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'Heated Rivalry': Franco Lo Presti Addresses Cliff Marleau's Future in Season 2

Morgan Pryor • September 11, 2026, 2:57 pm

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WHAT TO KNOW

- Franco Lo Presti played Cliff Marleau in Season 1 of *Heated Rivalry*.
- He wasn't listed among the returning cast members for Season 2.
- Lo Presti addressed his character's future.

While a **number of familiar faces** are sticking around in the *Heated Rivalry* universe for **Season 2**, there are a few characters whose fates **aren't totally clear**. One of them is Ilya's (**Connor Storrie**) Boston Raiders teammate Cliff Marleau, played by **Franco Lo Presti**.

In Shane (**Hudson Williams**) and Ilya's next chapter, which is based on author Rachel Reid's *The Long Game*, Ilya leaves Boston for the Ottawa Centaurs, moving to Canada to be closer to Shane. Still, Marleau does appear briefly in the sequel. Does that mean Lo Presti will reprise his role in Season 2, which is currently filming?

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Just ahead of his *Days of our Lives* debut on September 14, Lo Presti didn't completely dismiss the possibility. "All I can say is you're just going to have to watch the show and see," the actor told **TV Insider**.

If the show follows the book, Marleau could appear when Shane and Ilya are at an All-Star Game. Looking to go clubbing, Marleau knocks on Ilya's hotel room door. Ilya is preoccupied, sharing an intimate moment with Shane. Marleau, of course, doesn't know that and leaves Ilya to his own devices.

Whether or not Lo Presti appears for that scene or any other, the actor appreciates his time on the show. "With *Heated Rivalry*, there was always something special from the day that I began filming," he reflected. "There was an energy that really felt like it was something. So, when it blew up as it did, first and foremost, it was extremely deserved."

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Lo Presto, who hails from a hockey-focused town in Canada, easily connected with his *Heated Rivalry* character during Season 1 filming. “I grew up with a lot of hockey guys, so when the role came my way, I sat very comfortably in Cliff’s shoes,” he said. “I’ve got experience being in locker rooms. I know this guy. I know situations like that. So, being able to play Cliff, I’m going, ‘OK, it was meant to be. That was God’s plan,’ and I’m glad I got to put my spin on the character.”

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He's proud to have contributed to the show's success. "Beyond such an incredible and beautiful story that needed to be told, the people behind it and the actors who committed themselves and the vulnerability that was shown — that is art," he said. "And being able to be a piece of Ilya's journey was just an absolute privilege. I am super happy to have been a part of it."

***Heated Rivalry*, Season 2, TBA 2027, Crave & HBO Max**

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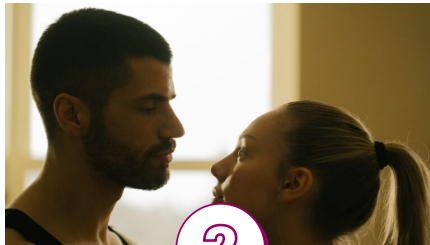
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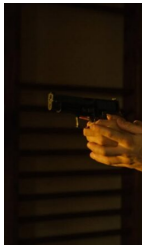
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