

Filmmaker Rollins Expresses Interest in Owning Atlanta Thrashers

Written by Matthew Coller
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The Associated Press reported Wednesday that filmmaker and Atlanta native Stephen Rollins is “gathering information” for a possible bid to purchase the Atlanta Thrashers. Rollins, who is head of Lightning Pictures, said he’s always been a Thrashers fan and would like to own a team if the opportunity presented itself.

Rollins spearheaded a group in 1996 that gathered 35,000 signatures in support of the NHL awarding an expansion franchise to Atlanta. Thrashers ownership is “currently talking to a number of people or groups who have expressed an interest in partial or significant stakes in one or both teams.”

If Rollins became an owner, he might have to quit his day job. The team ranked 29th in [Forbes NHL Team Valuations](#) and 28th

in overall attendance, drawing less than 75 percent capacity of the Phillips Arena. Also, according to Forbes, the franchise is amidst a legal battle between eight owners over the value of the Thrashers and Phillips arena. Seven of the eight owners, who have spent over \$10 million in legal fees, want to buy out one.

Rollins, who said he could promote the team, might not realize the mess that is the Thrashers. "I think if you get out into the community and start promoting the team and start having the hockey activities you once did, I really think this thing could be turned around," Rollins told the AP.

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