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Justin Trudeau, McGill University join buzz around Heated Rivalry

The former prime minister praised the show about hockey romance for highlighting Canadian talent.

By Harry North
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Former Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau on the left is shown with an Instagram post of his commenting on the Canadian hit show Heated Rivalry. PHOTO BY ERIK LEIJON

The fanfare over Canada’s celebrated TV hit turned cultural phenomenon, Heated Rivalry, has rolled on.

And now McGill University and even former prime minister Justin Trudeau have joined the conversation.

“Our IG bio needed a little refresh,” the university playfully wrote in an Instagram story with eyes and hockey stick emojis.

The updated bio reads: “Alma Mater of Shane Hollander’s dad. Not a town. A really good school. #McGill. 204 years of excellence in education and research.”

STORY CONTINUES BELOW



The adaptation of romance novels by Rachel Reid has become Crave's most successful original debut and has already been renewed for a second season. Fully Canadian-funded, U.S. media outlet Forbes referenced the show as a "soft-power moment" for the country.

In recent weeks, Tim Hortons and Wendy's have both posted nods to the show's cottage-country lore. Ottawa Tourism rebranded itself online as the "birthplace of Shane Hollander." The Canadian Red Cross also joked about fans stranded without cell service on the way to the cottage.

On Saturday, Trudeau weighed in, too, and praised the show.

"Proud of the Canadian talent bringing this story to life and helping our society reflect who we are through representation and visibility," the former prime minister wrote on Instagram.

Culture Minister Marc Miller told The Canadian Press he had watched the first episode and lauded it for challenging stereotypes.

And on the show's success, Miller added: "It's pretty cool to see. That doesn't happen to every program with Canadian content."

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The show has also percolated into professional hockey. The Boston Bruins acknowledged the series on social media during a game against the Montreal Canadiens. The Canadiens later aired a Heated Rivalry trailer during intermission at a Pride Night game.

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But as hockey writer Julian McKenzie discussed in a recent article, questions have also emerged

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over whether the show could recalibrate LGBTQ+ hockey culture. The men's side of the game continues to be a space many LGBTQ+ fans navigate cautiously. McKenzie noted



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