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Doctor Who Showrunner RTD: Heated Rivalry Is "Absolutely Excellent"

Doctor Who Showrunner Russell T. Davies breaks down why the first season of the hockey drama Heated Rivalry is "absolutely excellent."

Published Wed, 14 Jan 2026 08:35:14 -0600 by [Ray Flook](#) | [Comments](#)

Article Summary

- Doctor Who showrunner Russell T. Davies praises Heated Rivalry as "absolutely excellent" on Instagram.
- Heated Rivalry, based on Rachel Reid's Game Changers novels, has become a breakout hockey drama sensation.
- Davies highlights the show's bold storytelling, authentic LGBTQ+ representation, and standout production quality.
- Fans are buzzing about the series' love story, complex characters, and potential for more with Season 2.

While we await any intel whatsoever on the upcoming *Doctor Who* Christmas Special, it's nice to see that *Doctor Who* Showrunner **Russell T. Davies** has been keeping up on what's hot out there across the pop culture landscape. And right now, nothing's hotter than *Crave*, HBO Max, and series creator **Jacob Tierney's Hudson Williams** and **Connor Storrie**-starring hockey drama *Heated Rivalry*. Based on **Rachel Reid's** critically acclaimed "Game Changers" novels, the series has blown up in ways we haven't seen in some time, with fans already itching for the second season. Now, the dude who may or may not still be running *Doctor Who* after the holiday special hits is letting everyone know why he finds the series "absolutely excellent." Hmm... maybe we could see Williams or Storrie make an appearance in the *Doctor Who* Christmas Special?



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Image: BBC; HBO Max

"LOVED THIS. Absolutely excellent!" Davies began the caption to his Instagram post. "Yes, gay, okay, hooray, but never mind the sex, this is a love story, a great big classic love story. And it's a really classy production, great acting, direction, lighting, music, design (the real scandal is the property porn, oh those apartments!). And so many gorgeous details. Too many pillows on the bed. The camera's gay gaze (that's so rarely done right). Men watching TV with their hands down their pants. And the killer line being delivered in Russian, by Svetlana, about Jane. Wonderful. And it's such bold storytelling – the wild swing of Ep.3, the rabble-rousing joy of Ep.5, the sheer patience of Ep.6. Sometimes there's a fabulous lack of drama; traditional confrontations have all the steam taken out of them, replaced by proper, adult conversation. A gorgeous show, and in an age when @glaad reports LGBTQ+ representation falling under a hostile regime, Canada surges ahead into a bold new world. Magnificent!"

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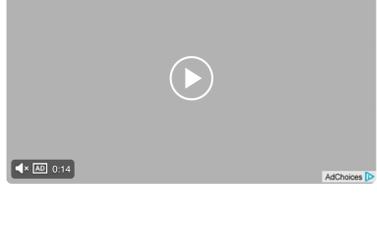
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Originally created for Canadian streaming service *Crave* by award-winning Canadian writer-director-producer **Jacob Tierney** (*Letterkenny*, *Shoresy*), *Heated Rivalry* chronicles the story of rival hockey players Shane and Ilya. Shane Hollander (Williams) and Ilya Rozanov (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.



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The series also stars **François Arnaud**, **Robbie G.K.**, **Christina Chang**, **Dylan Walsh**, **Sophie Nélisse**, and **Ksenia Daniela Kharlamova**. Produced by Accent Aigu Entertainment in association with Bell Media's *Crave*, HBO Max & *Crave's Heated Rivalry* is distributed internationally by Sphere Abacus.

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About Ray Flook

Serving as Television Editor since 2018, Ray began five years earlier as a contributing writer/photographer before being brought onto the core BC team in 2017.

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