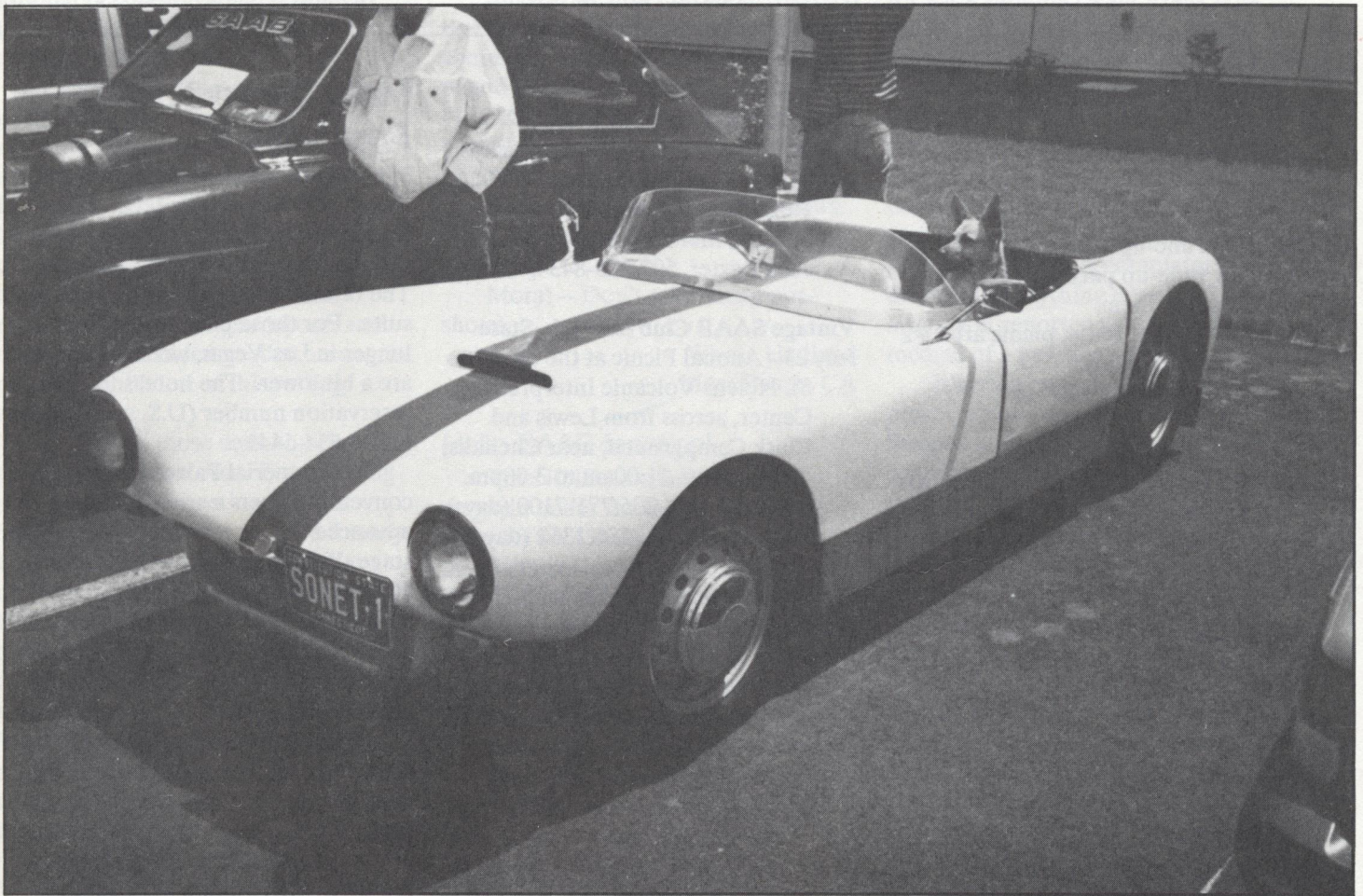


NINES

THE SAAB CLUB NEWSLETTER

\$2.25
July/August
1989
no. 183



Bill Jacobson's Sonett Super Sport, chassis #6, guarded by Maggie

- Erik Carlsson "Unretires"** page 14
- Northeastern Clubs Meet in Meriden** page 12
- Dick Grossman, father of the SAAB Club, dies** page 7
- Airflow body kits for 900 and 9000** page 10

Regional Club News

Calendar of Events

Central Penn SAAB Club

Aug. 1 - Meeting at Bube's Brewery in Mount Joy, 8:00pm.

Aug. 12 - Summer Lost Rally. Registration from 4-6pm across from the Fulton Opera House in Lancaster.

Tim Brown, 717/627-1945.

Milwaukee SAAB Club

July 16 - Barber SAAB Pro race at Elkhart Lake.

July 29 - Tune-up Tech Clinic. Bring your tune-up parts and get help installing them.

Aug. 20 - Picnic, 10am, picnic area #2 at Muskego Park.
Pat Greer, 414/964-7463.

New Jersey SAAB Club

July 22 - Picnic! at Richard Cavallaro's in Basking Ridge. For details and directions, call Herb Hirsch at 201/821-8284 by July 19.

SAAB Club National Capital Area

July 13 - Meeting at Bethesda Reg'l. Library, Bethesda, MD, 7:30pm.
Toby Turpin, 301/384-6732.

SAAB Club of Georgia

July 10 - Meeting at the Olive Garden Restaurant on Roswell Rd.

July 30 - Drive to Lake Lanier.

Chris McPherson, 404/469-7222.

SAAB Club of North America

NINES Editor & Publisher: Tim Winker

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Duluth, MN 55812-2221

(218) 724-1336, 9am - 8pm Monday thru Saturday

NINES is published eleven times a year as a service of the SAAB Club of North America.
The SAAB Club is not affiliated with Saab-Scania of America, Inc.

Important Reminder

There will not be an August issue of NINES. Usually the SAAB Club office is closed for a few weeks so I may participate in the National Convention, which has traditionally taken place in late July. Though the convention will be in October this year, I am sticking by the traditional cover dates to help comply with Post Office regulations, and to work on some projects around the home and office. Expect the September and October issues to arrive a few days early, and the November issue to be a bit later in that month.

Tim Winker, Editor

Saab-Scania Floral Clock Club

July 15 - Drive thru scenic Kentucky. Midway College, Midway, KY. Registration at 6am, breakfast at 7:30am, first car out at 9am.
Jack Baxter, 502/223-8434.

Vintage SAAB Club of Wash. State

July 23 - Annual Picnic at the old Mt. St. Helens Volcanic Interpretive Center, across from Lewis and Clark Campground, near Chehalis, Washington, 11:00am to 3:00pm.
Rich Roberts, 206/771-7100 (days)
Skip Schott, 206/486-1351 (days).

West Mountain SAAB Club

DATE CHANGE FOR R-9

Aug. 5&6 - Rallye 9, Singletary Rod & Gun Club, Oxford, MA. Tech sessions, banquet, guest speakers, car contest, WMSC Olympics, Club Car & more!!!
David Sullivan, 508/879-8288.

Make Convention Reservations

We now have confirmation from the Imperial Palace Hotel and Casino on room rates for the National SAAB Owners Convention on October 13-15. The rate is \$55 per room, or \$100 for a suite. For those planning to stay longer in Las Vegas, week night rates are a bit lower. The hotel's toll-free reservation number (U.S. and Canada) is 800-634-6441.

The Imperial Palace will also give convention goers a special rate on advanced tickets for their Friday night stage show, "Legends". Tickets for the 10:00pm show will be \$12.75, a discount of \$5.00. "Legends" features live impersonations of showbiz luminaries such as Marilyn Monroe, Buddy Holly and Elvis Presley.

There will be time to tour the car museum at the Imperial Palace, with over 200 rare or historic autos on display. A guided tour of the museum's restoration facility is being arranged.

The convention fee hasn't been established yet, but expect it to be about \$50 per person. It will cover meals and some convention souvenirs.

Convention organizer, Paul Florance, is difficult to reach by phone, so he asks that you write or leave him an E-mail message on CompuServe, at #73520,1742. Paul's address is:

126-1/2 Main St.

Seal Beach, CA 90740

Letters to NINES

RIP, Dick Grossman

I just learned of the death of Dick Grossman, past editor/publisher of the Chicago SAAB Club Newsletter until October 1980. He was also spokesman for many early SAABists who were of a rational persuasion when it came to the *raison d'etre* in automobile design and ownership.

I joined the Chicago SAAB Club in 1962 when as a front wheel drive advocate (I owned a '36 Cord and still do), I purchased a Saab 96 from "Skip" Lichty of Europa Motors in Fox Lake, Illinois, for \$2137.95 including special order 4-speed transmission and WW tires! I think **Road & Track** had recommended the 4-gear layout, and the whitewalls added needed accents in my architect's view of this rolling sculpture.

As I recall those days, the club president drove an Audi Fox, flashing your lights upon meeting another SAAB was *de rigueur* and we had many enjoyable outings, including slaloms on frozen Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Dick had taken over the job as editor of the newsletter and it soon became evident that he would not suffer fools, whether they be in Chicago, Detroit or Washington! Yes, he was sometimes abrasive. Yes, he sometimes had the narrow view of things. But his voice was refreshing in those days of banal automotive ideas from Detroit, Wolfsburg and Tokyo.

After seven SAABs (eight, with my son's Sonett), I note with regret that those days of real SAAB enthusiasts appear to be over. Saab-Scania merchandising goals have garnered the yuppie owner, who grew up with a VW, just traded in the BMW for a 9000T and will get rid of it in a year or so, for a Mercedes. This person not only does not recognize or comprehend the early "nines" ("A SAAB 5-

passenger estate wagon?", "Sonnet? Sonett? What's that?", "A 2-cycle, 3-cylinder what?"), but when greeted by a fellow SAABist by flashing lights, invariably checks the light switch to see if his/her lights are on, or responds with an apathetic or bewildered look when Smokey does not appear.

Kirk Kekatos
Grayslake, IL

Unintended misunderstanding

Suggest we don't promote SAABs by knocking other brands, such as the comments about the Audi 5000 on page 5 of the June issue. Even our "U.S. Gummt" has admitted the "problem" with Audi was -- in gummt lingo -- "pedal misapplication".

Audi got a bum rap! Who knows when Saab could find itself in a similar pickle?

Moral -- Don't take cheap pot-shots!

Wayne Hadland
Moss Beach, CA

Hallo SAAB fanatics!

The NINES is a wellknown magazin under the members of the German SAAB Clubs. Some of our members are also members in the SAAB Club of North America. Mr. Tom Remedios and Peter Bach, both very interesting guests to our monthly meetings, showed me regularly the NINES with its very interesting content.

Primarily the technical information for the "do it yourself Saab driver" are also very interesting for the European SAAB fan. I will try to send you also our experiences with our SAABs. There is really one letter with technical problems in every issue you can take profit from.

I am the president of the regional SAAB Club Rhein-Main in the middle of West Germany. We and six other regional clubs form the 1.Deutscher Saab Club e.V. -- the First German SAAB Club.

I made copies of the flyer in

NINES to hand them out to potential members. I hope to help by this way to bring the big SAAB family a little bit together.

Best SAAB regards!
Ricardo Freese
Baumgartenstrasse 15
6108 Weiterstadt 1
West Germany

More from Germany...

As a member of the SAAB Club for a few months I want to say how much I like the newsletter. As an Army officer stationed in Germany, it's my main club benefit and well worth the membership fee. You do a great job covering a long line of Saabs and diverse set of owners, ranging from those who lament Saab's \$25,000 high tech cars, to people like myself who love them. My only complaint is that I don't make anything near the \$70,000 a year you reported as the median income of a new Saab owner.

It's been over six months since we picked up our new Saab 9000S in Sweden and it's holding up like a champion. The fit and finish are far superior to any American car I've owned and equal or superior to German cars. The only problem of ANY sort has been the blinking pictogram you reported on last fall. Mileage has been good, averaging about 18.8 mpg to and from work and 25 mpg on the Autobahn, cruising speed at 160 kilometers per hour (100 mph). In the U.S., we don't think about driving 100 mph unless our cousin is the chief of police, but there are no speed limits on the German autobahns. The 9000S handles these speeds easily. Besides good performance and quality, I will also admit to enjoying it when our young officers tell me how much they like my car.

The 6000 mile service was done at Autohaus Weber in Giessen. The Germans call this a 10,000 kilometer service. With an extensive vocational education and apprentice program, German mechanics are all well qualified, and do good (if somewhat

expensive) work. Still, at 103 Marks (about \$55), the service was very reasonable, considering it involved an oil change and new spark plugs. They even cleaned the engine compartment. Suffice it to say that they're very thorough and not likely to make mistakes, certainly not as likely as if you or I crawled under the hood with a pair of K-Mart pliers. The new Saabs are not Chevy straight sixes, they are high tech all the way.

I support the changes to the technical advice column. I like to know the details behind problems and their solutions, even though I plan on getting service from an authorized dealer. The "Service Subjects from Saab" are excellent in this regard. Keep up the good work, and sign me off as a very happy Saab owner and satisfied club member.

Donald E. Pritchett

Arggh, these dealers!

I must echo the sentiments of Mr. Susnowitz that were expressed in the April newsletter. I was further along on the decision tree in that I was actually prepared (with considerable reservation) to purchase a new 900 to replace my 12-year-old 99. Logic led me to the SAAB at that time, but that same logic definitely pointed elsewhere. New designs like the Maxima or the 626 are good alternates. Moreover, when I visited three SAAB dealers, none had the model I wanted (base, with no options) and none even wanted to discuss price, citing some garbage about not knowing prices.

As it happened, a used, high-mileage 900 Turbo became available locally. So I bought that. This is voting my sentiments regarding Saab-Scania's marketing direction with my pocketbook.

I offer some observations regarding some quality aspects between the old 99 series and the 900. Various rubber components in the 900 seem to be short-lived compared to the 99. In particular, the water hoses, emission tubing, and CV boots already crumble

under my fingers. The 99 had its first hose failure after 12 years and 140k miles. The paint application seems to be improved as the 900 doesn't have the tracings of rust under the paint like the 99 did. I will have to see how the rest turns out.

T. T. Chuhay
Panama City, FL

Safe at home

How wonderful that Mr. Freiberg (Letters, May 1989) is just a touch-tone away from a "cheap" tow should the need arise.

To those of us, however, who are prone to venture beyond the end of our driveway with something more exotic than a two wheel bicycle, instant aid is not usually that easily available.

Having driven a variety of automo-

biles (sport and otherwise) in a variety of locations and conditions, it has never ceased to amaze me how a simple application of common sense and mechanical ingenuity can remedy a seemingly hopeless situation.

I therefore say "KUDOS" to Mr. Salvo and his unique solution to the disabled brake caliper on his 95 (NINES, April 1989).

There are times for safe actions and there are times for solutions to remedy "sticky" situations. I would rather be "safe" at home than to have my bleached bones spell out "Safety First" beside some desert roadway.

Be safe on the road, but also prepared and capable to act in case of breakdown, especially in an hostile environment.

Sterling Cox
Paramount, CA

New Car Coming?

The Factory started to move its cars upmarket with the introduction of the 93B. There has been a steady parade of innovations and upgrading since; the 95, the 96, the four-speed transmission, the Monte Carlo 850, the Long Nose... and the list is about to roll on. The Source says The Factory is about to launch its most important car since the immortal 92!

It is believed the model will be called the 9600. And what a car! Every detail raises fresh good goosebumps. If this information is correct, the 9600 will be a world beater well into the next century!

But to get to the specifics. The new car is slightly bigger than the 96 and therefore even roomier. It will be available in sedan and wagon. It looks like the stretched 96 that was shown in the trade papers. But the important details are under its beautiful skin.

The engine is the classic three-cylinder two-stroke, but with three carbs, three turbos and three intercoolers! It will be the most powerful engine in The Factory's history. It is expected to produce nearly 80 bhp (DIN)! That's a considerable increase over the single turbo mentioned for next year's Monte Carlo model. The engine will sit transversely to accommodate all the intercoolers and turbo plumbing. This also means the return of the overhead fanshaft. Over cylinder number two, it turns 90° to drive the fan mounted behind the radiator. This layout means a new gearbox which will be based on the near perfect 95/96 four speed. The famous column shifter will be maintained as might be expected.

That's the list of information thus far, but it is truly the event of the decade if it makes production. There is no word as to the future of the 95/96 models. One hopes for more details soon. Until then, best wishes.

Simon Du Stroke

Doktor Nio's SAAB Klinik

Submit your questions with as complete information on the problem as possible, also giving the year and model of SAAB. Problems of general interest will be answered here. No requests for personal replies please. Questions which would require modification of, or would defeat Federally required emissions systems will not be answered. For a proper diagnosis, it is recommended that you contact an authorized SAAB dealer or repair shop.

Send your questions to:

NINES KLINIK
c/o The SAAB Club
2416 London Road, Unit 900
Duluth, MN 55812-2221

I have a 1988 900 with about 6500 miles, and it performs well except for one annoyance -- a fairly pronounced "rubbing" or "squeaking" noise emanates from the shifter area when traveling over rough roads. Typically, the noise doesn't occur when first starting out. It becomes noticeable and increasingly worse only after the car has warmed up. The noise can be made to happen by wiggling the shift lever very slightly when in neutral, and it feels as though a rubbing or binding of parts in the shift mechanism accompanies the sound. Can you please suggest a cure?

Art Dudley
White Plains, NY

This is definitely of general interest to 900 owners. This annoying dry squeaking/rubbing sound can be silenced by lubricating not only the shift lever lower ball and socket, but also the shift rod as it passes through the front of the shifter console. Accessible by moving the carpet to gain a clear shot, use a spray lubricant that has some "stiction" properties, and aim at the rubber bushing at the nose of the housing and a few inches further forward where the centering cam and rollers are. Move the shifter through all the gears, then repeat the lube procedure.

My question concerns the lights on the front of my 900 Turbo that come on while turning or when the car is in reverse. The lights come on while turning, but not while the car is in reverse, unless the stick is manually pulled back and to the right. Is there an adjustment to fix this?

My second question also involves the transmission and the difficulty

encountered trying to put the car into first gear while stopped. At times it is hard, if not impossible. The car now has 128k miles with the only major work being a head and a throw-out bearing replacement.

William DeMars
Herkimer, NY

There are two lighting circuits in the 900 front lamps. One is for turn signal cornering, the other is in conjunction with the reversing lights. Of the front reversing lamps are not functioning without special shifter positioning, I doubt the rears are either. You need a new reverse lamp switch that screws into the shifter housing.

With the amount of miles on the clutch and input areas, I would suspect a pilot bearing in the flywheel that is so dry and stiff the clutch shaft cannot free-wheel when disengaged. An over-full gearbox has been known to contribute to stiff first and reverse selection from fluid flow spinning the mainshaft gears.

I have a 1986 900S 16-valve with 17k miles. My problem lies with the AIC valve. At 15k the dealer replaced the valve and the car ran fine for about 200 miles. Here's the problem:

The engine starts fine, cold start is OK, warm up OK, idle OK (800 RPM). Drive a couple miles, stop at traffic signals, RPMs now at 1000 or 1200, depending on outdoor temperature. If I stop the engine for a couple minutes, restart and idling are OK again (800-850 RPM).

As temperature changes, so does the idling speed (at 10F, 1000 RPM or more, at 40F, 900-950 RPM). The car responds well to extra load, air conditioning, etc. The dealer says I have to

live with it, blames the emissions control.

Bert Landry
Anchorage, AK

The Automatic Idle Control (AIC) valve is supposed to maintain idle speed regardless of temperature or engine load. There are numerous primary operational checks before blaming the valve itself:

- A. Dirty air filter and/or intake hoses and throttle plate.
- B. Maladjusted throttle valve switch, deceleration dash pot or throttle plate stop.
- C. Vacuum leaks or restrictions.

Have your mechanic show you basic idle setting and see that the AIC valve raises engine idle momentarily after disconnecting the ground test lead.

I will be going out of the country next year for about six months and will be leaving my '82 900 Turbo w/110,000 miles in the states. I have the opportunity to either store the car in a garage, or I can have someone drive it or start it occasionally. Recommendations?

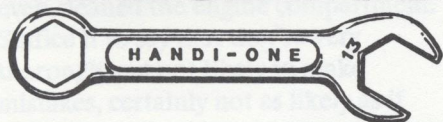
Robert Unger
Bryan, TX

It is usually better for all the systems involved to have someone warm up and drive the car periodically. Run it long enough for the cooling fans to cycle after 15-30 minute drive. Once a month should be sufficient.

If someone can be entrusted to drive the car in this manner, by all means take them up on the offer. Just have all the fluids flushed and replaced before you leave.

DO NOT ALLOW THE CAR TO IDLE LONGER THAN 8 TO 10 MINUTES AS THE CATALYTIC CONVERTER COULD OVERHEAT!

SERVICE SUBJECTS



FROM SAAB

New front brake pad service recommendations

Application: Saab 900 models, M79-87
Saab 99 models, M75-80

The primary brake pad recommendation for 1975-1987 99 and 900 front brakes remains the combination of Delco semi-metallics on the outside of the disc and Textar pads on the inside of the disc. However, alternative brake pads are now available for cases where the Delco/Textar combination results in unacceptable pad life.

These new alternative pads, P/N 40-04-123, are supplied in a four-pad set and are Delco DM121 composition. Note the following important points regarding these alternative pads:

- Because they are chamfered for use on both sides of the caliper, these pads are NOT equivalent to the two-pad set of DM121 brake pads (91-02-690). The two-pad, unchamfered DM121 set is designed ONLY for the outside of the disc, together with the Textar T474 pads on the inboard side.

- They must not be used for cars with brake drag complaints. If the car has short handbrake travel when it comes in for service, or has a prior history of brake drag, use the Delco/Textar combination set.

Rear brake pad recommendations remain unchanged. All Saab brake pads are asbestos free

See the accompanying brake pad summary chart on this page.

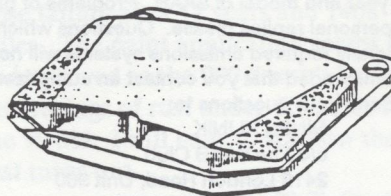


Figure 1. Chamfered DM 121 brake pads are now available for cases of short brake pad life.

Installation Notes:

1. If there is a brake drag complaint, see S.I. 10/86 895 (S.I. Supplement 6A) before installing brake pads. (NINES, Dec 86, pg. 5)
2. Refer to S.I. 07/86-862 (Supplement 6A) for complete instructions on installing brake pads on 900 models 1979-87. (NINES, Oct 86, pg. 5)
3. Clean and grease the sliding surfaces of the brake housing for the yoke and pads. Use Gleitmo 540 (P/N 30-08-612).

Saab Service Information updates are provided to NINES as a courtesy to Saab owners by Daniel L. David, Manager of Technical services, and Robert J. Sinclair, President of Saab-Scania of America, Inc.

4. Check the hand brake cable clearance at the caliper lever 0.019 ±0.003 in (0.5 ±0.1mm), and adjust if necessary.
5. Turn in the pistons with the aid of the special tool (P/N 89-96-043). Do not turn in the pistons past the point where they are in line with the plane of the hole for the pad retaining pin.
6. The brake pedal must be pumped while the handbrake is set at seven notches before moving the vehicle.
7. If the DM121 four-pad set (P/N 40-04-123) is used on pre-83 models, the dust boots must be updated to the later material quality and DOT 4 brake fluid only must be used.

BRAKE PAD APPLICATION CHART

APPLICATION	LINING I.D.	P/N	REMARKS
<u>FRONT BRAKE PADS*</u>			
1975-87 All Models	DELCO DM121 TEXTAR T474	91 02 690 (outer) 91 02 708 (inner)	2 pad set 2 pad set Use in combination only with Delco 121 pad on outside of each disc.
1975-87 All Models Pad Wear Complaint	DM 121 (chamfered)	40 04 123	4 pad set. Not for use on cars with brake drag problems.
1975-83 Moderate use Nat. Asp. Only	JURID 509	89 93 297	4 pad set.
<u>REAR BRAKE PADS (ATE CALIPER)*</u>			
1976 1/2-87 All models	DB 876	89 93 230	4 pad set.
<u>REAR BRAKE PADS (GIRLING CALIPER)*</u>			
1975-76 1/2 All models	DON 8095	78 73 755	4 pad set.

* All brake pads supplied by Saab are asbestos free.

It is with the greatest of regret that I am writing to inform the SAAB community of the death of Dick Grossman. Dick, known to many as the "Godfather" of the SAAB Club, died of a heart attack on Saturday, June 3rd following a long cardiac history.

Those of us who have been around SAABs and the SAAB Club since the '70s probably remember Dick quite well. However, for those who are relatively new to all this, a bit of history.

As the '60s turned into the '70s, the SAAB was still an uncommon and unusual car in the U.S. Though sales were growing in certain areas, the country as a whole suffered from a lack of dealers and qualified mechanics. The difficulty with service and parts caused owners to band together, forming clubs in several metropolitan areas, Chicago being one of them.

Sometime in 1971 (or thereabouts) the group from Chicago began talking about an official newsletter. After many fits and starts, the first newsletter was published in March of 1973, appropriately called *UP FRONT*.

UP FRONT had as its first editor the President of the Chicago SAAB Club, Allyn Reilly. Illustrator and printer of the newsletter was the club treasurer, a bearded commercial artist named Dick Grossman. This arrangement continued through October of 1973, when officer changes took place and Dick took over as the editor and publisher. The Chicago Board soon fell away and Dick assumed all responsibilities. The Grossman years had begun.

Dick strove to put out a well laid-out, technically informative newsletter. Though typos and spelling errors were frequent, content more than made up, resulting in a highly desirable publication. And what started as a local newsletter of less than 100 copies grew to be THE newsletter for over 3000 nationally by August of 1980 - Dick's last issue.

The want ads, "network" information, and articles by people such as John Fogg, Jack Ashcraft and Merle Young are what attracted the many shade tree mechanics to Dick's publication. But what gave the publication its special appeal was the editorial flavor imposed by Dick's unique personality.

Dick had his detractors and he had his fans. At any particular time Dick was called a hothead, irrational, pedantic, opinionated, outspoken, a David fighting Goliath, a champion of small cars and little businessmen, a firebrand. Whether friend or foe, a hero or a



target, one always knew what Dick thought. Dick's editorials were famous (infamous?) especially those that he titled "Five Minutes of Hate". No one was safe from his tirades, not even Saab or its president, Bob Sinclair. But special vehemence of his fire and brimstone writing was saved for Detroit and car clubs he viewed as pompous. Some examples of Dick's writings are on the following pages.

Controversial though he may have been, Dick nevertheless treated the Newsletter and Club as a responsibility and a trust. Visitors to his modest co-op apartment were always asked to

review the "Club" financial records. He went to great length to show how little he and Ruth took from the Club coffers to reimburse themselves. Dick felt he was a man entrusted with a mission. If known by some as a tyrant, then Dick was at least a benign and selfless tyrant.

In the late summer of 1980, Dick suffered a major heart attack. Realizing that he would be incapable of carrying on, he entrusted the newsletter, the equipment, the treasury, and hence the "Club" to Jeff Delahorne. Jeff and his wife, Carolanne Curtis, carried on the publication from October of 1980 until November, 1985. After much controversy and rancor, the newsletter passed into the capable hands of Tim Winker - the current editor of the now retitled NINES.

In the past several years Dick Grossman made few appearances and had little contact with the Club. When he did, it surprised and I think pleased him that he was still well remembered - especially for his editorials.

When I learned that Dick Grossman had died, I somehow felt that a small part of SAAB history had also died. And it drew to mind the passing of the 96/95. I don't mean to trivialize nor do I mean any disrespect. The 96/95 was a unique, idiosyncratic vehicle with a distinctive flair. Its character has not been matched by anything with which Saab has followed. The stereotypic owner was eccentric, educated, had a beard, and wore sandals or "earth shoes". Dick with his beard, sandals, eccentricities, and white 95 fit that mold to a T. We mourned the passing of the 96, a unique Saab fixture. Now we mourn Dick, a unique SAAB Club fixture.

Goodbye Dick, you will be remembered!

Andy Fedorowski
Chicago, IL

P.S. Anyone wishing to send condolences can write to:
Mrs. Ruth Grossman
1918 W. Hood
Chicago, IL 60660

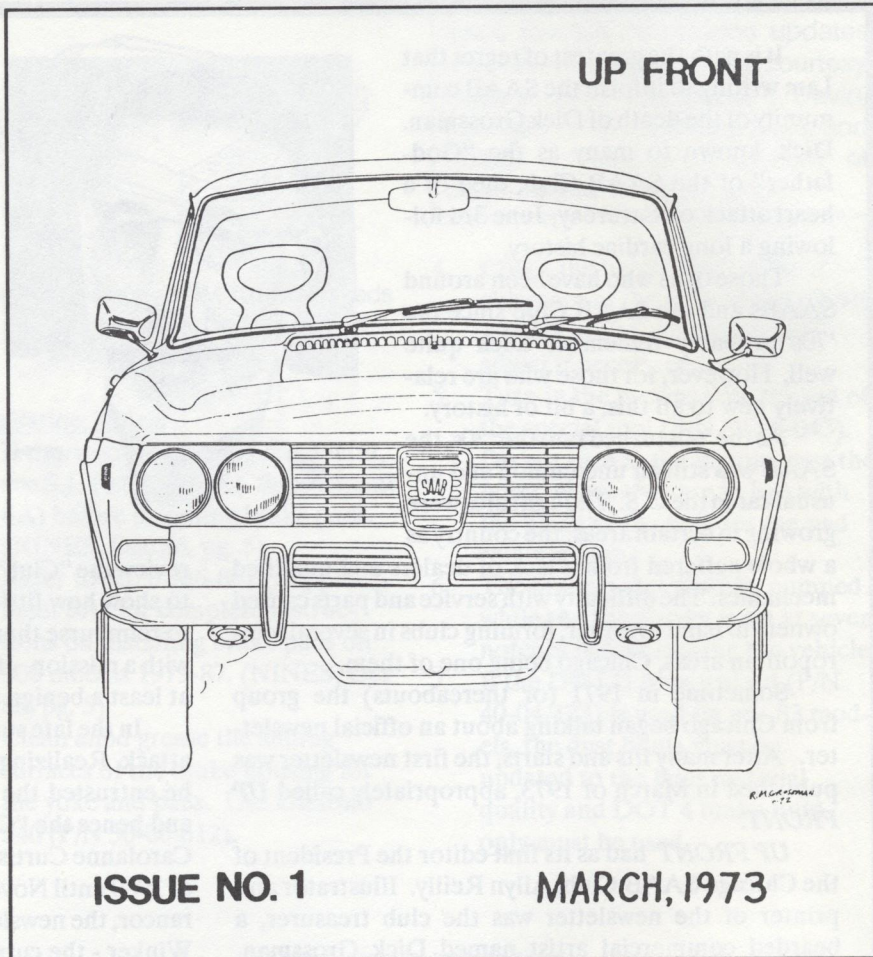
The Grossman Era

Dick Grossman was involved in producing the Chicago SAAB Club's newsletter beginning with their first issue in March of 1973. Dick drew the cover, reproduced here. He often illustrated technical articles in the newsletter, either his own or those written by other SAAB owners.

Dick is best remembered for his vitriolic editorials, aimed primarily at the domestic auto manufacturers -- General Motors in particular, at overpriced marque clubs and their glossy newsletters, and at what he believed were useless accessories in cars -- 8-track stereo/radios, air conditioning, spoilers, fat tires, etc.

Dick's final issue was August, 1980. He suffered a severe heart attack that summer, after which he was forced to give up the newsletter.

Dick Grossman was 69 when he died on June 3rd of this year.



May, 1975

5 MINUTES of Hate

Eastern govt. bullion.
U.S. officials estimate that

Kuwait the richest
ZURICH, Switzerland (AP)
— Based on per-capita gross national product, Kuwait was the world's richest nation last year, with \$11,000 worth of goods and services for each person in the land, according to a study by a Swiss bank. The United States was in fifth place behind several European countries.

... And none of these stinkers work! & never did.
and Detroit provides most of the demand for their oil!

November, 1975

Your a hard working nut Dick. I don't know what makes you do it.

Reply: My extreme hate towards Detroit; Charlie Wilson, Lynn Townsend, -accountants, who head automobile companies and replace themselves with another accountant. Accountants and corporation lawyers are not qualified to decide what kind of vehicle consumers should be driving. Engineers and inventors have differences of opinion, they make mistakes of judgement sometimes, but accountants and lawyers have no more right to butt in on car design than they do in; heart surgery or abortion, nor the arts. Detroit produces a two humped camel designed by a committee of accountants, lawyers, chicken engineers, supervisors and advertising "market researchers". Dick G.

January, 1977

WHY I HATE DETROIT!

On December 18, 1976 our radio broadcast a Ford commercial: Pinto outsells all small cars, with under 100 inch wheelbase, etc. etc. Yet three or four days earlier the news release from Ford repeated several times; "the market is just not buying small cars but, rather, the big cars are in demand". At the same time GM announced that 65% or more of their car sales are for small and compact cars. If the Ford Co. spokesman had said, "that our Ford small cars were not selling well"-it would have been believable.

They might be doing better if they offered a free choice of a line of GOOD F.W.D. compacts or steam powered, electric, or chair vehicles, or motorized skate boards each of which to be designed and engineered without GIMMICKS, paint strips, spoilers, fake spare tire bulges (they are doing that again) and other machinations to kill sales in order to hustle the masses into their 6 passenger gas guzzlers. — Dick G.

January, 1976

However, in another one of SAAB-Scania's stupid publicity releases they announce their new U.S.A. advertising campaign will emphasize durability, and this brilliant campaign was thought up by their newly appointed advertising agency. Get that---a newly hired advertising agency brilliantly initiats SAAB durability to be one of it's two principal acclamations--just like Volvo used to do. What the hell does that ad agency know! Such a campaign means that a 1000 more damn fools will interpolate this to mean that the transmission will outlast the engine, the wheel bearings and the body or that the transmission will last forever-longer than a Chevy. Obviously, no HARE BRAINED ad-agency copywriter should dictate the general copy theme unless he has had substantial experience with a SAAB, like driving one for at least 50,000 miles. SAAB-Scania executives know better than any ad agency could possibly know about SAAB's components. A SAAB will outlast, out perform most other compacts priced under \$8000--but it will not outlast any and all cars.

April, 1976

"Don't you think Saab had a good reason to put a spoiler - on the front?" Reply: Sure, good merchandising. They hope to attract some of the American yahoos. SAAB told us all,that they are the only car maker who owns a wind-tunnel and knows how to use it. So, the 96,97, and the 99 was intelligently designed - right? Now, suddenly, in 1976 it needs a spoiler...because the other goofy cars with no steel sheet under the convulated engine area needs a spoiler to reduce the air turbulence generated under most cars, most of which never were streamlined at the bottom. Even a turtle is more streamlined then most cars. Can't you see that? Those who drive in Northern climes must remove the spoiler when the big snows come.

August, 1977

The only way G.M. will change is to line up those directors against a brick wall. When that old (93 yrs.) foof, Mott died, did they appoint his son Stuart Mott into the board? Heck no! he's too liberal. Nepotism almost always goes from the curmudgeon to the worst, if the son is too "progressive" - he's not welcomed. 27 years ago I thought Howard Hughes was brilliant, only to learn later that he was also an evil, greedy corrupter of Congress. The same goes for Hunt, Rockerfellers, Detroit directors, etc. Some of you will write me that it is unwise of me to discuss any political philosophy - well, it's my answer to those who foolishly look to Detroit to come out with a sensible compact front wheel drive or an electric urban car with F.W.D. When a G.M. and Ford "spokesman" complains to Congress that foreign car makers are DUMPING their cars on the U.S. market and includes Saab's \$6,200 to \$7,800 compacts among them, then, you should know how rotten Detroit is. When you write in your rebuttal--be sure to include reasonable proof that Sweden exports more to U.S. than it imports over the average of the past 30 years.

May, 1977

Again, to explain to new members (old members know it) my chief reason or justification for our devotion to this Newsletter enterprise is not just a love for the SAAB, but my intense hate for Detroit automobiles!..

Dick G.

January, 1979

QUESTIONS/ANSWERS/LETTERS TO EDITOR

Why don't you get more articles written so that we non-technical people can understand them better?

Reply: We try a tiny bit, but there is absolutely no time available. Technical writing and illustration for the laymen is my specialty. But, instead I must devote most of my working time to the management, production of the Newsletter and correspondence. When we took over the Newsletter in 1973 we had about 150 members and spent 1-1/2 days producing the Newsletter. I had 20 days time to make a couple of tech' sheets. Our Newsletter is now five times as big and membership is 17 times greater.

I may not always agree with what you say - but I'd rather have you say what you think rather than pussy-foot around and say nothing.

Loren Nash, Daly City, Calif.

Please send me information on how I can pep-up my Turbo 99.

Reply: Go soak you head in a cold bucket of water!

I very much enjoy the publication, and consider it well worth the effort. After about 2 years of receiving it, I have become accustomed to your rather churlish obloquies against the "Big 3" and anything else that offends yoursomewhat left of center sensibilities.

I must admit I have come to get a certain amount of perverse pleasure from your rantings, and consider their inclusion only a small extra charge for the very valuable service being rendered to the membership.

David Rowland, New Jersey

Reply: Just a darn minute! I'm too old and mature to let anybody get away with that claptrap. I'm more pragmatic than you are. Just because I try to distinguish greed, dishonesty, chicanery, baloney - from honest production/efficiency, doesn't make my views "leftist". Refusing to pledge allegiance to General Motors doesn't make me a leftist either. Ruth and I own 20 shares of G.M., how much do you own? I believe heads of auto manufacturers should have good engineering back grounds, instead of accounting-law backgrounds - what's "leftist" about that? I believe a car manufacturer should be confined to designing and selling their products without bull-throwing, what's "leftist" about that? - Dick G.

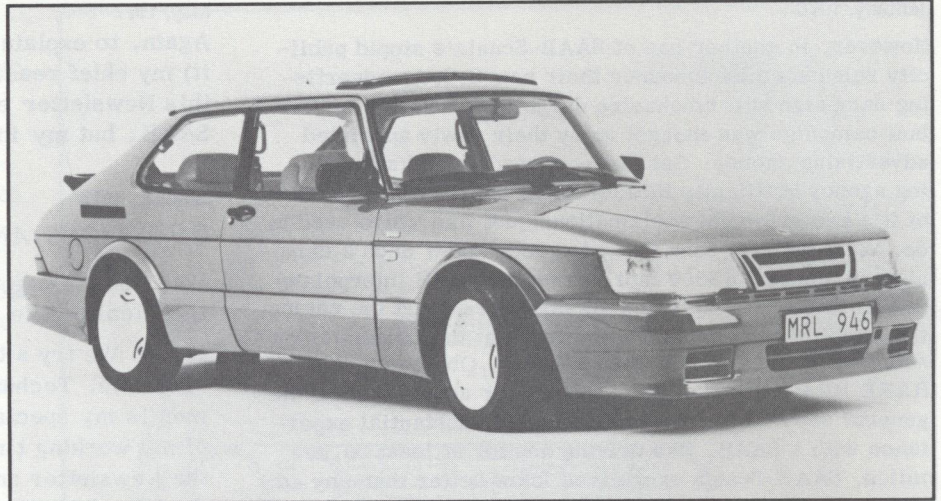
Airflow Styling Kits improve performance, create bold look

Saab Airflow Styling Packages, now available through all 371 U.S. Saab dealers as a dealer-installed option, offer better road-holding and less air resistance to the already aerodynamic Saab 900 and 9000 models. The styling kits also give Saab cars a bold new appearance.

Saab Airflow Styling Packages were developed and styled according to the tenet that form must follow function. Styling kit components are fitted around the Saab to direct air movement over the vehicle's surfaces. As the car's airflow improves, fuel consumption decreases, wind noise, wind resistance and side-wind sensitivity lessen; while high-speed stability improves.

Styling packages, individually created for the 900 and 9000 models, consist of front and rear spoilers, wheel arch flares, and a rear panel or "apron". All components are made of tough, durable Urethane plastic, the same impact-absorbing material used in standard Saab bumpers. Original panel mounting points are used to reduce the risk of corrosion.

All components can be painted to contrast or match the car's color. The



900 Turbo sports Airflow Styling Kit plus "Whale Tail" rear spoiler, side wind-deflectors, Aero wheels and sunroof deflector.

panels are pre-primed to reduce installation time and cost. The visual result is a well-tailored, distinctly aerodynamic form.

"We have added this dealer-installed styling package to our accessory line to give Saab owners the option to further develop their Saab's performance prowess and distinctive appearance," explains William F. Murray, Saab-Scania of America vice president--service and parts.

"Saab Airflow Styling Packages were approved after thorough tests in-

cluding wind tunnel and brake analysis, as well as 'real world' road tests. We wanted to check the strength of all componentry and the durability of the paint. The bumpers have also been tested and conform to the American legal requirements," he added.

Used in combination with Saab's Cross Spoke 6.5x16 inch wheels and Pirelli P700 205/55 VR 16 tires, standard equipment rear lip spoiler, and Saab recalibrated gas-filled shock absorbers, Saab's 9000 Turbo rated an impressive drag coefficient (Cd) of 0.295 in the wind tunnel. This makes the 9000 one of the few marques in the automotive industry registered at lower than 0.30 Cd. A similar package on a Saab 900 also measured a respectable 0.325 Cd when equipped with the Aero-style Super Inca 6x15 inch alloy wheels, Pirelli P6 195/60 VR tires, and rear "Whale Tail" spoiler.

Saab Airflow Styling Packages, like many other major Saab options, are warranted for the duration of the three years/36,000-mile New Car Warranty or the 12-month/unlimited mileage Parts and Accessories Warranty, whichever is applicable at the time of installation.

Suggested list prices for the styling packages are \$1,980 for 9000 models and \$1,393 for 900s, plus the cost of paint and installation.

Saab-Scania Press Information



Saab 9000 Turbo with Airflow Kit is dressed with Silver Spoke wheels and Hella fog lamps.

SAAB NEWS

May sales up in U.S.

Sales of new Saabs in the U.S. market during May of this year were up over May of 1988. U.S. Saab dealers reported total sales of 3164 during May, the first time since November, 1988, that sales had topped 3000 in one month. The figure for May of last year was 3072.

Saab-Scania of America, Inc. continues to offer incentives such as reduced rate financing and special leasing programs through its 372 dealers. Saab also launched a national television advertising campaign for the months of June through August, the first time Saab has been so aggressive in its advertising. The TV spots are part of the "Don't buy the wrong car" campaign introduced earlier this year.

SCCA proposes changes for Saab race cars

Saabs could become a part of the racing scene if proposed rule changes are approved by the Sports Car Club of America's Board of Directors at their September meeting. The July issue of *SportsCar*, the SCCA's official magazine, lists items approved by the Competition Board and sent to the BoD.

Under the GT classification, the Saab 900 16-valve would be eligible for GT2 as a tube-frame, rear drive car. SCCA is planning to ban turbocharging and supercharging in the GT categories over the next couple of years, so there would be no place for the turbocharged 900 or 9000 models. The proposal was made by SAAB Club member Larry Gesch of Milwaukee, who currently races a tube-frame, front-wheel drive 99 with an 8-valve engine in GT3. Gesch had requested that the 900 be allowed to run in GT3 with a weight penalty much as the VW Scirocco 1800cc 16-valve, but SCCA decided to move the 16-valve Saab engine up a class. Currently competitive in GT2 are the Porsche 944 and Mazda RX7.

In Improved Touring, the only Saab 99 2.0 liter eligible has been the EMS model. That listing would now change to all 99s, 1970 thru '80. Minimum weights for the 99 in ITB were also published -- the 99 1.7 and 99E 1.85 are allowed 2180 pounds, while the 2.0 EMS is allowed 2360 pounds.

Saab engineer wins American safety award

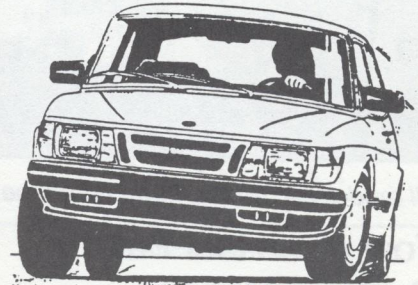
Bertil Ilhage, of the Saab Car Division of Saab-Scania AB of Sweden, has received the 1989 safety award of the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Mr. Ilhage, who is currently head of Saab's Electronics Development department, received the NHTSA Award for Safety Engineering Excellence at the recent international Experimental Safety Vehicle conference in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Among Mr. Ilhage's many achievements is the development of the world's first production car headlight wiper system, a system for keeping the car's headlights clean, that is now mandated in most European countries. The headlight wipers were first used on the Saab 99 in the early 1970s. Mr. Ilhage, who has been active in road safety work at Saab since the 1950's, was also involved in the development of "daytime driving lights", now also required by law in the northern European countries, and soon to be introduced in Canada.

Currently, Mr. Ilhage is responsible for Saab's participation in the European Prometheus project, aimed at achieving substantial improvements in highway safety, efficiency and environment.

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All models of Sonetts lined up on the lawn

Four clubs tour Parts Center in Meriden

Two of the rarest SAABs in existence, Sonett I's, shared the spotlight at a recent gathering of regional clubs at Saab-Scania's Parts Distribution Center in Meriden, Connecticut.

Over two hundred SAABers from four clubs in the Northeastern U.S. converged at the invitation of Saab-Scania's top guy in America, Bob Sinclair. Much of the day centered around a tour of how the parts for your SAAB get from Sweden to your hands via this particular warehouse, and others in Georgia and California.

Steve Rossi gave a tech session on the Barber SAAB Pro Series formula cars, and how standard 16-valve turbocharged engines taken off the production line at Södertälje are adapted to the Mondiale chassis and Hewland gearbox. Steve also explained how the modified fuel and exhaust systems, unencumbered by emissions equipment, allow the stock engine

to put out over 200 horsepower.

Following a buffet lunch, President Sinclair headed a panel to answer questions from the assembled SAABophiles. Other participants on the panel were Len Lonnegren, Director of Corporate Communications; Steven Rossi, Technical Planning Manager; Ed Kaplanian, Parts & Accessories Manager; Jay Flagge, National Training Instructor; and Carlton Dingman, Product Support Manager. Many of the answers revealed that the hierarchy at Saab-Scania has many of the same concerns as consumers, particularly over government regulation and increasing insurance company intervention.

The day closed with SAAB owners doing what they like to do best, discussing their cars and inspecting the SAABs on display. Two of the five remaining Sonett Super Sports were there -- one a part of the Saab-Scania of America collection, the other owned by Bill Jacobson. George Vapaa brought his Sonett Roadster, there were a couple each Sonett IIs and Sonett

V4s, and about fifteen Sonett IIIs. As mentioned in last month's issue of NINES, the New England Sonett Club has members all over the U.S., and they showed up from as far away as Iowa and New Mexico.

Saab-Scania showed off the Quantum Formula S race car that was acquired last year and raced Memorial Day weekend at Lime Rock by Bob Sinclair. There was a "Saab Friction Tester" - a specially equipped 900 Turbo used by airports to determine the amount of adhesion on runways, the "Yellow Widow" Scania drag truck which had just been on display as part of the Scania Caravan show, and one of the 9000 Turbos that completed the record setting "Long Run" in 1986.

Not to be forgotten were the 96s, 99s, 900s and even a 9000 or two. They were well represented with stock and "personalized" versions aplenty.

The participants were from the Delaware Valley SAAB Club, the New England Sonett Club, the New Jersey SAAB Club and the West Mountain SAAB Club.



A couple hundred SAABers converged for a day to tour the Saab-Scania Parts Distribution Center



Top: Two of the historic cars owned by Saab-Scania of America, a Quantum Formula-S (left) and a Sonett Super Sport, both powered by 2-stroke engines. Below: A 99 Turbo done in Red monochrome. Bottom: Some 900s with personal touches.



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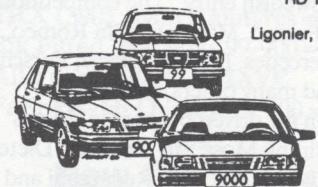
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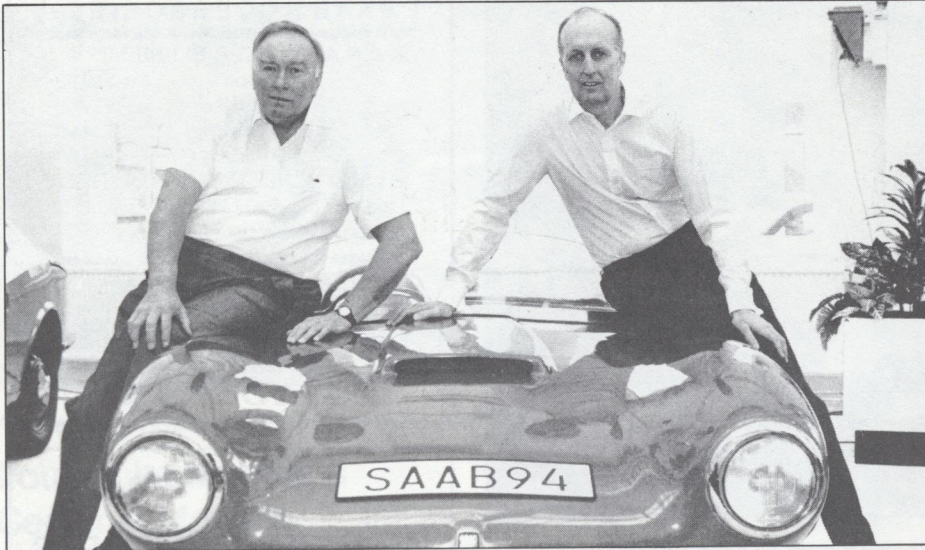
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Erik Carlsson (left) and Torsten Åman, ready for the '89 Mille Miglia Storica

SAAB legends return to competition

The Saab Sonett Super Sport was unveiled at the Stockholm Motor Show in 1956. This small, lively sports car was considered by Rolf Melde, Saab's versatile Chief Designer, to be vital to success in major competition events.

But the competition rules were changed, which sadly made the Sonett superfluous. Saab continued competing with the Saab 93 and 96, and the Saab Sonett ended up in the museum.

A new, albeit short, lease on life came earlier this year, when a Saab Sonett Super Sport with Erik Carlsson behind the wheel and Torsten Åman co-driving, was entered in the Italian Mille Miglia classic for veteran cars. Results: One stage victory and highest finishing Swedish entry. The competition included Ferrari, Maserati, Alfa Romeo, Lotus, Mercedes, Delage, Lancia, Porsche, Jaguar and many others, over three hundred in all, driven by veteran drivers such as Stirling Moss, Ari Vatanen, Dieter Quester, Jacky Ickx, Clay Regazzoni and Olivier Gendebien.

The Saab Sonett Super Sport (usually referred to as the Sonett I, but also known as the Saab 94) was built in 1955 to enable Saab to throw down the gauntlet to the established sports cars of that day in major competition events. Unfortunately, the rules were changed before the 1957 racing season which allowed standard cars to be modified, and the Sonett became unnecessary. Saab abandoned any thoughts of

taking the Sonett into production, even though an experimental batch of six cars had been produced.

The Sonett I was the brain-child of Rolf Melde, chief engine designer at Saab since the early days in 1949, and himself a competent rally and racing driver. Melde succeeded in arousing the interest of the Saab management in producing a sports car built around standard components of the Saab 93 (which was scheduled for launching as a 1956 model). The small, lightweight car was to be powered by the three-cylinder, two-stroke engine tuned to deliver 57 bhp.

The chassis was of lightweight and strong box-section construction of riveted aluminum sheet. The power unit from the Saab 93 was fitted the other way around as compared to the standard car, with the engine behind the gearbox. The ordinary Saab rear axle was provided with a better suspension than that of the standard car, and the mountings allowed for easy modifications to the handling characteristics. All of this was enclosed in a very elegant body of glass fiber reinforced plastic, drawn by Sixten Sason, Saab's styling designer. Weighing just over 600 kg, the first Saab Sonett had brisk performance in spite of the modest engine capacity -- the top speed was just over 100 mph.

This past April, 33 years after the launch in 1956, the Saab Sonett was finally given an opportunity to tackle the competitors of its time. Erik Carlsson was the

obvious choice as driver -- he had covered many road-testing miles in the Sonett. Torsten Åman was an equally obvious choice of co-driver to handle the maps, timekeeping and Halda Speedpilot (trip computer in today's parlance). Åman had been Carlsson's co-driver in the latter part of the 1960s.

The Mille Miglia Storica, as the race is known today, is run along the same roads as the original classic, although speed is no longer of essence. It is now a time/speed/distance rally with scoring to the tenth of a second. The average speeds for the stages vary between 50 and 70 km/h, but this was no obstacle to the cars being driven very fast when the opportunity arose - which it did quite often.

Due to the brisk pace many of the drivers were forced to wait for up to an hour at the end of the stages to cross the line within the specified tenth of a second. The organizers had foreseen this and a large parking area was arranged before every checkpoint.

Some of the entries did not have much time for a breather. On stretches that were too winding, with hills that were too steep, many of those driving small cars had to do their utmost to get to the checkpoints on time. Luca Del Bo, for instance, driving a SAAB 92 of 1956 vintage in perfectly standard trim, needed an extra hour on top of the allocated time. The 750cc two-cylinder engine was simply not powerful enough for the Abruzzo hills, but Luca made it to the finishing line anyway.

Villages with classic wine-bottle names opened their doors to the competitors with generous mementos and refreshments. After some stages, the cars were full of wine bottles, apples, sandwiches, tourist brochures, T-shirts and a great deal more.

At the prize-giving ceremony in the magnificent Palazzo Loggia in Brescia, the heartiest applause was afforded to the Italian police force rather than to any of the competitors. Without their assistance, the Mille Miglia of the 1980s could never have been what it was. Those who applauded most enthusiastically were no doubt the drivers who in true thriller style challenged one another in frequent duels on the highways.

On the way to the finishing line in the afternoon of the last day, eight Ferraris, one Alfa Romeo, a Lotus Eleven, an Austin Healey and a Fiat 1100 in close formation roared through the holiday traffic --



The Saab Car Museum used a specially modified 9000 Turbo to transport the Sonett Super Sport across Europe for the Mille Miglia

preceded by a motorcycle policeman with flashing beacon switched on, dispersing all other traffic to make way. The same treatment was afforded to Stirling Moss and his Mercedes 300-SL on his way down from Passo della Raticosa, where the police thought too many tourists drove far too slowly, and preceded to clear him a path.

So it was accuracy, and not brute speed, that decided the finishing positions for the Mille Miglia Storica. No modern electronic aids were allowed, not even an advanced wristwatch. Some teams found a

way around this problem by using odometers with an accuracy down to one meter. Or by the driver simply leaning out to see exactly when the front wheels crossed the magic rubber hose which stopped the organisers' stopwatch.

At all checkpoints, Erik Carlsson and Torsten Åman were less - usually much less - than two seconds out on the ideal time. But they were still in 73rd place in the overall results list. As consolation, they were the best Swedish entry out of five.

Sonett Super Sports - Where are they now?

- #1 - The car that was shown at the Stockholm Motor Show and the New York Auto Show in 1956 now resides at the Saab Museum in Trollhättan. This is the car used on the Mille Miglia Storica.
- #2 - Formerly one of the exhibits in the Philipson museum in Sweden, Chassis #2 is now owned by Saab-Scania of America, Inc. and was displayed at the Saab Club conventions in Pennsylvania (1985) and Delaware (1988). (See photo on page 13 of this issue.)
- #3 - Owned by Gosta Jakfors, who works in the Services department at the Saab factory in Trollhättan.
- #4 - Sold to a Saab employee, Sigvard Sörensen, who removed the original body and installed a hand built steel body. The car was called the "Facett", and was wrecked in a traffic accident.
- #5 - Also owned by the Saab museum in Sweden, this is the blue Sonett, often taken out for special displays.
- #6 - White with a blue stripe (this month's cover car), this is the only privately owned Sonett I in the U.S. It was acquired last summer by Bill Jacobson of Sports Car Service in Wilmington, Delaware, from Richard Hershatter of Connecticut. Bill raced the Sonett I earlier this year in a VSCCA vintage race at Pocono raceway in Pennsylvania. After having difficulty with a dirty fuel system during practice, Bill drove the Sonett to a first place finish in the handicap race.

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TECHNICAL TALK



Technical articles written by subscribers may recommend procedures or parts not approved by Saab-Scania of America, Inc. The SAAB Club and NINES cannot stand behind the correctness of information in these articles, but offers them based solely on the experiences of the writers.

Shifty solutions

A common complaint from 5-speed 900 owners is that they can't find third gear, or it is difficult to engage.

When SAAB came out with the 5-speed gearbox, instead of fabricating a gate for the shifter, they opted for a lower guide tab and a centering spring. The latter keeps the shifter, when not guided by your hand, in the third-fourth gear plane. You have to pull against the spring tension to engage first and second, then to go for third you need only to slide out of second, let go and guide up into third. If this doesn't happen, most likely your shifter centering spring is broken.

To complete the repair you will need a replacement spring (P/N 75-43-531), a Philips screwdriver (Torx on very new cars), a needle nose Visegrips and a work light. Remove the passenger side sill plate, then the forward lower wind lacing and carpet retainer plate. Now gently pull the carpet up and back from the front and look under at a point approximately 6 inches in front of the shifter. There will be a metal bracket and a block and roller assembly surrounding the shift rod. You may see the old broken spring hanging from one of the arms of the roller assembly. Leave it there! It won't interfere when you have the new one installed.

Place the shifter in the third-fourth plane and put your new spring in the needle nose Visegrips, holding one end so that both hooks of the spring are open. Get your self, your work light and your spring/Visegrip under the carpet (I know it's not comfortable! I've been there!). Hook the spring through the far side eye in

the roller arm first, then draw back and attach on the near side. Release the Visegrips and check the shift action. Reinstall the carpet, screw in the sill plates and you're done.

Another common complaint is that fifth gear is hard to engage because the shifter goes way over into the reverse plane when pushed to the right. This is caused by a misadjusted reverse lockout. You should have to pull up on the ring below the shift knob to get far enough right to engage reverse.

For this repair you will only need the correct screwdriver for the shifter hold down screws. It's usually a Posidrive. I emphasize this because these screws are usually very tight and stripping the head on one will not make your day! (Posidrive is NOT a Philips head! Ask your tool salesman.)

Peel up the shift boot from the bottom and remove the three screws holding the shifter in the console. NOTE: The transmission should be in neutral to remove the shifter. Lift out the shifter and note the nylon carrier's position and pin on the shifter itself (driver's side).

Now, the point of adjustment is at the very end of the shifter. The short (slightly less than one inch) end protruding from the shifter can be turned counter-clockwise to lengthen after the retainer pin has been pulled out. I recommend doing one full turn (keep the pin hole lined up!) at a time and checking the result after each turn by reinstalling the shifter. The ideal adjustment will block the shifter at the right side and go forward into fifth, and will need the lock ring pulled to gain the reverse plane.

Have you got a tight, squeaky shifter? Try these lubrication points. Use a penetrating grease spray.

One, at the rubber grommet on the leading edge of the shift console. Access by removing the top console cover and lifting the forward carpet.

Two, at the block and roller assembly, six inches in front of the shift console. Access is best from the passenger side under the carpet.

Third, at the rubber seal where the shift rod enters the engine compartment. Access from underneath the car at the firewall. Have a partner move the shifter (clutch engaged) while you spray to spread the grease into the dry areas.

Tim Brown, Technician
PARRformance
Lititz, PA

Heat shield for cat

After dealing many years with SAABs, we have many discoveries which our local dealerships seem unaware of. Our most recent discovery needs to be brought to the attention of all SAAB owners and mechanics.

The 900s have a catalytic converter shield which is supposed to protect the wiring from the heat of the catalytic converter (Saab P/N 93-49-804, approximately \$44). We are finding this to rot out, which exposes the wiring to extreme heat and has started fires or caused electrical problems because of melted wires.

This shield should be checked on all SAABs with catalytic converters and be a part of a normal inspection.

Lewis Auto Sales, Inc.
Lewiston, ME

Remote hatch opening?

Living in Brooklyn, New York, the capitol of car theft, there is a problem even with an older car. My 3-door 1982 900S has now had the lock on the hatch damaged for the second time in less than six months. It seems as though someone just shoves a screwdriver into the lock and applies some force and the cylinder is destroyed. The first time this happened the hatch could not be locked; this time I can't get it open. In both cases nothing was taken and there was no other damage.

My local dealer was able to replace the damaged cylinder and recode it to my key. Now I am going to have to do it again and it seems as though a more effective method for securing the hatch could be found. If the car had the more modern central locking system, rather than manual locks all around, I would be able to have some steel welded over the outside of the cylinder to completely cover it and still be able to open the hatch from inside the car.

Some cars of other manufacture have a mechanical version of this type of remote opening latch. A lever under the driver's seat attached to a cable that will release the lock is common. According to several dealers in my area and Saab Customer Relations in Connecticut, this is just not possible for my car. If anyone has any suggestions or has done such a modification I would appreciate hearing about it. Thanks for any help you can provide.

Alan Esner
Brooklyn, NY

[Cars that have a remote cable activated hatch release have the latching mechanism in the body of the car. The latching mechanism on Saabs is in the hatch (or trunk) door and there is no practical way to run a cable release. It might be possible to install only the hatch portion of the electrically operated central locking system. Anyone tried this? - TW]

Brakes with silver lining

I would like to ask for some information reference to disc brake pads for my Saab 9000 Turbo. In a recent issue of NINES, I found out about some Textar 474 metallic composite disc pads that were built for the Saab series 900s and 9000s. This was great info that helped locate these pads, but this started the opened Pandora's box.

I live in the Federal Republic of Germany and I'm attached to the U.S. forces here. I am a mechanic of sorts and believe that maintenance is the key to survival to any vehicle. I read that the Textar 474 disc pads were the preferred pads because of their new composite metallic base material properties, so went looking for a set.

First I went to the Saab dealership in the area where I live and asked for a price quote; 180 DMs (nearly \$100US) not including taxes, for the front end set only. I know that since there are so many different manufacturers of disc brake pads that there must be some with a lower price for the identical same pad, but to my surprise there is only one manufacturer, and that is Textar. They make pads under both their brand name and for Saab under the Saab logo.

I purchased a set with no other alternatives, but I would like to get a quote from stateside sources.

Donald L. Coe
25th DPU, 43rd SIG BN
APO, NY 09081

P.S. Under close inspection with a magnifying glass, there is no gold or other precious materials inside this pad set.

[Let's get this straight -- you have a \$25,000-\$30,000 car, fairly low production, you're trying to buy the best brake pads available, yet you expect them to be cheap?]

Total 9000 production from 1985 through 1988 was only 150,000 worldwide. It is unlikely that any company offering aftermarket performance prod-

ucts would tool up to manufacture what would, in all likelihood, be only a few thousand units. It's a common problem that Saab owners must face.

You don't say what year your 9000 is, but the standard 9000 pads are slightly different from the '88 and later 9000 Turbos, which use a different caliper. Saab's U.S. list prices on the brake pad sets are \$73.50 for most models, and \$110.50 for the later Turbos. Both pad sets are manufactured by Textar. - TW]

High idle problem

I recently experienced a problem with my 1986 900S which could be quite dangerous.

Upon first starting my car, I noticed the idle speed was somewhat high, about 1200-1500 RPM, but otherwise the car ran normally. After driving about twenty miles, the idle speed was up to 2000-2200 RPM; after another twenty miles I had to use the brakes to keep the car under 55 mph in 5th gear, and had to shut off the ignition at a stoplight when the idle went past 4500 RPM.

I checked under the hood and discovered the problem: The throttle return stop screw near the dashpot had moved to a very low position and was preventing the throttle from closing. I adjusted it by hand, but within two miles it moved again to cause a very high idle. I then removed the screw to drive the car home.

I now have a metric bolt serving this purpose; a nut and lock washer prevent the bolt from moving, and the head on the bolt prevents it from opening the throttle too wide should the nut loosen. Without the nut and lockwasher, the bolt will visibly move from the vibration of an operating engine.

Are there any other adjustments needed to the fuel injection in addition to resetting the idle speed with this bolt?

Robert J DeJonge
Cromwell, CT

Be careful when selecting alloy wheels

I have a little piece of information to pass on to club members. When I bought my '85 900 SPG last year, it came with a set of steel rims and ugly plastic wheel covers instead of the usual alloy wheels. I decided to rectify the situation recently. After looking at lots of different styles, I settled on Cragar Aero Trac wheels, a new style introduced this year and made with European cars in mind. They even listed styles in their catalogue that were designed to fit a SAAB.

The wheels finally arrived and they were as beautiful in the flesh as they were in the catalogue. But they didn't fit! The bolt pattern was fine, there was clearance for the brake calipers and the yoke, but the center hole was about 8/16th of an inch (2mm) too small in radius to fit over the hub nut housing. Ask me if I was happy.

Since I liked the rims and didn't really want to go through the bother of processing a complaint at the local hot rod shop where I bought them (these Detroit greasemonkeys look on a SAAB driver with some degree of disdain), I set about to machine the rims into spec. After this rather delicate surgery, the wheels were mounted and balanced and now all is right with the world (except my poor bank account).

I wanted to warn other prospective purchasers of this type of wheel that they won't fit the 900 without modification even though the Cragar literature says they will. The Aero Trac wheels offer a very nice alternative to the standard SAAB equipment based on a pie cut in three, and for this reason are rather special looking. On my silver-gray SPG, they are truly beautiful.

I have written to Cragar to ask for compensation for the six hours of shop

time required to make the alteration. We'll see what happens.

Bill Briggs
Arkell, Ontario, Canada

[Ed. note -- I understand the problem only too well. Wheels are usually the first addition toward personalizing any car, and Bill has mentioned one of the problems to watch for. Caliper clearance and correct offset are equally important. Offset is often ignored, but is critical as the wrong offset changes the load on the wheel bearings.

Though the bolt circle for the 99 and 900 has remained the same since 1969 (4-bolt, 4.5 inch diameter), minor changes have made switching alloy wheels between certain years of 99s and 900s difficult.

Beginning with 1979 models, the center hub was enlarged, meaning any alloy wheels from '78 or earlier models must have the center hole enlarged a bit to fit. I have had a couple of sets of EMS "soccerball" wheels machined like this to fit my '79 99 (the NINE-T9 which I wrote about in the September '87 issue of NINES. An update article is in the works). They should fit any 900 as well, provided the longer wheel studs on the front of the 900 allow the special EMS lug nuts to seat properly against the wheel.

The NINE-T9 recently received a set of 15-slot alloys, the original equipment wheels from a late model ('85-'87) 900 Turbo (along with 195/50HR15 BFGoodrich Euro T/As, but more on that in the update story). I figured that there would be no problem with the center hole, and I was correct. What I hadn't counted on was that in mid-1980, Saab changed the front axle and suspension pieces on the 900. The axle stub and nut stick out about 10mm too far to allow the plastic center cap to snap into place.

The suggested alternatives are:

1) Replace the entire steering knuckle/axle assembly with later pieces, a

potentially expensive proposition, even with used parts; 2) grind 10mm off the end of the axle and nut, potentially dangerous; or 3) replace the wheel studs with longer ones and use a 10mm spacer behind the wheel.

Don Andrews at Andrews, Inc. ran into the same problem when he mounted SPG wheels on his 1978 99 Turbo. He chose the third alternative listed above, replacing the studs with 1/2"-20x2" studs (Dorman part no. 610-298). He said the easy part was removing the old studs; the new ones took over 3000 lbs. on the hydraulic press to install. He used washers to space the new wheel out 10mm, but plans on either buying spacers or having some made.

Regarding wheel studs, 99s and 1979-'80 900s use a shorter wheel stud on the front (P/N 89-28-137) than on the rear (P/N 89-07-941). Beginning with '81 models, the latter part number covers both the front and rear studs.

One of Andrews' customers solved the same problem by leaving the lug nuts exposed and using the black plastic cap for some of Saab's optional wheels like the Silver Spoke style wheel.

One more note for those interested in different wheels on a 99 or 900: Several other manufacturers use the same 4-bolt, 4.5 inch bolt circle, so 14 and 15 inch diameter wheels from these vehicles might also fit a Saab. (13-inch wheels will not clear the caliper). None of these wheels has been tried to allow for correct offset, caliper clearance or center hub diameter. If you have tried any of these, please write to NINES and let us know how it works. The manufacturers are: Datsun/Nissan, Dodge Colt/Mitsubishi, Mazda (FWD only), MGB, Triumph TR6, and Toyota.

Returning to the problem of fitting 900 wheels to the NINE-T9, I'm beginning to think it may have been wiser and less expensive to have purchased new aftermarket wheels. - TWJ

Broken electric antenna mast replacement

Working in the basement, I was absent-mindedly pushing the button on the remote control garage door operator in my pocket and it happened -- the door closed on my wife's 900S as it was entering the garage, bending the extended electric antenna ninety degrees at its base. Upon examining the damage, the antenna snapped off leaving the interior nylon control line exposed. I cut the line, replaced my wife's car's antenna with the one from my 900S, and taped the hole shut with electrical tape.

Reading through last year's NINES to see what someone else had done in a similar situation, I came across a letter in which the writer had decided not to confront "a bag of worms" by opening the antenna to replace the mast, but rather to replace the antenna with a short, rubber unit from Radio Shack. A brave soul, I purchased the replacement mast from Saab and asked how to install it.

"Just pull out the old antenna," I was told, "making sure to pull all the nylon line out, then slip the nut over the new one, and have someone turn the car's radio on, then off, and feed the nylon line in as the antenna retracts. That's all there is to it." Ha!

Through my own trail and error, here is what appears to be the most straightforward mast replacement procedure (for 1985-86 900s, others may be different).

1. Purchase a replacement antenna mast from a Saab dealer -- about \$24.
2. Examine the broken end of the antenna remaining in the fender. Note that there is a sleeve retaining the lower end of the antenna in the housing. Over the years, dirty grease will collect in this sleeve tightly around the base of the mast, precluding its easy removal from the motor unit.
3. Have someone turn the radio on. As the antenna extender motor is

operating, pull the remaining toothed nylon line out of the base unit. It will come out cleanly, with perhaps two or three jerks on the line. Remember that there is a safety shutoff in the motor assembly that prevents motor burnout once the antenna is extended or retracted.

4. Open the left rear interior fender covering (four attachment points).
5. Remove the two Torx screws retaining the assembly. Pull up on the drain tube, then drop the unit out of the hole in the fender sheetmetal.
6. Remove the two screws retaining the sheetmetal mast guide tube in the plastic motor housing. Slide out the guide tube and its interior plastic lining. Nothing else will come out of the unit.
7. Using the large end of the broken antenna (making sure it is rounded off so as to preclude damaging anything else), push the

retaining sleeve and broken antenna stub up out of the tube guide.

8. Replace the guide tube and its two screws.
9. Remount the motor unit in the fender well. Make sure the drain line is vertical in the well.
10. Slide the retaining sleeve over the new antenna mast and feed the toothed nylon line as far into the motor unit as it will go.
11. Get someone to turn the radio on, then off. As the retractor goes into operation, feed the nylon line into the unit until it reaches full retraction. SUCCESS! Replace the plastic guide / rubber seal over the antenna and fender, then remount the nut and tighten.

Gerald Plotkin
St. Charles, IL

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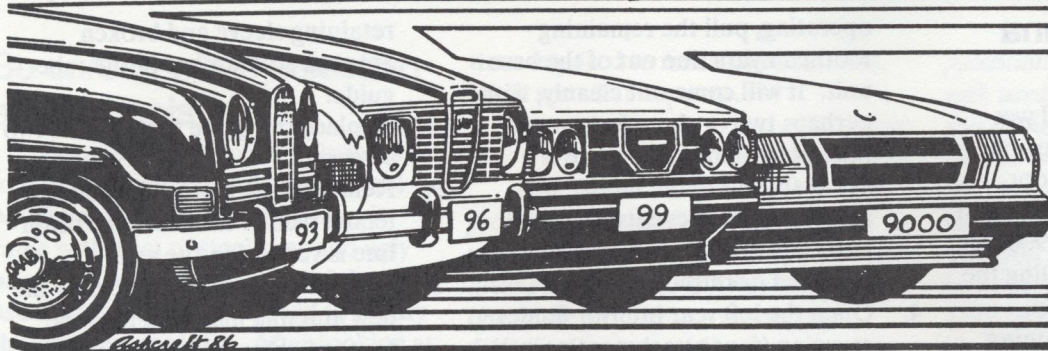
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DEADLINE: Second Friday of each month for the following month's issue, i.e. the 2nd Friday in January for the February issue.

COMMERCIAL DISPLAY ADS: Contact the editor for rates and info. Deadline, 1st Friday of each month for the following month's issue.

Sonett's For Sale

'74 Sonett III, good cond, 51k mi, recent engine work, new clutch, new brakes. Stored 8 years. \$2495 or trade? Steve Douglas, 242 Mill Farm Rd, Noblesville, IN 46060. 317/773-4682.*

'74 Sonett III, 100k mi, good overall cond, runs & drives, pan starting to rust. Easy restoration or excellent parts car. Spring barn cleaning. \$1500 obo. Mark Schrader, 27 Dorset, Edwardsville, IL 62025. 618/656-3504.*

'69 Sonett V4, show car. Original blue paint, glass, interior all in excellent cond. Garaged 8 yrs, +12 yrs in Calif. Send SASE for color photo. \$8000. Paul Derby, 5300 Forslin Dr, Edina, MN 55436. 612/925-0013.

'66 Sonett II, pre-production #26 of 28. Good original cond, runs well, 50k mi, no rust, needs upholstery, rare. \$10,000 or best offer. Robert Garber, 41841 Lawrence Ct, Elyria, OH 44035. 216/324-5507 or 322-6226.

93s, 95s & 96s For Sale

'72 96, new valves & clutch, needs brakes, fan bearing & balance shaft gear soon. \$500. Stuart Gaetjens, 1733 Valley Rd Apt.D, Champaign, IL 61820. 217/355-1409.*

'63 96 w/o eng, no rust or dents, rare. '66 95 & '66 96 3-cyl. Great rebuilders. '67 96-V4, runs perfect, great rebuilders. Lots of spare parts, engines & trans. Lane Shumaker, 157 Riverside Av, Golden, MO 65658. 417/271-3801 8am-5pm*

'69 96, 79k mi, blue, Southern car. Very good condition. Can bring car to Minneapolis or Duluth. Robin Vora, 188 Sherry Ave, Park Falls, WI 54552. 715/762-2497.*

Two '67 96 3-cyl: one oil injected, one gas/oil mixer; one blue, one brown, both run good. Plus spare parts. \$2,000 or offer. Herb Nelson, 3310 S Fulton Ct, Denver, CO 80231. 303/755-0326.

Parting out: '67 96; '73 96; '69, '73, '74 Sonetts, '79 900 5-dr. V4 engines & trans. Contact Bev at Trio Motors, 2501 S. Center, Burton, MI 48519. 313/742-7250.

Parts for '74 Sonett & '70 95, no eng or trans. Send SASE for list or call. Stu Barranco, 1876 Woodstock Rd, Woodstock, MD 21163. 301/465-9429.

750cc Piston Set - NEW - "B", .05 oversize, complete with wrist pin & bearing. \$250. Walt Chapman, 73 Main St, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370. 413/625-6147.

Sonett III parts: engines, trans, whole or parts. Brake parts, steering column, right door w/ glass (like new), mag wheels, driver & axle, complete A/C unit, misc items... Neil Lindemann, PO Box 3153, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. 313/994-5236.

Windshield from '74 Sonett, NEW in factory box. \$100. Tom DeRose, 504 Briar Rd, Bellingham, WA 98225. 206/671-4599 eves.

Factory SAAB manuals: '62-'64 96, GT850, Sport, \$40. Sonett II (95-96), \$40. 99, '75-on, \$70. 900 ('85) in fact. binders, \$85. '74-77 Service supplements, \$40. UPS incl. Margrit Adler, 1507 W University, Champaign, IL 61821. 217/356-9244.

96 front & rear fenders, hoods, trunklids, doors, bumpers, hubcaps, wheels, radiators, 99 front & rear rubber bumpers, \$50 ea. 99 wheels, \$8 ea. GT750 tach, \$50. 3-cyl radiator, \$35. Charles Dodson, 7 Wainwright Ave, Annapolis, MD 21403. 301/267-9245.

99s and 900s For Sale

'84 900S 3 door, 5-speed, 36k mi, one owner, excellent car, maintained by the book. \$6450 firm. Jay Cook, 1209 Coventry Dr, Stevens Point, WI 54481. 715/341-9188.

'82 900 Turbo 3 door, 5-spd. Showroom cond. Asking \$7500. Richard Rudenko, PO Box 156, Babson Park, FL 33827. 813/638-2691.

'82 900 4 door, 5-speed. Pioneer AM/FM cassette. Low miles, mint cond, very well maintained. Regret, must sell. Bruce Palermo, 75 West Pond Meadow Rd, Westbrook, CT 06498. 203/399-9596.

'80 900 Turbo, 5 door, 5-spd, sunroof, AC, 81k mi, Dorado brown, red int. Good cond. \$3000. Tom McKimm, Mt Freedom, NJ. 201/895-3348.

'77 99 5 door, 110k mi, Dorado brown, tan interior, PS, AC, rblt auto trans 5K, new timing chain, sprockets, guides, rblt calipers. \$1600. Tom McKimm, Mt Freedom, NJ. 201/895-3348.

'77 99GL and '77 99EMS: Complete and in servicable condition. Could be refurbished or parted out. \$650 for both. Graham Starr, 112 Russell Rd, Fanwood, NJ. 201/322-8247.

'75 99, 2nd owner, body & engine good, trans problem 3rd gear. Interior needs some work. Marie Dean, FL. 305/666-4549 after 6pm.*

'70 99, 2-dr, 4-spd, blue, 1.85 carb eng, '74 trans, 175k mi, 3rd CA owner. Well kept, driven daily. \$1500. Bruce Ashley, PO Box 2955, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. 408/429-8300.

99, 900 and 9000

Parts and Accessories

99/900 engines, transmissions, racks, control arms, axle assemblies, rotors, EMS mags, instrument clusters, wiring harnesses, body parts, interiors. Installation and parts list available. Henry's Recycled Saab, 310 George Ave, Baltimore, MD 21221. 301/686-2446 or 301/391-2747.

Parting out several 900s, including '85 900-T and '78 99 EMS. Rod Beckner, 604 E 1st, Albany, OR 97321. 503/581-0581 days.

Rebuilt 5-speed Transmissions & tranny parts. Heads, radiators, turbochargers, power steering. Complete 900 interiors, carpet sets, dashboards. Complete drivetrains, suspensions, wheels, glass, body parts, more... Michael Caro, 278 Boston Post Rd, Orange, CT 06477. 203/795-0776.

Weber "Big Throat" to replace throttle body on CIS 99/900, new in box, \$125. Set of 4 Kleber C4T 185/65TR15 tires, 10k mi, \$175 incl. shpg. Tim Winker, 2416 London Rd #900, Duluth, MN 55812. 218/724-1336.

'69-78 99 parts: 1.7, 1.85, 2.0 liter engines & transmissions, auto or manual, whole or parts. Suspension, glass, body, interior, bumpers, mag or steel wheels, axles, misc. Neil Lindemann, PO Box 3153, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. 313/994-5236.

Clearing out inventory of used 84-86 parts: headlights, new covered bumpers, grilles, parking lights, hood, 16-valve engine (less accessories), oil coolers, front axles & joints, racks, rotors, glass, wheels, A/C units etc. Douglass Wood, 32 Depot St., Westford, MA 01886. 508/692-5645.

Parted out '71 99E 4-spd. All parts in very good condition. Must sell ASAP. Paul Hein, Lansing, MI 48864. 517/349-4380.*

4 Continental CH51 195/60HR15, \$220. Set of 4 Koni gas shocks from 99T, \$170. Only 500 miles on both. Shipping included. John Blas, 2400 S 2nd Ave, N Riverside, IL 60546. 312/447-3021.

Wanted, All Models

Blue seats (F & R) for aging 900 4-door. Will consider leather if reasonable. Also, set of (4) alloy wheels desired. Tom Schwartz, 5231 Coy Rd, Canandigua, NY 14424. 716/396-2304.

Saab factory poster, blue on white, listing all SAAB models up to the 900. Call collect. Jordan Kramer, PO Box 1290, Berkeley, CA 94701. 415/540-6743.

'84-'86 900 APC Turbo 3 door, 5-speed for project car. Prefer cloth interior, non-metallic paint, bad turbo. Tim Winker, 218/724-1336.

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Bob Sinclair, head of Saab-Scania in the U.S., prepares for the Memorial Day vintage race at Lime Rock, Connecticut, in a Quantum/SAAB Formula S.

Photo by Tom Cox

Vintage SAAB Racing Group - an Update

The VSRG recently obtained a race prepared SAAB Sonett III formerly raced by Victor Hajj of Victor SAAB. This car was retired from racing in July of 1979 and, until last month, had not turned a wheel in competition in almost ten years.

At this year's Walter Mitty Challenge at Road Atlanta it was the hit of its race group. Ken Payne had a sensational drive, finishing fourth overall behind three Lotus race cars and ahead of 45 Porsches, Alfas, Lotus 7s, etc. Other than a quick check over, new fluids and tires, nothing else was done to the car.

Our 93 race car also had good finishes both in the Enduro and sprint races, and two weeks later had another good finish at a SVRA event at Memphis Motorsport Park. Cecil Stockard and his Bandini/SAAB sports racer, and our Quantum Formula-S were also competing at both the Walter Mitty and SVRA events.

By the end of the summer we hope to have the Sonett II and a Quantum race ready, thus rounding out an almost complete collection of early SAAB race cars. Does anyone know the where-abouts of a rear engined Bobsy/SAAB sports racer?

Randy Cook
605 Lake Sardis Dr.
Slidell, LA 70461

LeGrand/SAAB

SAAB Club member David Reiter took his first outing in his 1964 LeGrand Mark IV/SAAB 850cc powered sports racer in the Chase Bank Vintage Grand Prix at Mid-Ohio on June 23-25. This was after a four month restoration of the "parts in cardboard boxes" retrieved from a friend's garage. The resulting racer, finished Thursday night before the races, looks, smells and sounds impressive.

Unfortunately, as with all race car restoration projects, some rebirthing complications still have to be worked out. Practice on Friday was curtailed by overheating problems, which were cured when a circulation blockage caused by an air bubble was corrected. Saturday's qualifying session was aborted with shift linkage problems. The LeGrand, with its mid-engine and rear-wheel drive, has a unique cable shift linkage to the SAAB 4-speed gearbox.

On Sunday during the last chance qualifying session, the street stock Monte Carlo engine was not operating to its potential, so Dave brought it in after only one lap. We thought it might be improper main jets in the carburetors after the change from street to race exhaust piping. A couple of two stroke experts, Rick Parr and Bill Jacobson, opined that our problem might be carburetor icing.

Tom Cox
3609 Hernwood Road
Woodstock, MD 21163

24 Hours in the Pits

This month your roving SAAB Paddock and Pits reporter was back in the dirty hands business in the hot pits at the Nelson Ledges road course in Garrettsville, Ohio, for the SCCA Longest Day of Nelson '89. Unlike the Memorial Day invitation to the TDK corporate tent for the TDK Challenge Barber/Saab race at Lime Rock Park, where we watched Bob Sinclair drive a 1964 Formula-S Quantum SAAB in the Paine-Webber Invitational vintage race, Nelson Ledges brought your reporter back to the muddy reality of grass roots racing.

Under the FTC Motorsports banner from Atlanta, Georgia, this year's SAAB entries were Jack Baxter's 1976 99EMS and Curtis Castleberry's 1986 900 Turbo (see NINES, June '89, pg. 22).

After 12 hours, the 900 Turbo, car #90, was running in second place in SSA, about twenty laps behind the front running 1988 Nissan 300ZX. During the thirteenth hour, gearbox problems forced it behind the pit wall. The retirement was believed to be for the remainder of the race -- optimism is not in great supply between 3 and 4 am when it is raining.

After the sun came up and out to stay, crew chief David Wolf removed the ring gear and differential assembly, and the crew was able to extract enough broken bits and pieces to enable the car to motor in first gear only. Car #90 was then able to finish, entering the track with only 5 minutes left of the 24 hours. Result, 4th in class, 33rd overall of 37 cars. As the finisher with the least amount of distance covered, car #90 was awarded a check for 99 cents.

The #99 Improved Touring EMS ended up 3rd in ITB, 35 laps behind the class winning '79 VW Rabbit and a '71 BMW 2002. This despite a pit stop of more than an hour to repair a broken upper left rear shock mount. Since the VW completed 809 laps total (an average of 34 laps an hour), the SAAB could have been in contention at the end but for the shock problem (and if pigs had wings...).

Before the race was over, Joe Garrison had entered #99 in next year's race to be sure to receive pit #1 for the third year in a row. The whole crew, too numerous to name here, will probably be back next year, including your NINES chronicler who just might have caught a touch of the 24-hour virus -- Nelson Ledges variety!

Tom Cox

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(Use also for Change of Address)

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(i.e. '84 900 S 4dr. automatic, '78 99 GLE 5dr. 4-spd, '72 96-V4)

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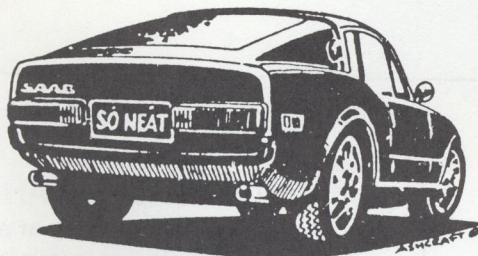
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SAAB Club decals (stickers), \$1.00 apiece

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "THE SAAB CLUB"



FROM THE BACKSIDE

I never got a chance to meet Dick Grossman, but you and I will be forever indebted to him. Dick kept the SAAB Club Newsletter going after the Chicago SAAB Club started to fade. He advertised in Road & Track and other magazines, and the regional publication grew from about a hundred to over 3,000 in just six years time. The Newsletter became the voice for SAAB owners around the country.

When I first took over as editor in late 1985, I did correspond with Dick on a few occasions, but since I'm nearly as bad at answering letters as Satch Carlson, I hadn't been in touch with him for several years.

Long time members would often ask about Dick when writing or calling, and usually referred to Dick's editorial comments with a chuckle. His "Five Minutes of Hate" editorials were often directed at domestic auto manufacturers and the accountants who ran them (and in most cases still do).

Another of Dick's pet peeves was car clubs and their newsletters that

were more of a mutual admiration society. It is one of mine as well. NINES still stands alone among marque publications in offering useable tech tips, and lots of them, on a monthly basis, at one of the lowest annual subscription prices anywhere.

The best word I've found to describe Dick Grossman is "curmudgeon" -- defined by Random House as "an irascible, churlish person", though I've usually thought of a curmudgeon also as one whose angry words speak for many, and who commands some respect for daring to put it all in print.

If threatened, Dick would take the writer to task in the pages of the newsletter (he did so with at least one SAAB dealer and the BMW Car Club of America), and the writer invariably would back down. Even if he wasn't completely right, he refused to be cornered.

I had thought to give Dick a chance to resume his "Hate" editorials, but space considerations kept me from extending the offer. It's probably just as well -- in our lawsuit-happy times, it likely would have gotten both of us in trouble.

Dick's newsletters weren't necessarily pretty, but they were read. The content kept SAAB owners coming back for more. Though my methods may be a bit different, my goals for this newsletter are pretty much the same -- to offer a forum where SAAB owners can share technical information on their cars, and do it at a reasonable cost.

I may have never met Dick Grossman, but he has had a strong influence on how I produce this newsletter. It is, after all, his legacy.

One person I was fortunate to meet at the joint meeting last month in Meriden was Walter Kern, designer of the Quantum sports car written up in the June issue. Walter drove his turbocharged Sonett III to the meet.

He gave me copies of his original sketch of the Quantum and some newspaper photos of the aluminum bodied Quantum II race car. He also brought along a scrapbook of photos and pertinent documents, but I didn't get a chance to look through it. I hope to do so someday.

Ready for this month's "excuses for lateness"? A couple of computer problems that took two weeks to resolve. They were mistakes I don't expect I'll make again. You can teach an old dog...

I'll be taking some time in the next few weeks to work on projects around the office -- like cleaning, organizing, transferring the mailing list from the Commodore 128 to the AT computer.

I have been working on the NINE-T9 again, and hope to complete the next phase in time to write an article for the September issue. With any luck it will arrive at your door by September 1.

Have a safe and fun summer!

Tim Winker, Editor

NINES

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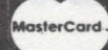
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