

# Matrix-Free MPM on High-Order Meshes with Ratel and libCEED

Jeremy L Thompson

University of Colorado Boulder

*[jeremy@jeremy.lt.org](mailto:jeremy@jeremy.lt.org)*

15 July 2025

# Ratel Team



Repository: <https://gitlab.com/micromorph/ratel>

Developers: Zach R. Atkins, Jed Brown, Fabio Di Gioacchino,  
Leila Ghaffari, Zach Irwin, Rezgar Shakeri,  
Ren Stengel, Jeremy L Thompson

The authors acknowledge support by the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Predictive Science Academic Alliance Program (PSAAP) under Award Number DE-NA0003962.



University of Colorado  
Boulder



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
KNOXVILLE



Ratel - high order, performance portable solid mechanics

Built on libCEED and PETSc

GPU and CPU performance

# Overview

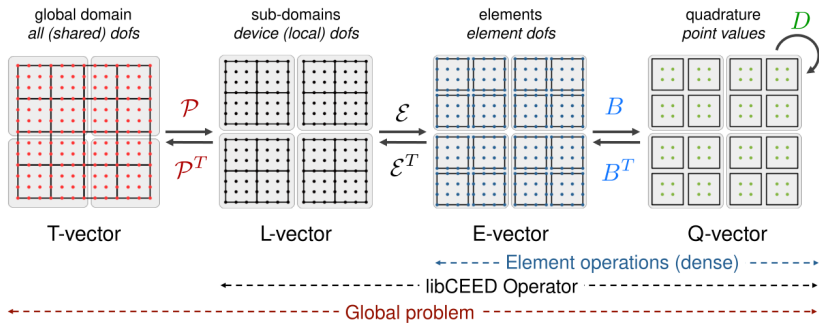
- 1 Ratel Background
- 2 AtPoints Evaluation
- 3 Performance
- 4 Multigrid
- 5 Future Work

# ECP Roots

- Ratel built directly on results from ECP CEED project
- libCEED provides high-performance operator evaluation
- PETSc provides linear/non-linear solvers and time steppers
- Ratel built from libCEED + PETSc solid mechanics demo app

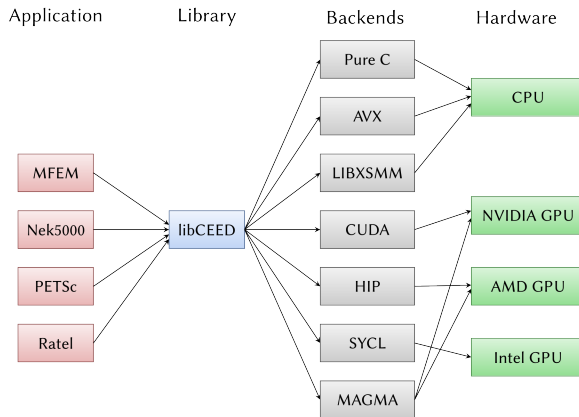
# Matrix-Free Operators from libCEED

$$A = \mathcal{P}^T \mathcal{E}^T B^T D B \mathcal{E} \mathcal{P}$$



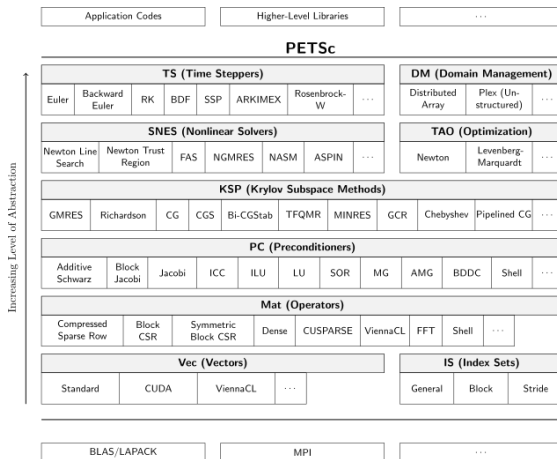
libCEED provides arbitrary order matrix-free operator evaluation

# Performance Portability from libCEED



Performance portability with libCEED's matrix-free operators

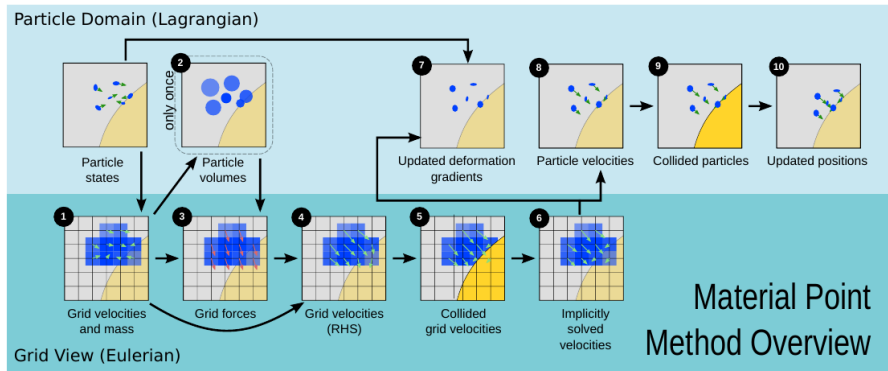
# Extensible Solvers from PETSc



PETSc provides extensible, scalable solvers



# What is MPM?



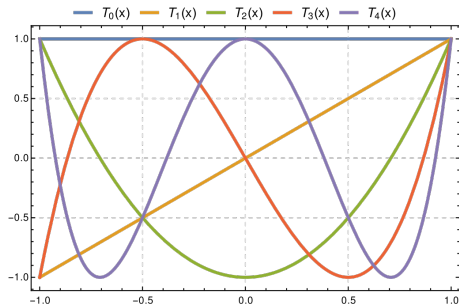
- Continuum based particle method with background mesh for gradients
- Extension of FLIP (which is an extension of PIC)
- Enables large deformation simulations with complex features

# MPM vs FEM

MPM can be formulated as very similar to FEM

- Problem on background mesh changes when material points move
- Can be viewed as FEM with arbitrary quadrature point locations
- Natural fit for libCEED matrix-free representation
- Ratel FEM infrastructure provides fast background mesh solves

# libCEED Basis Evaluation to Points



- Interpolate from primal to dual (quadrature) space
- Fit Chebyshev polynomials to values at quadrature points
- Evaluate Chebyshev polynomials at arbitrary points

# libCEED Basis Evaluation to Points

Interpolation to Chebyshev has same FLOPs as FEM  $\mathcal{O}(q^4)$

- Invert map  $C^{-1}$  from quadrature points to Chebyshev coeffs
- Create 1D interpolation matrix  $B = CN$
- Tensor product:  
$$B = (C \otimes C \otimes C)(N \otimes N \otimes N) = (CN) \otimes (CN) \otimes (CN)$$
- Additional cost from evaluation to arbitrary points

# libCEED Basis Evaluation to Points

Per point evaluation has higher FLOPs  $\mathcal{O}(q^6)$

- Recurrence for Chebyshev values at point

$$f_0 = 1, f_1 = 2x, f_n = 2xf_{n-1} - f_{n-2}$$

$$f'_0 = 0, f'_1 = 2, f'_n = 2xf'_{n-1} + 2f_{n-1} - f'_{n-2}$$

- Contract pencil of values with element coefficients
- Operation is independent per quadrature point
- $\mathcal{O}(q^3)$  FLOPs at  $\mathcal{O}(q^3)$  points

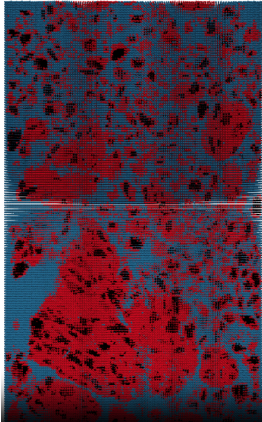
# AtPoints Operator

Final operator very similar to FEM

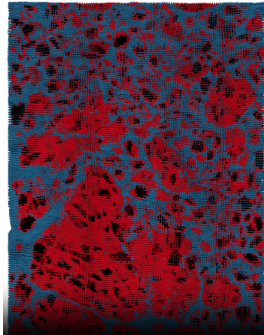
- $L = \mathcal{E}^T B^T B^e{}^T D B^e B \mathcal{E}$  - CeedOperator
- All other operations identical to FEM
- libCEED gives action of local MPM operator
- PETSc responsible for communication between devices  
 $A = P^T L P$

# Sample Run

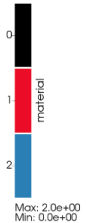
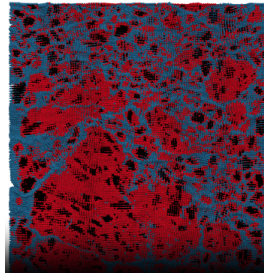
Time: 0.000000



Time: 0.508707



Time: 0.868844



Confined compression of mock HE material

# CEED Benchmark Problems

## Performance on CEED BPs

- BP1 - Scalar projection problem
- BP2 - 3 component projection problem
- BP3 - Scalar Poisson problem
- BP4 - 3 component Poisson problem

Bulk of FLOPs are in basis evaluation



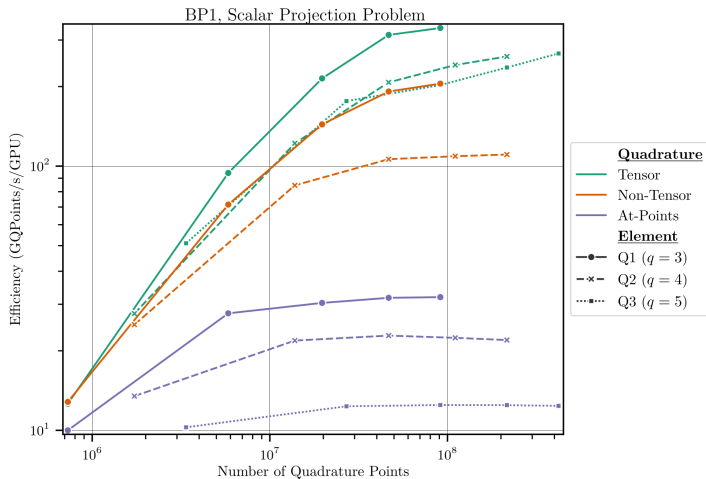
# CEED Benchmark Problems

## Performance on CEED BPs

- $p = 2, 3, 4$  and  $q = p + 1$
- Units cube with  $30^3$ ,  $60^3$ ,  $90^3$ ,  $120^3$ , and  $150^3$  elements
- Compare tensor, non-tensor, and at-points basis evaluation
- MMS w/ partial sum of Weierstrass function,  $a = 0.5$ ,  $b = 1.5$ ,  $N = 2$

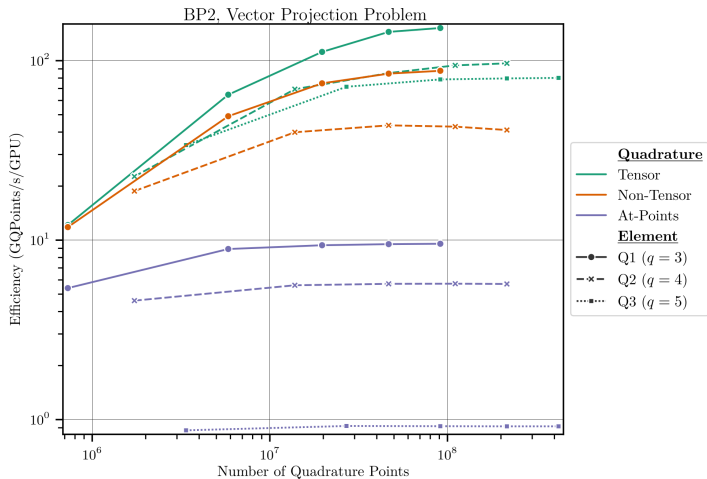
Using 4x AMD Instinct™MI300A Accelerated Processing Units (APUs)

## BP1



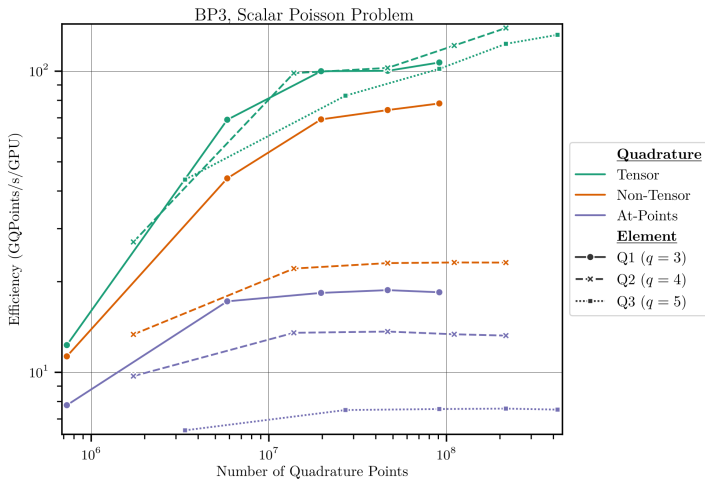
More FLOPs leads to lower efficiency

## BP2



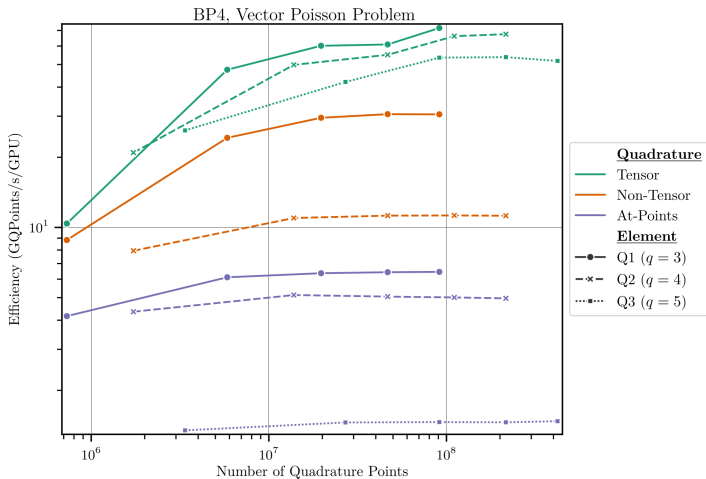
With more components, reach peak efficiency faster

## BP3



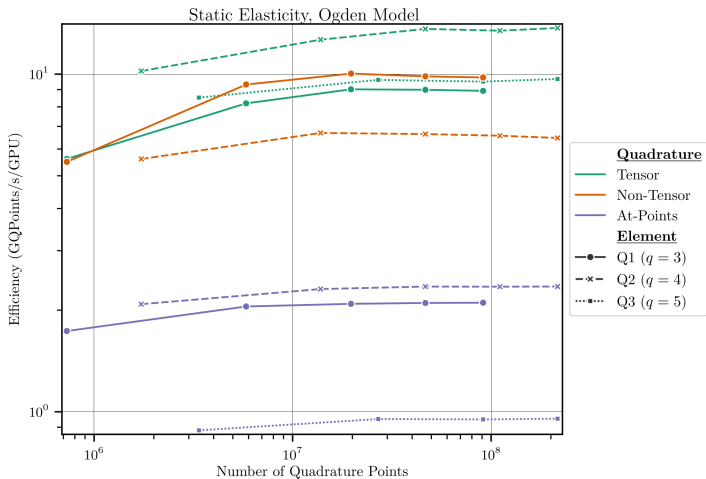
With derivatives, at-points closer to non-tensor

## BP3



Derivatives and more components worst for at-points

## Ogden



Still see cost with heavier QFunctions

# Preconditioning

Practical problems require preconditioning

- Problems for MPM tend to be poorly conditioned
- Poor conditioning + expensive Mat-Vec = need preconditioning
- Varying structure between elements makes assembly more difficult

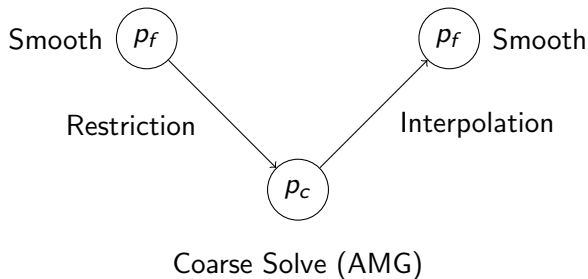
# PETSc PCMG

- PCMG - PETSc geometric multigrid preconditioner
- Requires several operators from the user
  - Restriction operator
  - Interpolation operator
  - Smoother
  - Coarse grid solver



# Ratel PCpMG

2 level multigrid with PCpMG



# Ratel PCpMG

pMG giving promising initial results with GPU impl

- Finite strain elasticity with damage
- Confined press of grain/binder with "sticky air" voids
- Jacobi iterations tend to double with 2x refinement
- pMG iteration counts robust with refinement

	# MPM Points	Jacobi its	pMG its
Coarse	388,800	900-1000	35-45
Fine	7,372,800	-	25-40

# Future Work

- Continued iMPM development
- AtPoints basis and assembly perf tuning
- More models using Automatic Differentiation
- Further contact models development
- Rust QFunctions
- UHyper, UMat integration
- Addition of fluid dynamics models
- Upstream PETSc + libCEED integration
- We invite contributors and friendly users

# Questions?



Repository: <https://gitlab.com/micromorph/ratel>

Ratel Team: Zach R. Atkins, Jed Brown, Fabio Di Gioacchino,  
Leila Ghaffari, Zach Irwin, Rezgar Shakeri,  
Ren Stengel, Jeremy L Thompson

Grant: Predictive Science Academic Alliance Program (DE-NA0003962)



University of Colorado  
Boulder



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
KNOXVILLE

