

## 2020 Builder Candidates Eligibility List

### Eligibility Criteria for BUILDERS

The list of eligible BUILDER candidates is compiled based on the criteria that was established by the Board of Directors of the National Soccer Hall of Fame in April 2007. The Board of Directors also agreed that previously eligible candidates, i.e. candidates who qualified under pre-2007 criteria change and those who are over 50 years old be grandfathered in and remain on the list.

BUILDER criteria is as follows:

- Candidates must be at least 50 years old or deceased
  - Eligibility for 2020 election - living candidates born no later than Dec. 31, 1970
- Must have made a positive impact on American soccer at the national federation or first-division level lasting at least TEN (10) years.
  - An exception to this TEN (10) year rule applies to International Referees. Per FIFA requirements International Referees are retired at age 45; therefore, International Referee criteria for a positive impact is SEVEN (7) years. Please note International Referees with less than the required SEVEN (7) years, can still be eligible IF they have completed TEN (10) or more years as a United States first-division referee.
- Candidate cannot be a current elected official and/or current full-time employee of the United States Soccer Federation or the National Soccer Hall of Fame.
- Any person who has been officially suspended by FIFA, CONCACAF, U.S. Soccer, the IOC or the USOC are ineligible to appear on this list.

### Process in which eligibility is determined

Non-playing accomplishments record keeping is not similar to the statistical recordkeeping as kept for playing accomplishments. The National Soccer Hall of Fame historians have examined all the available materials and made determinations, with a few exceptions noted below. As it is sometimes difficult to determine who has and who has not met those criteria, the National Soccer Hall of Fame historians have examined all available documents to vet all the candidates on the current list.

## Builder Candidates for 2020

**Mark Abbott** (born Aug. 20, 1964). A first-division league official. Abbott has been President of Major League Soccer for 13 seasons, 2006 through 2018, after having been an MLS employee since the league's start.

**Esse Baharmast** (born March 11, 1954). An international and first-division referee and a U.S. Soccer Federation executive. Baharmast was a FIFA international referee for six years, 1993 through 1998, including refereeing at the 1998 World Cup, the 1996 Olympic Games, the 1997 Copa America and the CONCACAF Gold Cups in 1996 and 1998. He was a Major League Soccer referee for three seasons, 1996 to 1998, including refereeing both the MLS final and the U.S. Open Cup final in 1996. He was the USSF's Director of Officials from 1998 to 2008. He won the USSF's Werner Fricker Builder Award in 2020.

**Joe Cummings** (born July 31, 1949). A Women's United Soccer Association and Women's Professional Soccer team official and an administrator. Cummings was president of the Boston Breakers in the WUSA for three seasons, 2001 to 2003, and in WPS for one season, 2009. He was executive director of the National Soccer Coaches Association of America for six years, 2009 through 2015.

**Richard Groff** (born 1946) A U.S. Soccer Federation and amateur soccer official. Groff has been a member of the board of directors of the USSF from 2001 to 2006 and again from 2010 to 2017. He was treasurer of the USSF from 1991 to 1994 and president of the U.S. Adult Soccer Association from 2010 to 2014. He won the USSF's Werner Fricker Builder Award in 2014.

**Sandra Hunt** (born June 14, 1959) A pioneer women's referee. Hunt, the leading American female referee in the 1990s, was a FIFA international referee for six years, from 1999 (when FIFA began naming female referees) to 2004, including refereeing at the Women's World Cup in 1999. She was a Major League Soccer referee for three seasons, from 1998 to 2000, and Women's United Soccer League referee for three seasons, from 2001 to 2003, including refereeing the WUSA championship game in 2001.

**Robert Kraft** (born June 5, 1941). A first-division team owner. Kraft has been investor/operator of the New England Revolution of Major League Soccer for 23 seasons, 1996 - current. Under his ownership, New England won the U.S. Open Cup in 2007, and hosted the MLS championship game in 1996, 1999 and 2002.

**Francisco Marcos** (born 1945). The longtime leader of the United Soccer Leagues. Marcos, an official of several North American Soccer League teams, founded the USL in 1987 as the Southwest Indoor Soccer League and led its growth through a series of phases. He also has been commissioner of the A-League and a vice president of the U.S. Soccer Federation. He won the USSF's Werner Fricker Builder Award in 2007.



**Thom Meredith** (born Nov. 7, 1951). A first-division team and league official, and a U.S. Soccer Federation official. Meredith, who was publicity director for several North American Soccer League teams, became the USSF director of communications in the 1980s. He was the USSF director of events for most of the 1990s and a vice president of the Women's United Soccer Association throughout its existence.

**Kevin Payne** (born March 5, 1953). A first-division team official. Payne was President and General Manager of D.C. United of Major League Soccer for 15 seasons, from 1996 to 2001 and again from 2004 to 2012. He was President of Toronto FC of MLS in the 2013 season, and from 2001 through 2004 was an executive of Anschutz Entertainment Group, which owned several MLS franchises. He won the USSF Werner Fricker Builder Award in 2011. Under his leadership, D.C. United won the MLS championship in 1996, 1997, 1999 and 2004; won the U.S. Open Cup in 1996 and 2008; hosted the MLS championship game in 1997, 2000 and 2007, and hosted the MLS all-star game in 2004.

**Jim Trecker** (born May 14, 1945). A U.S. Soccer Federation and North American Soccer League (NASL) official. Trecker performed various public relations tasks for the U.S. Soccer Federation and the National Soccer Hall of Fame for several decades, particularly in the area of book editing. In earlier years, he was the New York Cosmos Director of Public Relations, the NASL director of public relations, and Chief Press Officer of the 1994 World Cup.