

## Ken Hackmeister, Farmington, UT



Following a two-year term as President, Ken served as Executive Director of the ISC for 10 years, from 2002 through 2012, bringing the ISC into the modern era.

Several innovations came under Ken's watch as Executive Director, including the PRAWN system to attempt to equalize talent, the broadening of the ISC's international exposure with players from Latin and South America becoming mainstays, joining the influx of Kiwis and Aussies, and the addition of the ISC II division which extended ISC play into additional talent realms.

He oversaw a significant turnover in ISC personnel through the early 2000s, bringing many key influencers into the organization that continue his legacy of supporting the ISC and men's fastpitch softball.

Ken was the managing editor of the ISC World Championship Guide, one of the key annual collectibles for fans of the game.

All told, Ken served the ISC for 38 years in various capacities. Among his many notable ISC accomplishments:

- Appointed ISC Travel League Commissioner for Utah in 1980.
- Developed ISC souvenir merchandise program beginning in 1988.
- Began ISC umpire apparel program in 1989.
- Started ISC presence at annual Super Show (sporting goods) in 1989 to obtain new sponsorships for ISC activities.
- Tournament Director, 1992 ISC World Tournament and arranged national network television of 1992 ISC World Tournament.
- Inducted into ISC Hall of Fame in 1996 during 50th anniversary ISC world tournament in Kimberly, WI.
- In 1999, appointed ISC Executive Director Designate to begin official duties in September 2001.
- Following untimely death of ISC President Bob Welby in September 1999, was elected ISC President to complete Bob's term through 2001.

Ken's fastpitch playing career began in 1959 in Pocatello, ID, following the typical baseball activities of an 18-year-old. American Legion baseball was over, high school baseball was over, collegiate baseball was dropped by Idaho State College (ISC, ironically) and two friends enticed him into playing fastpitch softball to fill the void.

He played in Pocatello through the early 60's when his job transferred him to Los Angeles in 1963. In the LA area, he played for a team based in LaHabra, CA until 1968 when he moved to Utah to become an insurance agent in Bountiful, just outside Salt Lake City.

He didn't play the '68 season, opting to concentrate on his new insurance business but began playing again in 1969 with 2 different teams in 2 leagues.

Ken's defensive catching skills were quickly noticed and he gradually moved up the ranks to better and better teams, ultimately playing at the highest level for teams such as Sizzler, Dunn Oil, Tri Arc and Larry H. Miller Toyota, where he finished his playing career in 1987.

While still playing, in 1974 he was asked to become a member of the Valley Sports Assn., a volunteer group of mostly players and managers, who organized and staged all softball tournaments for Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation. That was the start of a more than 40-year involvement as a softball administrator.

#### International Experience

- Coached Boys 18U and Men's "A" teams in several Canadian tournaments
- Coached against teams from Canada, New Zealand, Taiwan and Mexico
- Coached in two ISC North American Championship Tournaments
- Played in 12 ISC World Tournaments
- Played against numerous New Zealand teams on 3-week tour in 1988
- Played in several Canadian invitationals (1972 – 1987)
- Named head coach of USA Junior Men's team for 1997 ISF Championship but had to withdraw due to work commitment at Disney.

#### National Championship Playing Experience

- Played in 11 ASA men's major national tournaments 1976-1987.
- Played in 12 ISC World Tournaments 1976-1987.

#### National Championship Coaching Experience

- Coached 12 ASA Boys National Tournaments from 1982-1994. During this span, Ken's various boys teams achieved 2 Championships, 2 Runner Up, 2-3rd Place, 2-4th Place and 2-5th Place finishes. Ken's boys program had teams in 23, 18, 16 and 14U age groups.

#### Championship Tournaments – Tournament Director

- From 1974 through 1994, 8 ASA National Tournaments, 2 ISC World/North American Championship Tournaments and 2 NAFA World Series.

#### Special Events and Activities

- Coached championship team in 1989 ASA Hall of Fame Boys Tournament.
- As business manager for Larry Miller Toyota team, handled administrative duties for their participation in 3 US Olympic Festivals
- Tournament Director for 3 Utah Summer Games fastpitch events for men, women, boys and girls.
- Coordinated local appearances of teams from New Zealand, Taiwan, Canada and Mexico.
- In 1993-94, obtained a 10,000 square foot warehouse for indoor winter clincs and practices. Facility had 16 pitching lanes, 2 batting cages, soft toss/tee area and a full size infield.
- Coordinated the 1988 New Zealand tour (3 weeks) for the Larry Miller Toyota team and a group of 40.
- Served as Tournament Director of over 150 invitational tournaments.
- From 1975-1986, wrote a weekly softball column for the Salt Lake Tribune.
- From 1979-1996, served as business manager for the top Salt Lake men's team. From 1974-2001, served as founder and tournament director for Salt Lake's Pioneer Days tournament.
- In 1982, co-founded the Salt Lake boys fastpitch program with program sponsor, Carl Hansen, owner of Page Brake. Program functioned continually through the 1996 season, returning to win an ISC II championship in 2017.

- In 1984, organized the Utah Softball Hall of Fame. Initial induction ceremony had 44 inductees covering over 50 years of Utah softball.
- In 1982 and 1991, honored by Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau for organizing and obtaining a variety of international, national and invitational tournaments to Salt Lake City, bringing in thousands of visitors to the area.
- In 1996, hired by Walt Disney Co. as the first Softball Operations Manager for the newly built Disney's Wide World of Sports complex at Disney World in Florida.
- Helped to run the highly successful AAU tournament at Disney in the 2000s.

Photo by Maddy Flanagan.