

NXT – August 21, 2013: The Best NXT Match Ever

NXT

Date: August 21, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Alex Riley

Tonight is a show I've been looking forward to for a long time. The main event tonight is a 2/3 falls match between Antonio Cesaro and Sami Zayn to settle their score. This match has gotten rave reviews since it aired and I've been wondering if it lives up to its reputation. Other than that we might find out who is Dallas' next challenger for the title. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Zayn vs. Cesaro. They're making this feel like a huge match.

Divas Title: Bayley vs. AJ Lee

Bayley wants a hug to start but AJ slams her head first into the mat instead. AJ sends her into the corner and puts on a cravate to control Bayley. A hard elbow to the jaw gets two for the champ and AJ does the crazy eyes. Bayley comes back with a big hug to ram AJ into the corner a few times for two each. A knee drop gets two on AJ and the fans are split here. Bayley drops a top rope elbow for two more but she's concerned about how much she's hurt AJ. The champion takes advantage with a shot to the ribs and a Shining Wizard to retain the belt at 4:25.

Rating: D+. This didn't work too well for me. It felt like both girls were just doing their schtick instead of having a good match. We don't know too much about Bayley other than she gets really star struck so it's hard to care about her. Actually Bayley reminded me of Joseph Park here:

someone who was just so excited to be here and didn't care about winning.

Tyler Breeze is in the back with some good looking blonde and asks if she'd like a picture. She gets in the picture with him and he glares at her before having her take a solo picture. That same guy (CJ Parker I believe) photo bombs Breeze again but Breeze sees the picture this time and freaks out.

Ron Hicks/Michael Zacki vs. Ascension

O'Brian starts with Zacki and hits a string of headlock takeovers. Victor comes in for shots to the ribs and European uppercuts in the corner. The double hiptoss into the double powerbomb crushes Zacki and a modified High/Low (with a jumping back elbow instead of a spinwheel kick) gives Victor the pin at 1:38. Total squash.

Baron Corbin vs. CJ Parker

Parker's Titantron is a tye dye ying yang and he's from a commune. He takes Corbin into the corner and kind of dances out, only to be taken down by a hard shoulder block. Parker comes back with a running clothesline and two knees to the chest followed by a falling DDT (think Christian's reverse DDT but from the front) for the pin on Corbin at 1:42.

Post match Parker says he's found what he's looking for. You might call him a hippie but he's just living. He calls the photo bombing "video loving", bringing out Tyler Breeze. Breeze yells at Parker but CJ says it's just having a good time. Parker rubs Breeze's face to send him running. I'm not really feeling Parker.

Alexander Rusev vs. Dolph Ziggler

Rusev is a very big man from Bulgaria who breaks a piece of wood with

Ziggler's name on it over his knee. Ziggler is WAY over with the crowd. Both guys are slow to start with Rusev trying basic power stuff and Ziggler easily countering everything thrown at him so he can strut a bit. Alexander throws him into the corner and Ziggler gets serious. He staggers Rusev with a dropkick but his cross body is caught in mid air. Alexander rams knees into Ziggler's back and drops him on the floor for a breather.

Back in and a running shoulder to the ribs gets two on Dolph. Rusev puts on a quick body vice but misses a second running charge into the corner. Dolph hits a good looking dropkick for two but walks into a running knee to the ribs for the same result. Back up and Ziggler hits a quick Fameasser for two but Rusev comes back with a nice spinwheel kick (for a guy weighing over 300lbs) for another near fall. He misses a top rope splash though, allowing Ziggler to hit the Zig Zag for the pin at 6:14.

Rating: C+. I liked this more than I thought I would. Rusev has potential to him as he's got a good look and moved very well for a guy his size. Ziggler did his job perfectly out there by making Rusev look far better than he would have otherwise. This was a very nice surprise as you would have expected a squash but got a solid match instead.

Next week we'll get a special look at the NXT stars at Summerslam Axxess.

Sami Zayn vs. Antonio Cesaro

They have a lot of time to work with here and it's 2/3 falls. Zayn debuted a few months ago and beat Cesaro in Sami's second match of the night. Cesaro won the rematch so tonight's the rubber match. Zayn dives over the top to take out Cesaro during his entrance before the bell. Back inside and Sami hits a spinwheel kick for the first fall six seconds after the bell. Cesaro is clotheslined to the floor and sent into the steps as we're not even a minute into the match.

They slug it out on the floor before Zayn gets two off another spinwheel

kick. Zayn pounds away in the corner but can't get a sunset flip. Cesaro can't hit a double stomp so Sami goes to the middle rope and jumps from there to the top for a high cross body for two. Cesaro throws him into the air to drop Sami face first on the buckle for two before pounding away at Sami's head. We hit the standing chinlock for a bit before Cesaro blocks a kick to the ribs and pulls Sami up into a powerbomb for two.

Back to the chinlock but Zayn jawbreaks his way out. A hard clothesline and the running stomp to the chest gets two for Cesaro. Back up and Zayn fires off forearms to the chest but gets caught in a backdrop, allowing Cesaro to rain down right hands. Another double stomp sets up the gutwrench suplex but Sami counters into a sunset flip for two. A running hurricanrana gets the same but Cesaro comes back with a bridging capture suplex for two.

Back from a break with with Cesaro putting on the standing chinlock for the third time. Zayn gets two off a rollup and hits a quick dropkick to put Antonio down. He charges right back into the chinlock though and Cesaro spins him around before taking it to the mat. Zayn actually taps out at about 9:00 shown, making it one fall apiece.

Sami rolls to the apron but Antonio pulls him back in with a superplex from the apron. That's SCARY strength but it's only good for two. Zayn grabs a quick rollup for two but gets caught in the chinlock again. That's rolled up for two followed by Cesaro charging into a boot in the corner. The fans think this is awesome and I can't say I disagree. Sami gets a VERY close two off a sunset flip after crawling up Cesaro's body.

Cesaro bails to the floor so Sami heads outside as well before getting a running charge and diving between the ropes into a tornado DDT on the floor. Cesaro dives back in at nine and Sami gets two. Zayn tries to climb the corner for another tornado DDT but Cesaro catches him in midair, lifts him into a gorilla press and drops him down into Swiss Death. Antonio immediately picks up Sami and puts him down with the Neutralizer for the pin and the third fall at 15:38 shown of 18:38.

Rating: A-. Yeah it's great. The third fall picked WAY up after a solid second fall. I'm not sure I get the idea of having Zayn win the first fall in a few seconds but it was definitely a face way to start the match. Either way, both guys looked great here and the match worked incredibly well with Cesaro looking like a beast at the end. Why he's in a jobber tag team and not being pushed as a top heel in WWE is beyond me. Check this match out if you have the chance.

Overall Rating: A-. Great show here with a solid match in Ziggler vs. Rusev and a great main event. The other matches were good enough and we got some solid storyline advancement here. It continues to amaze me how much better NXT works than Raw or Smackdown. Imagine that: wrestlers running a wrestling show makes it better than a show run by low rent Hollywood writers.

Results

AJ Lee b. Bayley – Shining Wizard

Ascension b. Ron Hicks/Michael Zacki – High/Low to Zacki

CJ Parker b. Baron Corbin – Falling DDT

Dolph Ziggler b. Alexander Rusev – Zig Zag

Antonio Cesaro b. Sami Zayn – Neutralizer

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 2001 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for just \$4 at:

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for just \$4 at:

NXT – July 24, 2013: The Backwards Edition

NXT

Date: July 24, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Brad Maddox, Tom Phillips

The main event this week is Paige vs. Emma for the inaugural Women's Title. Other than that we have new tag team champions in the form of Neville and Graves. They took the titles from the Wyatt Family tonight, meaning we need to find out what's next for Bray and company. Let's get to it.

The opening video recaps Emma beating Summer Rae to set up tonight's final.

Emma and Paige both say they'll win.

Welcome Home.

NXT Women's Title: Emma vs. Paige

The fans are split down the middle here as both girls feel each other out. Paige takes her down with a shoulder block but charges into a boot in the corner. A sunset flip gets two for Emma and she cranks on Paige's arm. Paige comes back with a heabutt but can't hook a backslide. Emma walks the backslide over to the ropes and spins into the Dilemma (Tarantula) as we take a break.

Back with Paige holding a chinlock and sending Emma throat first into the ropes for two. Paige is working as a very slight heel here. A PerfectPlex gets two on Emma and Paige stomps her down into the corner for two. Emma

takes her down by the hair and hits a corner cross body for two. Paige gets two off a sunset flip but Emma comes right back with a chinlock before riding her with a reverse waistlock.

Paige gets to her feet and drives Emma into the corner for some rapid fire elbows to the face. She takes Emma down by the leg and puts on a kneeling Texas Cloverleaf with her knee in Emma's back. Emma is in big trouble but she somehow wiggles out and kicks Paige away. A very quick small package gets two on Paige, sending the fans into heart attack territory.

Emma tries a leg lock but Paige gets to the ropes before it's on. Paige fires off headbutts and goes up top but gets caught in a superplex to put both girls down. The fans rightly say this is awesome. Emma finally covers but Paige gets her foot on the rope. Back up and Paige hits a few kicks to the ribs and the Paige Turner for the pin and the title at 11:13 shown of 14:43.

Rating: B. This was excellent stuff and probably the best female match I've seen in WWE in years. Emma came to play here and more than kept up with Paige. Paige looked like she survived the match rather than won it which makes for more entertaining matches most of the time. They had me believing it was over on both that cloverleaf and the small package that followed and the fans bought it too. Outstanding match here.

The other Divas from the tournament come out to celebrate. HHH himself comes out to raise Paige's hand. This should have closed the show.

Colter and Cesaro video on the topic of Sami Zayn. Zeb thinks Sami isn't a real American and is in this country illegally. Colter's background check can't find any evidence that Zayn has ever existed. There's reason to believe that Zayn wore a mask at one point, which is the sign of a criminal. Colter promises to have Sami deported and Cesaro says he's going to make Zayn's life a nightmare in and out of the ring. This was solid heel stuff.

Tyler Breeze vs. Angelo Dawkins

Breeze is a combination of Fandango, the Narcissist Lex Luger and Rick Martel but with bleach blonde hair. He keeps taking pictures of himself with his phone before the bell, ticking off Dash. The bell rings but Breeze needs to take some more pictures. Dawkins charges at him but gets pounded down with ease. Breeze kicks him in the ribs but stops for more pictures. He puts the camera down and hits a great spinwheel kick to the face for the pin at 1:18. Breeze is fun but I don't see him having much of a shelf life.

Ascension promo with Rick Victor now on the team.

Ascension vs. Mickey Keegan/Aiden English

They're still going with the name Rick Victor which doesn't quite fit the Gothic Matrix look. O'Brien runs English over to start but it's quickly off to Victor top uppercut and chop Aiden in the corner. Ascension keeps up the quick tags with Victor coming in for a running boot to the chest for two. A double hiptoss into a double powerbomb puts Aiden down and a High/Low (back elbow from Victor and a chop block from O'Brien) is enough for the pin at 1:56. Keegan never got into the match.

Luke Harper vs. Sheamus

They fight onto the ropes to start and Sheamus grabs a quick headlock. Harper actually runs him over with a shoulder and Sheamus isn't sure what to do. Sheamus comes back with a shoulder of his own to send Harper to the outside before dropping some knees back inside for two. A running ax handle to the face puts Harper down again as Wyatt gets out of his chair to shout. Sheamus sends Harper to the apron for the forearms but Rowan gets some as well when trying a save.

Harper FINALLY gets in a shot to Sheamus' back due to the distraction and

we take a break. Back with Harper in control and standing on Sheamus' head. We hit the chinlock as Bray is looking much calmer now. The goat mask hanging from the back of the rocking chair is a creepy image. Sheamus gets back up and hits a tilt-a-whirl powerslam to give himself a breather.

They slug it out and Harper hits a modified Boss Man Slam for two. Harper misses a middle rope splash and gets caught in the rolling senton for two. The Brogue Kick misses and the discus lariat gets two for Harper. Sheamus sends Luke into Erick and hits White Noise followed by the Brogue Kick for the pin at 9:45 shown of 12:15.

Rating: C-. Basic power brawl here and a way to make Harper look good. That's the cool thing about bringing someone like Sheamus in for a set of TV tapings: you can run a short term story like this but it takes so long to air the whole thing that you forget it was taped in one night. Decent match here.

Bray politely claps for Sheamus to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. As usual with NXT we hit on a lot of stuff here tonight. The big problem here is the order of action tonight. Sheamus is definitely a big deal on the show, but there was no reason to not have the girls close things out here. HHH coming out to congratulate the new champion would have been a great way to end the show but instead we get Sheamus winning a match everyone knew he would win. Odd choice but it's still a good show.

Results

Paige b. Emma – Paige Turner

Tyler Breeze b. Angelo Dawkins – Spinwheel kick

Ascension b. Mickey Keegan/Aiden English – High/Low to English

Sheamus b. Luke Harper – Brogue Kick

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my book on the History of Starrcade from Amazon for just \$4 at: