

Running

Featuring Angela Chalmers

Athlete Article



Angela Chalmers is one of Canada's greatest track and field athletes. She is an inspiration to Aboriginal peoples in this country. Born in Manitoba in 1963 to a Sioux mother and Scottish father, Angela moved to Nanaimo and then to Victoria, B.C. as a young girl.

"My mother is Sioux from the Birdtail Sioux Reservation. I am status Indian and a member of that band. But I also feel equally rooted on the island because my dad was born in Victoria and my aunts, an uncle and cousins live there."

Angela has many international middle-distance medals to her credit, most notably an Olympic

bronze in the 3,000 metres from the Barcelona Summer Games in 1992.

Her first major national competition was the 1981 Canada Summer games in Thunder Bay. Representing Manitoba, she brought home two silver medals in the 800- and 1500-metre events. At the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland, she became the first woman in the history of the Games to win both the 1,500- and 3,000-metre races.

At the moment of her greatest triumph in winning the 3,000 metre bronze medal at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, Angela Chalmers' thoughts were of her late father. "My dad was a big influence in my life although he died in 1984 before the Olympic trials," Chalmers said following the race. "I said to him when he was in the hospital that I wanted to prove to him that I could do it."

In 1994, the 30 year old Chalmers successfully defended her 3,000-metre crown at the Victoria Commonwealth Games. In front of her hometown crowd at Centennial Stadium, she broke the Canadian and Commonwealth records, another historic achievement. She remains the only woman in Games history to successfully defend the 3,000-metre crown.

Angela has also acted as a respected spokeswoman for Aboriginal empowerment throughout her involvement with sport, and has actively campaigned against drug and alcohol abuse. In 1995, she received the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in Sports.

She was inducted into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame and Museum (2001) and the BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum (2004).