

NXT – January 28, 2015: It Made Sense

NXT

Date: January 28, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Alex Riley, Jason Albert, Tom Phillips

This is another big show as we're two weeks out from Takeover and the showdown between Owens and Zayn. The contract signing is tonight and Owens has promised to say what he has to say to Zayn to his face. Also tonight the tournament to crown a new #1 contender continues with more first round matches. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Lucha Dragons vs. Buddy Murphy/Wesley Blake

Blake and Murphy are challenging and have some new, loud entrance music. We even get big match intros before we get going. Cara and Blake get things going with Wesley slamming him down in the corner, only to have Cara come back with a double springboard wristdrag.

Murphy dropkicks him out of the air for two though as the challengers are staying aggressive. Blake puts on a chinlock for a bit until Cara fights up and makes the tag to Kalisto. Everything speeds up and a sunset bomb gets two on Buddy as everything breaks down. Blake counters Cara's springboard and makes a blind tag. Kalisto hits Salida Del Sol on Murphy but the legal Buddy rolls him up for the clean pin and the titles at 4:00.

Rating: C. This is where NXT's booking pays off for them in the end. Murphy and Blake haven't won a bunch of matches over the months, but they've hung in enough of them that this isn't the most shocking win in the world. In WWE, a team like Slater Gator has been crushed almost every time they go out there and would have almost no chance in a title match. Even if they won, it wouldn't be accepted. On the other hand, this was

fine and made sense, as well as giving us a fresh set of matches for the division.

We recap Bayley suplexing Charlotte last week and Regal making the fourway title match.

Charlotte yells at Bayley but Bayley says maybe she's been too nice. She saw what Sami Zayn did when he got more serious and now it's time for her to do it. Charlotte says if Bayley tries that again, she won't make it to Takeover.

Tyler Breeze is going to be watching the rest of the tournament very closely.

#1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Adrian Neville vs. Tyson Kidd

The fans are split on who they like best. They hit the mat to start for a nice counter sequence leading to a standoff. Adrian starts cranking on the arm before he takes Tyson down with a hurricanrana, sending Kidd scrambling to the floor. Neville even teases him with a dive but pulls back with a Tajiri handspring flip. Kidd keeps sliding under the corner and out the other side of the ring to break the count, eventually drawing Adrian outside where he gets sent into the floor.

We take a break and come back with Kidd hitting a hard dropkick to the face and rubbing the same face into the mat. Neville sends him right back outside with a clothesline and hits a big old flip dive to take him down. A standing moonsault gets two for Neville as the referee is drenched in sweat.

The spinning fisherman's neckbreaker snaps Adrian's neck for two but he flips out of a release German suplex and grabs a Batista Bomb (crowd: "Better than Batista!") for two. Neville heads outside but a hard dropkick sends him to the floor. Back in and Kidd can't hook the Sharpshooter, allowing Neville to hit a running kick in the head (similar to the Helluva Kick), setting up the Red Arrow for the pin at 16:25.

Rating: B+. These guys beat the heck out of each other and it got better and better throughout the match. This is the basic idea of hitting each

other really, really hard over and over again until one of them can't get up and that's a great way to enjoy a match. Really fun stuff here and worth checking out.

Neville says he's ready to face either Corbin or Dempsey. The fans seem very interested in Neville vs. Corbin. I can't say I disagree.

Becky Lynch implies she'd turn on Banks to win the title. Good, as I like her better than Sasha.

Murphy and Blake are thrilled to win the belts and would give the Lucha Dragons a rematch anytime anywhere. They're still getting the hang of this talking thing.

Becky Lynch/Sasha Banks vs. Bayley/Charlotte

The fans aren't as into Bayley as they used to be. Bayley and Banks get things going with Bayley hitting a springboard armdrag but botching a second attempt, allowing Banks to take over. Off to Lynch for a forearm to the back before it's already back to Sasha. Charlotte comes in and snapmares Becky down before tagging Bayley right back in. In a smart move, Bayley thinks about going to the ropes but realizes <http://onhealthy.net/product-category/stop-smoking/> Banks would nail her in the back and opts for a jumping clothesline to a seated Lynch instead.

The villains use some cheating to take over and Sasha gyrates a bit, drawing a Sasha's ratchet/no she's not dueling chant. Becky comes back in and goes for the knee, only to get suplexed down, allowing the hot tag to Charlotte. She quickly gets Banks in the bridging Figure Four but Becky breaks it up as everything breaks down. Sasha Bankrupts Charlotte and Bayley makes a save but hits her partner in the process. Charlotte and Bayley start fighting each other and the opponents come in, drawing a double DQ at 5:50.

Rating: C. The match wasn't great but it was exactly the right booking. There was no need to have anyone get a pin here and it let Bayley show a lot more aggression. I'm still really high on Becky but she needs to show that she can do something in the ring as she's barely had any ring time so far. The fourway could be awesome if they let these four go nuts.

Hideo Itami comes up to Finn Balor in the back and says he brought Finn into the company and will take him out if he has to in order to advance in the tournament.

The returning Emma says things haven't gone as she planned since she left NXT so next week she's coming back to face Carmella.

#1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Bull Dempsey vs. Baron Corbin

Baron sends him into the corner to start and runs him over with a shoulder. Dempsey bails to the floor but Baron is right back on top of him to send him back inside. Back in and a corner splash has Bull in trouble and the End of Days is good for the pin at 1:31. Total squash here with Dempsey getting nothing. That almost has to end the feud.

Baron Corbin says he just took a step closer to becoming NXT Champion and next week Adrian Neville takes a step closer to being erased. Dempsey comes up and says he'll knock Corbin's teeth out. Baron just walks away. That would seem to be the way out of Baron losing clean next week.

It's time for the contract signing. The champ comes out first but Regal is hesitant to bring out Owens. Kevin comes out and Sami looks sad as much as mad. Regal isn't going to let this turn into every other contract signing in WWE because he'll cancel the match if they make any contact. The fans chant OLE and Sami signs without saying anything. Owens looks at Sami instead of the contract. Sami asks if he's just going to look at him or if Owens is going to explain why. Owens doesn't move so Sami says he'll talk about the last 12 years.

They fought with and against each other so maybe he should have seen this coming. The truth is he didn't see it coming though and he never thought it would happen on a night like R-Evolution when both of them arrived. It doesn't matter though because Sami is going to beat the heck out of him at Takeover. Owens still won't sign because he doesn't like it being a non-title match.

What Owens did at R-Evolution was business because he'll fight anyone for the right prize. That title means more money and a better life for his family, so Owens isn't doing this unless it's a title match. Regal

doesn't like Owens' last minute demands but Sami says wait a minute. Make it a title match because Owens really won't do it if he doesn't get what he wants. Regal writes something on the contract and Sami signs again. Owens eventually signs and throws the pen at Sami before leaving to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This show was about moving things forward for Takeover and they've done a great job. The title change was a nice surprise as it was something you almost never get on TV but it made sense. That's the tagline I would use for almost everything on this show: it made sense. It's clear that someone is paying really close attention to these stories and has planned them out step by step. That's such an important thing to do and the matches are almost always worth the payoff. Good show here and they're doing a very good job of a short build to the next Takeover.

Results

Buddy Murphy/Wesley Blake b. Lucha Dragons – Rollup to Kalisto

Adrian Neville b. Tyson Kidd – Red Arrow

Bayley/Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks/Becky Lynch went to a double DQ

Baron Corbin b. Bull Dempsey – End of Days

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NXT – January 14, 2015: The Best Hour Of Wrestling I Have Ever Seen

NXT

Date: January 14, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Renee Young, Rich Brennan, Alex Riley

It's the first show on Wednesday nights and we're starting with a bang as Sami Zayn is giving Adrian Neville his rematch for the NXT Title. Kevin Owens is still lurking around and there's always a chance he could get involved. We also have the continuing story of crazy Marcus Louis stalking Tyler Breeze. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Tyson Kidd vs. Finn Balor

Balor has the full entrance minus the face paint, which is still awesome. On another note, does Charles Robinson age? He looks identical to how he looked back in 1999. Balor starts with a running dropkick at the bell but misses a top rope stomp. That's fine with Finn as he takes Tyson into the corner for a running basement dropkick, sending Kidd out to the floor. The Irishman follows but gets speared into the barricade for a loud crash. The fans seemed to like that one and I can't say I disagree.

Kidd has dedicated this match Charlotte. His cat, not the wrestler. Back in and Kidd shouts at Finn to kill him before we take a break. We come back with Kidd catapulting him face first into the bottom buckle for two before we hit a chinlock. A dropkick in the Tree of Woe gets two for Kidd but Balor nails a Pele Kick to get a breather. I'm glad someone in WWE finally started using that move. A running sleeper drop puts Kidd down so he bails to the floor, only to have Balor nail a great flip dive.

Kidd pops back up with a running chest kick from the apron and the

springboard elbow drop for two. They're just beating the heck out of each other here. The Sharpshooter goes on but Finn finally crawls over to the ropes. A slingshot Fameasser misses Balor so he grabs a reverse Impaler, followed by the top rope double stomp to end Kidd 11:55.

Rating: B+. These guys were beating the tar out of each other and it was awesome. Balor has such a presence to him and is more than ready to be on the main roster. Based on that, I'd be surprised if he makes it there in the next year because WWE won't bring people up to the main show for reasons I don't understand. Granted the longer he's here and doesn't have to get "fixed" by the writers, the better he's going to be.

Package on Zayn winning the title at R-Evolution minus the post match beatdown. This is all about Neville vs. Zayn.

Bull Dempsey says he's just as undefeated as Baron Corbin and tonight will be Corbin's End of Days. The last thing he's going to hear is BULL BULL BULL.

Baron Corbin vs. Bull Dempsey

The fans start the counting as they hammer away on each other with Bull going down first. Thankfully the fans give up after about twenty seconds and the fight heads outside. Back in and Bull slams him down but misses his flying headbutt. End of Days is good for the pin at 1:36. This was exactly what it needed to be and Baron looked like a monster.

Sasha Banks/Becky Lynch vs. Natalya/Charlotte

Banks' theme song is rapidly growing on me. Natalya headlocks Becky to the mat to start before getting two off a rollup. Renee tells us about Natalya and Lynch tagging in Japan about nine years ago as the villains are sent to the floor, setting up stereo baseball slides from Natalya and Charlotte. A double delayed suplex gets two on Becky before Charlotte wheelbarrow slams Natalya on top of her for two.

Banks comes in and gets snapmared down, allowing Natalya to step on the back of her head to drive Sasha's face into the mat, immediately followed by a low dropkick. Sasha pops back up with two knees to the ribs as

things FINALLY slow down a bit. The men on the main show can't keep up a pace like that most of the time. Off to Charlotte for a neckbreaker for two as everything breaks down. Banks hits a neckbreaker of her own on Charlotte and grabs the tights for the pin at 4:20. Banks: "I WON!!!"

Rating: B-. I really wanted more of this as Charlotte and Natalya were looking like a polished team out there while Lynch and Banks have more than enough attitude to carry themselves. I still want to see more from Lynch as she has a great look and persona, but Banks is getting almost all of the spotlight, which she certainly deserves.

NXT Title: Sami Zayn vs. Adrian Neville

Sami is defending. They shake hands to start and Sami scores first with an armdrag. The champ hooks a headlock but charges into an armdrag, sending him out to the floor for a second. Back in and Neville sends him into the corner but gets caught in his third headlock in three minutes. Sami leapfrogs over Adrian and avoids a dropkick, sending Neville into his first frustration of the match.

Adrian slaps him in the face and Neville says he's sorry. Sami says sorry and forearm him in the face, starting the slugout with Neville getting the better of it and sending the champ to the floor. A big dive puts Sami down again as we take a break. Back with Neville hitting a running uppercut in the corner for two and hooking a hurricanrana for an even closer near fall.

Sami grabs the leg to block the Red Arrow but Neville won't let him hit the Blue Thunder Bomb. The power of OLE lets Sami force him up on the second try but Neville kicks out again. Zayn rolls some Germans but Neville flips out of a chicken wing/half nelson suplex. Neville cartwheels onto Sami's shoulders and snaps off one of the hardest hurricanranas you'll ever see for two. The referee has to check if Sami can continue but he shakes his head yes.

Zayn half pops up into a Koji Clutch attempt but Neville rolls away, only to have to bail outside to avoid the Helluva Kick. Sami loads up the diving DDT through the ropes but Neville superkicks him into a state of shock. Back in and Adrian has to bail out of the Red Arrow but avoids

another Helluva Kick into a sweet bridging rollup for two. Sami goes into Beast Mode and grabs the exploder suplex followed by the Helluva Kick for the pin at 13:56.

Rating: A. This was a completely different kind of match than the title change. While that one was about the drama and storytelling, this was about two guys beating the living tar out of each other and actually making me believe the title was in jeopardy. Outstanding match here and both guys come out looking awesome.

Sami celebrates but Owens comes in with a pop up powerbomb and puts his boot on Sami's face. Owens kicks the title over to Zayns' head to end the show.

Overall Rating: A+. This was as good of an hour of wrestling television as I've ever seen. Ignoring a 96 second power brawl (which was entertaining as well), the worst match would have been the best Divas match on the main roster in probably six months. Between Balor and Kidd just beating the heck out of each other and Neville and Zayn beating the heck out of each other even harder, I haven't had this good of a time watching a show since....oh I'd say the last big NXT show. Go out of your way to see this episode as they debuted on Wednesday with a major bang.

Results

Finn Balor b. Tyson Kidd – Top rope double stomp

Baron Corbin b. Bull Dempsey – End of Days

Sasha Banks/Becky Lynch b. Natalya/Charlotte – Neckbreaker to Charlotte

Sami Zayn b. Adrian Neville – Helluva Kick

NXT – January 8, 2015: I Want To Be A Sami Zaniac

NXT

Date: January 8, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Alex Riley

One of the many things I like about this show is they set up something for next week almost every time. In this case, we have three things, ranging from Itami vs. Curtis Axel to the Vaudevillains getting their rematch from R-Evolution to the return of Sami Zayn for the first time since he was laid out by Owens. That sounds like a stacked show so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's the champ to get things going. Sami gets ready to talk but leaves the ring to go be with the crowd and hold up the title. A YOU DESERVE IT chant stops him again before he gets to talk about what this title means. In anyone else's hands, it means you're the best. In his hands though, it means you can do it your way and keep doing it how you want because the proof is right here.

He's going to hate himself for saying this, but this title isn't his. It belongs to both him and the fans. Everyone here is part of a band called Sami Zayn and the Zaniacs. The fans start the OLE chant and Sami loves that song. Takeover was the best night of his life, but it didn't end like he wanted it to. Owens cried on his shirt that night and then hurt Sami really bad. He may have hurt Sami, but the champ is right back here, ready to defend the title.

This brings out Adrian Neville who says they tore each other to pieces last time and Zayn was the better man. Neville saw a new Sami and he's now the champion so congratulations. Sami appreciates it and is pretty sure Neville is entitled to a rematch. This brings out William Regal to congratulate them on having such a great match at R-Evolution. There will

indeed be a rematch and it takes place next week on the first Wednesday show.

The Vaudevillains can't wait to right the wrong from Takeover and prove their manliness.

Hideo Itami vs. Curtis Axel

Axel is trying to be the last real man in wrestling. At this point point there are almost enough of those to make a stable. Itami scores with the early kicks but Axel takes him into the corner and hits a series of clotheslines to the back of the head. A chinlock doesn't get Curtis anywhere but a knee to the jaw gets two. Axel throws Hideo down and asks who cares about Itami.

Curtis slaps on an armbar out of nowhere (no arm work so far into the match so let's ignore the neck work and go after the arm) but Hideo fights out and nails a clothesline of his own. Itami loads up a tornado DDT but instead jumps to the apron to snap Axel's throat across the top rope. The top rope clothesline is good for two but Axel tries the PerfectPlex. That goes nowhere so Itami snapmares him down and hits something like Trouble in Paradise to a kneeling Axel for the pin at 5:45.

Rating: C-. Not bad here and Hideo is starting to round into form as a singles guy. The clotheslines are a nice alternative to the kicks and it really opens up his offense quite a bit. It's also nice to see him finally have a finisher, even if it's the same move he does more often than any other. Axel as the new version of Tyson Kidd would be a fine role for him as he's talented in the ring but needs to reestablish himself after the last few years.

Tyson Kidd is getting ready in the back so Natalya tries to intercept Byron Saxton. A Total Divas interview is cut off by Kidd asking if she's taken care of the cats. Natalya goes off to feed them so Kidd can talk about how important it is to become NXT Champion. That means he can be the new face of NXT, right before he replaces Sarah McLachlan as the face of the ASPCA. Kidd loves all cats, except Grumpy Cat. Fact.

Video on Bull Dempsey vs. Baron Corbin, based on who can squash jobbers faster. They face off for the first time next week.

Sasha Banks vs. Alexa Bliss

This is due to Banks breaking Bliss' nose a few weeks back. Alexa grabs a quick sunset flip for two but has her headscissors countered into a faceplant. Banks takes her time trash talking but stops to blast Alexa with right hands to the face. She lays Bliss across the middle rope for a double knee to the ribs, setting up the Bank Statement for the submission at 2:06.

Quick package on Neville vs. Zayn from R-Evolution.

Tyler Breeze vs. Chad Gable

Gable is an Olympic wrestler who has gotten rave reviews so far. Gable easily takes Breeze down to start and rides him with a front facelock. The fans are WAY into Chad to start as Graves won't confirm or deny that he runs Breeze's fan club. Breeze fights up and takes him down for a chinlock while throwing in some trash talk to the Uggo. Gable gets to his feet and throws on an armbar over the top rope ala Alberto Del Rio. He breaks at four and Breeze is TICKED, setting up the Beauty Shot for the pin at 2:37. Gable looked good out there in the limited time he had.

Finn Balor is looking forward to facing Tyson Kidd next week, but Kidd is going to need more than nine lives to survive. Fact. Simple, yet effective. Why is that so lost on the main show writers?

We see a still from Breeze's post match celebration, showing an ominous face peeking out from the curtain to look at him. It's not clear whose face it is.

Tag Team Titles: Lucha Dragons vs. Vaudevillains

Vaudevillains are challenging again after the Dragons pinned the illegal man at R-Evolution. Kalisto quickly springboards onto Gotch and pounds away with right hands before it's already off to Cara. Some kind of modified Gory Stretch has Gotch in trouble as Graves says these two might be equally strong. English comes in and says the titles are coming home

with them tonight. He school boys Cara through the ropes and out to the floor for a nice move, but Kalisto sends both Vaudevillains to the floor for a big double dive.

We take a break and come back (after an announcement that Daniel Bryan will be in action on the first Thursday Smackdown) with Kalisto trying the big spinning wristlock, only to have English hold the ropes to send the masked man crashing down. Gotch gets two off a big belly to back before a double chop puts Kalisto down again.

English comes back in but gets rolled up for two, only to slap on a chinlock. Back up and Kalisto finally rolls over for the hot tag to Cara. Everything breaks down and Gotch kicks Cara in the head, only to be low bridged out to the floor. In what looked to be a botched finish, Cara lifts English up for a powerbomb and Kalisto adds a spinning clothesline to the back of the head to retain at 11:45.

Rating: C+. The match was fine but the ending really didn't look good. In theory it was supposed to be a clothesline to the front but it looked awkward instead of devastating. The Dragons need new opponents now, and thankfully NXT actually has some teams they could quickly build up into contenders. I'm not sure where the Vaudevillains go, but a refocus on the comedic stuff could be in order.

Overall Rating: C+. Not one of their stronger episodes here but they did a great job of setting up next week to look like something special. Sami's opening promo was excellent with a ton of emotion and it set up the rematch next week. I really like how NXT is able to wait things out and tease the big stuff, such as Owens showdown with Zayn. Not the match mind you but just those two in the same place at the same time. Instead of hot shotting to that, we're getting what should be a great match out of the way, instead of just jumping straight to it. WWE could learn from that, but the circumstances are a bit different up top.

Results

Hideo Itami b. Curtis Axel – Spinning kick to the head

Sasha Banks b. Alexa Bliss – Bank Statement

Tyler Breeze b. Chad Gable – Beauty Shot

Lucha Dragons b. Vaudevillains – Powerbomb/top rope clothesline combination to English

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2014 Awards: Most Improved

This one is always up for some debate.

We'll start by just listing off some contenders.

First up is the suddenly dominant Lashley. This was what WWE should have done with him for years: find the guy a mouthpiece and let him just hurt people. He's a genetic freak that can wrestle on the mat, so let him do that instead of trying to make him a superhero. I never got why WWE wanted him to be a face when he has the personality of a turnip, but ever since he became a monster heel, he was one of the highlights of show.

Ethan Carter III is the same thing but as an intellectual heel instead of a monster. The guy went from being nothing in WWE to one of the best acts in TNA, very much in the same vein as Rick Rude back in 1991. Carter is going to be a player in TNA going forward and I could easily see him winning the World Title in the coming year.

The Dusts have gone from eh to one of the top teams in the company, though that's not really saying much.

Seth Rollins started the year as the forgotten member of the Shield and became a strong contender for Wrestler of the Year. You couple that with more than holding his own on the mic and it's hard to argue that he's shot through the roof this year.

Tyson Kidd...the more I think about this one the less I buy into it. It's not so much that he got better but more along the lines of his got pushed. He's basically the same wrestler but with facts and cats. I like what I'm seeing out of him, but it's not like he's gotten insanely good overnight or anything.

We'll give the Divas a shot and include Charlotte. She went from a borderline disaster to the woman who can actually look down on the rest of the NXT girls. I have no idea where this came from but suddenly her title defenses are one of the highlights of the big NXT shows, which I don't think anyone was expecting. That's definitely worth a nomination.

Finally, you have to mention Tyler Breeze. The guy went from a goon to tearing the house down every time he was in a big match. That match he had against Zayn at Takeover was outstanding and he's nailed so much of the character all year long. This is one of the best surprises all year and he's gone through the roof.

At the end of the day though, I have to go with Rollins. I would have bet on him being Kofi Kingston but he's looking more like a Randy Orton every day. He's always had talent, but there are a dozen guys on the roster who have untapped skills. To go from the potential he had to realizing that potential is a huge improvement and worthy of the award.

NXT – December 4, 2014: Inzayn Intensity

NXT

Date: December 4, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jason Albert, Alex Riley, Rich Brennan

It's the last show before R-Evolution and I'd assume tonight is just going to be about firming up matches for next week. I'm really hoping we don't get a rushed heel turn from Neville as the match would be far more entertaining with both guys staying on the paths that got them here. Other than that we might have some fallout from Bayley calling out Lynch and Banks last week. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Charlotte vs. Mia Yim

Non-title. Charlotte starts with a WOO before sending Mia into the corner for a slap to the back. Natural Selection is good for the pin at 51 seconds.

Post match Sasha Banks, in a Charlotte shirt, comes out and says just give her the title now. Charlotte tells her to bring it and starts a ratchet chant. Sasha says she has more flair than Charlotte and her daddy. She's going to beat Charlotte so badly that she'll be a bigger loser than her old man. This brings out Bayley in a big leg brace and on crutches to tell Sasha to shut her ratchet face. Banks kicks her in the knee and runs off when Charlotte comes up the ramp. Sasha tries to get a cheap shot but Charlotte drags her to the ring and says get a ref out here. Becky Lynch sneaks in from behind though and Banks lays out the champ.

Time for another silent movie from the Vaudevillains! This time the police commissioner calls them to say the Lucha Dragons are dropping water balloons off the roof of city hall. After a training montage

(complete with Gotch fighting a video of a tiger), the Vaudevillains attach an anvil to the Dragons, sending them down....into a mushroom cloud? Gotch is glad that they took the belts away because they would have just weighed the Dragons down even more. Keep in mind though that no Lucha Dragons were harmed in the filming of this motion picture, but that won't be the case next week. These things are brilliant.

Vaudevillians vs. Buddy Murphy/Wesley Blake

English jumps over Blake to start but dives into a powerslam for two. A snapmare sends Wesley into the ropes though in a nice idea. It's off to Murphy as the fans sound like they're sighing for some reason. Off to Gotch for some Hindu Squats while holding Buddy in an Indian Deathlock. English comes back in for some elbows to the leg before it's back to Gotch to stay on the leg. Murphy finally rolls away and makes the tag as everything breaks down. Blake is sent to the floor for a big crash and the Whirling Dervish ends Murphy at 4:15.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here but the Vaudevillains are getting better in the ring. Those vignettes are as good as anything I've seen in a long time. Murphy and Blake are decent in the ring but they really need to stop losing every time if they're supposed to have a future.

Regal is in the back with Tyler Breeze, who hasn't seen Marcus Louis since he wandered off last week. Tyson Kidd comes in and says he wants a rematch with Balor, but Regal makes it a tag with Itami/Balor vs. Kidd/Breeze. This took less than a minute and covered two stories. Why does it take Raw twenty minutes to cover one?

Bull Dempsey vs. Elias Samson

The fans count until the flying headbutt ends Samson at 22 seconds.

Baron Corbin vs. ???

End of Days, 11 seconds. Of course Bull was watching from the stage.

Kevin Owens video, talking about how he's fought and teamed with Seth Rollins, Daniel Bryan, Adrian Neville, and Sami Zayn (called Owens' best friend), but WWE called all of them first. Now it's his turn.

Tyler Breeze/Tyson Kidd vs. Hideo Itami/Finn Balor

Kidd holds the ropes open for Natalya and offers to do the same for Breeze in a funny bit. Itami and Kidd get things going but it's quickly off to Breeze, whose arm is quickly yanked. Balor comes in with a slingshot stomp for no count but Kidd makes a blind tag and decks Finn to take over as we go to a break. Back with Breeze coming in to stomp Finn in the corner before it's quickly back to Kidd for even faster stomping.

A neckbreaker gets two for Tyson and we hit a bow and arrow. Balor fights up but misses a dropkick to put him right back down. Breeze grabs a neckbreaker of his own for two before Kidd comes back in for a hard kick to the leg. A slingshot legdrop to the back of the head gets two for Kidd but he eats a Pele (now called a soccer kick), allowing Finn to tag Hideo. Itami fires off a series of kicks to destroy Breeze before hitting a delayed running dropkick in the corner to a sitting Tyler. Everything breaks down and Balor hits Shadows Over Hell, setting up Itami's kick to the back of the head for the pin at 11:30.

Rating: C. Pretty standard tag match here but Itami continues to look totally one dimensional. I know he isn't the biggest guy in the world but he needs to do something more than just kick a lot. Daniel Bryan has proven that a smaller guy can do more than just strike while still having it be a major part of his offense so it certainly can be done.

Post match Finn tells Ascension to bring everything they have because he's going to show them something they've never seen before.

Here's Adrian Neville for the final speech before the title match. A lot of people have said he should be conflicted by this match, but his goal is the same as always: to win at all cost. Some people say that he should be ashamed of what he did to retain the title at Fatal Four Way and every other title match. If he had it his way, it would have gone completely differently, but that's the fundamental difference between himself and Sami: Zayn doesn't have the killer instinct and that's why he'll never be NXT Champion.

This brings out Sami who says he's been listening to everything Neville has been saying and it's ticking him off. Who is Neville to act like

Sami's babysitter and tell him how he should live? Whatever Sami decides to do after the match is up to him and his actions, not Neville's. Adrian backs off a bit and says he respects Sami more than anyone else and next week it's going to be an honor to face Sami in the match of their careers.

Adrian offers a handshake but Sami says no. This is where he goes wrong every single time but he won't do it here. This isn't about respect and he slaps Adrian in the face. Neville doesn't get to end him because it's going to be Sami ending Adrian's story and taking that title. This wasn't a heel turn for either guy but rather Sami just being more intense this time around.

Overall Rating: B-. The wrestling wasn't great here but I'm wanting to see Takeover a lot more than I did coming in. That main event has me drooling because you know those two are going to tear the house down with the near falls. The only match that doesn't do much for me is Ascension vs. Itami/Balor as there doesn't seem to be a ton of drama there, but whatever gets Ascension onto the main roster is a good thing at this point. This show did exactly what it was supposed to do and sets up a good looking card for next week.

Results

Charlotte b. Mia Yim – Natural Selection

Vaudevillians b. Wesley Blake/Buddy Murphy – Whirling Dervish to Murphy

Bull Dempsey b. Elias Samson – Flying headbutt

Baron Corbin b. ??? – End of Days

Finn Balor/Hideo Itami b. Tyler Breeze/Tyson Kidd – Kick to Breeze's head

NXT – November 20, 2014: The Fastest Show In Wrestling

NXT

Date: November 20, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Renee Young, Alex Riley, Rich Brennan

We're getting close to the end of the year and ultimately the next Takeover special, but now the main event isn't as clear. Last week Sami Zayn was tricked into losing his NXT Title shot against Adrian Neville, leaving his future up in the air. Other than that we have Itami/Balor getting ready for their showdown against the Ascension which will be the newcomers' official welcome to the company. Let's get to it.

We recap Sami's loss last week.

Opening sequence.

Bayley vs. Becky Lynch

Bayley is sent out to the apron to start and gets dragged right back in. A release northern lights suplex and legdrop give Becky two and we're already in a chinlock. They get right back up with Bayley hitting some quick ax handles to the chest for two. Sasha offers a distraction from the floor though, allowing Lynch to pull the hair and grab a rollup and tights for the pin at 2:14.

Charlotte comes out to save Bayley from a post match beatdown.

Bayley thanks Charlotte for the help but warns her to stay away from Sasha. They hug and everything seems ok.

Here are the Vaudevillains with something to say. They're patient gentlemen, but they deserve the title shot that they've earned. Cue two mini wrestlers dressed like the Lucha Dragons (Renee: "Kind of like Lucha-Loompas!") and we're actually having a match.

Mini Lucha Dragons vs. Vaudevillains

The full sized guys takes turns with airplane spins on #1, even handing him off between each other instead of dropping him. #2 gets tagged and doesn't want to come in. A quick neckbreaker from English gets the pin at 1:29.

Kevin Owens (Steen) is coming on December 11, 2014.

Baron Corbin vs. Elias Sampson

End of Days, 22 seconds. The fans were counting again.

Bull Dempsey comes out for his match and stares Corbin down on the way.

Bull Dempsey vs. Steve Cutler

The fans start counting again. Fans: "21! 22! 23! BARON'S BETTER! BARON'S BETTER!" Bull destroys Cutler and no sells some right hands before the top rope headbutt ends this at 54 seconds.

Tyson Kidd vs. CJ Parker

It's the rare heel vs. heel match here. Kidd grabs a hammerlock around the ropes as the fans chant TOTAL DIVAS. Parker nails a quick kick to the face for two but Kidd knocks him out to the floor. A dragon screw leg whip onto the ropes has Parker in even more trouble and the Sharpshooter ends him at 2:59.

Kidd offers to excellently execute Finn Balor next week.

Enzo takes credit for Carmella's success but nothing comes of it.

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Dash Wilder/Scott Dawson

Enzo and Cass aren't the Parker Brothers, but they'll scrabble your headpiece, monopolize you, connect your four eyes and never feel sorry for it. Enzo grabs a headlock on Dawson to start as Renee critiques Amore's hair. Off to Cass to clean house before shouting "ENZO! I'M GONNA TAG YOU IN!" Cass kicks Dawson's head off, giving Enzo the pin at 1:38.

Ascension runs in and destroys Wilder with the Fall of Man. Fans: "SEVEN MORE TIMES!" They're going to kill Itami and Balor before they rise again.

Zayn thanks Regal for the chance to get something off his chest tonight. End of scene.

Here's a serious looking Sami Zayn to talk about last week. He's known he has what it takes to be a champion his entire life, but last week proves otherwise. We see a similar video to the opening montage of Neville pinning Sami in the title match last week. Fans: "YOU GOT ROBBED!" Sami asks Neville to come out so here's a limping champion.

Sami talks about having no business being here if he can't win the big one. Now Neville doesn't owe him anything because he gave him a title match last week, but if their friendship means anything to him, Adrian will give him one more chance at the NXT Championship. If Zayn can't win that one, then he's done. Neville says he'd give him a rematch tonight but that's not his decision.

Above all though they're friends, and Neville thinks Sami has nothing left to prove. Zayn gets mad and says the only thing he has left to prove is on Adrian's shoulder. If he can't beat Neville for that title, then he doesn't need to be here. Sami sounds like he's on the verge of tears. Cue Regal who says Zayn is far from a failure.

Sami was part of NXT Arrival and Regal can't think of any main event better than Sami Zayn vs. Adrian Neville. That rematch will take place at NXT Takeover: Our Evolution on December 11. Neville is pleased but he doesn't want Sami's career on the line because he won't be responsible for ending Sami's dream. Zayn again says he's done if he loses and drops the mic to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This is a hard one to grade as everything went by so fast. I kind of like it that way though as the matches may have been short but they all did their jobs efficiently enough, especially when two of them were about winning as fast as they could. Sometimes you don't need to keep a match going just for the sake of keeping it going and NXT was smart enough to realize that. Sami's promo at the end was awesome but

it kind of telegraphs the ending to the match. Still though, solid show tonight as NXT continues to destroy the main show in making the most out of their time.

Results

Becky Lynch b. Bayley – Rollup with a handful of tights

Vaudevillains b. Mini Lucha Dragons – Neckbreaker to #2

Baron Corbin b. Elias Sampson – End of Days

Bull Dempsey b. Steve Cutler – Top rope headbutt

Tyson Kidd b. CJ Parker – Sharpshooter

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Dash Wilder/Scott Dawson – Big boot to Dawson

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Smackdown – November 14, 2014: Story Advancement And

Good Matches. Mass Hysteria!

Smackdown

Date: November 14, 2014

Location: Echo Arena, Liverpool, England

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tom Phillips, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're wrapping up the European shows here with the blue show over in Liverpool. By now most of the Survivor Series main event is set as I believe we have five guys apiece. It should be interesting to see if any of them are swapped out again. They've done a nice job so far of building up the people in the match other than Cena, which should be the point of something like this. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Raw's events and all the changes to the teams.

Here's the returning Chris Jericho for a British Highlight Reel. Jericho has one burning question: Who is Adam Rose's Bunny, because he's AWESOME. He thinks it's Funaki, drawing the first Funaki chant in WWE history. That's enough hijinks though so let's get our guests out here. This brings out HHH and Stephanie, with Steph doing Jericho's pose in a cute bit.

Jericho would like to know why the Authority wanted to be on the show. Stephanie says it was because it's been too long since Smackdown had the Highlight Reel and they like to have fun. She sucks up to the fans and calls them the most important part of the show. We get a YES chant, which shows how important the fans are because they keep him that popular. However, he wouldn't be there without the Authority. Who could run the WWE without the Authority? Jericho: "I could."

Actually he has a better idea: the fans run WWE. He lists off some humiliating ideas for HHH, such as cleaning Jericho's boots, before showing us a clip of Vickie Guerrero shoving Stephanie into the mud in her retirement match. That's enough for HHH who says the wolf doesn't ask to be embraced by sheep. The Authority is going to be laughing when they

win at Survivor Series. Jericho should learn that when he calls again to come back and get his WWE fix, because he might be erased from the WWE history books by then. Chris thinks this is an arena full of Jericholics and starts singing the Goodbye song.

Video on Wyatt costing Ambrose the Cell match.

Bray Wyatt vs. Sin Cara

Bray nails him a few times to start but misses a charge. Cara goes up for the Swanton but only hits mat. Back up and the charge hits this time, setting up the suplex slam. The Spider Walk sets up Sister Abigail for the pin at 2:16. Total squash.

Post match Bray says he can feel Ambrose screaming for help in his heart. Dean used to feel unloved and woke up every Christmas morning, hoping that daddy would come back. But when he came downstairs, only darkness was waiting for him. That's what life has become for Dean, but Bray is the light he's been searching for his entire life.

Salvation is at hand so let Bray fix him. Cue Ambrose but Bray bails and calls Dean predictable. All he has to do is push the right buttons and Dean will be there right on time. Ambrose wants to punish him, just like he wants to punish his daddy. Bray gets in but gets knocked out by a single right hand. As he walks away, Bray says Dean is crying out for help and that he is the key.

Xavier Woods' new day is coming.

Goldust/Stardust vs. Adam Rose/The Bunny

Non-title. Rose is a bit less energetic on the way to the ring this week. We get a clip from Main Event where the Bunny took out Goldust, allowing Rose to roll up Stardust for a surprise pin to get back in Adam's good graces. Adam runs over Goldust to start but gets thrown into the corner for a tag off to Stardust. The Express tries to fire up Rose as he fights out of a chinlock. Goldust and Rose bang heads and the hot tag brings in the Bunny. Stardust gets taken down and won't tag out, allowing Stardust to block a splash with knees. Dark Matter ends the Bunny at 2:03.

Rose Party Fouls the Bunny post match.

WWE2K15 stuff.

Dolph Ziggler looks at what the Authority has put him through in recent weeks and isn't worried about his triple threat elimination title defense tonight. He says he's survived everything they've thrown at him and if this is the night he loses, he's going down with a fight and staying on Team Cena. All he has to do is survive until Survivor Series and then the Authority is gone.

Video on Ryback.

Ryback says he's on his own team and the only person who needs to worry about surviving is Kane, who he faces tonight. What you saw on Monday was just an appetizer and unfortunately for Kane, it's almost feeding time.

Intercontinental Title: Tyson Kidd vs. Cesaro vs. Dolph Ziggler

Ziggler is defending under elimination rules. Kidd gets shoved away to start and Cesaro kicks Dolph in the face. The smaller guys dropkick Cesaro down but Dolph has to kick out of a rollup from Tyson. They trade rapid fire rollups for two each until Dolph dropkicks Cesaro down again. We take a break and come back with Cesaro suplexing both guys at the same time in a nice power display. A powerbomb plants Dolph and Kidd comes back in with a springboard elbow drop.

Cesaro throws Tyson down to cover Ziggler for two and the fans think this is awesome. Dolph gets two off a Fameasser to Kidd but gets caught in the Tree of Woe. Now it's Kidd with some delayed dropkicks to Dolph's face but Cesaro nails a clothesline for two on the Canadian. The champ comes back in with a high cross body to Cesaro as JBL rips on Ziggler for complaining too much. Ziggler neckbreakers Kidd and DDTs Cesaro at the same time for two each. Kidd pops back up with a neckbreaker of his own to the champ but gets caught with an uppercut on the top.

They all head to the corner and grapple up top until Cesaro superplexes Ziggler while Kidd powerbombs Cesaro for the Tower of Doom. Cesaro covers Ziggler but Kidd slaps on the Sharpshooter to the European at the same

time. Pure leg strength breaks the hold though and Cesaro counters the running DDT with Swiss Death. We take another break and come back with Kidd hitting a Blockbuster on Cesaro, driving him into Ziggler's raised knees at the same time.

For once that hurts the knees so Kidd puts on the Sharpshooter with Cesaro adding a Crossface at the same time. In what JBL calls a very stupid move, Kidd lets go of his half and stomps on Cesaro, earning him a Cesaro Swing. Ziggler comes back with the running DDT for two on Cesaro but Kidd kicks the champ in the face, right into a German suplex from Cesaro. Back up and a Zig Zag nails Cesaro but Kidd dropkicks the champ down and steals a pin to eliminate Cesaro at 18:17.

So it's Ziggler vs. Kidd for the title now with the champ on the floor. Tyson headscissors him down into the steps before running the barricade for a kick to the face. Back in and Kidd chokes on the ropes but gets rolled up for two. A Moss Covered Three Handled Family Credenza gets two for the challenger so Kidd springboards with a dive only designed to get superkicked down for two. Tyson pops back up and grabs the Sharpshooter, only to have Dolph roll through into the Zig Zag for the pin at 21:43.

Rating: B+. This had the time to get going and worked out quite well by the end. I like that Kidd is getting a solid push and getting to show off his skills instead of just being an accessory to Natalya. This feud is doing a great job to build up Ziggler, and more importantly the Intercontinental Title, which have been needed for a long time now. Really good, long match here.

Natalya vs. Layla

Layla steals the shirt Natalya is about to throw into the crowd. Natalya rolls out of a wristlock ala Owen Hart but Layla rolls out of an early Sharpshooter attempt. They trade some hard forearms until Layla just kicks her in the head. Some choking on the ropes gets two for Layla and we hit a figure four neck lock. Off to a body vice instead as we keep cutting to Summer Rae on the floor, even though she hasn't done anything. Layla poses a lot but gets dropkicked down for two. Natalya gets thrown out to the floor but slaps Summer hard in the face. Back in and a quick

Sharpshooter makes Layla tap at 3:55.

Rating: D+. Eh Summer looked good in a short black dress and Layla is always good looking. I'm not sure why I'm supposed to care about this though but I'm assuming it's something related to a show that doesn't air with the rest of WWE's shows and is about four months removed from current events.

Recap of the opening segment.

Kofi Kingston's new day is coming as well.

We recap Bray's promo on Dean earlier.

Ambrose shouts about being sick of Bray Wyatt. Bray jumps him from behind and lays Ambrose out. He says this world isn't made for people like them and labels are the way the world puts them in a box.

Ryback vs. Kane

HHH and Stephanie are at ringside. Kane grabs a headlock to start as we're already in the slow power counters stage. Ryback runs him over with a shoulder but eats an uppercut for his efforts. Cole wants to know what HHH and Stephanie could possibly do if they lose at Survivor Series because it's all the know. A suplex puts Kane down and we take a break. Back with Ryback hitting his Thesz Press and slamming Kane's head into the mat.

The Meat Hook is stopped by a big boot and an elbow drop gets two for Kane. Ryback fights back with chops but gets whipped hard into the corner. We hit the chinlock for a bit but Ryback powers up and breaks a chokeslam attempt. Now the Meat Hook connects but Kane escapes the Shell Shock and takes it to the floor where a chair to Ryback's ribs draws a DQ at 11:45.

Rating: C-. Watchable power match here with neither guy doing anything of note but enough big crashes to make it work. Ryback continues to look good in the ring and capable of doing more than big spots, though I'm not sure why they couldn't have Kane take a pin here. I don't know why they keep letting him lose by DQ but it's not going to kill him to lose to a

fairly big name.

Ryback shrugs off the chair shots and nails Kane with the chair. He stares HHH down to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Smackdown and WWE continue to pick up steam as they let the wrestlers do their thing tonight. It's almost like interesting stuff happens here, including Ambrose vs. Wyatt which has mainly been built up on Fridays. This wasn't a must see show or anything but it had a great TV match that got a lot of time. What more can you ask for from Smackdown anymore?

Results

Bray Wyatt b. Sin Cara – Sister Abigail

Stardust/Goldust b. Adam Rose/The Bunny – Dark Matter to the Bunny

Dolph Ziggler b. Cesaro and Tyson Kidd – Zig Zag to Kidd

Natalya b. Layla – Sharpshooter

Ryback b. Kane via DQ when Kane used a chair

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NXT – November 13, 2014: I'll Take Neville To Block

NXT

Date: November 13, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jason Albert, Alex Riley, Rich Brennan

Tonight is a big show for NXT as we have the showdown between Sami Zayn and Adrian Neville for the NXT Title. I don't quite believe we're getting the full match tonight though, or at least we're not getting a clean ending. Other than that we have the fallout from the debut of Finn Balor, who will be helping Itami in his war against the Ascension. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Itami vs. Ascension and Balor debuting last week.

Opening sequence.

Here's Balor to open the show with a rather epic entrance. He says he's here in NXT because he's the future...and here are Natalya and Tyson Kidd arm in arm. Tyson is sure that Balor has a fascinating story but no one cares. Fact. Kidd was brought into this business as a Hart, so the first thing he was ever taught was respect. Cue Justin Gabriel who says a new international superstar is here every week to be a top guy. Finn has to get through them first though, but let's pause for a WHO ARE YOU chant at Gabriel. Kidd and Gabriel get in the ring but here's Itami, walking very slowly out to save his buddy.

Finn Balor/Hideo Itami vs. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel

This should be good. Gabriel and Itami get things going but it's quickly off to Kidd for a wristlock. Balor comes in for the first time and Tyson is already out for Gabriel. A dropkick puts Gabriel down but he bails to the floor, setting up a big flip dive from Balor as we take a break. Back with Itami putting Justin in a chinlock and getting two off a kick to the chest. Off to Balor vs. Kidd with Tyson taking him outside for a

neckbreaker on the floor. Gabriel hits a LOUD chop on the floor before kicking Finn in the back.

Tyson does the same for two as the heels take over on Finn in the corner. We hit the chinlock on Balor before Justin cranks on both arms at the same time. Kidd and Gabriel keep making the fast tags until Balor nails Tyson with a Pele Kick. The hot tag brings in Itami to clean house and a big kick gets two on Kidd. Justin dives into a knee to the ribs for two as everything breaks down. The newcomers hit stereo corner dropkicks, setting up a top rope double stomp to end Gabriel at 10:34.

Rating: C+. This was a much more promising match from Itami than the previous weeks singles efforts. Balor continues to look like the star of the team though and the more complete wrestler. Itami is coming around though and just needs some more time to get used to the WWE style.

We look back at Zayn vs. Neville from about a year ago in a great #1 contenders match.

Zayn says tonight feels different than all of the previous times. The road to redemption is more than just a nice tagline because destiny never makes mistakes. Tonight is going to unfold just like it's supposed to.

Sasha Banks vs. Alexa Bliss

Banks sends her into the corner to start and nails a low clothesline for an early two. The fans argue over whether Sasha is ratched as she puts Bliss in a modified surfboard. Bliss nails a dropkick but gets caught in the Backstabber into the Bank Statement for the tap out at 2:18.

Banks wants to make her title match against Charlotte official. She doesn't do anything to accomplish that but she does indeed want it.

Neville says Sami is his friend but he's going to be disappointed again tonight.

Lucha Dragons vs. Wesley Blake/Buddy Murphy

We need new jobbers around here. Non-title again. Kalisto throws Blake around to start but Murphy sneaks in to catch Kalisto in mid air for a

suplex. Murphy gets two off a clothesline before it's back to Blake for a top rope stomp to the back for two of his own. Buddy comes back in to hammer away but Kalisto slips through his legs to tag Sin. Cara speeds things way up but gets thrown into Blake to knock him off the apron. Kalisto hits a HUGE corkscrew plancha to drop Blake again, setting up the Swanton from Cara to Murphy for the pin at 5:07.

Rating: B-. Those dives from the Dragons are just nuts and made the match that much better. This was in the classic power vs. speed mold and worked as well as you would have expected it to. Murphy and Blake have a future if they're allowed to get some more ring time. They've got a look and aren't bad in the ring which puts them ahead of a lot of teams.

The Vaudevillains applaud the Dragons but tell them to keep the titles polished.

NXT Title: Adrian Neville vs. Sami Zayn

Zayn is challenging and quickly flips Adrian down to send the champion into the corner. He does it again before avoiding some dropkicks and dropkicking Adrian out to the floor. Sami loads up a dive but backflips back in when Neville moves. The OLE chants start up as Sami holds the ropes open but Neville flips back in. Now it's the champ's turn for some rapid fire kicks and Sami is in trouble.

Back from a break with Neville holding a chinlock to slow things down. Sami fights up but is pulled right back down into the same hold. Back up again with Sami nailing three clotheslines because that's the standard comeback anymore. The third puts Neville on the floor and now the flip dive connects. Back in and Sami hits the cross body but hurts himself on the impact. Adrian hits a quick standing shooting star for two but can't hook a powerbomb.

Sami gets back up and catches Neville on his shoulders for a BIG spinning powerbomb and two. Fans: "THAT WAS THREE!" Neville nails another kick but Sami ducks the second and rolls some Germans, capped off by a release half nelson suplex for two. The Helluva Kick is blocked by a kick to the face and the exploder is countered with a rollup for two more. Neville goes up for the Red Arrow but only hits mat to put both guys down. Adrian

comes up holding his knee and Sami won't go for the Helluva Kick. The referee throws up the X so Sami goes to check on Adrian...and gets rolled up for the pin at 15:33.

Rating: B. They were starting to feel it here but it's clear that they're setting up another match down the line. I'm glad that this didn't come off like a full heel turn but rather Adrian continuing to do whatever it takes to retain the title while staying within the bounds of the rules. Sami is getting the title though and the match at Takeover (you know it's coming) is going to blow the roof off the place.

Sami is stunned as trainers check on Neville to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. Two good matches and a nice debut from Balor are about as good as you can get out of an hour of wrestling. Sami's road getting stopped for a bit is a nice twist but you know Zayn vs. Neville is headlining the next special. This was an awesome show though and felt like a big one even though it only had one major match. Really good stuff.

Results

Hideo Itami/Finn Balor b. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel – Top rope double stomp to Gabriel

Sasha Banks b. Alexa Bliss – Bank Statement

Lucha Dragons b. Wesley Blake/Buddy Murphy – Swanton bomb to Murphy

Adrian Neville b. Sami Zayn – Small package

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NXT – November 6, 2014: Indeed, This Is Awesome

NXT

Date: November 6, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jason Albert, Alex Riley, Rich Brennan

It's a big night in NXT as we have two major stories to get to. First and foremost, Tyler Breeze is Sami Zayn's latest obstacle on his road to redemption. Breeze is one of the only guys that Sami has never beaten and tonight they square off in what might be a #1 contenders match. Other than that we get to find out who Hideo Itami has found to help him in his war with the Ascension. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Zayn's road to redemption. I like this story more every time I see it.

Opening sequence.

Sami Zayn vs. Tyler Breeze

Feeling out process to start with Tyler getting two off an early backslide. Sami flips out of an armbar and nails an atomic drop before taking Breeze into the corner. Tyler comes right back with some stomps in the corner before bulldogging him face first onto the middle buckle for two. We take a break and come back with Sami fighting out of a chinlock but eating an elbow. Back to the chinlock as the fans are chanting for Breeze.

Zayn fights up again but Tyler fights out of the Blue Thunder Bomb and drops Sami with a neckbreaker for two. Sami shoves him off the top rope

but Tyler dropkicks him out of the air. The Koji Clutch is quickly broken and neither guy can hook a German suplex. A HUGE Supermodel Kick gets two on Sami and frustration is setting in. Breeze takes him into the corner but walks into the exploder suplex, followed by the Helluva Kick to give Sami the pin at 14:43.

Rating: B-. It's good but they weren't going to be able to live up to their Takeover match with the time they had. Sami getting a clean pin over Breeze is a big step for him and he looked all fired up throughout the match. They're doing a great job of making Sami look unstoppable leading up to the showdown but I'd like to see Adrian get in some big wins of his own. Good stuff here.

Neville isn't afraid of Sami because he can't win the big one.

Dash Wilder vs. Tyson Kidd

Wilder runs him over to start so Tyson begs off in the corner. Kidd unloads in the corner and catapults Wilder face first into the bottom turnbuckle. A kick to the back gets two and we hit the chinlock on Dash for awhile. Wilder finally gets up and nails a powerslam for two, only to get kicked in the head again. A Moss Covered Three Handled Family Credenza sets up the Sharpshooter to make Dash at 4:28.

Rating: D+. That chinlock took way up way too much time and it hurt whatever they were going to be able to do here. Wilder was being treated like a bigger deal than usual here, even though he only had limited offense. This is the kind of stuff I'd like to see on Raw: let some of the guys that don't get much time show up on TV and have a quick match instead of doing star vs. star all the time.

Marcus Louis is completely insane and ranting like a crazy man. I didn't recognize him at first.

Sami Zayn says he feels like the Count of Monte Cristo by beating all of these people in a row. The road to redemption is more than just a tag line and he wants his shot at Neville next week.

Becky Lynch/Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte/Bayley

Bayley and Becky get things going with Bayley driving Lynch into the corner with aggression to start. Off to Banks who gets dropped with a clothesline and knee dropped for two. Charlotte and Becky come back in with the champ taking Lynch down in a cravate. We take a break and come back with Charlotte taking her back down with another cravate.

Charlotte talks trash to Sasha on the apron before whipping Lynch into the corner to knock Sasha to the floor. She spends too much time yelling at Banks though and gets nailed for two. Banks comes in now for a few shots and immediately tags back out. Charlotte comes right back and drops a knee on Lynch's head before bringing in Bayley. Lynch takes her into the corner and tags in Banks for some forearms to the back.

In an evil nod, Banks hooks Bayley in a figure four neck lock and drives her face first into the mat ala Charlotte. The heels take turns on Bayley until she finally suplexes Banks down for a breather. Sasha knocks Charlotte off the apron and gets rolled up, only to roll through on Bayley and grab the tights for the pin at 11:34.

Rating: C. This was about setting up two future matches and there's nothing wrong with that. I like Banks being more of a cowardly heel now as it fits her personality to show that she can win on her own but want everyone else to do it for her. Lynch continues to look like the biggest star in forever though and seems more than ready for the main roster.

Regal confirms Neville vs. Zayn for the title next week.

Here's the Ascension to call out Itami. They tried to be patient but Itami has done nothing but make threats. Get out here right now so we can finish this. Itami comes to the stage and is joined by....FINN BALOR! I believe the screen was originally supposed to say Prince Devitt and then turn into the new name but it just said Finn Balor (pronounced like valor). They charge the ring and destroy Ascension with a variety of kicks and knee shots as the fans chant THIS IS AWESOME and DREAM TEAM. Finn goes to the top for a double stomp to Konor's back to end the show. Finn looked AWESOME here and the fans ate him up.

Overall Rating: B. This show was a blast and proof of what you can get if you actually take your time to set something up. It has me wanting to see

the next Takeover show because the card is going to be stacked with matches that are waiting for a blowoff. Something tells me we're not going to get a clean finish to the title match next week and there's nothing wrong with that. Really solid show this week Balor's debut being a highlight.

Results

Sami Zayn b. Tyler Breeze – Helluva Kick

Tyson Kidd b. Dash Wilder – Sharpshooter

Becky Lynch/Sasha Banks b. Charlotte/Bayley – Rollup to Bayley with a handful of tights

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NXT – October 16, 2014: Follow the NXT Road

NXT

Date: October 16, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Alex Riley, Renee Young

The road to whatever the next big show is called continues and apparently we're now in the land of Titus O'Neil, who pinned Sami Zayn in last week's main event. Adrian Neville made the save and is likely going to be Titus' next opponent. It's always hard to guess where things are going with NXT week to week so it's likely something totally unrelated to last week. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Baron Corbin vs. Elias Sampson

End of Days, 18 seconds.

Here's Sami Zayn with something to say. Last week he lost to Titus O'Neil and that's not ok because he's better than that. It's time to refocus and go after the NXT Title (crowd ERUPTS for that) but Tyson Kidd has other thoughts. Tyson says it's time to face facts and is wearing an InZayn shirt for some reason. He talks about how Sami is lying to the people because everyone knows he's going to blow it like he always does.

Sami cuts him off at the knees by asking if Kidd has Natalya's permission to be out here. Crowd: "YOU GOT SERVED!" Kidd laughs him off but Sami says it's the start of his road to redemption. He's good enough to be here and he's good enough to beat Kidd, which he'll prove tonight. Sami suggests to go find Breeze's phone and call Nattie to make sure it's ok. Kidd: "Why would Breeze have Natalya's number?" Anyway the match is on for later.

Lucha Dragons vs. Wesley Blake/Buddy Murphy

Non-title. Murphy and Blake are now known as Team Thick. Cara backdrops Blake down and it's off to Murphy early on. Sin tries a springboard DDT but gets muscled up into a suplex for two. Cool counter. The Thick guys take over on Cara with some power stuff, including a slam and chinlock from Murphy. Cara kicks away and makes the tag so Kalisto can clean house. Everything breaks down and Cara takes Murphy to the top for a superplex but jumps up for a victory roll and the pin at 3:21.

Rating: D+. The Dragons are a good high flying team and that's all they

need to be. I can't imagine they're a long term option with the belts, but the NXT Tag Team Titles have always been dominated by big power teams instead of guys like the Dragons. Still though, they're fine for a change of pace and this worked fine.

We see Tyler Breeze beating Mojo last week.

Rawley says he's out for awhile because of the shoulder but it's just taking one step back to take several forward. He tries to make this serious and intense and it just doesn't work. The time off is a good thing for him though as he really needs to be repackaged.

Becky Lynch vs. Charlotte

Non-title. Becky takes her down with a quick armdrag and keeps Charlotte in trouble on the mat, only to charge into a backbreaker out of the corner. Charlotte puts on a figure four headlock and drives Becky's face into the mat a few times for good measure. A double clothesline puts both girls down but it's Lynch up first and in control. Some legdrops get two for Lynch but Charlotte comes back with a suplex for two of her own. Charlotte gets in a shot to the ribs and Natural Selection is good for the pin at 4:07.

Rating: C+. Good back and forth match here as Lynch continues to look like a star in the making. They're playing up the idea that she has natural skills but she doesn't have the experience to put it all together yet. It's amazing how deep the division is with different characters, especially when you look at how generic most of the WWE Divas are.

We see Itami and Funaki getting beaten down last week.

Ascension says Itami is in for the same treatment as Funaki if he doesn't back off.

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Legionnaires

Cass throws Sylvester around to start and it's off to Marcus, who goes nuts on LeFort over his bald head. We'll call it a no contest at 30 seconds.

Carmella vs. Old Blue Pants

The fans and announcers have no idea who the jobber is so they name her after her pants. Carmella takes her down and puts on something like a Crossface with her legs for the submission at 32 seconds. I believe Blue Pants was a girl who wrestles under the name Leva Bates.

Sasha Banks and Becky argue over who is going to be the next Women's Champion. Banks asks her what she'll do to make it to the top.

Neville is defending against Titus O'Neil next week and is tired of all these Raw and Smackdown guys coming after his title.

Sami Zayn vs. Tyson Kidd

Sami talks a lot of trash to start before cranking on a headlock. He throws Kidd's coat at him in the corner and you know it's on now. Tyson tries to speed things up into a monkey flip but Zayn rolls to the side and is staring at Kidd when he gets up. Some more armdrags put Kidd on the floor and Sami teases a dive to mess with him. Kidd stalls on the floor and gets Zayn to chase him, only to jump to the apron for a kick to the face as we take a break.

Back with Kidd choking in the corner and driving an elbow into Sami's head. A neckbreaker gets two and we hit the chinlock. Zayn fights up and nails a dropkick but misses the Helluva Kick. Instead a cross body is good for two and the Blue Thunder Bomb gets the same. Kidd comes back with a hard elbow to the face and a Moss Covered Three Handled Family Credenza for two of his own. The Sharpshooter goes on but Sami crawls over to the ropes. Sami suplexes him into the corner and the Helluva Kick is good for the pin at 10:30.

Rating: C+. These two are part of what is becoming the NXT version of the Smackdown Six (or four in this case). You can throw any combination of these two, Neville and Breeze out there and you're going to have a good match. That's a really valuable asset to have, but hopefully NXT doesn't just let the same guys have the same matches over and over again to water down the matchups. Sami's road to the title is clear, and man alive is that arena going to explode when he wins.

Overall Rating: C+. You can see the end for a lot of these stories, but we still have about six weeks to go to get there. This December special is going to be awesome with some long stories getting blown off and the winners that people want to see. It's amazing how easy it is to have these stories with in depth characters but no major company seems capable of pulling it off. Good show this week as NXT is back on track.

Results

Baron Corbin b. Elias Sampson – End of Days

Lucha Dragons b. Wesley Blake/Buddy Murphy – Victory Roll to Murphy

Charlotte b. Becky Lynch – Natural Selection

Carmella b. Old Blue Pants – Leg choke

Sami Zayn b. Tyson Kidd – Helluva Kick

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