he done since then? Here are his accomplishments since losing the world title at Bound For Glory 2008, or roughly five years ago:

X-Division Title (50 days)

Tag Titles (91 days)

Television Title (70 days)

Joe also won the Maximum Impact tournament, which was held entirely on Xplosion and was for a world title shot also on Xplosion. Oh and he won the Deuces Wild tag tournament with Magnus.

On the other hand, here's another set of accomplishments in roughly the last three years:

Television Title (126 days)

X-Division Title (30 days)

Tag Titles (14 days)

These numbers belong to Robbie E. Robbie E., the epitome of the comedy jobber, has numbers comparable to Samoa Joe over the last three years, and very easily could surpass him if

this tag title reign lasts awhile. Think about that for a minute. Robbie E. > Samoa Joe in success.

What has Joe done lately to keep him at the elite level in TNA? From what I can tell, very little.

Do You Believe In the Shield?

If you don't... You should because they won both title matches tonight.

Wrestlemania 29 Preview – Tag Titles: HELL NO vs. Big E. Langston/Dolph Ziggler

This could go more than one way. First and foremost this is one of the matches that depends on where it is on the card. If it's late in the show, I can't imagine we don't see new champions. If it's earlier on in the show, I think the champions retain and Ziggler walks out with a title later on in the form of the Smackdown big gold belt. This is also interesting because it's the in ring debut of Langston, who has had some very entertaining matches down in NXT. I'm not sure if we're going to see the fun Langston or another generic

power guy, but either way it should be fun.

Now the main idea here is that one way or another, we need new tag champions. Kane and Bryan have held the belts for like six months now and it's WAY past the point where they should have dropped them. The champions aren't funny anymore, they're not really fighting, their matches are nothing special, and the joke is way past over. I don't see why we're sitting around watching them anymore when they're not doing anything of note and haven't been for months now. If Langston and Ziggler don't take the gold from them, hopefully someone does so soon.

As for the match, I'll go with the unlikely idea of new champions. It's pure instinct which is rarely right but I can't go with the champions retaining again after all these months. Ziggler has been on a very small roll so maybe they'll FINALLY give him something instead of just having him hold up a dented briefcase for nine months and hoping we think that means something. Then again there isn't much to the tag titles so it doesn't fix anything, but in WWE's eyes the gold is enough to make you mean whatever they want you to mean. The titles change here methinks.

Oh and I've heard rumors of making this a six person tag with AJ and Kaitlyn being added to make it winner takes all titles. If that's the case, I'd bet on the heels taking the belts even more. AJ is a good five months past being the best option for the title, but at least she would be better (and look better) than Kaitlyn.

NXT – February 13, 2013: If You Build It As A Big Moment And Treat It As A Big Moment, It's A Big Moment

NXT

Date: February 13, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Tony Dawson

Tonight we have the finals of the tag title tournament and more build for the NXT Title match between O'Brien and Langston. Other than that we're probably getting ready for the next challenger for Langston, which could be almost anyone. Something else I like about NXT: no triple threats for the most part. That's the only way I could see Langston losing though, so there's a chance they might start showing up. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the tournament thus far.

Opening sequence.

Mike Dalton vs. Axl Keagan

Before the match, Paige jumps ring announcer Summer Rae. Paige says the match isn't going anywhere until Rae comes back to face her. This brings out Dusty Rhodes to tell her to leave but Paige won't go. Paige finally leave\s but gets in a fight on the stage with Rae, possibly injuring her shoulder in the process. No match apparently.

Alex Riley vs. Corey Graves

The mat is black here for no apparent reason. On the other hand, the match is happening for a specific reason as Graves attacked Riley after a tag tournament match two weeks ago. Riley starts fast and sends Graves into the corner early on before slamming him down. Graves suckers him in though and fires off a kick to the knee to slow Riley down. Regal: "Sometimes a boot to the face can work wonders."

Graves grabs a chinlock as we hear about Summer Rae vs. Paige coming up next. A back elbow gets two for Corey and it's off to another chinlock. Riley fights up and comes back with a quick suplex and a spinebuster for two. Not that any of it matters though as Graves takes him down with the 13th Step for the fast submission at 5:16. The announcers don't know the name of the hold even though they've said the name before.

Rating: C. I really like Riley so it's nice to see him doing something here. He isn't going to make it onto the main roster for a long time due to whatever reason they have at this point, but it's cool to see him here. Graves is a guy I could see going to the main roster soon as he has the unique look that WWE loves and isn't bad in the ring either. Nice little match here.

Video on the Elimination Chamber.

Summer Rae vs. Paige

Paige has a bad shoulder coming in so Summer immediately kicks the shoulder for two. Off to a short arm scissors as Rae is at least showing some brains. Paige immediately fights up and throws Summer down, only to get her arm pulled on again. A BIG spin kick takes Paige down for the pin out of nowhere at 1:59. That's Paige's first loss I believe.

Sasha Banks gets another love note and will meet her secret admirer next week.

The O'Brian vs. Langston match is next week.

NXT Tag Titles: Wyatt Family vs. Adrian Neville/Oliver Grey

It's a tournament final so no one is defending. The Family is Erick Rowan and Luke Harper, but we get another Wyatt promo first. This one talks about how the ultimate underdogs are already in the ring and they get to face some monsters tonight. Harper and Grey get things going with Luke being sent to the floor almost immediately. A big dive takes Harper out and we take a break.

Back with Neville coming in to work on Erick's arm. The size difference is huge here as Rowan might be a full foot taller than Neville. Back to Grey to pound on the arm before it's back to Adrian. Bray is standing at ringside instead of in his rocker here. The monsters finally get in a shot to Grey's ribs as Lee comes in again. That advantage lasts all of a few seconds though as it's back to Neville who backflips over Luke before tagging Grey back in. That seemed rather pointless.

Rowan pounds on Oliver in the corner but the advantage again only lasts a few seconds with Grey cranking on the arm again. Back to Neville who fires off kicks to Rowan's leg and hooks a quickly broken sleeper. Bray actually gets involved by tripping up Grey, only to get ejected by Dusty. We take another break and come back with Grey in a chinlock at the hands of Harper. A slam puts Oliver down and it's off to a neck crank from Rowan. The cranking continues as the monsters change again.

Luke mixes things up by switching over to a front facelock before Rowan comes in for a bearhug. Grey finally fights out of the corner and avoids an elbow drop to make the tag to Neville. Things immediately speed up and a jumping DDT gets two on Harper. Neville loads up a springboard kick but jumps into a kick to the face from Harper.

Grey makes a diving save at two and things settle down a bit. Neville escapes a belly to back suplex but gets splashed in the corner. The

monsters collide in the corner and Adrian kicks Harper in the face, setting up the corkscrew shooting star for the pin and the titles at 11:54 shown of 18:54.

Rating: B. This took some time to get going and the middle dragged a bit, but the little guy vs. big guy formula here was working like a charm. Grey makes a fine punching bag and Neville has enough stuff to make a convincing comeback to set up the big finish. This was the perfect way to give us a first set of champions and the match worked really well. Good stuff here.

Dusty comes out to present the champions with their titles.

Overall Rating: A-. This was a very solid show all around with a great ending to cap it off. It's an amazing thing: when you build up a moment as a big deal, treat it like a big deal, and have the match be a big deal, the moment becomes a big deal. The tournament was a success and we've got underdog champions that can hold the belts for a few months before dropping them to some bigger threats. This was good stuff all around and another example of how well NXT works.

Results

Corey Graves b. Alex Riley – 13th Step

Summer Rae b. Paige – Spinwheel Kick

Adrian Neville/Oliver Grey b. Wyatt Family – Corkscrew Shooting Star Press to Harper

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NXT – January 30, 2013: This Show Is My Wrestling Salvation

NXT

Date: January 30, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Tony Dawson

This is the second week of the tag team title tournament and my guess is we'll get two more first round matches tonight. Other than that we've got Conor O'Brien challenging Langston for the title next week which should be interesting given that we haven't seen Conor since Cameron was released. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the announcement of the title tournament and the first two matches. For the first time we get to see the full brackets:

Wyatt Family

Bo Dallas/Michael McGillicutty

Primo/Epico

Alex Riley/Derrick Bateman

Leo Kruger/Kassius Ohno

Oliver Grey/Adrian Neville

Welcome Home.

NXT Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Alex Riley/Derrick Bateman vs. Kassius Ohno/Leo Kruger

Bateman and Kruger get us going with a kneeling staredown. The fans are behind Bateman despite him not being seen in months. They fight over some basic holds to start before it's off to Riley. Kruger hides in the corner before bringing in Ohno. Kassius doesn't seem impressed so Riley takes him down with an armdrag into an armbar. Riley hits a big dropkick as Regal talks about why wrestlers drop down ("They don't want to get hit.").

Back to Derrick who knocks Kassius to the floor and we take a break. We come back to see Kruger in a Bateman armbar followed by Bateman pounding away in the corner. A running knee in the corner misses Kruger though and that's the knee that kept him out for four months. Back to Ohno who cranks on the knee a bit before Kruger comes in to do the same.

Kassius is looking at Regal as Leo tags him in. Kind of odd as Regal hasn't done anything to Ohno in a few weeks but whatever. Anyway Ohno comes in and puts on another leg lock before tagging back to Kruger. Leo hooks a kneeling half crab and a Robinsdale Crunch before bringing Ohno back in for a spinning toe hold. I like how they're mixing the holds and moves up instead of using the same ones over and over again. It's so boring when people do that.

Bateman kicks Ohno away and makes the hot tag to Riley. Things speed up and Riley hits a spinebuster and falling forward DDT out of the corner for two. Everything breaks down and Ohno hits a big boot on Riley to set up what looks like an arm trap cravate for the tap out at 10:51 shown of 14:21.

Rating: B-. This was the tag team formula and it worked very well. I like Ohno better as a vicious killer rather than the usual guy he's been where he feigns respect for everyone else. Kruger didn't get to show off a lot here which is somewhat disappointing but at least we got to see some Alex

Riley. This was a lot better than I was expecting.

Mason Ryan vs. Sakamoto

There's a name we haven't seen in a long time. Ryan is still a musclehead but he's a bit less cut up now which might be a good thing for him. Sakamoto tries to hide in the corner but gets thrown across the ring by the throat. A cross body is caught in a backbreaker and fallaway slam by Ryan before it's time for a trapezius hold. That doesn't last long so Mason ends him with a Jackhammer at 2:19. The fans call Ryan boring and I can't say I disagree. He's just a power guy who uses power moves and that's it.

Aksana vs. Paige

Aksana takes over to start and shows off some "power" before crawling around on the mat. With a boot in Paige's back Aksana pulls on her limbs for a bit but here's Paige's comeback. She pounds away on Aksana a bit before hooking a kneeling Sharpshooter with her knee in Aksana's back for the tap out at 2:59. Paige continues to impress.

Post match Summer Rae runs in and jumps Paige from behind.

Sasha Banks is very excited about winning last week. She thinks the sky is the limit but here's a delivery guy with a letter. Apparently Sasha has a secret admirer.

NXT Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Primo/Epico vs. Michael McGillicutty/Bo Dallas

Epico has his hair down here which makes him a lot easier to distinguish from his partner. Primo and Dallas start things off with Primo being shoved into the corner. Dallas sends him to the outside before it's off to Epico. The cousins take over but almost as soon as Primo comes back

in, Dallas is able to regain control. An atomic drop gets two and it's off to McGillicutty. A double back elbow gets two as does a backbreaker by McGillicutty.

Back to Dallas for a pretty sweet back and forth double teaming sequence (starting with a Dallas right, a McGillicutty knee lift and a Dallas clothesline) for two. Michael counters an Epico dropkick to send him to the outside. We take a break and come back with Michael hitting a running dropkick but having to beat up the illegal Primo, allowing Epico to dropkick McGillicutty to the floor.

Back in an Epico hits a slingshot hilo for two on Michael as Rosa gyrates a bit. Primo hooks a chinlock with a bodyscissors for a bit before it's back to Epico. He hooks another chinlock on Michael but McGillicutty fights up and they collide. The double tag brings in Dallas and Primo with Bo hitting an awkward looking kneedrop for two. Epico breaks up a pin attempt off a tornado bulldog from Dallas. Primo and Dallas are left in the ring and an arm trap DDT gets a close two on Bo. Primo loads up something but charges into the belly to belly suplex for the pin at 10:25 shown of 13:55.

Rating: C+. Another pretty decent tag match here but not as good overall as the first one. I like the belly to belly far better as Dallas' finisher than the spear. Dallas' size isn't a big enough guy to make that move look effective but with something like the belly to belly it's more believable. This was another good match and a good way to close the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Two good matches and some angel advancement make for a solid show this week. I'm surprised we didn't get at least a promo about the title match next week but that wasn't the focus of tonight's show. This show continues to be the highlight of my week as it's so nice to have a show you know is going to be ok at worst. I can't remember the last time they had a truly bad episode which is almost impossible to be able to say in wrestling.

Results

Leo Kruger/Kassius Ohno b. Alex Riley/Derrick Bateman – Arm trap cravate to Riley

Mason Ryan b. Sakamoto – Jackhammer

Paige b. Aksana – Kneeling Sharpshooter

Bo Dallas/Michael McGillicutty b. Primo/Epico – Belly to belly suplex to Primo

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NXT – January 23, 2013: It's Tournament Time Again

NXT

Date: January 23, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Tony Dawson

On the 29th anniversary of the birth of modern wrestling, we're back in Florida for more NXT. After last week's transitional show we should be ready for something new tonight. Odds are Langston is going to get his next challenger tonight which should be interesting as he has no one else to fight at the moment. Let's get to it.

Shawn Michaels is in the ring to open the show. Fans: "HBK! HBK! HBK!" Shawn: "Aw come on." The fans quiet down. Shawn: "No don't stop!" Anyway, Shawn is here and he's got two belts which are apparently the new NXT Tag Team Championships. Shawn says that there's a tournament starting tonight

and the winners will be the stars of the future. He says that as a former tag team champion he knows what kind of a springboard these belts can be. Nice little cameo here that didn't take up much time at all and made things feel special.

Opening video.

NXT Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Wyatt Family vs. Yoshi Tatsu/Percy Watson

It's Harper/Rowan here. Watson and Rowan start things off with Watson jumping WAY over Rowan's head in a leap frog and taking him down with a leg lariat. Off to Tatsu as Regal gives us an idea of the mentality behind being in a tag team. Rowan chops Tatsu into the corner and it's off to Harper to pound away in the corner.

Luke puts on a chinlock and circles around the ring at the same time to keep Yoshi disoriented. I don't think I've ever seen that before. A jawbreaker finally gets Tatsu out of trouble but it's off to Rowan to slam him down for two. Rowan cranks on the neck for a bit and here's Harper again, but he lets Yoshi crawl over and bring in Watson. Everything breaks down and Harper takes Watson's head off with a clothesline for the pin at 4:55.

Rating: C. This was just a squash but the Wyatt Family has a great presence to them. There's something disturbing to them where they're just a bit off and that's a great characteristic to have. At this point Wyatt doesn't even need to be in the ring which is good as I think he's still recovering from his injury. The Family is doing fine just being creepy right now but them getting some gold would be nice.

Dusty is with Derrick Bateman and Alex Riley and offers them a tournament match against Kruger and Ohno. Corey Graves comes up to complain about not getting an NXT Title rematch and not being in the tournament. Riley gets in his face and Bateman hums a circus tune. The tag team leaves and

Dusty makes it Graves vs. his former partner Jake Carter tonight. Graves says tell Carter that Carter is in his path to the title.

Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox

Alicia makes fun of Sasha for being tiny and having the nickname of Small Package. Fox sends her into the ropes but walks into a headscissors to take her down. Sasha sends her to the apron but gets popped in the face for two. A bridging northern lights suplex (called a fisherman's suplex in a rare mistake by Regal) gets two for Fox and we hit the chinlock. Sasha comes back with a monkey flip and an armdrag out of the corner, only to be caught in a wheelbarrow front slam for no cover. Fox picks her up for a slam but it's the Ricky Steamboat/Randy Savage small package pin for Banks at 3:23.

Rating: C-. This was too short to mean much but at least Banks looks good and got to show off a bit here. The Divas are nowhere near as irritating here as they are on the main shows as they're actually treated somewhat seriously on NXT. Decent stuff here and Banks got to look good despite being a tiny little thing.

Video on Paige who is here to be a champion.

Some new blonde interviewer asks Aksana about her match next week with Paige. Aksana accuses Paige of stealing her look and says 2013 is her year.

Conor O'Brien says he's the true Ascension and he will rise.

Corey Graves vs. Jake Carter

Graves seems to get a face pop on his way to the ring. Carter grabs a headlock to start but gets shoved into the corner. That goes nowhere for Graves as Jake pounds away in the corner and the middle of the ring.

Corey comes back with a suplex and into an arm trap chinlock which Regal says can be called a Gator Hold. Carter fight up and hits a clothesline for two but gets sent into the corner and chop blocked down. The 13th Step leg lock ends Carter at 3:09.

Rating: C-. Another just ok match here as Graves gets to run over Carter and remind us that he exists after the title match from a few weeks ago. Graves got a good reaction and definitely has a unique look which will be nothing but good for him. Carter on the other hand looked pretty generic out there and didn't appear to get any of his dad's good qualities.

Post match Graves says that he's been screwed out of a rematch for the title and kept out of the title tournament because he's an "outcast". As the savior of misbehavior (terrible name) he's declaring anarchy on NXT. Oh and if Riley sees him, stay down.

NXT Tag Team Title Tournament: 3MB vs. Oliver Grey/Adrian Neville

It's Slater and McIntyre here. We start with Drew vs. Neville with Drew taking him down to the mat with ease. Off to a chinlock by McIntyre which is eventually countered by a headscissors but Drew is able to tag in Slater. Heath immediately lets Neville backflip out of a hold and bring in Grey for the first time. Off to an armbar on Slater followed by a dropkick to send Slater to the outside.

The Brits cause some heel miscommunication before Neville dives on McIntyre on the floor. We take a break and come back with Drew getting two on Grey. A clothesline gets two on Grey and it's back to Slater for a superkick for two of his own. Slater hooks a chinlock as we hear about Grey being a lumberjack. Oliver quickly escapes and brings in Adrian who starts flipping around as fast as he can. After kicking Slater in the face, the now legal McIntyre gets caught with that corkscrew shooting star for the pin by Neville at 6:26 shown of 9:56.

Rating: C+. This was a basic formula match but Neville got to show off a lot more than he had did last week. That big shooting star is a great finisher and looks awesome but we haven't seen yet if he can pull off the other stuff that it takes to fill out a match. Decent little tag match here as Grey and Neville look good as a fast little team.

Big E. Langston vs. Axl Keegan

Non-title here. I love the look of glee on Langston's face during his entrance and the kind of dance he does with the powder on his hands. We hear about Langston's association with Ziggler but the fans don't seem to mind at all. Langston literally runs him over and wins with the Big Ending at 56 seconds.

Langston loads up the second Big Ending when Conor O'Brien pops up on screen. He says that in two weeks there will be an awakening. Langston should be there so O'Brien can show him what he thinks of the five count. After an evil laugh from Conor, Big E. hits the Big Ending anyway. A third Big Ending and another five count end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This wasn't their strongest show but they set a lot of stuff up tonight. We've got some new titles in play and the start of what could be a decent tournament to earn them. Also O'Brien is back and Langston has his first challenger for the title. Sometimes you have to have a slower show to set up something down the line and that's what happened here. Not bad at all but nothing to see in the matches department.

Results

Wyatt Family b. Yoshi Tatsu/Percy Watson – Clothesline to Watson

Sasha Banks b. Alicia Fox – Small Package

Corey Graves b. Jake Carter – 13th Step

Oliver Grey/Adrian Neville b. 3MB – Corkscrew Shooting Star Press to McIntyre

Big E. Langston b. Axl Keegan – Big Ending

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Royal Rumble Pre-Show Match Set

It's not a spoiler but since people insist on whining about reading news when they come to a site where news is posted, I'll put it after the break. I'll even go one up on that and throw in some fake tags. Is THAT enough to make you lunkeheads happy? Cesaro is defending against Miz. You knew that was going to be added to the card in some sort.

Wrestlemania #28: Tag Title Match – Primo/Epico (C) vs. The Usos vs. Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd

For the tag titles and likely a dark match. This was announced the week of the show and is going to be streamed for free on the WWE's Youtube channel and WWE.com. The champions have had

the belts now for about two and a half months but were actually being used as jobbers on Raw for Big Show earlier this week. I love the Usos but for the life of me I don't get why they added in Gabriel and Kidd. Apparently the team was formed on Superstars with the question from Kidd of "hey, wanna be a team" and a reply of "sure". That gets you in the title match at Mania now I guess.

As for a prediction, I'll go with the champions retaining, but if this gets the title picture moving a bit it'll be great.

Thoughts/Predictions?