



The

Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

www.theBDR.net

... edited by Barry Mishkind – the Eclectic Engineer

Broadcast Operations

SportsCaster Answers Many Requests



By Hank Landsberg

[October 2018] Doing some remotes is a bit more complex these days, than when someone would run out with the Marti unit. Not only is the route to the studio more complex, but the number of people involved is often much larger than in the past.

We are really excited about our brand new SportsCaster product. It really is unique, because there is nothing else like it on the market.

I have had the idea for this product for several years.

When I introduced the Sports Pod in 2012, my intention was to build a "master controller" to complete the system. But I was not convinced that there was enough market in the radio business to support the product, so it did not happen at that time. .

AN UNEXPECTED USE

Then in early 2018, I had conversations with two guys who produce video broadcasts of school sporting events (most schools broadcast via the Web)..

They "opened my eyes" to a whole new market: school video. You would be amazed at what kids are doing these days with video production. Not college students, but in high schools, middle schools, and even elementary schools! They are amazing.

These kids produce "morning shows," not unlike *Good Morning America* on ABC. These shows are wholly written, performed, and produced by students as young as 10 years old (Where was this stuff when I was 10?). There is even an online magazine – [take a look](#) – you will just be blown away with the level of professionalism).

Bottom line: Video production is a great way to teach journalism, writing, teamwork, and a host of other real-world skills.

GETTING THE STORY

We had hours of conversations, they explained exactly what they needed. It turned out the Sports Pods were perfect for the announcers, but they needed to add other capabilities to the system. This is why I designed the SportsCaster.

By adding the functions necessary for a video broadcast, SportsCaster became the piece of gear they needed for live school sports video broadcasts.

IDENTIFYING A NEED

My two sporting-event producers told me of the huge hassle they go through every time they go out to do a game.

There is a load of equipment – much of it "jerry-rigged" – to handle all the technical requirements of live play-by-play. Mixing the microphones is the easy part. Providing headphone audio to talent, reporters, and camera operators is a whole other issue. And, adding talkback and intercom – what a headache.

They needed something to meet their unique needs and integrate all the functions, so it all would work together in a seamless, easy-to-use system.

FILLING THE NEED – AND MORE

SportsCaster is the "missing link" that ties everything together: it mixes talent microphones, mixes and distributes headphone audio to the entire team, and provides duplex intercom for everyone.



The SportsCaster front panel

SportsCaster is a "Sports Broadcast Audio Control System" that manages and controls all aspects of play-by-play audio. It provides comprehensive audio facilities for the entire broadcast team: play-by-play announcers, producer, field reporter, and camera operators.

GIVING EACH ONE THEIR FEED

SportsCaster's most unique feature is the ability to custom-mix the headphone audio for each user.

What the play-by-play talent hears might be different from what the camera ops hear. The announcers need an intercom to chat with each other (off-air), as well as talk to the Producer. The field reporter needs a dedicated headphone feed, with intercom to/from the Producer, but isolated from the announcer's intercom. And the camera ops need isolated talkback from the Producer as well.

MORE THAN A MICROPHONE MIXER

As you can see, getting the right feed to each person on the team can get fairly complicated – mixing the microphones is the easy part.



Backside connections for the SportsCaster

These are the challenges that we met with SportsCaster. It does all these things in a way that easy to understand, even for a novice user.

We just started shipping SportsCasters, and we are pleased and grateful that the reviews have been positive indeed.

- - -

For more information on the SportsCaster, [just click here](#). To contact Henry Engineering, call: 562-493-3589 or email: henryeng@aol.com



If you enjoy tech tip articles like this, you are invited to receive the one-time-a-week BDR Newsletter.
[Just click here](#) – it takes only 30 seconds

Return to The BDR Menu