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# McLaughlin

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## LEAKING ANDERSEN BAILER REPAIR

by Steve Sherman

When I first realized the gasket on my MC Scow had worn out it appeared the bailer must be removed from the boat. That requires gelcoat and glass work. I thought this was the only solution. I was wrong. Christian Zenger of Melges Boatworks educated me on how simple the repair can be.

**Before you go any further** try lubricating the bailer gasket with Plumbers Grease. This may stop the leaking. Vaseline will work but not as well as Plumbers Grease.

There are 5 different size bailers manufactured by Andersen. Two: The Mini and New Large Models use a soft sponge gasket that is easy to get at and held in place by factory applied adhesive. These are the outer 2 bailers in the pictures. The other 3 Models Super Mini, Super Medium and Super Large have a hard rubber gasket that is held in place by a slot between the upper and lower installation plates. Note: The Super Mini is shown in two configurations, but the gasket is the same in both. What all the bailers have in common is that once the bailer slide is removed the gasket can be taken out and replaced without removing the bailer from the boat.



### WHAT BAILER IN IN MY BOAT?

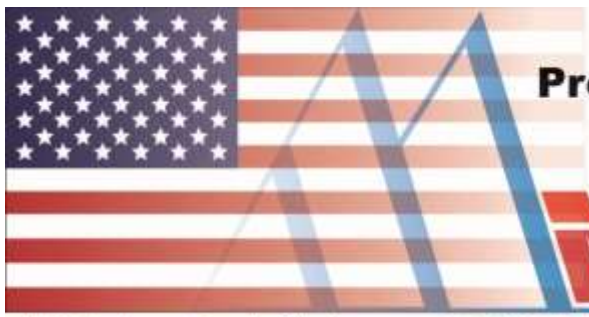
My experience is with the Snipe, which in all the boats I am familiar with uses the Super Medium Bailer, The E

Scow, which I believe uses only the New Large Bailer and the MC Scow of which the very old ones (-900 Sail No's) use the New Large and the others use the Super Medium.

The **3 Super Bailers** are install from inside boat. The slide width is: 13/16 in. on the Super Mini, 7/8 in. on Super Medium and 1 1/4 in. on the Super Max outside to outside. All 3 have a 1/8 in. lip at the top rear of the slide.

NAME	PART NO.	OVERALL	MOUNTING
Super Mini	564131	2-3/8 x 4-1/8	Inside
Super Mini Special	435200	2-3/8 x 4-1/8	Inside
Super Medium	564132	2-5/8 x 5-5/16	Inside
Super Max	564133	3-1/8 x 5-5/16	Inside
Mini	564130	2-1/4 x 3-5/8	Outside
New Large	564136	3-18 x 5-9/16	Outside

With the **Mini and New large** the bailer is installed from outside bottom of the boat. When open you can feel the sponge rubber of the gasket. On the other 3 you cannot touch or even see the gasket as it is never exposed. The slide on the Mini is 3/4 inch wide and the slide on the New Large is 1 inch wide outside to outside. These 2



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bailers have no stopper tab. The only thing keeping them from dropping out the bottom of the boat is the wire handle.

### **WHERE IS THE BAILER LEAKING?**

Normally the inner gasket that presses against the bailer slide has been worn out. In this case you will see water bubbling up around the slide. In very rare cases the boat manufacturer bedding compound leaks. You should be able to see water coming in from outside the flange body. **In this case only**, try tightening the

installation screws to see if this stops the leak. If this does not stop the leak you will have to remove and re-bed the bailer. A sealant such as 3M 5200 works best on this type of repair.

### **REPAIR OF THE SUPER MINI, SUPER MEDIUM AND SUPER MAX BAILERS**

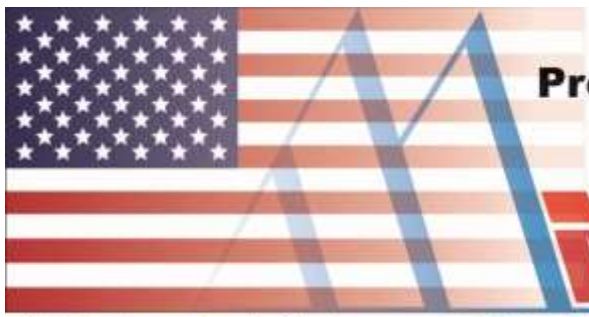
1. Remove the wire handle and plastic rod spacer by springing the handle outward. Taking this off and on is not easy. It requires a lot of force.



2. Once the handle is removed the only thing preventing the bailer slide from dropping out of the bottom is the 1/8 in. lip at the rear top of the bailer slide. Carefully use vise grips or pliers to bend it straight. If the bailer is down in a hole in the floor the lip maybe difficult to get at.



3. Now push the bailer slide out of the bottom or lie on your back and pull it out. While you may think the front of the slide is hinged, it is not and the entire slide drops out easily.
4. From underneath you can see the 5 mm sealing gasket. Using a pocket knife or needle nose pliers grab and remove the gasket. **Take note of how the old gasket was positioned.** There are 4 ways to reinstall the gasket. Only one is correct. The slide cannot be reinstalled if the gasket is not turned correctly. The front is obvious because it is narrow. The inside cut of the rectangle is a bevel. It is not square cut. The larger width of the bevel faces downward helping you reinstall the bailer slide.



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5. Lubricating the new gasket with Plumbers Grease, Vaseline, Silicone spray, WD-40 or dish washing liquid will help it slide into place easier. The lubricants also prolong the life of the gaskets and should be applied once or twice a year.
6. Reinstall the stainless slide by pushing it forward and upward. If it goes partially in and will go no further, most likely the place where you bent the tab is interfering. Don't get frustrated and hit it with a hammer just bend it further forward. There is a good chance bending the tab straight and then back again will cause it to break off. This does not affect the function of the bailer as the handle prevents the bailer slide from going down too far.
7. Reinstall the bailer handle.

### **REPAIR OF THE MINI AND NEW LARGE BAILERS**

These are the original older style bailers that install from outside bottom of the boat. Note the you can see the sponge rubber black gasket once the slide is removed. Top picture on right.



1. Remove the handle and white plastic spacer. The bailer slide can now be pushed out the bottom of the boat. Note that there is no metal tab that will need to be bent. The gasket is now fully exposed.



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2. The gasket is held in place by an adhesive. Using a knife, chisel or screwdriver remove the old gasket completely. If the old adhesive is still in place remove it with a solvent like lacquer thinner.
3. Remove the protective paper from the replacement gasket. If one of the ends is narrow in width it goes toward the front. Carefully position the gasket and press it in place.
4. Replace the bailer slide. Begin at the front. The Slide has a U-shaped opening. The upper flange of the U must go above (Inside) the bailer while the bottom plate is below. Use the slide to compress the gasket in the front. Once this is achieved then the rear can be pushed up into place.
5. Now the handle and white spacer plastic can be reinstalled to finish the installation.

#### **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Once or twice a year put Plumbers Grease or Vaseline on the sides of the slide and door and then open and close repeatedly. This lubricates making it easier to operate and the gasket last years longer. Don't worry about putting a petroleum-based product on the rubber, because it does not seem to have a negative affect. I have not tried this on the sponge rubber. You could also use a synthetic lubricant.

The door is precision shaped. When open water pressure pushes it against the body so tight it does not leak. If the stainless sheet metal on the bailer body or the flap door is bent many times they can be straightened and fixed while still in the boat.

If you buy an Andersen Bailer service kit you will receive a number of outer gaskets of varying thickness. These are the gaskets the builder uses during installation to control the height of the bailer in relationship with the boat bottom. Unless you are reinstalling the bailer and making it flush with the bottom of the boat all you need is the thicker sealing gasket.

McLaughlin Boat Works is a US wholesale distributor of Andersen bailers and replacement gaskets. McLaughlin can be reached at 800 784 6478, or online at [www.optistuff.com](http://www.optistuff.com). You can order the gaskets direct from the company online store.