



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 7, 2012

News Flash: NHL Stars Accept Homosexual Hockey Players

With all the self-importance characteristic of the professional sports culture, a group of players and coaches with National Hockey League has unveiled a special television ad highlighting that the league's stars would be happy to share the ice with talented homosexual hockey players.

Feigning the sobriety worthy of an honest-to-goodness crusade against actual discrimination, a succession of rugged NHL athletes dead-pan before the camera, declaring the obvious: *"If you can skate, you can skate — if you can shoot, you can shoot — if you can score, you can score."*



The 60-second spot (watch below) makes a huge deal of what has always been the case in professional athletics: regardless of one's aberrant lifestyle and behavior, if you are talented in a particular sport, you are a welcome addition to that sport's professional ranks. The point, after all, is winning games and championships.

In this case, a small segment of the NHL community recognized an opportunity to juxtapose the league's own virile and violent reputation against a sensitivity the league has supposedly embraced toward the personal feelings and needs of a very small (perhaps even non-existent) minority of players — who happen to be part of a slightly larger minority that is extremely vocal and politically powerful.

The ad campaign, part of the pro-homosexual [You Can Play Project](#), is the brainchild of Philadelphia Flyers scout Patrick Burke (pictured above), who explains in the ad that before his homosexual brother Brendan died in 2010 (in a car accident), "he was the first person to fight for the rights of gay athletes in professional hockey." Burke goes on to boast that since his brother's death, "our family has fought hard to carry on his legacy and ensure that LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender] athletes around the world are afforded equal opportunity, judged only by their talent, character, and work ethic in their sport."

Laying aside the fact that the professional sports world cares little about a talented player's character or work ethic as long as he produces positive results and revenue, the [Canadian Press](#) pointed out that the NHL "has yet to have an athlete come out and declare that he's gay." Nonetheless, Burke and his You Can Play Project were able to recruit a small group of NHL players to appear in an ad that subtly promotes the homosexual agenda, disguising it as an effort to ensure that every worthy skater — regardless of his fetish — gets an even shake on the ice.

In an interview Burke insisted that the ad is an effort to convey the message that the only thing NHL players care about is winning, and "having the best teammates, and it doesn't matter if the best teammate happens to be gay or straight." Of course, that has always been the case in every sport. Only Burke is somehow bothered by the natural discomfort that arises when men are confronted with homosexual tendencies in other men. When such a situation occurs among teammates, it can make for



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some awkward moments— and occasional sophomoric joking in a locker room.

That is part of what Burke, in the name of his late brother, is apparently fixated on. His You Can Play Project website explains that the focus of the effort, including the new TV spot, is to “change the sometimes homophobic culture of locker rooms with a message that athletes should be judged on athletic skill and ability, not sexual orientation or other discriminatory factors.”

On camera Patrick is joined by his and Brendan’s father, Toronto Maple Leafs general manager Brian Burke, who declares that hockey players from “around the world” are joining in this crusade, begun by his late son, to stamp out supposed homophobia among the NHL ranks. After all, the ad concludes with another group of NHL stars, “... if you can play, you can play,” regardless of your sexual orientation.

Let’s be clear: It is proper to insist that individuals in any job be judged on their merits and skills, and that a work environment be conducive to civil harmony and productivity. And yes, that includes not allowing homosexual employees to be bullied or badgered — assuming, of course, that their orientation is not an overt or intentional distraction. In the real world, business owners and co-workers — even those who are opposed to homosexuality — have customarily made such gracious allowances for productive and discreet homosexual employees.

But from all indications, Burke’s efforts go beyond this ethical standard to a subtle promotion of homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle worthy of celebration. Burke recalled that when his late brother revealed his homosexuality, it “turned into a great moment for us.... We had a very open relationship where I asked him a lot of questions because I didn’t know anything.... And hearing some of the stories that young LGBT athletes face really touched me and made me want to do something in Brendan’s honor to help those kids.”

One of the ways he has “honored” his brother, reported the [Washington Post](#), is to lend his support to overtly pro-homosexual causes, marching in “gay” rights parades and helping promote a Denver-based “gay” hockey team called [GForce](#). Interestingly, the team’s slogan — “Tough. Proud. Gay.” — focuses on the peculiar characteristic that Burke and his TV ad insist is irrelevant to a player’s hockey skills, drawing an unavoidable distinction between GForce teams members and hockey player who are tough, proud, and heterosexual.

It is still too early to tell how the campaign against “homophobia” will play with NHL fans and rank-and-file players. Most likely, players will by and large offer passive lip service in support of the effort, while furtively eyeing teammates they always thought were different.

By contrast, players whose faith and convictions prompt them to speak out in favor of traditional marriage and family values — at odds with the homosexual agenda at the root of the effort — will, no doubt, be marginalized as possessing the very attitudes that pro-homosexual campaigns such as You Can Play are supposedly battling.



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