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SAFETY AND MOVEMENT DISCIPLINE DURING CURRENT US UNREST: LESSONS FROM HONG KONG PROTESTERS

Do not stay in one place for too long; follow Bruce Lee's 'be water' philosophy and disperse often. Disruption is key; occupy key places to show your strength and disrupt ICE agents. Try to stay non-violent. That helps protect participants, reduce escalation, and strengthen the moral legitimacy of the movement. Attending with trusted friends or affinity groups helps people stay grounded and make decisions collectively. Establish check-in plans and emergency contacts ahead of time. Protests are emotionally intense; participants should be encouraged to take breaks and support one another. Staying aware of surroundings helps people make safe, informed decisions.

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What Does It Mean When The Hottest Piece Of Olympic Merch Isn't From The Official Outfitter But Heated Rivalry?

January 30, 2026

The hottest Olympic merchandise isn't from the Team Canada collection, but a fleece jacket sported by fictional hockey player Shane Hollander in *Heated Rivalry*. Prime Minister Mark Carney even got in on the action, posing in the original fleece with star Hudson Williams (Hollander) on the red carpet at the Canadian Media Producers Association's annual Prime Time conference in Ottawa on Jan. 29.

To say *Heated Rivalry* is a phenomenon feels like an understatement. Crave's hockey romance, created, written and directed by Jacob Tierney and based on Rachel Reid's best-selling *Game Changers* book series, is a worldwide hit. It has made stars of its two leads, Canadian Williams and American Connor Storrie (Ilya Rozanov), and created a fervour for "The Fleece" that Hollander wears during the Sochi Olympic scenes in Episode 2 of the "word-of-mouth sensation."

What does it say when a fleece jacket from a television series has more cultural relevance than the official Team Canada gear? "What it's speaking to is that attention isn't monopolized by official status, but rather is captured by the memes and the social connection and the authenticity," says associate professor Jenna Jacobson, the director of Toronto Metropolitan University's Retail Leadership Institute.

The Milano-Cortina Olympics start on Feb. 6, and it's safe to say that the buzz around the official Team Canada collection, designed by Vancouver-headquartered active brand Lululemon, is nowhere close to the excitement around Hollander's white zip-up. Fans have gone to great lengths to craft their own versions of the fleece jacket, created by *Heated Rivalry* costume designer Hanna Puley, and 6,154 people signed an online petition urging Team Canada to make it official merchandise.

Fans may not have convinced Team Canada to bite, but an official *Heated Rivalry* fleece is coming in a collaboration with Toronto-based clothing company Province of Canada.

"Fans are the heart of *Heated Rivalry*, and this is entirely because of them. We've listened closely to what they've been asking for, and the fleece jacket has been at the top of that list," Tierney and Brendan Brady, executive producers and co-presidents of Accent Aigu Entertainment, said in a statement on Jan. 28.

Province of Canada said that details, including pricing and the release date, are to come.

"This is a grassroots movement in a certain way, albeit a light one. We're not talking about a political uprising or anything, but you are talking about a similar concept: people using the digital tools that are available to them to have a voice and ask for something, which happened," says Jacobson. "So, you're taking the TikTok or social media logic of remixing and parody and everyday wearability, coupled with Canadian pride in this beautiful little moment."

Fans using petitions to advocate for something important to the community, such as fighting a cancellation or pushing for a new season, isn't new. But what's interesting about the journey of "The Fleece" is that it's migrated from a television show into real life, adds Jacobson.

Olympic outfitting is usually about national symbolism and ceremony. The *Heated Rivalry* fleece jacket isn't ceremonial, but it is relatable and intensely Canadian, which many people are especially drawn to at the current moment.

With the ongoing trade war, Jacobson sees the *Heated Rivalry* fleece as an expression of Canadian pride. "It's kind of shifting it away from Team Canada, or even really the Olympics more generally, and more toward this product as a cultural object — as an object that connects people across the country."

The fan-driven movement is "a close, cosy, kind of ironic, algorithm-friendly moment that captured the attention of Canadian viewers, which allowed this to transpire into the real thing."

Province of Canada is a well-known, established, independent Canadian brand, Jacobson emphasizes. While Lululemon would have also had the capacity to develop a version of the fleece jacket in-house, Jacobson notes that the company has had challenges recently, including layoffs at the head office, stocks dropping by 65 per cent since 2023's record high, another see-through leggings scandal and CEO Calvin McDonald stepping down. "I don't think that that directly speaks to this moment, but in terms of if they have the capacity, I think that they probably could have done this if the demand was there," she says, adding that, additionally, taking cues from popular culture isn't how Olympic gear is usually designed.

"Official outfitters don't take their leads from something that already exists. The launch of a product is, in and of itself, a big event. So, it's not surprising that they didn't, because that's not the usual practice to engage in that kind of activity."

Every marketer hopes for a viral moment, but by nature, they're often unanticipated, adds Jacobson. When it comes to deciding whether to sponsor an Olympic athlete or become an official outfitter, brands make calculated decisions based on how much it will cost and what the return will be. The value of Lululemon being an official outfitter is keeping it top of mind, positioning it as a Canadian brand and strengthening its link to Canada on the world stage.

"The Fleece" is on a journey of its own — rooted in Canadiana, coziness and fuelled by fandom. It's light-hearted and warm in a world that can feel heavy, says Jacobson. TikTok and Instagram's nostalgic "2026 is the new 2016" trend comes from a similar place — a yearning for the past when things seemed simpler. "It's also -30 degrees out in a lot of Canada right now. So, we can all connect with needing a good fleece."

- Carney jokingly takes credit for *Heated Rivalry*'s success: 'I greenlit this thing. I stood up to the Americans'
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ALBERTA UCP CAUCUS HAS 'NO BUSINESS' SIGNING SEPARATION VOTE PETITION: FORMER PREMIER

Former Alberta premier Jason Kenney says the governing United Conservative Party caucus has "no business" signing a petition to force a vote on the province quitting Canada.

February 2, 2026 - 19:52 | | CBC News - Canada

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ALBERTA JUNIOR HOCKEY TEAM ANNOUNCES THREE OF ITS PLAYERS KILLED IN VEHICLE CRASH

The Southern Alberta Mustangs, based in Stavely, Alta., announced three players on its roster died while travelling to a team practice on Monday. The team is an amateur hockey club playing in the United States Premier Hockey League.

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