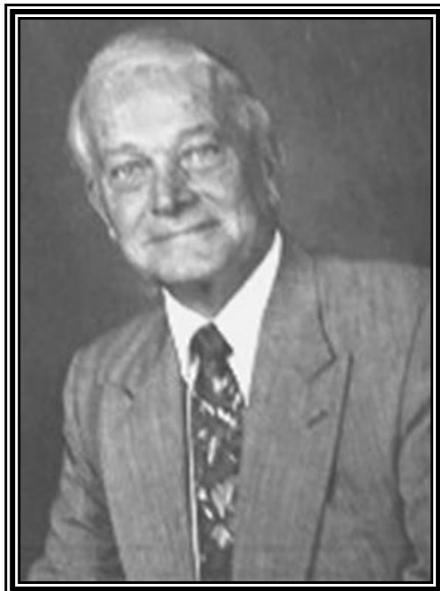


## Bob Welby - HoF - 1991

### THE WINDS OF CHANGE AND THE INTERNATIONAL SOFTBALL CONGRESS: The Welby Factor Comes of Age



From the moment he became ISC President in 1993, Welby set out on a mission to bring change in the organization which would make the ISC stronger and more responsive to players, sponsors, and hosting organizations.

As the reigns of control pass from Milt Stark to Ken Hackmeister of Utah, the style and the tone of leadership will become markedly different. The approaches to the problems and opportunities facing the ISC will often be 180 degrees from those which have characterized the 19 years during which Milt Stark has done his level best to continue the legacy of ISC founder Carrol Forbes.

Both of these events must be seen as “sea changes” in the life - - - and in the future - - - of the organization itself. They put into motion forces and events which may well determine the direction and the viability of both the ISC and the sport itself.

Not surprisingly, it is possible to trace both of these changes to the actions, wisdom, and forethought of a great man who died nearly two years ago - - - Bob Welby of St. Louis.

In addition to working to heal some of the schism which had long existed between his organization and the ASA, he used his power as President to bring change in the leadership and responsibilities of several key committees.

Welby’s plan to staff the World Tournament Committee with “some of the very strongest, most effective men in the ISC” led directly to significant change, change that has opened the door for additional, new potential host communities and sponsors.

In Bob’s moves designed to broaden the base of leadership and give more authority to the Executive Committee and to committee chairs, Welby unleashed forces and personalities resulting in progressive moves and changes perhaps broader and a mite quicker than even he could visualize.

In August of 2001, the “changing of the guard” at the top of the organization will reflect a shift in philosophy which coincides with the changes which Welby’s appointments hastened. After long, loyal, and effective service, Milt Stark’s retirement will give way to Ken Hackmeister’s innovation-directed and promotion-driven leadership. It is imperative that broad support for the new leadership which Hackmeister represents fall into place immediately.

The “passing of the torch” has come neither easily nor smoothly, but it has come. Now the burden rests with ISC leadership beginning with the Executive Committee and continuing through the Board of Directors to provide their support to the new Executive Director as he begins to lead the ISC into the 21st century.

The feisty little Irishman who led us well, kept us laughing when we needed laughter, and left us all-too-soon, will be looking down on Eau Claire, Wisconsin, in August; will be looking down on so many of his friends who are working hard to implement some of the changes which his actions either brought about or accelerated; will be looking down on the organization and the sport which was so much a part of his life

by Gordon L. Wise - - Past ISC Commissioner and Director of Marketing - July, 2001