

JANUARY SALE Save 20% Ends 1/31/26. Discount applies to Pay Later base rate only. Taxes, fees, & options excluded. Additional...

THE AVENUE | MOVIES AND TV

How to cope after watching 'Heated Rivalry': A Gainesvillager's guide

Five ways to help your post-cottage depression

By Teia Williams January 26, 2026 | 5:36pm EST



Feeling heated rivalry withdrawal? Here are a few ways you get another period of 2026's breakout romantic phenomenon!

Photo by Henry A. Moore | The Independent Florida Alligator

The electric TV show "Heated Rivalry" has altered pop culture in the two months since its release. The Crave Original series has taken fans from 2008 to 2018 in six episodes. From room 1221 to Russia and, ultimately, to the cottage, the hockey rivals found love.

The show streams on HBO Max and follows two rival hockey players: Shane Hollander, a freckle-faced Canadian playing for Montreal, and Ilya Rozanov, a cocky Russian playing for Boston. To the public, they hate each other; in private, things quickly become very steamy. As their relationship moved beyond sex to love and intimacy, viewers have been left wanting more.

The obsession with the characters and the world the cast and crew made has been difficult for people to move on from.

As Connor Storrie's character Ilya Rozanov said in episode six, "I don't ever want that problem to ever go away." For those who never want to leave the cottage, here are some ways to feed the "Heated Rivalry" hangover.

1. Re-Heated Rivalry

The Wooly in downtown Gainesville is hosting "Re-Heated Rivalry" nights, where fans of the show can rewatch the last two episodes together and play trivia. The events will be held on Jan. 30 and Feb. 6.



Avery Bender, a 39-year-old event planner, came up with the idea as she was watching the series for the first time. She called The Wooly's event manager and set the puck in motion. She was inspired by the watch parties she had seen online.

"People have watched this show over and over, and they have it memorized. It's only six episodes," Bender said. "It's so fun to watch something with a group that also likes it just as much as you do."

Due to high demand, attendees are required to RSVP for the free event. Donations of \$1 to \$10 are encouraged to support the Pride Community Center of North Central Florida.

Tickets can be found through @woolydowntown on Instagram or its website.

1. The 'Game Changers' series

"Heated Rivalry" is a TV adaptation of the second book in the "Game Changers" series by Rachel Reid.

@ Enjoy what you're reading? Get content from The Alligator delivered to your inbox. Subscribe Now

The six-book series, which doesn't necessarily have to be read in order, focuses on queer love stories in hockey. For fans of the third episode about Scott and Kip's story, read the first book in the series, also called "Game Changers."

JANUARY SALE Save 20% New year. New roads. New rides. Book now Hertz

The books are in high demand right now and may take a while to arrive when ordered online. The Barnes & Noble off of Archer Road has a limited supply of the later books in the series.

1. Become a hockey fan

Gainesville doesn't have an ice rink, but there is a UF Hockey Club. The team travels to Jacksonville for their home games, and they won the Southeastern Conference national championship in 2024.

If the hockey scene seems exciting but Jacksonville is too far, you can watch the games on TV with your friends or head to a sports bar like Mother's Pub & Grill or The Swamp Restaurant. Of course, there is always the NHL and PWHL as well.

1. Watch it with someone else

One way to get obsessed over the show all over again is to live vicariously through someone else. It is hard to get the feeling of watching something for the first time again. The closest way to it is by watching someone else get all the feelings while watching it for the first time.

Watch it with someone who hasn't seen it yet, get their reactions and have a debrief after certain scenes and episodes.

Another way is to watch a reaction video series where YouTubers, streamers, influencers and podcasters are watching it. The podcast "The Basement Yard" is watching and reacting to the show, and fans are excited because they think one of the hosts, Joe Santagato, looks like Kip in the show.

JANUARY SALE Save 20% New year. New roads. New rides. Book now Hertz

TikTok influencer Abbi Dicensio has a series where she films her mother's reactions to shows. They filmed a six-part series of themselves reacting to the show. YouTubers Dan and Phil did an episode reacting to the first episode of the series.

1. Watch similar TV shows, movies and books

If none of that works, try out similar media to add to the obsession.

TV shows like "Young Royals" and "Heartstopper" also center on young queer love stories.

There are also emotionally heavier movies, such as "Call Me by Your Name" and "Brokeback Mountain." A movie about rivals on the lighter side is "Red, White & Royal Blue." A movie that follows the story through a sport and with a similar electronic soundtrack is "Challengers."

Alex Guardo, a 22-year-old UF history senior, watched "Heated Rivalry" as it first premiered and saw it grow into the success it is today. As an avid TV watcher, some of her recommendations to watch next are "Tell Me Lies," "Elite" and "The L Word."

"The one that I will recommend the most like 'Heated Rivalry' is 'Yellowjackets,'" Guardo said.

JANUARY SALE Save 20% New year. New roads. New rides. Book now Hertz

Sophie Néliste, the actor playing Rose Landry in Heated Rivalry, also plays teen Shauna, one of the main characters in "Yellowjackets." Guardo said if someone wants to watch something messy like "Heated Rivalry," any of her selections would work.

Hockey is a popular trope for spycy romance books. The "Maple Hills" trilogy and the "Off-Campus" series both follow a friend group of hockey players in college. The "Him" trilogy centers two hockey players and their blossoming relationship.

Contact Teia Williams at twilliams@alligator.org. Follow her on X @teia_williams.

Support your local paper DONATE TODAY The Independent Florida Alligator has been independent of the university since 1971, your donation today could help #SaveStudentNewsrooms. Please consider giving today.

Teia Williams Teia Williams is a journalism student and in her second semester at The Alligator. She is a lifestyle and general assignment for The Avenue. In her free time she is constantly reading, going to concerts, or talking about her favorite celebrities.

Google Fiber We're expanding in your area Learn more

Popular

UF presidential search committee member appears in files related to Jeffrey Epstein

By Alexa Ryan | Jan. 19

This rare bird hasn't been seen in Alachua County since 1999 — until now

By Juliana DeFilippo | Jan. 22

Parents upset after Alachua County Public Schools installs new fence near school

By Grace Larson | Jan. 25

Alachua County School Board denies school closure rumor, addresses ICE unrest

By Grace Larson | Jan. 21

Florida overcomes adversity on vault en route to victory

By Seth Haber | Jan. 23

Calendar

No events at this time. Submit an event

Gfiber Internet for influencers. Sign up now

More



No. 11 Gabia Paskauskas wins nail-biter as Florida defeats Ole Miss



Florida v. LSU: How the Gators can capitalize after their first conference win



A new Gainesville cafe kickflips onto Fifth Avenue



352-376-4458 2700 SW 13th St. Gainesville, FL 32608



METRO SPORTS THE AVENUE OPINIONS EL CAIMÁN MULTIMEDIA CLASSIFIEDS EVENTS

ABOUT US CONTACT US ADVERTISING DONATE DONOR WALL TERMS OF SERVICE PRIVACY POLICY

ETHICS AND DIVERSITY DISTRIBUTION ARCHIVES LETTER TO THE EDITOR SUBMIT A TIP