

Release Notes for the JCapper Scratch BOT ONLY program download package published 06-24-2020:

What's Inside:

This download was compiled on 06-24-2020 and delivers a Scratch BOT .exe file that contains a key program update.

Q. Why am I publishing this Scratch BOT Only program download package?

A. On Tuesday 06-23-2020, changes began appearing in the entries reporting races off the turf at FEX (*but not BTP-MNR*) in the Equibase Scratches and Changes XML.

The new Equibase changes as they appear in the XML read as follows:

```
<change_description>Current Turf Track Condition</change_description>  
<old_value>Off Turf</old_value>  
<new_value/>
```

This conflicts with programming changes released in the 07-02-2019 version of Scratch BOT after Equibase told me they had adopted the following as the new way to correct a race mistakenly taken off the turf in the XML and report it as back on the turf:

```
<change_description>Current Turf Track Condition</change_description>  
<old_value>Off Turf</old_value>  
<new_value>Firm, Good, Soft, Yielding, etc.</new_value>
```

A close look at the two sets of entries reveals there is a subtle difference between the two.

Note that in the first (recent) set of entries TkCond is missing from the new_value node.

Note that in the second (older) set of entries an actual TkCond is present in the new_value node.

Previous versions of Scratch BOT handled Tuesday's new entries for races taken off the turf at FEX exactly the way I programmed it:

As races mistakenly taken off the turf in the XML that were being corrected as back on the turf.

Unfortunately, this wasn't a one off.

The same exact thing happened today Wed 06-24-2020 for races that were taken off the turf at both LAD and LSX – but not for races that were taken off the turf at BTP where the XML did not contain the new changes described above.

I've reached out to Equibase for clarification.

But I haven't heard back yet.

The Scratch BOT in this program download contains code changes that will correctly handle the changes Equibase has introduced into the XML over the past 48 hrs.

I'll know more once I hear back from Equibase.

But until that happens, I wanted players in the JCapper user community to have access to a Scratch BOT that correctly handles races taken off the turf for all of the different ways Equibase has been reporting them – including the changes introduced into the XML over the past 48 hrs.

THAT is why I am publishing this Scratch BOT Only program update.

-jp

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FYI, for those of you who are interested, below is a cut and paste of my release notes for the Scratch BOT only program download package published back on 07-02-2019:

A. On 05-16-2019 at Pimlico: Track personnel mistakenly changed Track Condition in the Race XML for all of the turf races to Off Turf.

Trouble is, only races 3 and 9 actually came off the turf. The other turf races on the card, races 1, 5 and 7, remained on the turf.

Track personnel later went back in and changed Track Condition in the Race XML for races 1, 5 and 7 from old value Off Turf to new value Good.

Naturally, Scratch BOT had never been programmed to handle this – mainly because I'd never seen races mistakenly taken off the turf be put back on the turf in this manner.

I had a conversation with Equibase and learned that in the event track personnel mistakenly take race(s) off the turf – that's how they plan to correct the Race XML going forward to put race(s) back on the turf.

Based on that, I recoded the xml parse routine and published an updated version of Scratch BOT as part of the Full Silver program update on 06-04-2019 as well as the Full Platinum program update on 06-05-2019.

Then on 06-11-2019 at Parx: Races 3, 8, and 9 were taken off the turf. But the Race XML contained subsequent Track Condition entries similar to (but not identical to) those used at Pimlico on 05-16-2019 to put races back on the turf.

As a result: Scratch BOT initially (correctly) recognized that Parx 06-11-2019 races 3, 8, and 9 as Off Turf.

But later - Once the Track Condition entries (similar to those used at Pimlico) had been added to the Race XML: Scratch BOT incorrectly interpreted those subsequent Track Condition entries in the Race XML as meaning Parx 06-11-2019 races 3, 8, and 9 were now being put back on the turf – when in fact those races were actually Off Turf (Ugh.)

That night 06-11-2019 – I whiteboarded out all of the possible use cases I was able to glean from the Race XML for taking races off the turf and making corrections to put races back on the turf. Doing this involved scanning the Race XML for several hundred race cards including the race cards for PIM 05-16-2019 and PHA 06-11-2019.

I then recoded the XML parse routine in Scratch BOT to handle all of the use cases I was able to glean from the Race XML.

The next morning 06-12-2019 – I tested my work – and was able to verify that the revised XML parse routine was handling all of the different ways Equibase had been making entries in the Race XML to take races off the turf and put races back on the turf.

On 06-12-2019 I compiled a new Scratch BOT ONLY program download package and uploaded it to the Build 198 program download pages for both JCapper Platinum and JCapper Silver.

So far so good --

On Monday 07-01-2019 at LAD: Races 1, 3, 5, and 7 were taken Off the Turf and run on the dirt course.

Scratch BOT's xml parse routine picked up the initial entries in the Race XML to take races 1, 3, 5, and 7 off the turf.

But track personnel had also made additional Track Condition entries to the Race XML for LAD races 1, 3, 5, and 7. These additional track condition entries were similar to those used at Pimlico on 05-16-2019 to put races back on the turf. They were also structured in slightly different way than anything I had seen in the Race XML before. Of course, this new unexpected structure in the Race XML tripped up Scratch BOT's xml parse routine.

As a result: Scratch BOT failed to take LAD races 1, 3, 5, and 7 off the turf on Monday 07-01-2019.

So yesterday afternoon 07-01-2019: I whiteboarded out all of the possible use cases I could identify in the Race XML for taking races off the turf and making corrections to put races back on the turf. Doing this involved scanning the Race XML for several hundred race cards including the race cards for PIM 05-16-2019, PHA 06-11-2019, and LAD 07-01-2019.

I then recoded the XML parse routine in Scratch BOT to handle all of the use cases identified from the Race XML.

This morning 07-02-2019 – I tested my work – and was able to verify that the revised XML parse routine was handling all of the different ways Equibase has been making entries in the Race XML to take races off the turf and put races back on the turf.

I compiled a new Scratch BOT ONLY program download package, uploaded it to the server, and added new download links to the Build 198 program download pages for both JCapper Platinum and JCapper Silver.

Again, if Equibase would just use the COURSE node in the xml for changes in surface (instead of messing with Track Condition!)

Now you know why I published a Scratch BOT ONLY program update.

That's It! (For Scratch BOT.)

-jp.

Who Should Install This Download:

If you want the latest published version of JCapper Scratch BOT: You should install this download ASAP.

After installing this download:

You should find that the Scratch BOT module delivered by this download handles the (new/unexpected) entries in the Race XML that were used on 06-23-2020 to take races off the turf at Fort Erie and on 06-24-2020 to take races off the turf at Lone Star and Louisiana Downs.

Install Instructions:

1. Close down all open JCapper program windows, log into the JCapper Message Board and navigate to the Build 198 program downloads page.
2. Save the Scratch BOT Only Special Download Package (published 06-24-2020) - filename: Scratch_BotOnly06242020.exe to your hard drive. (Hint: c:\JCapperBuild is a good location to save it.)
3. Double click the download package file (filename: Scratch_BotOnly06242020.exe) to run the extractor.

The extractor will copy the .exe file for JCapper Scratch BOT (and only JCapper Scratch BOT) to your c:\JCapper\Exe folder, overwriting the existing .exe file for JCapper Scratch BOT (filename: Scratch_Bot.exe) - and then on most machines, will launch JCapper Scratch BOT.

That's It!

There's nothing else to install – and no import routines to run.

Enjoy,

-jp

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