Give your budget a glow up — $946 AVERAGE SAVINGS FOR NEW CUSTOMERS WHO SAVE — PROGRESSIVE — Get a quote

LIFESTYLE

‘We’re selling out games’: How Heated Rivalry changed London’s ice hockey scene

The hit tale of stick-crossed lovers is making an impact in the capital

Mark Carney hugs Heated Rivalry star

MADDY MUSSEN
17 HOURS AGO

1 COMMENTS

Style — Sign up for the best picks from our travel, fashion and lifestyle writers. Email — Sign up
I would like to be emailed about offers, event and updates from Evening Standard. Read our privacy notice.

Back in the early 2000s, when David Beckham was at the height of his fame, The Sun newspaper claimed to have found the only person on the planet who hadn’t heard of him: a shepherd in Chad. I wonder if that shepherd has escaped the impact of Heated Rivalry, the viral Canadian ice hockey show that follows the tale of stick-crossed lovers Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov.

Heated Rivalry’s impact has been nothing short of monumental. It has

sold out to the last three weekends, which I can't not think is to do with the show,” says Dylan Dix, a player at the RedHawks. “Ever since the show came out, we’ve had a lot more interest,” agrees manager Graham D’Anger, who says “nothing of this scale” has happened to ice hockey in the UK before. “It’s both in terms of playing and people coming down to watch. Our ticket sales have increased by 15 per cent.”

Arizona Launches New Policy For ”Senior Drivers” on Tuesday — Auto Savings
Ask a Pro: ”I Have a $1.4M IRA. Should I Convert $160K/Year to Roth to Save on RMDs?” This Quiz Matches Nearly 50,000 People Each Month with Vetted Financial Advisors — SmartAsset

Dix and his fellow players are getting their own taste of the Shane and Ilya star treatment, making appearances in local bookshops while dressed in full kit, and being interviewed on BBC Radio London. This kind of attention is all very unexpected for the RedHawks, who aren’t accustomed to the kind of fame that surrounds NHL players (the Canadian-American league that Hollander and Rozanov play in).

DYLAN DIX
STREATHAM REDHAWKS

Streatham RedHawks aren’t even in the UK’s top league. That would be the Elite Ice Hockey League, which is led by teams like the Belfast Giants, Cardiff Devils and Nottingham Panthers. The RedHawks are one level down, in the National Ice Hockey League. Ice hockey players in this league aren’t paid enough to be full-time, so Dix and his teammates have full-time jobs to support themselves. “It’s a labour of love,” says team captain Ryan Watt, who works at Heathrow Airport when he’s not on the ice. “Being 36, I'm one of the oldest in the league. But I can't see myself retiring anytime soon either. I'll keep playing until the body gives up.”

RECOMMENDED
Next UK-EU summit should ‘go further’, says Starmer ahead of talks
All aboard! UK's first rapid-charging battery train launches in London
What a yarn! Knitting entrepreneur casts off for Atlantic charity row
What is Groundhog Day and how is it celebrated in America?

Heated Rivalry might be known for its tenderness, but ice hockey is not for the faint-hearted. Anyone who’s attended an ice hockey game will know that things frequently get aggressive, and injuries are common. “It's rough, it's physical. We have fights,” Watt says. “I've had surgery on my right knee once, surgery on my left hip twice. My two front teeth aren't mine. I’ve had maybe 18 stitches in my face, broken both hands. Both AC joints in my shoulders. I'm sure there's more.”

STREATHAM REDHAWKS

“I’ve had a broken kneecap, torn MCL,” Dix adds, “separated shoulders, wrist surgery, broken hands, broken fingers, concussions, broken noses, stitches, sprained ankles, broken feet. There's a lot. It'd probably be easier to list what I haven't hurt to be honest. But that’s what makes the game exciting. It’s worth the risk.”

Get 300 Mbps for $50/mo when you bundle with Cox Business Connect with RingCentral — COX BUSINESS | RingCentral — Learn more — ltd. avail./areas.

Dix, Watt and D’Anger are admittedly addicted to the game, and they hope Heated Rivalry will inspire a whole new legion of fans. “I haven't met many people who have just been to one hockey game,” Dix says. “If they've been to one, they've gone back.”

It’s safe to say the Streatham RedHawks are enjoying their time in the sun, then. “Hopefully it's a long time in the sun,” Dix laughs, “and it really grows the support, both worldwide and especially in the UK, where there's lots of room for growth.”

MORE ABOUT ICE HOCKEY

HAVE YOUR SAY... VIEW 1 COMMENTS

Cardiologist: A Teaspoon On An Empty Stomach Will... Belly Fat's Worst Enemy? Try This Tonight! — Health Headlines
This 60-Second Habit Is Why Some 60-Year-Olds Move Like... — Ultra Health Findings
Arizona Launches New Policy For ”Senior Drivers” Do not pay your next car insurance bill until you re... — Auto Savings