

## Soft-Bait Repair

### Reviving life into battle-torn plastics

**T**hough not as often as we'd all like, there are usually a few days each fishing season when a particular soft-plastic lure assumes a diamond-like value. They're the days when you cringe setting the hook, knowing another lure is toast, while eyeing the dwindling bag of the magic color at your feet. Your buddy asks, "Can I borrow one of those?" You hate to be rude, but you have no choice.

"I've only got one bag left," you reply, setting the hook yet again. "Get the net." A dozen bruised, battered, torn and ripped plastics litter the floor of the boat — now seemingly useless. But they don't have to be. Savvy anglers know how to stretch their lure-buying dollar to the max and can even take advantage of several torn lures to create a new one.

Pro Steve Clapper of Lima, Ohio, is one of those savvy anglers. Clapper dominates tournaments in the Lake Erie smallmouth circle, but he also spends some 120 days per year fishing waters across the country — north and south, east and west, for tournaments and fun alike, and catches hundreds and hundreds of bass on plastics each year. So, as one can imagine, he shreds through a lot of plastic baits. But he doesn't burn through as many bags as one might think. Instead, Clapper maximizes their value through nightly repair work with a cyanoacrylate adhesive, especially on fun-fishing trips.

Though many pros use these adhesives, such as Super Glue, for strengthening

knots, Clapper has found Pro's Soft-Bait Glue to be the best formula for all-around use by anglers.

Clapper often finishes each new rig with a tiny drop of Soft-Bait Glue — a little around the hookeye to secure the nose of the bait, and a little around the knot, etc.

But baits that are torn beyond use do not simply get thrown away. Two springs ago, for example, while on a 10-day Lake Amistad adventure, Clapper found the bass ravenous for Senkos, and the glue was a pocketbook saver. "That was shortly after a Stren Series event on Amistad," Clapper said. "The tackle stores were riddled, so we were repairing torn Senkos at night with the glue. We figured it up, and we saved at least \$150 that week in Senkos alone."

As long as they're glued together straight, new Senkos, or virtually any other soft bait for that matter, can easily be constructed from two or three short segments of old ones. Additionally, appendages on creature baits and the like can easily be salvaged from one bait to another, and the pieces can even be used to create custom shapes and blends of various colors. Even expensive soft swimbait bodies can easily be mended with the glue.

Because the glue cures to a flexible consistency, it has little to no effect on the

action of a plastic (unlike Super Glue), and when used in modest amounts as directed, only adds a slight "callous" to the overall texture of a lure.

The glue dries in seconds, making for easy repairs. Take the head of a plastic lure that's been split from a hookset, and place a drop or two of the glue near the top so it runs down into the split. Pinch the split together and hold it for a few seconds, being careful not to get the glue on your fingers, and it's as strong or stronger than it was originally.

We've tried the stuff on all manner of soft-plastics and other soft baits — including Berkley Gulp!, and we're impressed. The glue seems to bind Gulp! material as well as it does plastic, so it should prove valuable to anyone who uses Gulp! as a primary part of his or her arsenal. We have gone so far as to add pieces of Gulp! to certain plastic baits to add a scent-filled sweetener, so to speak, even when the action of a standard plastic is in order. It works well.