



In the ultra-competitive junior hockey leagues in the early 1960s, a young man could tolerate nearly anything that helped him stand out from the hordes of other prospects, so John Paris, Jr. did just that. The African-Canadian from Nova Scotia dazzled and dominated on the ice -- often facing racism on and off the ice. It took courage. They Called Me Chocolate Rocket is the story of John's life from his childhood in the Curry's Corner section of Windsor, Nova Scotia, where he was rated one of the top junior prospects in Eastern Canada and scouted by the legendary Scotty Bowman, to his eventual decision to coach, beginning with the Montreal-area minor systems and on to the pro ranks with the IHL's Atlanta Knights. Although John has an impressive resume, it is the stories of the complex life that he has lived -- persevering in a hockey world where blacks were rare -- that propel the book. From John being befriended by Rocket Richard as a junior, to being brought back from near-death in a Montreal hospital at age 25, to getting a "street lesson" in Atlanta when caught in a gang fight, and more. Now living in Dallas, Texas with his wife and young daughter, John is actively involved in hockey as a coach and principal instructor for top-level prospects, and works in prestigious U.S. junior development camps.

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