

Candidate Statement – Jason Patch

It is with great enthusiasm that I announce my candidacy for the position of President-Elect in the upcoming election. I have been a proud member of the NHFOA since I completed Glenn Colburn's apprentice program in 2010.

Since that time I have been witness to a significant number of changes within the organization. I realize that you will never get 120+ members to agree on everything but transparency and the ability to have your opinions heard are likely at or near the top of everyone's list. I spent 14 years as the President of New Hampshire Pop Warner and this experience gave me quite the education on being able to band people together to work towards common goals. I have learned over the years that it is perfectly fine to disagree. The true strength of any organization, however, comes from the ability to put differences aside and find ways to work as one cohesive unit.

I had the pleasure of serving for nearly three years on the NHFOA Executive Council in the role of Secretary and this gave me a much greater appreciation of the amount of work that goes into making this the most respected officiating organization in New Hampshire. I have also enjoyed my time serving on the Mechanics Committee for the past two seasons.

I would like to commend the current NHFOA council on the way that it led us through the most trying season imaginable. Even though this season brought its fair share of negatives due to Covid-19, I feel that it has provided us with many positives as well.

The pandemic essentially forced us into a model in which weekly and state meetings were conducted strictly through Zoom and/or trainings housed on the NHFOA hub. Thanks to Technology Chair Bill Smallwood, it was proven that an online option does in fact work when it is used as intended. While there were some glitches with the technology in the early stages, we have shown that does work and with continued improvements should be a mainstay for our organization moving forward. I am all for making things more convenient for our membership if we can guarantee that we aren't sacrificing competency and professionalism on the field. In a time where we are in dire need of quality officials, I would like to ensure that we don't lose any good ones if we are able to offer a flexible option on satisfying meeting requirements. I would support a handful of in-person meetings throughout the year (i.e. state meetings and/or mechanics meetings), but I do think that there is a benefit to offering an online option.

One of the biggest positives to come from this season in my opinion were the unannounced evaluations that some of us have received during our games. Quite frankly, the topic of "peer evaluations" is one of the areas that we have struggled with as an organization over the years. I see a tremendous benefit for each official to receive quality feedback at the conclusion of their games. This allows officials to have their strong points highlighted while also identifying areas of opportunity. While I don't pretend to have all of the answers, I would take it upon myself to solicit ideas from the membership so that a formal plan can be brought to the council to improve in this area.

I strongly believe that the majority of the officials in this organization want to get better but need direction on how to get there. I think that thorough evaluations would help in this process. I would

also spearhead efforts to offer optional offseason clinics and/or roundtable discussions for officials that are willing to dedicate additional time to improve their game. These could be conducted online, in a classroom or on the field depending on the time of year and membership interest.

Recruitment and retention of officials also remains a top priority and is an area where we should continue to provide resources and support. Kyle Scofield has done a tremendous job with the apprentice program and as President-Elect I would work closely with him to seek out additional opportunities in bringing in interested officiating candidates.

Prior to deciding whether or not to run for this position I reached out to a handful of members to get ideas on how we improve as an organization. An overwhelming theme is that the membership would like to see more transparency when it comes to field ratings and determination of playoff assignments. I promise to work diligently with the council to find a solution that addresses this issue.

I am fully committed to transparency and listening to ideas that come directly from the membership. Looking at topics with an open mind provides the opportunity for growth and continuous improvement. If you have any concerns that you would like to discuss, I can assure you that they will be properly addressed with the council on your behalf.

I would like to reiterate that I consider this to be the premiere officiating association in the state. I am passionate about the NHFOA and fully understand the level of commitment that it would take to excel in this role.

I respectfully ask for your vote and I would be honored to serve you as President-Elect.

Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions or concerns prior to casting your vote.

Best Regards,

Jason Patch
603-315-1035