



COMPACT
FRONTWHEEL
DRIVE CLUB
of AMERICA

SEPT 81

DEDICATED TO SMALL-
ENGINED SMALL CARS &
ENERGY CONSERVATION

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MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION

Newsletter # 97, our 80th multipaged monthly. Dues for membership/subscription are \$10 for the first year, including two back copies, 12+ tech sheets and emblem. Renewal dues: \$8.00. Renewal notification will be stamped on the open rectangle at the top of this page. A treasurer's report will be made three times a year. This is a non-profit organization.

Or: a three-ringed binder with a collection of back articles and tech sheets is available for \$6.00 postpaid. Or, 40¢ one issue.

Always specify: 96, 97, 99 or 900 and year, for appropriate sheets.

LOCAL CLUB NEWS

SAAB CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA--Presents a V-4 tune-up clinic on Sept. 27 at 1 pm at John's Saab, located at 1836 Washington Way, Venice, just past the SARLO sign. Take the 405 and exit at Washington Blvd West past Lincoln and veer right on Washington Blvd. Look for Sarlo sign on left just before John's. All members welcome. This will be a hands-on tune-up clinic, so bring your own parts, or just come and watch. Please do not bother John for information pertaining to the clinic, call Paul Florance, 213-438-3257.

CENTRAL ILLIANA SAAB CLUB--will have a picnic meeting at 2 pm, Sunday Sept. 20th at Margrit Adler's house, 1507 W. University, Champaign. The program includes demonstrating an injector cleaning machine, recall and service information manual, setting new meeting schedules, and parts discounts for CISC members.

MINNESOTA SAAB CLUB--will hold their next meeting on Sept. 28, Monday, 8 pm at the Shakey's at Snelling and Larpentuer.

SAAB CLUB OF NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA--holds their monthly meetings the first Wednesday of each month at the Silver Spring Public Library, 8901 Colesville Rd, Silver Spring. The parking lot meet begins about 7:30 pm with the formal meeting at 8 pm. For more information, contact Bruce Williams, 326 Lincoln Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20010.

MILWAUKEE SAAB CLUB--will hold their regular meeting on Monday, Sept. 28, 7:30 pm at Shakey's Hwy 100 at Silver Spring Dr. On Oct. 18 the club will hold an open gimmick rally in the South Kettle Moraine area. For further details, directions, or other information, call Jim Hart, 352-0627.

MINNESOTA SONETT CLUB--will have a meeting on Sunday, Sept. 27 at Jeff Schille's house, 808 21st Ave. So., in Np. St. Paul. There will be a V-4 gearbox clinic, and the meeting will begin at 1 pm.

EDITORIAL RAMBLINGS

This issue closed on Sept. 10, which is the normal deadline. Last month we mailed 3009 newsletters which is the first time since I took over as editor that we passed that milestone. The garage portion of our garage/office "complex" is close to completion so this issue is on time, as I hope all future issues will be.

We still have about five Haynes 99 Manuals for sale and about 16 V-4 manuals also. The price is \$10.50 postpaid. The 99 manual does contain a supplement pertaining to the 1976-78 models including the '78 Turbo. As yet I have not found an after-market service manual for the 900 series, so the Saab factory issue is the only one for them.

We have received an alarming number of newsletters returned in the mail the past few months. With first class, you are guaranteed forwarding postage, but if you do not leave a change of address card with the post office, they cannot forward it. We get it back and there is nothing we can do until and if you write us you new address. So please be prompt with notification of address changes. We are not like most magazines which require eight weeks prior notice, we will make the change before the next available newsletter.

We still have flyers available for members who would like to place them on windshields of Saabs or to hand out to Saab drivers they meet. One of our consultants, Andy Buc, has had remarkable success with flyers that he has handed out in the Seattle area. They are also a good way to help recruit new members for a local chapter as there is a space to rubber stamp a local club address.

I got a copy of the Volvo 1800 Club newsletter the other day and found it very interesting. They will only print letters that are typed by the sender to the Club's column width, and charge extra for ads that are not typewritten. Keep this in mind the next time you find a typo somewhere in these pages. Also their print is very small and difficult to read. If any members have copies of other car club newsletters, I would be interested in seeing them, either copies, or I will copy them here and return them.

Jeff Delahorne, editor

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SAAB CLUB--will next meet at 7:30 pm on Tues. Sept. 29 at The SAAB Shop (Addiline, Inc.), 1910 W. Stanford Ave. in Englewood. We'll get to see a clutch job on a 99 from start to finish. Call Rick Tibbs at 978-1564 for more information. The two August events suffered from a marked lack of participation and now that summer vacations are past, members are encouraged to get back in the swing of things.

"EQUAL YES, SUBSTITUTE, NO!" OPINIONS ON USING REPLACEMENT PARTS INSTEAD OF SAAB

My Newsletter just came and as usual it is full of "such and such will fit, air cleaner so and so substitutes, use kit for such and such another car, etc." And every month it seems to contain several small articles about what will fit and/or substitute. Good, I'm all for that! The name of the game is to drive Saabs and hope they last forever, and the better the maintenance, the longer they will last.

But, some of the substitutions suggested are "penny wise and pound foolish." Ok, you say, no Saab dealer near you. Yet each month's issue of the Newsletter carries ads from Saab dealers who are happy to ship to you UPS.

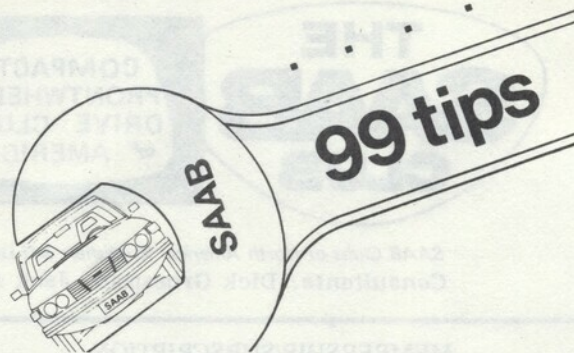
I work on a few cars, and the majority that have been "substitution maintained" are just that--poor substitutes. A Fram PH16 is a good oil filter, it may be cheaper than the genuine article (Saab p/n 02-04 495--for the reader not familiar with abbreviations, p/n means "part number."), but it is also smaller, and smaller means, to me, less filtration area. A Fram air cleaner p/n so and so may fit a Sonett for less money, but it has to be trimmed with scissors or tin snips. What happens if we leave a little notch where unfiltered air can get into the Sonett engine?

And time--a Saab part fits right on, while substitutes usually take a considerable amount of time. Some time ago a friend needed a Sonett brake light switch. At that time the Saab part cost about \$17. "No way, biGod, I'm not going to pay that for a brake switch." So what did he do? Went to the auto parts store, bought an American switch for \$2.25. But how to use?? Pipe fittings, welding, rethreading, loosing so much fluid he had to rebleed the whole system. I ask you, did he save anything?

Now don't get me wrong, I like to save bucks too. If someone finds that a NAPA kit to rebuild a master cylinder is exactly the same as a Saab kit, but cheaper, you bet I'll buy NAPA. But if I've got to file this, bend that, shim something else to make it fit, then I'm going to visit my dealer.

I constantly get the feeling that Saab Clubbers think all dealers are thieves out to rip off Saab owners. There may be a few out there that are like that, but not in any bigger proportion than among GM or Ford. Give them a chance. They've got to look up the part, order it, and pay for it so that when you need it, they will have it on the shelf for you. It was designed to fit your car, your car was designed around it, and you will have a whole lot happier time if you use the correct part.

Bob Mitchell, 136 E. Seaview Ave.
Linwood, NJ 08221



99 CLOCK REPAIRED--RERUN OF '78 STORY

I fixed two '73 99 clocks recently, based on David Mondecarr's success story with '72s (Feb. '78 p. 10), but there were some changes.

- 1). First disconnect the battery negative terminal.
- 2). To get the instrument dash panel off, you unwind the three screws, then just pull panel straight back, do not lift up.
- 3). To get at the speedometer cable, remove the large plastic panel under the steering column. The cable connection, a large plastic nut, is released by twisting it clockwise and pushing toward the rear of the car, reaching up from underneath.
- 4). Pull off all light wires.
- 5). Then remove whole instrument cluster--but do not remove clock from cluster.
- 6). Unwind the three tiny nuts on the back of the clock--one of these is inside the blue plastic "nut cover."
- 7). Remove back cover of the clock, then you will see a tiny brass arm with a hole in it hanging down from rear wall of clockworks, but not quite reaching a tiny solder connection.

This broken connection is a fuse of sorts. I soldered the two pieces back together like Mondecarr did while bending the arm down, but three days later the solder gave out. So I think that a better remedy is to solder a small bare wire between the two pieces, using ordinary solder; this way the solder joint is left unstressed, unlike in the original configuration. It is best to tin this wire by presoldering it. Then reassemble the clock back cover, and put a 1½ amp fuse on the positive wire in the car which goes into the clock (blue wire) using an in-line fuse holder, plus sufficient wire to get at the fuse without having to disassemble the panel, should this fuse blow.

If the connections to your clock are not bad, then there is a very good chance that all you need to do is solder the broken fuse joint in order to get the clock working again.

K.J. Strack, Pittsburgh, PA

"HOT START" KIT AND STARTING PROCEDURE

David Bush's letter (Aug., p. 8) regarding the throttle housing modification causing the Saab to run "hot," I have the following to offer. My '77 99 had the hot start problem prior to installation of the kit. Around here, all 99s seem to run normally with the needle at 10 o'clock during hot weather. My dealer informed me that the "warm start" instructions on the sunvisor have been superseded to: "Warm start, place foot LIGHTLY ON ACCELERATOR to start." Since following this procedure, I have had no start problems and no "stumbling."

Margrit Adler, Champaign, IL

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TIRES, TIRES, AND MORE ABOUT TIRES....

I've received lots of little tips from members about experiences with various makes of tires and I thought it might be interesting to offer a compilation of them here. Jeff Delahorne, Ed.

As to the difference in tires on 99s, my '72 came with Semperits which had flats on all four tires within 8,000 miles. Then they gave good service. Our replacement tires are always Michelins and while they are noisier and have more pull, the wear and riding quality has always been exceptional. I keep them at 28, usually have plenty of tread left at trade in time and found they do not fall apart when hitting an unavoidable chuck hole. I have had Pirellis and while they seem to be quicker and equal to Michelin in riding and holding, I could never get the mileage out of them. A lot of our local Saabers use Klebers and swear by them.

Margrit Adler, Champaign, IL

I really enjoy the '78 Turbo. I have Addco sway bars front and back which improve cornering as do a new pair of Pirelli CN 36s, 187/70s with a VR speed rating.

Joel Miller, Belmont, CA

Pirelli CN 36s are excellent in both the wet and dry. At the present rate of wear I calculate about 30,000 miles before they need replacing. Metzeler Alpin snobs have worked quite well in deep slush and are fairly quiet on dry roads.

C.J.B., New London, CT

Michelin ZX and XZX are long wearing, but not so good on wet roads. Semperit M401s have better wet road abilities and, I think, better overall traction with good tread life. Semperit has not been available for over a year or so, but are becoming available again as M501. The choices of the BMW club (Dick's arch enemy) are, by memory, Vredestein, Goodrich TA, and Kleber. I left out a few, and as I recall, Kleber was number four or five. The BMW people have a problem which is not so important to Saab. McPherson struts are super sensitive to imbalance, therefore the BMW people look for round, balanced tires. I normally inflate my tires to 36 psi which seems to work well.

Jim Gause, Severna Park, MD

Has anyone tried the new Semperit 501s? My EMS needs new tires and I have been relatively happy with the M-40a which are now discontinued in favor of the M501.

Richard Zordan, Indianapolis, IN

I have a comment to add to Steve Laxton's about tires (April '81). I have now seen two different Semperit 401 tires fail internally. One on the rear of my '71 95, the other on the front of my Mom's 96. Both times tread coming apart on the inside causing pulling and vibration. I like the handling of the 401 but I think I am going to try Michelin ZX as I believe they are a higher quality tire.

Eric Killinger, Boulder, CO

I have been having some problem locating info on what brands and sizes of 70 series radials will fit my '78 99 GLE. There seems to be a question of differences in dimensions of various brands even though they are the same size. Also I cannot find dimensions of Saab fender wells for clearance. The

SILICONE FLUID NOT THE ULTIMATE ANSWER?

I and others have reported that silicone brake fluid may be the answer to premature failure of seals. Finally I have some direct experience with which to judge. In Dec. '78 I installed a new clutch master and slave cylinders with silicone brake fluid. This past May the slave cylinder finally started leaking, two years and four months later. Not too bad I think; how long have other folks cylinder seals lasted? I went to rebuild the cylinder only to find that it is too badly pitted to reuse--a very disturbing thing. I'm not sure why this happened, but my overall conclusion is that silicone fluid is not the final ultimate answer. Any other conclusions out there?

Eric Killinger, Boulder, CO

SAAB AIR FREIGHTS SPARE PARTS FROM SWEDEN

Saab-Scania Press Info: All spare parts needed to service Saabs in the U.S. are now being shipped from Sweden to U.S. warehouses by air freight.

William F. Murray, National Parts and Accessories Manager for Saab-Scania, announced that direct air shipments from Sweden are now being received twice a week at Saab's master depot in Orange, CT, and once a week at the depots in Carson, CA and Schiller Park, IL.

Under an agreement worked out with the Scandinavian Airlines System, special SAS containers are packed at the master parts depot near Nykoping, Sweden, and dispatched from Stockholm aboard the regular SAS flights to New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles

GASOLINE ODOR IN 99 PASSENGER COMPARTMENT

I drive a '78 99L that has given me good service with close attention. During these 46,000 miles I have had some problem with a gasoline odor in the passenger and trunk compartments. At about 16,000 miles I tightened the phillips head screws on the fuel level transmitter cover which helped somewhat. At 35,000 miles I replaced the banjo washers on the fuel pump fitting in the trunk and the rubber gasket for the fuel level transmitter, to no avail. At 45,000 miles I pulled up the carpet to check the fuel lines, only to find them OK. Finally at 46,000 a mechanic suggested I clamp all the fuel line junctions at the filler hose and in the left rear pillar (roll-over valve). I think this has finally solved the problem.

John Barron, St. Louis Park, MN

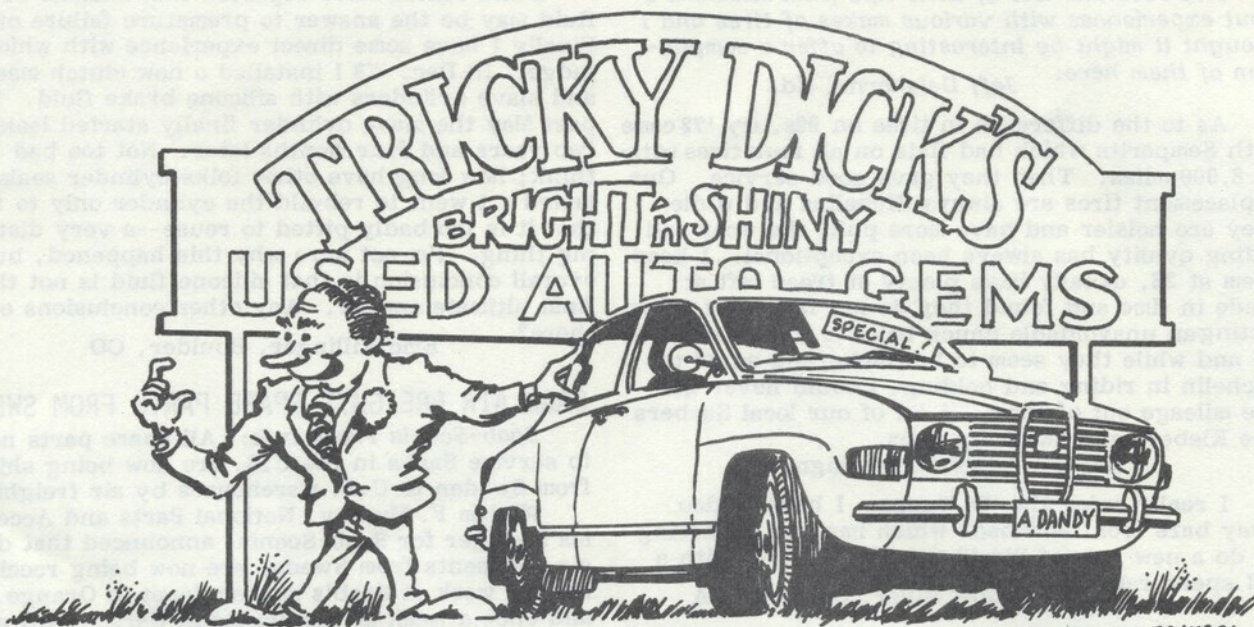
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We'll ship any part - anywhere in the USA. We have one of the largest parts departments on the East Coast. Complete stock of V4 parts and what is still available in 2 cycle parts. Call Dan Stella - (215) 886-8660.

general opinion so far is that 185/70x15 is the size and load range if they have the dimensions to fit. Any suggestions would be appreciated.

Daniel Wilkison, Clarksburg, MD



CAVEAT EMPTOR

by Jack Casaroff
SIANGBI

The Romans did a lot of things right, when you stop to think about it. In addition to building roads all over the more or less civilized world of their day, they had a lot of wild parties, seem to be credited with the invention of the orgy, did indeed originate the magnificent Roman arch, invented concrete, and built the most complex system of aqueducts the world had ever seen. They originated the system of law that eventually became our system of juris prudence, and at least one or two forward thinking Romans must have imagined chariots that could attain motion without the help of slave or dray animal. Why else, then, would they have uttered the famous words that title this article? Even WITH a Roman nose, Nixon would have had a hard time selling chariots ("..... would you buy a chariot from this man.....")!

So we learn, if we are smart, from those who have gone before us, and when you get ready to buy your used chariot, "Let the buyer beware" is a good little saying to keep in mind. When buying anything used, its best to know all you can about that product in order to best understand its weak points and how to detect them. After all, we all more or less understand the good stuff. Its the unde-

tected bad or worn parts that will cause problems for us later on.

If we apply this type of logic to buying a used car, it follows that we look for areas of trouble that crop up again and again on a given make of car, and if I learned anything at all from being associated with cars for most of my years, it is that ALL cars have mechanical problems and idiosyncrasies, be it Renault Dauphine or Mercedes 450SEL. Most buyers decide on the degree of expense they can afford when buying a used car. It would be much more intelligent to decide the degree of maintenance costs one could afford.

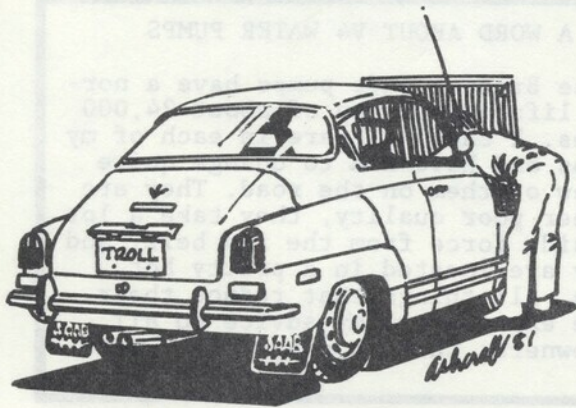
The Renault tends to break at rather predictably short intervals, costing a given amount of money to make it road worthy again. The Mercedes also breaks, usually at somewhat longer intervals, but with an astonishing increase in the amount of money required to put its exalted carriage back on the highway.

The V4 Saab lies somewhere in between the two in costs, and probably is better than either one so far as breakdown intervals are concerned. Having owned more Saabs than most people ever see, and bruised my knuckles on all of them, I have found a certain pattern of failure

of parts in these cars, based partly on age, partly on country of origin of the part, partly on mileage of the car, and partly on the maintenance habits of past owners. I intentionally left driving habits out of my considerations, largely because proper maintenance is much more important.

For example, a gentle driver like my ex-wife will be very easy on brakes and clutches and will see to it that the car is cleaned inside and out on a regular basis. Less maintenance (other than interval inspections) is needed, and that given the car off-sets any real wear. If a car is driven extremely hard (as in the manner of my oldest son) then water pumps, brakes, clutches, valves, shock absorbers, and gearboxes will require attention at rather short intervals. But IF he maintains the car in a manner commensurate with his mode of driving (and he does) then the car will not be in any significantly poorer state of condition than the similar car my ex-wife drives, at similar mileages. The Saab V4 is one of just a few cars (along with Peugeot, and to a lesser degree, the early Volvos) that are so strong in body construction and chassis components that they virtually never wear out, at least until the speedometer begins to read all zeros for the third time in its life.

So what sort of patterns begin to appear and at what mileages, and how do we detect a Saab that has been neglected or had the bejesus driven out of it WITHOUT the corresponding maintenance it so desperately needed?



IC MOTOR IMPORTS



Since we usually know nothing of the car we are considering for purchase, we need some rule of thumb for what you might call average useage of a car by an average driver who gives it average maintenance. Under these circumstances an average pattern of wear and part failure can fairly accurately be predicted. The buyer must be aware, however, that variables can be caused by extremes of useage, such as on a car driven most of its life on the hills of San Francisco, or pounded over rutted back roads of Montana for most of its miles. I categorize Saab V4s this way:

Low Mileage--under 40,000 miles.
 Medium Mileage--40-80,000 miles.
 High Mileage---80-120,000 miles.
 Ancients--Over 120,000 miles.

Since the last V4 was imported into this country in 1974, the low mileage cars are getting fewer and farther between. A typical owner might be the school teacher who only had a few blocks to drive to school each day, and who had all the interval inspections done up to and including the 36,000 mile inspection. Since maintenance was done and the mileage is low, only age of the car and the country of origin of the parts need be considered, aside from obvious or hidden crash damage.

Age deteriorates everything, but mostly parts continually exposed to the weather and the sun (upholstery, paint, and rubber parts) and these need close examination. In a smoggy city, ozone deteriorates rubber parts so you should inspect axle boots, fuel filler hoses, all the coolant hoses, the fan belt, and rubber parts around the windows and doors.

Country of Origin failures and potential failures include anything built by the British, since their control of materials and workmanship leave a very great deal to be desired. Check the wiper motor, the water pump, the rear brakes, and the clutch hydraulic cylinders. At this mileage a functional check on

the road and a visual check for leaks or wear should suffice. If it looks good, runs good and sounds good, its probably a pretty good car. Just bear in mind that you'll probably have to make some repairs in some of the areas indicated above before too long.

SOME SOUND ADVICE

Much can be learned about a car by listening to it. I personally dont even care if the car has a radio, thats not the kind of sounds I'm talking about. I means the sounds, good and bad, that can come from a V4 Saab's mechanical parts.

Push down on each of the 4 fenders of the car and listen to the results as you progress around the car. Do you hear squeaks, groans, clunks, or scrapes? Does the car bounce up and down several oscil-

lations after a sharp push on the fender? Does it refuse to push down at all? Investigate any of the above problems.

Open and close the doors. Listen. Do the doors shut solidly and easily? Do you have to force them to close? Does anything rattle and shake after you shut the door? Rattles can mean rust, or a part left loose inside the door or local body panel after body damage was repaired. Check it out.

Medium Mileage Saabs will begin to show definite wear patterns--the idiosyncrasies of the breed. Ask the seller to see the maintenance records on the car. check for any transmission work that has been done recently (Don't consider a clutch and pressure plate replacement as anything like a transmission overhaul). By 60,000 miles most Saab V4s have had or are ready for their first transmission overhaul. There are exceptions to the rule, of course, but this is the PATTERN the cars have shown over the years.

The front brakes are ready for their second set of brake pads and the back shoes are getting ready for replacement if the mileage is near the upper end of the bracket. If the clutch disc has not been changed, its getting ready, along with the pressure plate and release bearing.

The British brake and clutch hydraulics are ready for overhaul or replacement. Original equipment Monroe shocks are about shot and the water pump is probably ready to be changed for about the third time.

Medium mileage Saabs are ready for their first (and sometimes second) exhaust system. Much of this depends on how the car has been used, with short trips being the way to short periods between replacement since the moisture inside the system is not burned out completely on short trips and the system rots out from the inside.

By now the VDO clock will have stopped working but the rest of the VDO gauges almost never fail at this mileage.

A WORD ABOUT V4 WATER PUMPS

These British made pumps have a normal life expectancy of about 24,000 miles. I carry a spare in each of my Saabs and have had to change quite a few of them on the road. They are rather poor quality, they take a lot of side force from the fan belt, and they are located in a pretty hot area, all things that reduce their life expectancy. My advice to all V4 owners: Carry a spare with you!

MORE SOUND ADVICE

Start the car, engine cold. The first few seconds of operation are critical for the tip-off sounds of future problems. Watch the oil pressure idiot light. Does it go off almost immediately after the engine starts? Does the engine tap for a while and then get quiet--about the same time that the idiot light goes out? If so, it could be an oil filter without the proper shut-off valve, OR it could warn you of camshaft or balance shaft bearings with too much clearance. The oil pump has to pump quite a bit of oil before the bearings all get their usual amount of oil since so much is spilling out of the camshaft and balance shaft bearings. An expensive engine overhaul is near if this is the case.

Listen to the engine with the hood open. From cold, is there any clanking noise at the front of the engine? If so, and if it goes away as the engine warms up, look for the expense of changing the timing gears before too long. Are the valves

noisy? If so, it may be a tip-off to a lack of maintenance, since the V4 engine holds its valve adjustment quite well over a long mileage period. Is there any change in the sound of ticking as you rev up the engine a little bit? If you rev it up to 18-1900 and close the throttle, does the tick noise sound hollow (piston slap) or does it sound hollow at a point just as the engine is taken off idle (bad rod bearing)? V4s don't make strange noises without some expensive reason

Listen for any squeals or grinds at the front of the engine. If you have or can borrow a mechanics stethoscope you can exactly pin-point the source of such a noise. Personally, I have a hard time telling if such a squall is from the alternator, water pump, or fanshaft bearing, but can tell in just a few seconds by listening to the noise with a stethoscope tip placed near the bearings on each of the units. ANY noise spells some expense, of course.

High Mileage Saabs have definite patterns of wear and replacement also. While most of the hydraulic parts of the car will have been rebuilt by now, the British cylinders will be pitted and ready for complete replacement in all but a few cases. The back brake cylinders will be frozen and inoperative. One or the other of the front constant velocity joints and/or a front wheel bearing will be worn and making some noise and need replacement. One of the rear wheel bearings will probably also be noisy and in need of replacement.

The primary drive gears of the engine--the timing gears--will be loud and ready for replacement, and if the car had an air conditioner on it at any time the fiber gear on the balance shaft will probably already have been changed once.

The alternator and starter will be in need of brushes and bearings and

the bearings on the fan shaft will be getting loud. Somewhere over 90,000 miles the speedometer shaft in the speedo itself runs dry, siezes up, and breaks the speedo cable. The rear transmission mount, the one you can't see or feel, is probably oil soaked, cracked, and spongy, and contributing to hard shifting. The front motor mounts are probably still OK.



On most cars with over 100,000 miles on them the metal around the lower hinge on the driver's door fatigues and cracks, allowing the door to sag and making it hard to close. Lift on the back of the door. If you can raise the back of the door more than a quarter of an inch or so, the door will have to come apart, be taken off the car, and the structural cracks in the door will have to be welded.

The interior light switch will be broken and the interior light will not work anyhow due to corrosion buildup in the grounding switches on the door jambs.

Some rather interesting age phenomenon begin to occur as Saab V4s exceed 100,000 miles. Usually the

weather stripping around the back portion of the rear side window on the 96 shrinks and no longer fits the opening, leaving a gap that makes some wind noise but somehow never leaks. The seat upholstery will be moulting and some of the sponge rubber will find its way to the floor under each seat until a neat mound of the stuff can be observed under each front seat. The top of the dash will look like a disaster area. But barring a rust producing climate, the body will still be just as strong as ever as will the major suspension parts. Cared for cars will still soldier on, as if they didnt know they were getting old.

ARE YOU STILL LISTENING?

Is there any noise as the car idles and you move the clutch pedal in and out? A noise here can spell a bad pilot bushing, release bearing, or transmission input shaft bearing, and all are expensive and probably predict that parts other than themselves will have to be changed once you get inside to check it all out.

Drive the car around the parking lot or down a quiet street. Listen to it. Drive it slow in all four gears, even briefly in fourth. Are there any clunks as you get on and off the throttle (lock out the freewheel, please)? Stick your head out the window and listen. Apply the brakes gently. Any whines or grinds? If so, investigate. Turn the car around in circles in the parking lot, in both directions. Any clicks or clunks in the front end could spell a bad wheel bearing or outer axle joint.

Color any of those noises expensive.

Now drive the car on the open road at speeds up to say, 65 mph. Are there any noises during acceleration? Listen again to the gears, during acceleration, steady cruise, and deceleration. If you get more than a gentle whine in any of the gears under these conditions, you are probably looking at a VERY expensive transaxle overhaul before very long.

Try the brakes and listen to them. Does the car stop straight, with no pull in either direction? Are there any grinds or growls when the brakes are applied? Is the pedal firm and free from vibration? Make this check carefully. A pull to one side may only mean a low tire, but it can just as easily mean a front end badly out of alignment because of a past accident.

Ancient Saabs have moved into the realm of unpredictability. If you have owned one of them for years and know all the parts you have changed you at least have a handle on the common problems. Its the age and high mileage problems that make life interesting with an ancient.

Linkages begin to falter. For example, the throttle linkage may sieze

up where it pivots at the firewall. The clutch linkage may be so worn you can't get a proper clutch release action. Emergency brake cables may stretch and break or the emergency brake lever itself may fatigue and break off at the lower pivot point.

Chrystalization failures can give you fits because you can't see the problem before it happens. Change all

ONE LAST THING TO LISTEN TO

After your road test, open the hood and listen to the engine. Are there any taps or knocks that you didn't hear before? Remember that the oil is hot now and a lot thinner than it was when the engine was cold. Thinner oil will not mask a rod bearing that is beginning to go bad like it did when the oil was cold and thick.

Now go listen to the tail pipe. If that sounds dumb, it is, just like a fox. As the engine idles, is the sound from the pipe steady and even? Or does it go "phut--phut--phut" in an even beat with the speed of the engine? If the latter is the case, it's the tip-off of a cylinder with low compression and probably spells a valve job to be done very soon. Shut off the engine and give the tail pipe a gentle push with your foot. Does it clank and bang against the body? If so some muffler work, or at least some pipe mounts will have to be installed.

Start the engine and watch the tail pipe. Does it puff smoke when it is started? Have a friend rev up the engine a bit and let off. Repeat the process 5 or 6 times. Is there any smoke? If there is, and if it's black, that's a dirty carburetor or a plugged air filter, probably, and a relatively easy thing to fix. If on the other hand, the smoke is blue, that's from oil, and means oil is being forced past rings or valve guide seals--a mark of an engine with a lot of miles on it. Be suspicious.

Finally, and lastly, listen to what the owner/seller tells you, but keep in mind what your senses have already told you. The owner may be aware of a problem and be trying to mask it by telling you that it is something simpler. Or, he (or she) may not even be aware of the problem. Or, the owner may not be very mechanically inclined and may be parroting what his mechanic friend from down the block (who works on Dodge pickups) told him it MIGHT be.

four cotter keys that retain the big castle nuts on the axles. Check the frame of the car around the front spring towers for cracks and weld up any that you find. Check the fuel tank for leakage and repair/replace it as necessary. Often the leakage is a filler hose or seepage around the sender unit mounting on top of the tank. While you are back there in the back fooling around with the fuel tank, make a general visual inspection for cracks. It's unusual to find any back there but always better to fix a little crack than a big break.

Through all this, the major structure of the car should be just as strong as ever. That's the beauty of a Saab--when other cars are thrown away because the front end is shot, you don't even have to worry about that with a Saab!

Throughout this entire process of checking over a Saab prior to buying it--the Caveat Emptor--remember that it is after all just a mechanical device and therefore subject to wear and tear like any other machine. If

you find one that has enjoyed a lot of maintenance throughout its life--no matter what its mileage is now--and even if you spot a few things that need attention, it is probably a better buy than a car with less miles on it that is being sold by a more or less indifferent owner with no maintenance records.

As always, if something doesn't seem right to you, it's best to pass on the car and look for another one unless you can really buy it right (cheap) and you have some spare parts available and the knowledge to put them on and make any necessary adjustments.

It's hard, in the long run, to spend too much for a really good car, and even harder to spend little enough on a real dog. I hope this little article will help you to know the difference by understanding just a little better the pattern of events and ageing that make up the lifespan of a Saab.

CLASSIFIED AD RATES

'81 TURBO SUFFERS FROM FAULTY LAMBDA UNIT

For the first 5,000 miles that we owned our '81 Turbo four-door, we were plagued with some extremely annoying problems. It had an intermittent hesitation (both mild and violent) that occurred at all speeds, at all engine temperatures, etc., but that always disappeared when the car was at the dealer for service. It also had lousy acceleration (our '78 99 could beat it) and extremely poor gas mileage (16-21 mpg).

After eight or nine trips to the dealer where no problem could be discovered and conversations with the Saab rep, the only thing they could think of was to replace the Lambda control unit. Luckily the dealer had another new Turbo in stock and they took the unit from it. (This is a \$500 item and may not be stocked by all parts departments)

Even though the unit tested out fine with the dealer's equipment, the problems appear to be solved. For the last 3000 miles the Saab finally feels like a Turbo and gas mileage has improved to 29mpg on the highway. Apparently the control unit is rarely defective and is one of the last things to be checked or replaced. However, if you do get a bad one, driving and owning a Turbo can be a most painful and aggravating experience.

The Saab Club Newsletter is a most informative service for anyone who owns a Saab and wants to keep an older one running or troubleshoot a new one. The most recent newsletter had several items pertaining to early '81 Turbo models like ours and now we can be sure to mention any modifications to the service department and make sure they are fixed.

Ann Morris, Blue Bell, PA

DISTRIBUTOR AND EGR TIPS FOR 99s AND 900s

By substituting a hex-headed screw for the slot-headed screw that holds the condenser to the outside of the distributor, one can eliminate the need to remove the distributor in order to change the condenser. I found a hex-head screw with a 7 mm head that works perfectly although it does not hold the washer captive like the original screw does. The job can be made even easier if you remove the hoisting eye the next time you change coolant or have the cooling system drained for any reason. Whatever you do, do not drop the screw into the clutch housing!

Many people will tell you that you cannot disassemble and clean the EGR valve. Not so. I've had mine apart several times, and as long as you do not get any solvent inside the diaphragm assembly, you will have a good-as-new EGR valve. The fun part is getting it apart the first time. Use a small (1/8") blade screwdriver that can be inserted in the screw slot from the side and a small nail with a flat head to remove the three screws, turning each screw 90° with one "tool," then 90° with the other to loosen all three together. Clean the valve body with a suitable solvent and gentle scraping and brushing, taking special care of the machined surfaces, especially the valve seat. Clean the poppet valve the same way. To reassemble, substitute the same size hex-head screws as used for the condenser, only with about 1/2" grip length versus 3/8" for the condenser. From then on, disassembly/reassembly will be easy.

Charles R. Wirt, Norfolk, VA

Ads offering parts or Saabs for sale or wanted at prices under \$200 are FREE to members and non-members. 25-word limit, plus name and address. Ads listing prices of \$201 to \$900, enclose \$2. Ads listing prices \$901 to \$2000, enclose \$5. \$2001 and up, enclose \$10. All ads without a price listed, enclose \$10.

Commercial ads, \$10 per column inch, two inch maximum. We will delete all unnecessary superlatives and abbreviate where possible. Please enclose sufficient funds with ad copy, we will NOT bill.

SONETTS FOR SALE.....

1969 Sonett, sand yellow, very good cond., rust repaired, alloy wheels, 90,000 miles: \$3000; 1969 Sonett, new blue, good repaired rear end collision, Konis: \$2500. Both cars have very good interiors forward, bad mouse fur rear. Also 75% restored 93F, virtually rust free: \$1000. Robert Allen, 3035 NW 6 St., Gainesville, FL 32601, 904-376-1228.

1972 Sonett, A/C, new Michelin tires and exhaust system, orange: \$3500 or offer. Larry Rosser, 1702 Tulane, Richardson, TX 75080, 214-783-0158 or 214-462-5511.

Sonett III, 1972, orange, 101,000 mi., but always well maintained, very good cond. inside & out. Asking \$3900. Mike Wallace, 617-877-1275 eves.

1972 Sonett III, 40,700 mi., mustard color, body very good, transmission exc., engine needs work, includes five honeycomb rims, factory manuals, & new cassette stereo: \$2000. Nancy Hoy, 2750 Black Rock Turnpike, Fairfield, CT 06430, 203-374-0134.

1974 Sonett III, exc. cond., new clutch, shocks, distributor, exhaust; am-fm radio, good radials, mag wheels, good interior. Unique two-tone starburst green and black. Must sell for school tuition: \$4250 or offer. Gaila Loring, PO Box 443, Lafayette CA 94549, 707-253-0276.

Sonett, 1974, mechanically very good, needs rocker panel installed, otherwise body very good: \$3300; also have many 96 V-4 parts, motors, trans., etc. Will sell separate or package. Tom Baker, 13 Maple St., Marcellus, NY 13108, 315-488-4526.

95s and 96s FOR SALE.....

1963 96, all original, running and practically rust free, 57,000 miles: \$1800. Also many new & used V-4, two-stroke, & 99 parts including body & eng. Robert Caponera, 68 Green Hill Rd, Killingworth, CT 06417, 203-663-1021.

1964 96 (bull nose) complete, runs, fair cond., some rust: \$1200 or best offer. Don Howse, 2308 Beal, Lansing, MI 48910, 517-482-0671.

1965 Monte Carlo 850, straight body, some rust, many spares. For parts or restoration. Best offer. John Hallen, 218-326-4482, tow bar included.

1966 96 two-stroke, exc. cond., 45,000 miles, fm radio, needs clutch: \$1650; also have many 95 & 96 parts including axles, wheels, seats, glass, & some body parts. Also have body parts and 3 & 4 speed trans. for 93. Robert T. Garber, 41841 Lawrence Ct., Elyria, OH 44035, 216-324-5507.

1968 96 Deluxe; engine runs good, but is out of car, needs clutch; one bad fender: \$500 or best offer. Bo Curtis, 1409 Park Ave., Long Beach, CA 90804, 213-438-2536.

1970 95, good engine and trans., very good interior some body rust: \$750. Adrian Snare, 14 E. Broadway, Goldsboro, PA, 717-938-5207.

1971 96, rebuilt engine and trans., green with very good green interior, very good cond. throughout: \$2750. Dai Williams, 339 Chestnut, San Francisco, CA 94133, 415-989-1955.

1972 96, 100,000 mi., engine good, trans. good, but shifting yoke problem, clutch worn, body has rust: \$300. Larry Gustafson, 4824 78th Lane No., Mpls, MN 55443, 612-566-4641.

1973 95 wagon, very good cond. in & out, no rust or dents: \$1475 or best offer. Alex Ciuca, 213-284-7180, Los Angeles, CA.

95, 96, and SONETT PARTS FOR SALE....

One V-4 trans.: \$150; Solex carb: \$30; starter: \$50 Alternator: \$50; '70 V-4 engine: \$150, and more. Dave Johnson, Rt. 1, Box 82, Two Harbors, MN 55616, 218-834-2329.

One '69 V-4 engine, 60,000 mi.: \$200; Many 95, 96 & Sonett parts. Nick Hayden, 3385 W. 86, Cleveland OH 44102, 216-281-9823 or 216-431-9413.

95 & 96 parts: LF fender: \$75; front windshield: \$50 starter: \$50; distributor: \$35; calipers: \$35; wheels \$10; Sonett III doors: \$50; rear bumper: \$50; also V-4 engine & misc. parts. Mike Tucker, 2324 Davis Drive, Matthews, NC 28105, 704-847-2282.

Four used hubcaps for 96, \$60 incl. shipping. Marc Greene, 1857 W. Byron St., Chicago, IL 60613.

Assorted 96 V-4 parts, complete wiring harness, front suspension, rack and pinion, windows, interior parts: \$10 and up; Dale DeValerio, 313-839-0856 Detroit, MI.

1968 V-4 engine, complete--you can hear it run; pick up only, too much bother to ship: \$150. Bob Mitchell, 136 E. Seaview Ave., Linwood, NJ 609-927-4613.

Mag wheels for Sonett III: \$200. call after 6:30 pm weekdays or anytime weekends, 301-335-6398, David Cieslak, Baltimore, MD.

Stainless Steel muffler and tailpipe for 95/96 V-4 or two-stroke, new cond. with clamps and hangers: \$50 or \$70 with good V-4 headpipe incl. Eric Davidson, 16000 Willow Rd. SE, Port Orchard, WA 98366, 206-857-2729.

95, 96, & SONETT WANTEDS.....

1974 Sonett III ski rack; two plastic "Saab" wheel hub inserts; R.C. Brink, PO Box 91, Anchorage, AD 99501, 907-274-3576. Also want lists of available used parts.

Want Saab 96 V-4, approx. 1970, for parts or restoration. Will pay up to \$600 depending on cond. Northern Calif.--Oregon area. Jim Howes, Rt. 1, Box 379-C, Arcata, CA 95521, 707-822-1917.

Need Right front marker light for '72 Sonett (lens & trim): \$15? Also rear view mirror for same car: \$20? R. Huettner, 7 Flintlock Dr., Acton, MA 01720 617-263-2470.

One Gas strut for '73-74 Sonett rear window/hatch. Charles Simcox, 262-5 Oakland Mills Rd., Freehold, NJ 07728, 201-431-2345.

Want side-draft triple carb set for two-stroke Sonett. Will pay \$100 or more or possibly trade for Sonett mag wheels. Jeff Delahorne, 218-525-3253.

99/900s FOR SALE....

1974 99LE 2.0l 4 dr., am-fm stereo; flawless orange body; 85,000 mi. on engine; valve job and timing chain 5,000 mi. ago; A/C needs compressor: \$2400 Dr. Edd Lyon, Shaftsbury, VT 05262, 802-447-0051

1978 99 Turbo, red metallic; 4 spd., 3 dr., am-fm cassette, Cibies, new brakes/tires; 33,000 miles, very well maintained, all records: \$7400/offer. David Lake, 8021 SE 71st, Mercer Island, WA 98040 202-232-2702.

99/900 PARTS FOR SALE.....

1978 Turbo catalytic converter, used only one month with unleaded gas: \$300. Wally Turfboer, 201-795-6443.

99 Parts: '79 clutch master cyl.: \$50; '79 instrument panel (1800 mi.): \$100; '75 CIS fuel distributor: \$150; '76 2.0 l cyl. head--needs heli-arc weld of small crack: \$125. Mark G. Guido, 901 Timberlane Lake Forest, IL 312-234-4939.

Complete instrument panel from '74 99LE, everything works: \$50 or offer. Donald Wigston, 314-535-2118.

Complete air conditioning system from '76 EMS, best offer. Mark Schaefer, 514 W. Jefferson, Naperville, IL 60540, 312-357-6755 eves, 236-3920 days.

'72 99 body only, in very good cond., for parts or whole car; also three radiators from '76 99 and many other parts for 96 & 99. Alex Ciuca, 213-284-7180.

One pair Semperit PR4 Snow tires, 165SR15, mounted on steel 99 rims 5/32" tread: \$100. George Williams, Portsmouth, NH, 603-436-4636.

1976 Complete motor and automatic trans. from 99 rear end wreck, 39,000 mi., motor: \$450, trans.: \$300 or both for \$650. Will deliver within 300 miles. Also have complete '75 rebuilt 99 head with less than 2000 mi.: \$250. Will guarantee all units. Tom Nola, PO Box 627, Wurtsboro, NY 12790, after 7 pm, 914-888-2246.

Speedometer and fuel/temp gauges for most 99s (out of '72 99E): \$20 each or offer. R. Huettner, 7 Flintlock Dr., Acton, MA 01720, 617-263-2470.

One exc. Blaupunkt Frankfurt am-fm stereo auto radio, one yr. old: \$125. Russ Prymak, 9 Campbell Rd., Wayland, MA 01778, 617-358-4484.

Five Continental Contact snow tires, 165SR15, on Saab rims with four hub caps, balanced, 15,000 mi.: \$140 M.E. Cabanela, 1100 Greenbriar Rd. SW, Rochester, MN 55901, 507-285-1045 after 6pm.

99/900 WANTEDS....

Wanted: Seats and headliner for '73 green 99, also a clock and radiator temp sensor. Adrian Snare, 14 E. Broadway, Goldsboro, PA, 717-938-5207.

Wanted: Shop manual for '76 99 with CIS: \$25? R. Lynn Warren, 14006 SE 50th St., Bellevue, WA 98006, 206-641-7483.

Please use knife/letter opener

SEPT 1981



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FUEL ODOR FROM FILLER NECK, '79-80 900s
Saab Service Information, Issue No: 04/81-469:
Whenever a fuel odor is traced to the fuel filler neck side cover gasket (or any other part of the housing) replace the neck with the correct 1981-type unit

rather than replacing the gasket or otherwise attempting to repair the fault.
The 900 filler neck part numbers and their usage are listed below:

Part No.	Cap Type	Fuel Restriction	Application
8387508*	Threaded (Square threads)	No	Early '79 "Federal" (Noncatalyst)**
9328428	Cam-lock (Bayonet)	No	Late '79 "Federal" (Noncatalyst)**
9326356	Cam-lock (Bayonet)	Unleaded only	'79-80, ALL Catalyst equipped
9335902*	Threaded (Round threads)	No	'81 EU (Retrofits '79 "Federal")**
9335118*	Threaded (Round threads)	Unleaded only	'81 US (Retrofits '79-80 Catalyst)***
9335878	Cap for 9335902 and 9335118		

* Does not have side cover.
** Not allowed on catalyst equipped cars.
*** New assembly no. (includes 9335902 plus restrictor 9335159 and lock ring 9339540).

Be sure to order threaded cap 9335878 for each 1981-type filler housing ordered for retrofitting an earlier 900 (the cap is not included). Accessory lockable cap 0241513 also fits (fitting the accessory cap is not claimable under warranty).

NOTE: Do not replace any fuel system part unless necessary as indicated by an evaporative system pressure check. (See Aug. '81 Newsletter)

If vehicle is less than five years old or has less than 50,000 miles, replacement of the filler neck due to a fuel odor is eligible under warranty.

Saab Service Information is made available to the Saab Club through the courtesy of Mr. Daniel L. David, Manager of Technical Services at Saab-Scania of America, and Mr. Robert L. Sinclair, President of Saab-Scania of America.