

## Rusty Lucian Bute Beat Denis Grachev, Who Made Him Work

Written by Michael Woods

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Lucian Bute got back on the horse, and didn't get bucked by foe Dennis Grachev in Montreal on Saturday night at the Bell Centre. That said, the ride wasn't free from bumps, or saddle sores; Grachev, nicknamed "Drago's Son," wasn't put off by Bute's artistry, which wasn't as artistic as we've seen in the past. Grachev, a Russian living in Cali, bulled forward and showed ample chin and pluck. But the judges saw Bute the victor, by scores of 115-113, 118-110, 116-112.

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In the first, the 12 to 1 favorite Bute, a lefty, pumped his jab against Grachev, who wanted to land his right hand. The bout, which ran on Wealth TV, presented as Bute's first since he was stopped by Carl Froch, in round five, back in May.

A cut formed on Bute's left eye opened up late in the first. I didn't sense any undue anxiety in Bute, he didn't look gunshy to me early. A left in the second round on Grachev had the crowd buzzing. The Romanian born Canadian as usual moved laterally a whole bunch, picked his spots in a better second. In the third Grachev landed a few and a few more in the fourth. Grachev stalked the favorite in the fifth, and though he got clipped several times, he wouldn't be put off. His corner gave Bute the business after round six, telling him to quit messing about, that he was fighting the wrong fight. It didn't improve in the next round, as Bute had to hold on a couple times in the seventh and eighth, but it looked like maybe the hometowner had his rhythm late in eight. But his corner still wasn't pleased. "He's hurting you sometimes," Stephane Larouche said. He said Bute was headhunting too much. He was in round 11, during a stirring trade session, with Bute's back tot he ropes, to close the round. Bute stared at Grachev, and barked at him, at the close of the round. "Three most important minutes of your career coming up," his trainer told the hometowner. He listened, starting slow but then picked up steam, and had his best round. We went to the cards...

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