

First Husbands of Hockey

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First Husbands of Hockey

by [tuesdaymidnight](#)

Summary

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Even if you don't follow hockey, you've probably heard of Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov. Both men exploded onto the NHL scene after being drafted first and second in 2009. Ever since, these perpetual All-Stars have played before sold out crowds, traded season scoring highs, and won four Stanley Cups between them.

Below, these newlywed superstars discuss their different approaches to style, how life has changed for them since coming out, and how their relationship has impacted the world of professional hockey.

Notes

This fic is inspired by a fabulous [Vogue magazine cover edit I saw on Twitter](#).

Thank you to B, as always, for making this better.

See the end of the work for [more notes](#)

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Even if you don't follow hockey, you've probably heard of Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov.

Both men exploded onto the NHL scene after being drafted first and second in 2009. Ever since, these perpetual All-Stars have played before sold out crowds, traded season scoring highs, and won four Stanley Cups between them.

In March of 2021, the long-time rivals shocked the world of professional sports by revealing that they were in a romantic relationship. Though not the first NHL players to come out (Hollander is gay, Rozanov is bisexual), they are the first to be in a public relationship. This past July they wed in Ottawa, where they both now play for the Centaurs.

Below, these newlywed superstars discuss their different approaches to style, how life has changed for them since coming out, and how their relationship has impacted the world of professional hockey.

How would you describe each other's style?

IR: Boring.

SH: Eurotrash. [laughs] I guess I'd say that Ilya's taste is bold. It's pretty easy to tell whose side of the closet is whose. But really, he's so hot he can get away with wearing pretty much anything.

IR: Yes, I am very hot, thank you. That was good answer. Mine is still the same. Shane's style is very boring. I prefer him with no clothes.

SH: You said you'd take this seriously.

IR: I am very serious. I would prefer you never wear clothes. Except on the ice. It's too cold. Causes shrinkage.

Okay, so let me flip the question. How would you describe your own style?

SH: I dress for comfort. Because of what we do for a living, we end up wearing a lot of athletic wear. But I hired a stylist a few years ago, and that helped me figure out what else looks good on me and how to look more professional. I go for a lot of blues and grays because they work well with my skin tone. I like classic pieces so I don't have to think too much about what goes together.

IR: I like what looks good on me. So pretty much anything. I choose patterns, bright colors, things I wasn't allowed to wear growing up, because I had to look respectable.

SH: Now he likes to be noticed.

IR: I am noticed because I am tall and handsome. I wear black, I still get noticed.

Your descriptions definitely match what you're wearing today. (Shane is wearing a blue crewneck sweatshirt featuring a dog illustration, and Ilya is in a bright yellow hoodie, both from the HUMAN MADE SS22 line.)

SH: Oh, huh, I guess you're right. We didn't even plan that. These were recently sent to us as a generous gift from HUMAN MADE.

IR: The dog on Shane's is not as cute as our Anya. Would you like to see pictures? I have a whole album. [hands over his phone, which is open to an album containing 1,200 pictures of a very cute dog]

Shane, you mentioned that you two share a closet. Do you fight over closet space? Do you ever wear each other's clothes?

SH: Well, we live in Ilya's house in Ottawa.

IR: No. It's *our* house. You helped me pick it out. My realtor is your mom's friend.

SH: Right, yeah. Old habits. [chuckles] It's our house, but Ilya originally lived there alone, so the master closet was just his. When I moved in our things kept getting mixed up. I had to hire an organizer to help us optimize the space. But things like t-shirts and socks still get mixed up a lot. Sometimes I'm not really paying attention and I'll put on an old t-shirt of his.

IR: It's very cute when Shane wears my clothes, but he can only wear my shirts. Pants don't work because Shane is far too short. And his ass is smaller than mine.

SH: My butt is *not* smaller than yours. I can squat more than you.

IR: Your stylist has my measurements. You want me to call her and ask whose ass is bigger?

SH: Why does my stylist have your measurements?

IR: For the end-of-season awards this year. I thought we could coordinate. Maybe something tailored. Or maybe bespoke suits with matching pocket squares.

SH: Oh Ilya. Yes. Yes, let's do that.

That's so sweet. I'm sure you haven't had a lot of opportunities to wear couple clothes. Now that you've come out, does that put any pressure on you to present yourself a certain way? Or do you feel like you have to meet the stereotype of the fashionable gay man?

IR: Are bisexuals not allowed to be fashionable? I didn't get this memo.

SH: I assume that question was more for me. I guess I don't meet a lot of the stereotypes of a gay man, especially because of my profession. It took me a long time to even come to terms with my sexuality myself, so my experience is just different from someone who grew up within a larger gay community and not around a bunch of hockey players.

But I think as an athlete, not just a gay athlete, I do want to present myself professionally off the ice. A lot of players in the league are fashionable, and I've learned about fashion from them as well. I think caring about how you present yourself shows that you care about the job, that you take it seriously.

IR: He wants to look as good as me.

SH: He's teasing, but it's not always easy to look fashionable. It's easier to wear athletic gear, because as athletes we have a particular body type. For hockey players it can be hard to find clothes that fit, so sometimes—well, at least back on my old team—guys would recommend certain designers or certain tailors who could make alterations.

IR: He's saying our asses are too big for normal people's clothes.

Shane, you've been seen in Los Angeles shopping with your ex-girlfriend Rose Landry. Has her style influenced yours at all? Ilya, how do you feel about their continued friendship?

SH: We're still good friends. It's usually less that we shop together and more that she likes to dress me up. I'm still not very adventurous with my clothing choices, so she tries to get me into bolder things, brighter colors. I think she'd actually have a lot more fun shopping with Ilya.

IR: I like Rose. She's been good friend to you. Good f-- hag.

SH: You can't say that!

IR: Did I not use it right?

SH: You did, but you—you're not gay!

IR: But my husband is.

SH: [rolls his eyes] He loves doing that.

As the first married couple in a professional sports league, what impact do you think this will have on the NHL? And what do you think about the criticism that this takes away from the sport?

SH: Well, first of all, that's not true. There are a bunch of married couples in the WNBA and the PWWHL, and probably other women's leagues. Women are a lot further along at this than men. So I don't really expect a wave of NHL marriages. [laughs]

IR: As much as it hurts to say, Scott Hunter was the one who opened the door. I don't think it is that we're married so much as we don't apologize for it or for who we are. We fell in love. If people don't like that, that's their problem.

SH: If our being out and married makes queer kids out there who like hockey feel more comfortable playing the sport, or any sport, then I think that's a positive impact. If anyone sees that as a negative, then, like Ilya said, that's their problem.

IR: We're both very good at hockey, and we were very good at hockey before anyone knew we were together. It's not reasonable to think people will not be interested in our personal life. But Shane has always made me better player, not worse. If people question that we'll show them on the ice.

For those of us seeing this from the outside, can you talk about what it's been like for you from the inside? Have the other players treated you differently since you were outed?

SH: [hesitates] Well, I know the league has expressed general support, but I'm not going to lie, there's still a lot of homophobia around. Most of it isn't direct threats, but the casual way that homophobic language gets tossed out is so common I think guys don't even think of it as offensive.

IR: The first English phrases I learned were homophobic slurs. I regret now that I used them when I was trying to fit in.

SH: So, yeah, I think that's one pretty easy thing for us to be more aware of and to tell guys to knock it off.

IR: There are so many words in English language that make good insults without being homophobic. I tell Hayden Pike he's bad at hockey ten different ways every time we play.

SH: Don't let him fool you. They're secretly friends. They bonded over *Real Housewives of Salt Lake City*.

IR: There's something shady going on with Jen, and I don't trust Whitney's husband.

SH: Anyway, more than slurs, I think some guys are just uncomfortable with it. I can guess why, but that's something you'd have to ask them. Their discomfort isn't my responsibility. I'm just happy to be on a team now that's really supportive of both of us.

IR: Ottawa is a great team. Best captain in the league.

I'm sure you've seen some of the criticism since you confirmed your relationship. What would you say to hockey fans who think your relationship detracts from the sport?

SH: Even after I came to terms with my sexuality, and as we were figuring out how a relationship could work. I was worried about my legacy. About how I'd always be remembered as the gay hockey player and not for any of my accomplishments. But I think my accomplishments speak for themselves.

IR: We are playoff contenders this year, just like we were last year. Our goal is to bring the Cup to Ottawa. My personal goal is to win more MVP awards than my husband. Score more goals. Play for more seasons.

SH: Hey!

IR: Once we win the Cup as married couple, that should be the end of conversation, yes?

SH: What my husband said.

Let's end this on a fun question. I don't want to cause any marital discord, but is there anything in the other's wardrobe that you'd get rid of?

SH: I mean, Ilya's Russian, so he has a ton of track suits.

IR: This is a lie. This is slander.

SH: Are you kidding me? I could go into our closet right now and pull out at least five Adidas track suits.

IR: Those are *separates*. I don't wear them together like a suit. *You* still have Montreal t-shirts and other gear. I don't like those at all.

SH: Oh. I—it just seemed like a waste not to keep them.

IR: Then give them to needy people, to MCC Thrift.

SH: That's a great idea actually. We both have way too many clothes. We should do a closet purge.

IR: I guess I could give away one track suit.

SH: You mean your "separates"?

IR: Shut up, Hollander.

End Notes

If anyone likes this, I'll do a Vogue 73 Questions with them.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!