

Image via HBO Max

Spicy New Hockey Drama With 95% RT Scores Big on Streaming After 2-Episode Premiere

By Denis Kimathi Published 2 hours ago

Denis is a news writer for Collider. He has covered television for several years, starting with writing scripts for YouTube videos before transitioning to articles. He has reviewed shows across different genres. His favorite types of articles to write are exciting news updates...



Canadian comedian and screenwriter **Jacob Tierney** has been a regular presence on television since 2016, when the comedy series **Letterkenny** premiered. Co-created with **Jared Keeso**, it led to the **hockey-centric comedy Shoresy**, which concluded its fourth season earlier this year. Tierney's next hockey-centric project, **Heated Rivalry**, is nothing like *Letterkenny* or *Shoresy*. It is an erotic drama about two rival hockey players who realize the feelings between them are not typical of competitors; they are something more profound. *Heated Rivalry* premiered on November 28 in multiple countries, including on **HBO Max** in the U.S. The two episodes released so far have been enough to send the show flying up the streamer's top ten chart, where it's currently number 2, according to Flix Patrol. The show is adapted from **Rachel Reid's Game Changers** book series. Its official description reads:



"Heated Rivalry chronicles the story of rival hockey players Shane and Ilya. Shane Hollander (Hudson Williams) and Ilya Rozanov (Connor Storrie) are two of the biggest stars in Major League Hockey, bound by ambition, rivalry, and a magnetic pull neither of them fully understands. What begins as a secret fling between two fresh-faced rookies evolves into a years-long journey of love, denial, and self-discovery. Over the next eight years, the pair chase glory on the ice while struggling to navigate their feelings off it. Torn between the sport they live for and the love they can't ignore, Shane and Ilya must decide if there is room in their fiercely competitive world for something as fragile and as powerful as real love."



Is 'Heated Rivalry' Worth Watching?



The series gained a cult following even before it premiered and has since grown in popularity. It doesn't have a Rotten Tomatoes critic score yet, but most of the reviews posted on the site are positive – and audiences have already given it a resounding 95% score. Collider's **David Caballero reviewed the first season** and noted that, while the show has rough edges, Storrie and Williams are a revelation as Shane and Ilya. He praised their chemistry and the show's ability to capture the state of being closeted so well. Caballero wrote:

"Overall, though, Heated Rivalry is definitely recommended for those who love romance stories featuring handsome leads with instant, palpable chemistry. Williams and Storrie are the beating heart of this show, and they do a great job of capturing the anxiety and fear that come with being true to oneself. As a millennial man who would've been a teenager when the show's narrative starts in 2008, I quickly related to both the setting and the characters' predicament. Coming out of the closet in the late 2000s seemed out of the question when being LGBTQ+ was still considered very much taboo. Perhaps that's Heated Rivalry's greatest strength: capturing that specific time and place and using it as a catalyst for a carefully crafted tale of romance, ambition, and self-discovery."

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Stream *Heated Rivalry* on HBO Max in the US and Australia and on Crave in Canada. New episodes release on Fridays. Stay tuned to Collider for more updates.

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Drama Romance Sports

Release Date November 28, 2025
Network Crave
Directors Jacob Tierney

Cast
Connor Storrie Ilya Rozanov
Hudson Williams Shane Hollander

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