



Jim Abbott has battled the odds his entire life. Despite being born with only one hand, he was the 15th player to ever make a professional debut in the Major Leagues. Many considered the move a publicity stunt by manager Doug Rader, but after struggling early, Abbott proved his doubters wrong by winning 12 games with a 3.92 ERA in his rookie season.

On the mound, Abbott wore a right-hander's fielder's glove at the end of his right arm. While completing his follow-through after delivering a pitch, he rapidly switched the glove to his left hand so he could handle any balls hit back to him. In that first 1989 season as a professional he won more games as a rookie than any other previous player without Major League experience.

Inspirational speaker Jim Abbott spent hours as a youngster bouncing a ball off a wall to practice fielding as well as throwing. He was the starting quarterback on his high school football team, which went to the finals of the Michigan state championship, and he showed enough promise as a pitcher to be drafted by the Toronto Blue Jays shortly after graduation.

However, Abbott went to the University of Michigan on a baseball scholarship. Abbott led the Wolverines to Big Ten titles in his freshmen and junior years and won the prestigious Golden Spikes Award, presented annually to the outstanding college baseball player in the United States. He had a career record of 26 wins and 8 losses at the school.

As a member of Team USA in 1987, he became the first American pitcher in 25 years to beat a Cuban team on Cuban soil. The team won a silver medal at the Pan-American Games and Abbott won the U. S. Baseball Federation's Golden Spikes award as the best amateur player in the country.

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Testimonials

"This is the best speaker we have had in four years. Everyone loved Jim!"

- Schindler Elevator.

Jim Abbott was the most down to earth keynote I've ever had. So undemanding and gracious. At the same time, Jim was captivating and genuine and did exactly what a good keynoter should do. He was a great storyteller and relatable and eminently listenable. "I went into his talk expecting to roll my eyes so hard I'd sprain them. "ADAPT" as an acronym? Really? Gah. But he surprised me and got stellar reviews and I even really liked listening to him.... And I really don't like keynotes :)"

- National Auctioneers Assn..

Jim Abbott

Speech Topics

- TED Talks
- Sports
- Resilience
- Overcoming Adversity
- Motivation
- Inspiration

