

SMARTCASTER and Baseball

This document is primarily intended for those operators who already have experience programming a Smartcaster. If Breaklogs, clocks and Timed Events are new to you, please start there before proceeding to baseball.

First of all, despite the name, the Smartcaster “baseball” interface covers everything from Indy 500 to Sumo wrestling... or any other satellite-closure based remote operation.

We called it the “baseball” interface because it was baseball that provided the most challenge for automation. Pitching changes, extra innings, rain cancellations, rain delays, returns from rain delays and double-headers make for an interesting programming challenge even for a totally live manned station. For automation it was nearly impossible since the automation system assumes the existence of a log—one document that holds the schedule of what will play and in what sequence it will play.

Baseball doesn't work that way. You don't know how many pitching changes there are going to be within a game—if any. How long is the game going to last—who knows? Baseball executes an intricate weave of contingencies that all have to be planned for ahead of time.

Smartcaster approaches this problem through the use of a “sublog.” A Sublog is a short log—a sequence of breaks that define a category, such as Pitching Change, Extra Innings and Main Break. Smartcaster runs these sublogs in parallel, so that no matter what the ballpark throws at you, it'll be ready.

Baseball must plan ahead for the following contingencies:

- 1) **Main Break** – defined as the log of local breaks during the pregame, postgame and game itself.
- 2) **Rain Delay** – Refers to a delay that is so long, that the network has opted to allow stations to resume normal programming.
- 3) **Rain Delay Return** --- Fired at the end of an extended rain delay, this is intended to return a station back to game programming.
- 4) **Extra Innings** --- Many clubs fire off a different closure to accommodate extra innings. If any of these breaks are mandatory, you'll need to build a sublog dedicated to extra innings.
- 5) **Pitching Change** --- Many clubs allow for a local option during a pitching change. You'll need to establish a sublog to handle such an event.

- 6) **Legal ID.** This is usually a sublog containing only one event—a legal ID.
- 7) **End of Game** --- Signals the end of the game and instructs Smartcaster to resume normal programming from music-on-hard-drive or Satellite (whichever would have normally be on at the time the game concludes).

Setting up a Game

There are 6 steps to setting up a ballgame within Smartcaster.

- 1) **Define the sublogs**
- 2) **Create the Game**
- 3) **Assign triggers to each of the sublogs.**
- 4) **Assign behavior to specific triggers that have special functionality.**
- 5) **Schedule the game**
- 6) **Modify the existing breaklog for the approximate duration of the ballgame.**
Do this for spots *only*. If yours is a music-on-hard-drive Smartcaster, leave the music on the breaklog. That music (and any spots you don't remove) will be played in the event of a rain delay, rain cancellation or if the game simply runs short.

Define the Sublogs

In Smartcaster a sublog is not exactly a sequence of events, it's a sequence of *breaks* that, in turn, hold each event. To define a sublog, please do the following:

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll see:</i>
Select "Sublog Manager" under "Programming".	You are presented with the sublog Manager screen.
Press 'A' to add.	You are prompted for a new sublog number. Each sublog has a unique 3 digit identifier.
Choose a three digit number and press [ENTER].	A sublog called "New Sublog" is created.

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll see:</i>
With “New Sublog” highlighted, press 'D’	You'll be asked for a description of this sublog.
For our example, let's call this sublog “Chicago Cubs Main Break” (or substitute team of your choice) and press [ENTER].	The Description Box disappears, and you're back to the list of all sublogs.
Press 'E' to edit this new sublog.	The Sublog Editor appears.
Press 'L'	The sublog manager prompts you for a Label.
Please Provide a meaningful label (or description) of the first break to go into this sublog (such as Pregame Break 1). Finish by pressing [ENTER].	The Label box disappears.
Start entering the cuts that are to play during this break. Finish each entry by pressing [ENTER].	As the break populates, you'll see the title and duration information displayed.
When finished with the break, press 'P' to indicate you wish to pause till the next break.	You'll see a space appear to delimit the two breaks. Please note that the braces on the left-hand side of the screen indicate items within a break.
Continue adding each break as explained above with “p” for pause between each one. Should you make a mistake, highlight the mis-entered information (even the space between breaks) and press [DELETE].	
When finished, press [ESC].	

Labeling breaks is optional but recommended.

Rain delay and Rain Delay return should contain only a label followed by a short audio cut that bridges the transition between the ballgame and local programming. During the rain delay, Smartcaster plays from normal programming from the breaklog.

Currently with sublogs the user is **very** responsible to make sure that *the number of breaks is correct*, and that *each break is programmed to the proper length*.

Once all the breaks in a sublog play, the pointer to the “next” break returns to the top of the log. Some sublogs contain only one or two cuts that loop.

Create the Game

Once the sublogs are created, we need to tie them together into one package—the ballgame itself.

Under Programming, select “Ballgames”.

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll See:</i>
The first time into the Game Management screen, a game called “NEW GAME” is created automatically. If this is the first time into the screen, please skip this step, otherwise, press 'A' to add a game	You'll be prompted to enter a three digit number unique to this game.
Enter a unique three-digit game number.	The Game Number box disappears and the newly-created game appears in the list and you are prompted for a description of the new game.
Type a description for this new game (such as “Cubs”) and press [ENTER].	The description box disappears and your new game is presented in the list of games.

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll See:</i>
Press 'R'	You'll be prompted to indicate which RIDZ channel is used for this ballgame.
Choose which Air Channel to use, then press [ENTER].	You're back to the list of games again, this time your RIDZ channel for your game is defined.
If you wish your game to have an intro cut to be played when the game starts, press 'I' here and type in the intro cut number.	

Assigning Triggers to each of the Sublogs.

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll See:</i>
Once the game is created, described, had its RIDZ switcher and Intro defined, press [ENTER]	The Trigger management screen appears. This screen ties incoming closures to the sublogs you've already defined.
Press 'A' to add a trigger.	A new trigger entry appears, and the user is presented with a list of sublogs from which to choose.
Highlight which sublog you wish this trigger to use and press [ENTER].	You're back to the list of triggers for this game, with your newly-created trigger displayed.
Press 'C'.	A box appears requesting the closure number that will fire the next break in the sublog tied to this trigger.
Enter the input number (from 1-32) and press [ENTER].	

Repeat this process for each of the Sublogs. Every closure that the ballclub sends down should trigger a sublog.

Assign behavior to specific triggers that have special functionality

The closure that fires the next break does just that and nothing more. This is also true with the closure that fires the legal ID...the closure happens, the ID plays and the ballgame resumes. There are three conditions, however, when a closure has to do more than firing the next break in a sublog: Rain Delay, Rain Delay Return and End of Game.

These conditions call for extra functionality and must be designated.

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll see:</i>
<p>Scroll through your list of triggers. Search for the trigger that signals the game to delay due to rain.</p>	
<p>Press 'D'</p>	<p>This bestows the power to delay the game to this trigger. When this trigger occurs, the next break in rain delay sublog fires, then the game broadcast is suspended and programming from automation resumes in the background until such time as the ballclub resumes the broadcast.</p> <p>Be sure that the audio contained within the rain delay sublog is short. Please remember that the audio within this sublog is designed only to bridge the gap between the ballgame and the resumption of normal programming. This sublogs should not itself contain extended rain delay programming.</p> <p>You should see a check-mark under the 'D' column in this trigger's entry.</p>

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll see:</i>
Scroll down till you highlight the trigger that allows the ballclub to resume after a rain delay.	
Press 'R'.	A check-mark under the R column indicates that when the ballclub fires this closure, play the next break in this trigger's sublog, then resume broadcast of the game.
Scroll down until you highlight the End of Game Trigger.	
Press 'E'.	When this trigger fires, the next break in the End of Game Trigger's sublog plays, then the game ends and Smartcaster resumes programming from breaklog (either Satellite or Music on Hard Drive depending on what is normal for that time of day/day of week).

Schedule the Game

All ballgames are scheduled in Smartcaster's Action Manager (under Programming). Please follow these steps to get your game scheduled:

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll see:</i>
Under the Scheduled Tab, press 'A' to add an Action.	You'll be asked for the day of the week the action is to take place.
Move the cursor under the day you wish the game to take place, and press 'x'.	An "x" appears under the day of the week.

<i>What to do:</i>	<i>What you'll see:</i>
Press [ENTER].	You are now prompted for the time the event is to take place.
Enter the time of day that the event is to occur. Please remember to designate A or P for AM or PM, or use military time.	You'll then be presented with a list of all possible actions.
Arrow down until (under the MISC header), you'll see an entry entitled, "Begin Ballgame". Highlight this option and press [ENTER].	You'll be prompted for the three digit game number.
Enter the three digit game number assigned to this ballgame, then press [ENTER].	You'll be asked to provide a meaningful name for this event. The default is "Begin Ballgame".
If you can live with the default, just press [ENTER], if you want more detail, enter whatever text you wish into this blank and press [ENTER].	Your event shows on the list of scheduled Actions.
Press [ESC] to exit.	

Modify the existing breaklog for the approximate duration of the Ballgame

During the ballgame, the breaks run from the sublogs. The master breaklog is back-burnered in case the game is delayed, canceled or just goes too quickly. Keep this in mind when you make adjustments to the contents of this log.

What will happen

At the scheduled time, the Smartcaster interrupts normal programming and plays the introduction for the scheduled ballgame. Upon the conclusion of the introduction, the RIDZ channel designated for the game is put to air.

On the screen you'll see a list of all possibilities. Scroll up and down to see what is next in each sublog. The closure number that triggers each event is shown in parenthesis to the left of the sublog/trigger name.

As the game goes on, when the ballclub fires a closure, the next break in the sublog triggered by that closure plays.

As the sublog plays, you can use the arrow keys to maneuver up and down the contents of the break. You can insert or delete any item that has not been played or is not currently playing.

To terminate the playback of audio immediately, press [ALT]+[Q]. You'll be prompted to quit the spot or the entire break.

When a sublog concludes, you are returned back to the running game screen.

When the End of Game sublog is triggered, whatever break is next in the End of Game sublog plays, then Automation resumes back to whatever programming is normal for that time of day, be it satellite or hard-drive music.

If the computer is rebooted during the execution of a ballgame, it will come back up in the ballgame and await closures for that ballgame. Should the system be down for an extended period of time (long enough for the game to end), an operator will have to exit the game screen manually.