

John P. Foley

Election Statement – Non-Executive Director

The role of a NED is to monitor the Board individually and collectively and to be the voice of the ordinary chess player. This requires the incumbent to have senior business experience as well as knowledge of the chess world. I believe I meet these criteria. I was NED from 2014-2015 and relinquished my post voluntarily in order to stand for Home Director. I am pleased that many of the policies I advocated are now being adopted e.g. a condensed British Championship and a professional League Management System. Much of my time was devoted to the High Court case where we sought to have chess officially recognised as a sport. The legal arguments were complex and more finely balanced than lay people assumed. Although ultimately we lost the case, considerable publicity was garnered, issues were clarified and there is a greater awareness of the special nature of Mindsports in society. This is helpful when presenting arguments to government e.g. through the All-Party Parliamentary Committee on Chess which I attend.

I ran a business strategy consultancy for a decade working with international organisations to clarify their objectives and to devise new products, services and methods of distribution. Prior to that, I worked at PwC where my role was to model and structure complex investments. I can draw on this variety of skills and experience to assist ECF to achieve financial sustainability whilst providing high quality services to members. I would like to see us improve our organisation and how we deliver our services. ECF could offer more services to members, improve junior development and increase diversity. I want our traditional heritage events to be more attractive to players and to maximise their sponsorship potential.

I am chairman of Kingston Chess Club and Inter-Club Tournament Director for Surrey County Chess Association. I play for Kingston in the Surrey and Thames Valley Leagues, for Wimbledon in the London League and county chess for Surrey (and for Lancashire when I resided there) and the Law team (I am a barrister) in the London Business Inter-League competition. As a chess organiser, I ran a four-team squad in the 4NCL chess league, and a summer camp in Latvia. I occasionally play in tournaments domestically and abroad. My Twitter feed is @ChessScholar.

I was the Director of Training and Education for the charity Chess in Schools and Communities for several years. I trained approaching two thousand teachers and tutors from around the country in the fundamentals of teaching chess in primary schools. I am Director of the successful annual London Chess and Education Conference www.londonchessconference.com now in its fourth edition, which brings together around 150 international experts to share knowledge and ideas about the teaching and promotion of chess. I believe that games comprise a neglected area of educational practice. I am organising a seminar on the Didactics of Strategy Games in early October bringing together experts from around the world: www.chessplus.net

As a youth, I was junior champion of Middlesex and London and also of Oxford University where I was a contemporary *inter alia* of Mike Truran and Dominic Lawson as well as of John Nunn and Jonathan Speelman all of whom have served chess in an exemplary fashion.