

What Adversity Can Do

As a high school senior, Jim Abbott averaged .427 as a baseball hitter, and led his team in home runs. He quarterbacked his football team to the state finals. He later went on to pitch professionally in major league baseball.

Such feats would be remarkable for any athlete. For Abbott, they border on the miraculous, since he was born without a right hand. As a quarterback, he had to handle snaps from center with one hand. As a pitcher, he had to hurl the ball, then move his glove to his pitching hand in order to field. He had to catch ground balls or pop flies in his glove, then tuck the glove under his right arm and retrieve the ball with his left hand before throwing it.

An All-American hurler at Michigan, Abbott won the Sullivan Award in 1987, threw a 4-0 no-hitter for the New York Yankees against Cleveland in 1993, and played for 10 seasons on four different teams, ending his big-league playing career in 1999. Today, he is a motivational speaker.

After one of his pro games, a boy approached Abbott, who noticed immediately that the boy had only parts of two fingers on one of his hands. The boy shared that other kids called him "Crab."

"Kids used to tell me that my hand looked like a foot," Abbott told the boy. Then he asked an important question: "Is there anything you can't do?"

"No," came the reply.

"Well, I don't think so either," Abbott assured the boy.

Adversity causes some people to break, but it helps others to break records.

Remember: The faith that moves mountains might require a pick.

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7).

--Beecher Hunter