

NXT Takeover: In Your House Preview

It's that time again as NXT is taking over...well Peacock again, but that might work out just as well. This time feels different though, as I have forgotten that the show is taking place more than once now. This has not felt like the kind of build you get for a Takeover and that is a shame, as the show has earned its amazing reputation. There are matches on the card that look good though so let's get to it.

Mercedes Martinez vs. Xia Li

We'll start with the only non-title match on the show because NXT has become a promotion that is awash with titles, just like almost every other. Martinez is mostly a monster and Li is running through the entire division. You need to run over some people on the way there though and Li has marked Martinez as her next target. That might be easier said than done.

Or maybe not as I'll take LI to win here. There is little reason to think that Martinez is going to win as, simply put, she doesn't win matches around here. I'm not sure how long Martinez is going to stick around NXT, but at least she is getting some high profile matches. This should be a heck of a fight as Li has gotten that much better, and odds are she is going to win here.

North American Title/Tag Team Titles: Bronson Reed/MSK(c) vs. Legado del Fantasma

This is one of those things that can work out rather well, as you have all of the titles on the line in a winner take all match. That is something I could go with seeing, as it combined a pair of matches into one but it also opens up a bit more drama, which is not something you might be able to get out of a single match. It means you could see a surprise, and

it would be two at a time.

As tempting as a pair of title changes would be here, I think the champs retain, as Reed winning the North American Title felt like a big deal. I could see MSK dropping the belts to Legado sooner rather than later, but I don't think it happens here. There is an idea here though and that is a good thing, but actually pulling the trigger on the changes is a bit hard to imagine.

Million Dollar Title: Cameron Grimes vs. LA Knight

Hey look, a ladder match. As in another ladder match, just like they had at the last Takeover. This time around it is for the revived Million Dollar Title, which has oddly turned into an interesting feud. Granted that might have something to do with how great Grimes has been on the mic in the build to the match. Knight is one of my favorite talkers today though and I could go for seeing the match.

That means I have to pick a winner though and egads I'm not sure where this is going. I'll take Grimes just because the story has been built up so long, but I'll say that with a grand total of no confidence. This could go either way and that is a great way to build up some drama. Knight needs the win, but it isn't like losing a ladder match would hurt him at all. Granted the same thing could be said of Grimes, and that is why the whole thing should work well.

Women's Title: Raquel Gonzalez(c) vs. Ember Moon

Moon has come back a very long way and that is quite the relief. She has been back in NXT for a good while now and nothing has really come together for her just yet. That has finally started getting better and Moon is starting to feel a little bit more like a star who could pull something like this off. I'm not sure if she will, but it is something I could believe and that is a good thing to see.

With that being said, I can't imagine Moon winning the title back here so we'll go with Gonzalez retaining. Gonzalez is someone who could be champion for a very long time to come and a win over Moon is going to be a good start. Moon has the bigger weapon with the Eclipse and that is something you have to account for, but ultimately Gonzalez is going to retain, likely with the lifting powerbomb.

NXT Title: Karrion Kross(c) vs. Johnny Gargano vs. Adam Cole vs. Kyle O'Reilly vs. Pete Dunne

Then we have this, which is the majority of the main event scene thrown together into one huge main event. This is the kind of thing you don't see very often in NXT and that might be a good idea in this case. What we are likely to get here is one big mess with everyone going nuts for twenty plus minutes with a bunch of near falls after another. You can get a lot of entertainment out of that if the match is structured right, which is where NXT shines.

As for a winner...egads where are they going here? I think I'll go with my usual train of thought here and pick Kross to retain. I'm not sure I can imagine him having two pretty short title reigns, but there is always the chance that he is getting hotshotted up to the main roster. I would not be stunned to see him lose the title, but I'll go with Kross retaining here in a prediction likely to be wrong.

Overall Thoughts

The more I think about this show, the more hope I have for it. There are a lot of good pieces to the card and just a few should be enough to carry a five match card. NXT knows how to do these big shows as well as anyone else and if they can pull this one off, they might be even more impressive than I thought. The potential is there, even if the interest might not be, and that could be enough to get it across the goal line.

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Takeover: In Your House: You Still Got It?



IMG Credit: WWE

Takeover: In Your House

Date: June 7, 2020

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Beth Phoenix, Tom Phillips

I'm almost scared for this one, as I don't know if NXT can pull off the same magic without the fans. It doesn't help that the show has been a lot weaker since it moved to two hours, but you never bet against Takeover because the show has a pretty outstanding record. Tonight's main event seems to be another cinematic match between NXT Champion Adam Cole and Velveteen Dream so let's get to it.

The opening video is a pure nostalgia trip, with an NXT version of the old "revolutionary force in sports entertainment" intro, Todd Pettengill running down the card, and one lucky winner....not winning a house tonight. New Generation fans (all 14 or so of them) will have a good time with that one.

An altered version of the old house set is here too, with Code Orange performing the opening song.

Shotzi Blackheart/Tegan Nox/Mia Yim vs. Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez/Candice LeRae

LeRae tags Gonzalez in to hide from Yim, who is game to go after Gonzalez instead. Kai comes in so Mia brings in Nox for the revenge. Nox slugs away in the corner and hands it off to Blackheart for some kicks to the face. Kai gets in her own kick for two though and it's back to LeRae, who misses the backsplash. Gonzalez kicks LeRae by mistake and it's time to go outside for the parade of dives.

Back in and Shotzi runs LeRae over for two, followed by Cattle Mutilation. Kai makes the save and then distracts the referee so Gonzalez can get in her own clothesline. It's Shotzi staying in trouble but Gonzalez misses a running boot in the corner. Mia gets the hot tag and comes in to clean house until a double knockdown puts her and LeRae down. Nox comes in to beat on Gonzalez, who comes back with a powerbomb for two. Yim and LeRae fight to the floor and then into the garage, leaving us two on two. Kai kicks Gonzalez by mistake and a double dropkick puts Gonzalez on the floor. The Shiniest Wizard finishes Kai at 9:52.

Rating: C+. It was a fast paced and exciting opener and that's all you could expect from something like this. Nox is a star in the making, but I'm not sure how much faith you can put in someone with her history of

injuries. I like having the two feuds in one match here and Nox vs. Kai feels like it could have some legs if they want to keep it going.

Promotional consideration paid for by the following, with William Regal as Alfred Hayes: WWE Ice Cream Cookie Sandwiches.

We recap Damian Priest vs. Finn Balor. Priest wanted to make a name for himself and attacked Balor, who wasn't going to stand for that. It's time for a showdown.

Finn Balor vs. Damian Priest

Balor dropkicks him in the corner before the bell and goes after the knee to take the big man down. They head outside with Balor going shoulder first into the steps and then back first onto the apron. The forearms don't do much for Balor as Priest plants him with a lifting Downward Spiral. Priest stomps Balor down in the corner for one, meaning it's off to the chinlock.

Balor fights up and sends him to the apron for the dropkick into the barricade. Some hard stomps against the barricade keep Priest in trouble but Priest is back in with a clothesline to cut off the dive. A series of strikes has Balor in trouble so he hits a fast Pele kick for two. Priest knocks him back to the floor and hits a Razor's Edge onto the apron for two of his own. Back in and Priest hits some running elbows in the corner but Balor is back with the Sling Blade to break up the trio.

Priest kicks him in the face again, only to have Balor counter again. The Coup de Grace is countered into a sitout chokeslam for two and Priest tells the referee he's not stopping this. A Razor's Edge off the apron onto the steps is broken up so Balor forearms him off the apron and onto the steps instead. Back in and the top rope double stomp to the back sets up the Coup de Grace finishes Priest at 12:37.

Rating: B. This is one where the NXT wrestlers at ringside helped carry things as they made it feel more energized. These two started fast and didn't really stop until the ending, which is a good way to do a match like this. Balor almost has to move on to the title picture now, or at least into contention for it. What else is there for him to do at the

moment?

And now, here's Adam Cole for ICO-PRO.

We recap Johnny Gargano vs. Keith Lee for the North American Title. Gargano and Candice LeRae aren't happy with how they've been treated around here so it's time to do things their way. This includes defeating Lee to become North American Champion, so Lee and Mia Yim mocked their big proclamation. Gargano attacked Lee's eyes with his car key and then crushed Lee's hands to even the odds a bit coming into this one.

North American Title: Keith Lee vs. Johnny Gargano

Gargano is challenging and has the key in his trunks. Lee has a Black Lives Matter vest and shoves Gargano around a few times to start. The spinning kick to the face misses and Gargano is terrified. A quick chase lets Gargano get in a dropkick through the ropes, but the suicide dive is pulled out of the air. Gargano can't send the bad hand into the steps but winds up running towards the set door.

Since that's not a real door, Lee catches up to him for the Grizzly Magnum chop. They head back inside with Gargano stomping on the hand so Lee knocks him away for a short breather. Gargano is right back with left hands in the corner before shoving Lee's face against the buckle.

The band hand is bent around the turnbuckle before cranking on the arm even more. The slingshot spear is cut off by an enziguri to give Lee two but he can't hit a powerbomb. Gargano's clotheslines don't work so Lee shows him how it's done for two more. Lee wants to see Gargano's heart and loads up another powerbomb.

This time Gargano kicks him in the head and rolls into a sunset flip for two more. Gargano knocks him outside and it's a suicide tornado DDT to knock Lee silly on the floor. The count is broken up at nine so Lee Pounces Gargano through the Plexiglas. Lee pulls what used to be Gargano back in but here's Candice for a distraction.

Mia Yim comes out to take care of her but the distraction lets Gargano use the key on Lee's eye. There's the slingshot DDT for two on Lee,

followed by a low superkick for the same. Gargano hits two more of them for the same but talks too much trash, allowing Lee to hit the Spirit Bomb. The Big Bang Catastrophe retains the title at 20:38.

Rating: B. Another hard hitting, back and forth match here with Gargano taking a surprising loss so soon after starting his big heel turn. That being said, I'm not sure what in the world is left for Lee. Other than going title for title with Adam Cole, who else is left to come after him at the moment?

We recap Adam Cole vs. Velveteen Dream. Cole has been champion for a year but Dream had him beaten until the Undisputed Era interfered. Tonight, they're fighting in a Backlot Brawl, meaning in a ring behind the building with fans in cars around the ring.

NXT Title: Adam Cole vs. Velveteen Dream

Anything goes, Cole is defending and drives up to the ring in a really big truck, while Dream is in a Lamborghini and dressed as Negan from Walking Dead (complete with Lucille the bat). Dream gets in some early near falls but Cole catches him with a kick to the face. Cole grabs the belt and gets in another car but Dream is there to beat on it with the bat.

They slug it out again and here's an Uber, with the two of them literally fighting through it. The Uber pulls away and they fight up what looks like the street in front of an apartment building. Cole gets away and finds a fire extinguisher to blind Dream. Some uppercuts knock Dream back to ringside and Cole forearm him up against a truck. Dream manages to post him but Cole rolls away and asks for time out.

A dive off the top is superkicked out of the air to put Dream down again. Dream does the same to Cole though and the champ is out on the ground. Cole gets planted onto the hood of a car and Dream busts out a ladder. The Purple Rainmaker from the ladder is loaded up but here's the rest of the Undisputed Era in another car with the horn offering a distraction. Dream is fine enough to knock Cole off the ladder and into the windshield though, drawing some blood from Cole's arm.

The Era beats Dream down in a hurry and that means it's time to fill the ring with chairs. Dexter Lumis pops out from under the ring though and beats up the Era, even throwing them in the trunk of a car and driving off. Dream is down on the pile of chairs so Cole pulls himself up, only to have the Panama Sunrise countered into a Dream Valley Driver for two. Dream says it's Dream Over so Cole hits him low and hits the Panama Sunrise onto the chairs to retain at 14:58.

Rating: B. This was one of the more enjoyable cinematic matches and some of that might have had to do with commentary. It helped keep the match a little more grounded and that's what it needed. This almost has to be it for Dream, because what else is there of him to do down here if he isn't winning the title?

DX is having issues answering internet questions.

We recap Karrion Kross vs. Tommaso Ciampa. Kross debuted and attacked Ciampa so it's time for his first real test.

Karrion Kross vs. Tommaso Ciampa

Kross starts fast and sends Ciampa down in a hurry. Ciampa is back up with the Willow's Bell attempt. Which is countered for a kick to the face. They head outside with Kross dropping him back first onto the apron and there's a hard suplex back inside. Kross hits a big clothesline and loads up a chokeslam but Ciampa slugs away to knock him to the floor. Now Willow's Bell can connect for two but the Fairy Tale Ending is countered into an F5. The Krossjacket goes on and Ciampa is out at 6:12.

Rating: C. I thought he would win but I didn't think he would do it like that. This was just a step ahead of a squash and that is the kind of major debut that Kross needed. Kross comes off like a total monster and giving him that kind of a finisher could make him quite someone to be reckoned with around here. I like the presentation and with someone like Kross, that's what matters.

A disheveled Robert Stone is here.

We recap Charlotte vs. Io Shirai vs. Rhea Ripley for the Women's Title.

Charlotte beat Ripley to win the title at Wrestlemania and then Shirai won a ladder match to become #1 contender. Shirai beat Charlotte via DQ so the triple threat title match was set.

Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Io Shirai vs. Rhea Ripley

Charlotte is defending and bails to the floor to start. Back in and Charlotte takes them both down while shouting about how this is her house and they are just guests. Ripley fights up but gets sent hard outside, with Charlotte sending her even harder into the barricade. Shirai grabs a hurricanrana off the apron to take Charlotte down but she's back up to run both challengers over.

Charlotte and Shirai are back inside with the former grabbing the Boston crab until Ripley makes the save. Shirai cuts Ripley off though and adds a 619 to Charlotte. A double stomp to Charlotte's ribs keeps her down but Rhea is up to drop Shirai and put everyone on the mat for a bit. Charlotte gets in a double spear for the double knockdown but the moonsault hits Ripley's knees.

Shirai escapes the Riptide and grabs the Crossface on Charlotte, meaning Ripley has to make another save. That's fine with Shirai, who hits a springboard missile dropkick on Ripley but Charlotte grabs Natural Selection for two more. Shirai knocks Charlotte outside and hits the big suicide dive onto Ripley. Charlotte is back up to take Shirai down and the brawl with Charlotte starts going around the arena. Naturally, Shirai uses the distraction to get up to the top of the house set and dive onto the other two for a huge crash.

Charlotte stays down on the floor but Ripley can't superplex Shirai. They switch places as Charlotte gets back in and pulls Shirai down. Ripley is ready for her though and it's a super Riptide to Charlotte for two with Shirai making the save. The standing Texas Cloverleaf has Shirai in trouble until Charlotte makes the save with the kendo stick. The spear sets up the Figure Eight on Ripley but Shirai moonsaults onto Ripley (mostly onto her head) for the pin and the title at 17:40.

Rating: B+. Other than being terrified for how Shirai landed on Ripley, this was a heck of a fight with all three going hard from bell to bell

with one save after another. Shirai winning was a surprise but one that I can take as it should slow down the amount of Charlotte appearances. It's a rather good main event though and that's what mattered, with Ripley being able to get another shot later on. Charlotte needs to take a few weeks off, but I doubt that's what she winds up doing.

Confetti and streamers end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. Yeah I'd say that worked, as Takeover manages to pull off another one. The worst match of the night was the short Kross vs. Ciampa match and even that was easy enough to watch. They need some fresh blood at the top of the card though and I think Lee vs. Balor is going to be the match to determine that spot. The action was very good here though, and a lot of that was due to the wrestlers acting as the crowd. They really did add something and if the rest of the shows could duplicate it, we would be in a much better place from week to week. Very good show here, though it didn't have the blow away classic.

Results

Shotzi Blackheart/Tegan Nox/Mia Yim b. Candice LeRae/Dakota Kai/Raquel Gonzalez – Shiniest Wizard to Kai

Finn Balor b. Damian Priest – Coup de Grace

Keith Lee b. Johnny Gargano – Big Bang Catastrophe

Adam Cole b. Velveteen Dream – Panama Sunrise onto a pile of chairs

Karrion Kross b. Tommaso Ciampa – Krossjacket choke

Io Shirai b. Rhea Ripley and Charlotte – Moonsault to Ripley

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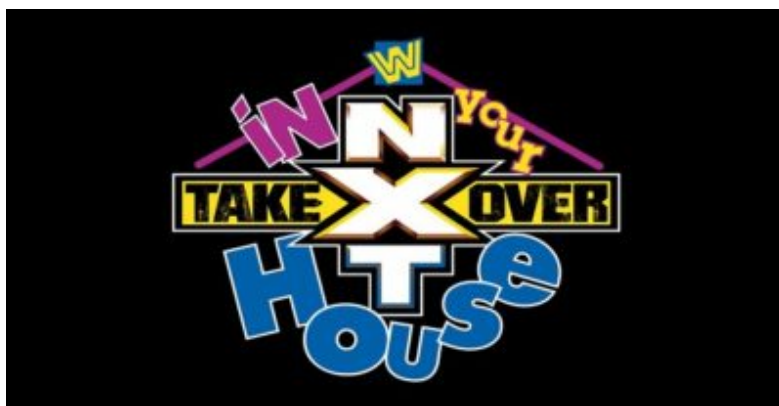
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Takeover: In Your House Preview



IMG Credit: WWE

It's that time again and I'm really nervous about this one. NXT has taken a big hit in the last few months and I don't know if they can make it work again. The card just doesn't feel important here and they won't have the fans there to make anything work. NXT has pulled off some miracles before, but maybe they've got another one in their magic hat. Let's get to it.

Karrion Kross vs. Tommaso Ciampa

Let's start with one of the harder ones as they really could go either way here. Ciampa is an absolute NXT legend and one of the biggest stars the promotion has ever had. That being

said, Kross is the new star and has done nothing but squash jobbers so far. Kross has always been more about character work than in-ring abilities, so I'm not sure if he's ready for this spot.

He better be though because he's beating Ciampa here. NXT knows better than to cut off someone brand new so fast so there is no need for Ciampa to win here. Ciampa is absolutely bulletproof in NXT, but he has lost a ton of steam in recent months. I'm not sure what he needs to do to fix things up, but maybe he just needs a change of scenery after so long around here.

North American Title: Keith Lee(c) vs. Johnny Gargano

This is another match where I think you need to look forward more than at what you have in front of you. Gargano is freshly heel and there is only so much he can do without a big win. At the same time you have Lee, who has been completely dominant as North American Champion. That would suggest something big is coming for him, and I think I know what that is.

I'm going with Gargano winning here, naturally through some shenanigans, so that Lee can move on and go after the NXT Title. There isn't anything left for him to prove as the North American Champion so let him move on to the bigger and more important situation. It should work out well for everyone involved and Gargano and Lee should be able to have a heck of a match. With Gargano winning that is.

Finn Balor vs. Damian Priest

It's another interesting one here, though NXT didn't promote this one very well (if at all) on this week's TV show. That's not like them, but then again almost everything has been a little bit off lately. Balor is getting back to his old status around here and Priest is someone who has looked great out there with Dominik Dijakovic and Lee. Now we need to see what he can do against someone else.

I'll take Balor here in a pick I don't have much confidence in making. It would make sense to have Balor move on to face Lee for the #1 contendership in what could be a heck of a match. There is no shame in Priest losing to a former World Champion and NXT legend, so it's not like anything truly bad can come out of this one. An upset is possible, but I'll play it safe and go with Balor.

Mia Yim/Shotzi Blackheart/Tegan Nox vs. Raquel Gonzalez/Dakota Kai/Candice LeRae

I love a good six person tag but you don't see one very often. This is a mixture of two feuds in one and that's a good thing. Neither of the feuds is really big enough to make it onto the show on its own but coupling them together should be enough to make the whole thing work out well enough.

That being said, there isn't a ton of drama here as LeRae and company should win, if nothing else to give LeRae's new heel run a boost. Have Gonzalez wreck people and LeRae can get a smiling pin. It's something that would work out well for her and fit everything she's doing now, while also making Gonzalez look awesome and allowing Kai to smirk a lot, which she does rather well.

Women's Title: Charlotte(c) vs. Io Shirai vs. Rhea Ripley

Here's your standing "man I'm sick of Charlotte" comment because man I'm sick of Charlotte. She's an amazing talent and one of the best in the history of the women's division, but WWE needs to learn the concept of not having someone around ALL THE TIME. There is no need to have her around this often, and yet odds are that is going to continue for the time being.

So yeah, Charlotte retains here, mainly so she can be on every show possible. It doesn't matter if you're sick of her or not, because you're going to see her on another show in a hurry. Shirai might be main roster bound and Ripley will probably get the title back eventually, but it's the Charlotte Show for

now, because there's a show, and that means Charlotte is going to be on it.

NXT Title: Adam Cole(c) vs. Velveteen Dream

Oh my goodness we had to get here eventually and I have no idea what to pick. Cole has been champion for over a year now and it is time to take the title off of him. At the same time though, I can't imagine Dream winning the title anymore, as he has gone pretty cold in the last few months. You can go either way here, but again I think it's the future that matters here more than the present.

I'm going with Cole to retain here, possibly due to the Undisputed Era because anything can go here because of the Backlot Brawl aspect. Cole's time is running out as champion but I have a feeling it continues on a little bit longer. Dream...my goodness I hope he doesn't get called up to the main roster as has been rumored, because EGADS they would ruin him in a heartbeat. Cole retains here, but I have no confidence in the pick.

Overall Thoughts

Usually I get something a little bit more excited about these shows as I do the previews. That just isn't happening this time though and that worries me to no end. The matches will likely be good because there's so much talent in there but I can't get to being as excited as I usually am. Now of course I'm NEVER betting against Takeover until they let me down because they have about as perfect of a record as they can, but the magic doesn't seem to be there this time around. If that's the case, it's a sad day because Takeover is/was special. I don't want that to go away, but this time around, maybe even NXT can't make it work.

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