

Bute Takes Out Lee Harvey Zuniga On ShoBox

Written by Michael Woods
Thursday, 12 March 2009 19:00

It is a thing of beauty, the perfectly placed shot to the solar plexus. We don't see it enough these days, that old-school selection. But for the recipient, there is nothing beautiful about taking a shot to the middle of the torso, and having every ounce of air expelled violently from your body. The look on Fulgencio Zuniga's face when Lucian Bute hit his solar plexus in the fourth round of the main event at the Bell Centre in Montreal, Quebec, Canada on Friday night spoke louder than any word could. Zuniga's face contorted into the same grimace Lee Harvey Oswald gave off when Jack Ruby blasted a cap in his belly.

Somehow Zuniga, unlike Lee Harvey, managed to get on his feet. But Bute wasn't going to let Zuniga off the hook. He bore in, caught his wounded prey on the ropes, and forced a stoppage in a bout televised on ShoBox.

It was a solid win which was met with great excitement from the crowd, which has really taken to Bute, who was born in Romania. But TSS thinks it might be a nice change of pace if Bute, who has now fought 11 straight bouts in this same arena, switches things up, and maybe hits the road, against slightly more formidable opposition. Mikkel Kessler doesn't have a gig lined up anytime soon, does he?

Bute (a Montreal resident; 167.4 pounds; 23-0 entering; age 29) put his IBF super middleweight crown up for grabs against Zuniga (from Colombia; 167.7 pounds; 22-3-2 coming in; age 31), who is now 0-for-3 in big league title bouts.

TSS Universe inhabitants know that Bute is best known for being knocked down by Librado Andrade in the waning seconds of the final round of his second title defense back in October 2008, a knockdown that spurred controversy as the ref in charge in Montreal gave Bute an excessive amount of time to recover. But they also know that Bute arose at the count of eight, and beat a ten count, though all concede he was leaning on the ropes when he got to his feet. They also know that he was sent to the mat with five seconds left in the round, and there would be no way for Andrade to finish the job, if Bute rose and the ref didn't give him extra time by waving Andrade to step back deeper into the neutral corner, because the round was over when he stood up. "I'm over that incident," Bute said before his bout kicked off. "That was a difficult last thirty seconds...but I'm still the champion, the belt is still with me." Indeed it is, and we all can see that he certainly wasn't gun shy after taking that late shellacking in his last gloveup.

In the first, the lefty Bute pumped some jabs. Z looked to land heavy shots from the start, figuring he'd need a KO on enemy turf. Bute steered clear of Z's leaden left, and scored with counters. In the second, the calm Bute used his feet well, as he circled and stepped to safe territory when Z came close. Z banged with some hooks to the body, but knew a straight left would come hurtling at him right quick. Z leans in with his jab, and his balance was off, a tempting target for the sharper-shooter, Bute. In the third, Bute backed up Z with a counter. Zuniga looked amateurish with his wide misses in this round.

Bute Takes Out Lee Harvey Zuniga On ShoBox

Written by Michael Woods

Thursday, 12 March 2009 19:00

In the fourth, Bute blasted Zuniga in the solar plexus with a left. The ref started a count, a sloooow count, and Z got up at nine plus. Bute went back to work, but Z held it together. He got hung up on the ropes, eating shots, not answering. The ref, Lindsey Page, saw enough after he ate about ten smacks, and halted the scrap. The time of the TKO was 2:25 of the fourth.