ANGELA JAMES

BEATRICE AEROS

Angela James is a mixed-race ice hockey player who played between 1980 and 2000.

James had a difficult life growing up. She was raised by a single mother and lived in subsidized housing in the Flemingdon Park neighbourhood in Toronto.

Born in 1964, James is the daughter of Leo, a black American who came to Canada to escape racial segregation from Mississippi, and Donna, a white Canadian from Toronto.

"James and her siblings were some of the few black children in the neighbourhood and often faced racial taunts, especially because she was a mixed-race child"

She would often get into fights with neighbourhood children as a result and eventually she channeled this into her love for hockey.

James developed an interest in sports as a young girl and began to play with her neighbourhood boys' house league when she was eight years old, despite officials opposing her participation.

James continued to hone her skills throughout her youth and career. She would go on to win gold representing Canada in several Women's World Championship games.

2009 CANADA SPORTS HALL OF FAME

She was known for her physical strength and her tough, gritty style. Other hockey players often said that running into James on the ice was like "hitting steel." At the height of her career, she was known as the "Wayne Gretzky"of women's hockey.

2010 HOCKEY HALL OF FAME