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BUSINESS INSIDER

10 details you might've missed in 'Heated Rivalry'

By Kevin O'Keefe · 2 hours ·

Hudson Williams and Connor Storrie play hockey rivals Ilya Rozanov and Shane Hollander in HBO's "Heated Rivalry." HBO/Crave

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- "Heated Rivalry" has concluded its first season, but that doesn't mean there isn't a cliffhanger.
- Hockey fans have enjoyed cheering for Shane and Ilya's Easter eggs and fun details you might've missed.
- There are rocks to at least two other books in the "Game Changers" book series in the show.

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Just when you thought you were out, we're pulling you back in.

"Heated Rivalry" may have completed its six episodes run in December, but it's never a bad time to, well, "relive."

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If you've somehow missed out on "Heated Rivalry" season, here's a crash course. The Canadian series stars Hudson Williams and Connor Storrie as competitive hockey players who secretly fall in love throughout the season. They've been hooking up on the down low for their entire season.

It's based on a series of hockey romance novels by Rachel Reid called "Game Changers," named for the first book ("Game Changer"), which focuses on the love story between New York hockey star Scott Hunter (François Arnaud and Ilya Grady, Brilliant A.I.), a comedian drop-worker with dreams of attending grad school.

After "Game Changer" came "Heated Rivalry" — the main source material for the show — then "Tough Guy," "Common Goal," "Fake Models," "The Long Game," and the upcoming "Overtime," which will be released in the fall.

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In the agonizingly long wait for season two, we've combed through the book series and found some Easter eggs, fun details, and more that were scattered throughout the show.

Here are 10 details you might've missed in season one of "Heated Rivalry."

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Creator Jacob Tierney has a cameo in the first episode as the director of a commercial starring Shane and Ilya.

Jacob Tierney is a director in the "Heated Rivalry" universe. Crave

He's the guy wearing the beanie behind the monitor.

This isn't the first hockey series Tierney has been involved with — he co-created "Letterkenny," which he also sporadically appeared in) and was a director and executive producer on its spinoff "Shoresy."

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The fictional hockey podcast heard throughout the season, "Man in the Crease," is hosted by two real Canadian radio personalities.

Episode three is called "Man Tackle." Crave

If you're a fan of Montreal hockey, you might recognize the hosts of "The Morning Show with Conor McKenna and Shawn Ivan" as the two voices behind the fictional "Man in the Crease" podcast, a pretty consistent provider of hockey exposition throughout the season.

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In episode three, Kip and his friends thank The Kingfisher's bartender; Kyle. He's one of the main characters in "Common Goal," the fourth book in the series.

Kyle is played by Matthew Finlan. Crave

The Kingfisher is an important location throughout the "Game Changers" book series, as the formal hangout of Kip and his friends, including its bartender, Kyle, who is named in episode three.

Kyle is one of the two protagonists of "Common Goal," which is about his relationship with New York Admirals goalie Eric Bennett.

There's a piece of art that resembles the set for Drogan's "Game Changer" in the smoothie shop, perhaps a nod to the novel "Game Changer: Scott and Kip's story.

"Heated Rivalry" and "Game Changer." Crave/Amazon

This could be a stock, a happy accident, or a really subtle Easter egg, so mark well on here.

The spiral print, seen hanging in the smoothie shop, is the exact same shape as some of the set decorations of a game show on Drogan.

Why is this significant? Because the name of the show is "Game Changer" — also the name of the novel focused on Scott and Kip (but the third episode is based on, and the inspiration for "Game Changer," the title of the overarching book series.

A poster for Rose Landry's film "Under Dark" can be spotted at a bodega.

"Under Dark" gets a cameo but is the not episode. Crave

To the left of Kip's head, you can see a poster for "Under Dark," an apparently bad film starring Rose Landry, the movie star whom Shane briefly dates in the new episode.

Rose herself calls it a "horrible FBI movie."

Producer Brendan Brady has a cameo as the director of a different commercial in episode four.

Brendan Brady has a little bit and you owe it Lunes. Crave

At the beginning of episode four, we see a montage of Shane and Ilya's relationship over a couple of years, as they stay in contact during the offseason.

Brady, one of three credited executive producers on "Heated Rivalry," plays a director of one of the commercials Shane shoots — he does one for an underwear brand, and another for cologne.

Ilya and Shane have a brief conversation about another player, Ryan Price, while watching TV. He's the main character of book No. 3: "Tough Guy."

They discuss Ryan Price while watching highlights on TV. Crave

Ryan, in both the books and the show, is what's known in hockey as an enforcer. Basically, his unofficial job is to protect his teammates by intimidating the other team and sometimes by getting into fights — but he doesn't enjoy it.

In "Heated Rivalry" (the book), readers meet Ryan while he's on the Raiders with Ilya, and the two connect during a flight.

That scene didn't make the show, but Ilya does tell Shane during a conversation that Ryan "is not what you would think" and calls him quiet but "not a bad guy."

It's unclear if Ryan will be introduced in season two (or three) of "Heated Rivalry," but if you're interested, you can learn more about him by reading "Tough Guy."

A commenter shown during the social media montage is a nod to Rachel Reid, author of the "Game Changers" series.

Sam Phelly, 31 in pink/black hoodie. Crave

The first commenter, who wrote "You can feel the chemistry through the screen omg," has the username @rachelreidwrite, about certainly a nod to "Heated Rivalry" author Rachel Reid, whose real name is Rachelle Cragnon.

Shane tells his parents he doesn't want to waste the two weeks he has off a year with some stranger; that's exactly how long he'll spend with Ilya at the cottage.

Shane and his parents are at a loss (but they don't know everything about their son). Crave

Sensing that Shane is in a funk, his parents Tom and David tell him that they'd like to spend time with their grandson Wyatt (Shane and Ari's first born, and an uncle to "Heated Rivalry").

However, Shane rebuffs them, saying he "only gets Ilya, two weeks of a year" and doesn't want to spend their "next to someone he doesn't know."

That's because, of course, he wants to spend them with someone he also knows. In the next episode, Shane invites Ilya to his cottage and says that then "could have a week or even two" together.

In Rose's newest movie, she seems to be playing a Mystique-esque character.

Rose is seen getting ready in a mirror. Crave

It's mentioned in the previous episode that Rose is in Montreal filming the new "X-Squad" movie, a clear reference to the "X-Men," but it doesn't specifically mention what she's filming. Fans of the comic book universe could be one but getting pulsed that another Marvel movie is in the cards, but the Lawrence did when she played Mystique in Ben "X-Men" movies.

During the title card for episode six, you can hear the distinct sound of a loon, or, as Ilya would say, a "stupid Canadian wolf-bird."

The title card for the season finale. Crave

For fans of the book, the cottage episode was always going to be a big deal, and they could breathe a sigh of relief when they heard a bird call over the title card for episode six, "The Cottage."

It meant that Tierney and the rest of the producers knew how important every little detail was, including a loon call, which Ilya would later mistake for a wolf (much to Shane's amusement).

This little moment is so important to Ilya that, in "Role Model" and "The Long Game," it's revealed he's even gotten a little loon tattoo on his arm.

As Shane and Ilya drive to Shane's cottage, the song they listen to on the radio is the theme song for a Québécois show called "Le chalet," or "The Cottage."

Shane speaks fluent French in the show and the book. Crave

The song is called "L'anarchie des jours heureux," and is performed by La Bronze. It translates to "the anarchy of happy days" — a sentiment that Shane and Ilya can certainly relate to during their secret getaway to Shane's cottage.

Shane's Rookie of the Year award is on display at his cottage.

He won it in the second episode. Crave

It's right up there on the lodge, on top of the blue book.

We see Shane win the award in the second episode, and we saw him mistake Ilya's vetoes about returning to Russia for jealousy about losing the award to Shane.

Clearly, they got past it.

Shane and Ilya switch clothes while at the cottage.

They're wearing the same flannel. Crave

We first see Shane wearing the brown flannel when he's grilling burgers for the two of them (and getting teased by Ilya for not halving the recipe).

The next night, Ilya rocks the same flannel when he tells Shane that he's got "a problem." He can't stop thinking about another hockey player with "beautiful freckles."

All of the MHL team logos might have you doing a double-take.

From left, The Montreal Metros, the New York Admirals, and the Boston Raiders. Crave

This one's confirmed by Jacob Tierney: Almost all of the MHL logos in the show are either, for lack of a better word, phallic — or look like a butt.

"I'm not trying to be subtle," Tierney said on an episode of the hockey podcast "What Chaos"

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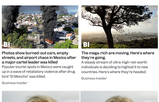

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