

Installing a slide topper cradle to eliminate sagging topper that retain water

My '03 39L had two longish slides that held water in the center. They held a lot of water actually. I would have to get on the roof and sweep it off because it was leaking through the topper and standing on the top of the slide. At one point in the coaches history, it had leaked inside but I resealed the slide top and fixed that then looked at why there was water there in the first place. If you looked down the topper roller you could see it bowing in at the middle. At the SE Regional rally in 2017, I noticed the full wall slides has this 'thing' in the center that seemed to keep the roller straight and the topper tight. After some research, I discovered that the 'thing' was a Dometic cradle support for slide toppers [3309526.006](https://www.makariosrv.com/dometic-black-cradle-support-for-slide-toppers-3309526-006u/). They are available in white or black.

I ordered one from [makariosrv.com](https://www.makariosrv.com). It installed quick and easy and did exactly what I wanted. No more standing water on the topper and less water on top of my slide. I was planning on buying one for the passenger side but since I decided to trade up to my Cousin Jim's '06 39L, I held off. When the deal was done, I immediately ordered two black ones from Makarios RV for the '06 and installed them at the campground.

<https://www.makariosrv.com/dometic-black-cradle-support-for-slide-toppers-3309526-006u/>

They were about \$85 delivered. They also make white ones and the part number is 3309526.006B At the moment, Bontrager's RV Salvage has some on Ebay for \$65+shipping.

<https://www.ebay.com/itm/RV-Camper-Trailer-Dometic-Cradle-Kit-for-Slide-Topper-Awnings-3309526-006B-/122385383102>

Regardless, if you google the part numbers you'll find them at various prices so shop around. All 5 of the one's I've installed also came with the no flap bracket also. The installation instructions suck but it's a simple process. Follow along and you'll see how I installed one on Frank Cason's 2018 44H. It took about 15 minutes and then Frank and I went down the road and installed one on Bob Angus' 44H also. For some reason, Fleetwood put one on the passenger side but not on the drivers slide.



If you look closely, you can see the inward bow in the front topper tube.

The first step is to find the center of the slide out. I marked it with a piece of tape with a corner pointing to the center. The cradle has 3 rollers, the back roller must be finagled under and behind the back of the roller. It's not hard but you have to put your hand behind it and pull it outward while pushing the cradle upward...all while not scratching the paint. If scratching the paint is a concern, put some tape on the back of the cradle arms. It will be loose enough you can pull it off once in position.



Then comes the pucker moment. You need to drill 4 holes in the side of the slide. I do the bottom ones first and use a 1/8" bit. The kit comes with 4 galvanized screws. Before each screw was installed, I smeared it with "RV GOOP". I like this stuff, it seals but also rubs off and doesn't leave a residue. I got it a WalMart 10 years ago. You can see a bit squeezing out in the photo below. Once the bottom screws are seated, I drill the top two and ease the screws in in a X pattern so it tightens slowly. The shell of the slide is just 1/8 Fiberglass and you don't want to strip the screw.



Now it is time to install the two 7/16 bolts and Nylock nuts through the arms and holes in the frame to lock the upper roller in position. Easy but having a 7/16" ratchet wrench and a 7/16" box end is helpful but not required. You can also see that the excess Goop has been wiped off.



That's it. You can see in the photo below how much straighter the slide roller is. The topper is nice and tight in the center and looser toward the ends so it drains naturally.



There wasn't much water on Frank's topper but when I put the cradle under Bob's about 2 gallons of water came off. Unfortunately it missed Bob about 2 feet... LOL! It doesn't take two people but it is handy to have someone hand you things so you don't have to climb up and down the ladder so much.

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