



CAPITOL CITY SPEAKERS BUREAU

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Jim Abbott

Travels from: California

Fee Range: \$10,001 - \$15,000

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, but Abbott proved his doubters wrong by winning 12 games for the California Angels 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.

Although he was born without a right hand, Abbott was taught by his father to focus on his gifts and to find alternative ways to win. A baseball fan, Abbott spent hours as a youngster bouncing a ball off a wall to practice fielding as well as throwing. In high school, he was the starting quarterback for his football team, which went to the finals of the Michigan state championship. Jim showed enough promise as a pitcher to be drafted by the Toronto Blue Jays shortly after graduation. However, he chose to attend the University of Michigan on a baseball scholarship instead. Abbott led the Wolverines to Big Ten titles in his freshmen and junior years, and graduated with career record of 26 wins and 8 losses.

In 1988 Abbott joined the California Angels beginning a tremendous Major League career. Jim had his best season in 1991 winning 18 games for the Angels while posting an ERA of 2.89 and finishing third in the American League Cy Young Award voting. In 1993, he threw a no-hitter while pitching for the New York Yankees at Yankee Stadium.

Jim's many honors include the 1987 *Sullivan Award* recognizing him as the best amateur athlete in the United States. Jim is the only baseball player to have received this award. Abbott was also honored as the *Male Athlete of the Year* for the 1988 Olympic Games. Jim won many awards while at Michigan including the 1988 *Big Ten Jesse Owens Athlete of the Year Award* and was inducted into the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame in 2004. Abbott was invited to throw out the first pitch at game 7 of the 2002 World Series and recently participated in his first Yankees Old Timers Day.

Today, in addition to being a pitching instructor for the Los Angeles Angels, Jim is a professional motivational speaker. Unique as a sports speaker, Jim's story, and the way he delivers it, appeals to many types of audiences - even those who are not sports fans. In his keynotes, Jim Abbott uses motivational sports stories of how he overcame adversity and anecdotes from his career as a professional baseball pitcher.

Most Requested Programs...

- ADAPT: A System for Overcoming Adversity