



# NINES

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no. 226

The SAAB Club Magazine



The Saab 2000 Regional airliner with the latest 900 and 9000 models

**9000's Flamed, Report Exposed:**

**San Francisco Examiner claims "Firey Flaw" in 9000s ... page 24**

**How to :**

**Fit a 16-valve engine into a 99 chassis ..... page 7**

**Replace a 16V timing chain without removing the engine ..... page 14**

**Repair minor cracks in older 9000 bodies ..... page 18**

**High mileage Saabs: Living long and prospering ..... page 32**

**A 300K mile 900 Turbo takes on the Ohio Winter Rally ..... page 36**

**1995 Georgia National Convention Update ..... pages 22-23**

# Regional Club News

## International Saab Clubs Meet.

June 16-19, 1995 - City of Bad Neuenahr/Ahrweiler, Germany.

## National Saab Owners Convention

Aug. 18-20 - Atlanta, GA. Chris McPherson, 404/351-SAAB. Details on pages 22-23.

## The North Central Saab Club

April 24 - Tentative detailing clinic, Milwaukee.  
 April 29 - Tentative spring cleaning tech clinic.  
 May 21 - Tentative airport tour, Milwaukee.  
 June 2-4 - Great River Road Rally  
 Andy Saksa, 414/785-1550.

## The Northwest Saab Owner's Club

April 30 - The Raindrop Rally at Kitsap Peninsula.  
 \$20 entry fee. Mark Nolte 206/226-3155.  
 July 7-9 - Norm Thompson Historic Races, Portland.

## Saab Club National Capital Area

July 2 - MWCSCC Autocross.  
 Andrea Hurtt, 301/565-2110.

## Minnesota Saab Club

May 4 - Membership meeting. Professor's, Har Mar Mall. Dean Nelson, 612/636-3771.

## Bay Area Saab Club

April ? - Swap meet with ALFA club at Alfa Parts Exchange in Hayward, CA.  
 June 24 - Rallye at 9pm. Union City to Bay Area. 510/582-1858

## San Diego/Southern California Saab Clubs

May 6 - Open House at Continental Motors in Oceanside CA (tentative). Service clinic, an opportunity to drive the new models, and access to a Saab representative.  
 Brett Martin, (619)265-8840.

## New England Sonett Club

July 15 - Annual meeting at Saabfest '95, Walden, NY. Bruce Turk, 914/778-2469.

## Saab Club of Greater New York

July 15 - Annual meeting at Saabfest '95, Walden, NY. Robert Wagner, 212/727-0793.

## Green Mountain Saab Club

July 15 - Annual meeting at Saabfest '95, Walden, NY. Cathleen Pembroke, 802/223-0025.

## Saab Club of Northeast PA.

Contact Ron Augelli, Scranton PA 717/969-9863.

## SAAB Club of North America

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*Tim Winker*

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*Clare Dodge*

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**Editorial contributions** are welcome. All material submitted is assumed to be for publication unless clearly labeled otherwise. Double-spaced typewritten articles are preferred, but most anything is acceptable. We cannot answer every inquiry and reserve the right to edit materials submitted.

Those wishing to submit articles or letters on 5¼" or 3½" IBM-formatted disks, please convert to ASCII text files (<filename>.TXT). Please include a printed hard copy, and a SASE if you want the disk returned.

**Photos:** Preferred format for photos is black-and-white, in 5"x7" or 8"x10". Good contrast color photos can usually be accommodated, no smaller than 3½"x5", please. Photos used on the cover will be rewarded with a one year subscription to NINES.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** Eight weeks notice is required for change of address. Please send new address and old address, including zip codes, to the SAAB Club at the address above.

**RETURNED CHECKS:** There will be a fee of \$10.00 charged for checks returned for any reason.

## Clubs & Contacts

### Appalachian SAAB Club

Ken Edwards  
 296 Brethren Church Rd  
 Jonesborough TN 37659  
 615/ 753-3153

### Bay Area SAAB Club

(Northern California)  
 Douglas Morse  
 25291 Morse Ct.  
 Hayward, CA 94542  
 510/ 582-1858.

### Central Penn SAAB Club

Meets: 1st Tuesday, Bube's Brewery, Mt Joy, PA. Social hour at 6:30pm, Meeting at 8:00pm.  
 George Basehore  
 477 E. Main St.  
 Middletown PA 17057  
 717/ 944-2915.

### Delaware Valley SAAB Club

Meets: 2nd Thursday, 7:30pm  
 Pat Bolmeyer  
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 302/ 695-3125 or  
 302/ 994-6357

### Great Lakes SAAB Club

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 2121 E. Capitol Dr. #403  
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 1420 15 Terrace NW  
 New Brighton MN 55112  
 612/ 636-3771.

### Montreal SAAB Club

E. Peter McLoughlin  
 c/o Dormer Laboratories  
 6600 Trans Canada Hwy  
 Pointe Claire, Quebec H9R 4S2  
 514/ 451-5165.

### New England Sonett Club

Meets: 1st weekend in March, June, Sept. & Dec.  
 P.O. Box 4362  
 Manchester, NH 03108.

### Northwest SAAB Owners

(Washington, Oregon, Brit. Columbia)  
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### Western Pennsylvania SAAB Club

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 9433 Katherine Dr.  
 Allison Park PA 15101  
 412/ 364-4780.

# Letters to NINES

## Water pump failures?

The Professional Perspective article by Chuck Andrews regarding ersatz Saab parts was most informative. I take issue, however, with the statement, "Our experience has shown that the original Saab pump will go an average of 80,000 (miles)." I've driven Saabs of the 99, 900 and 9000 genre since 1976, and I've never had a water pump failure. My two current 9000's have 135,000 and 60,000 miles on them and their pumps are just fine.

I think the correct statement might be that, of the Saab water pumps that fail, they do it an average of 80,000 miles. Thus the failures are being measured, not the entire population of Saab water pumps.

Now, I have a question. My the brakes on my 1986 9000 squeal unmercifully, even after replacing the pads. The rotors are somewhat scored and have a distinct ridge at the outer circumference. The dealer said the rotors probably should be replaced, or turned down if they're not under spec. First, what is the spec? Second, where can I get new rotors for less than the megabucks my dealer wants? Third, is that outer ridge the reason for the squeal?

Bill Fishburne  
via CompuServe

## NINES saves a bundle of Deutschmarks

Hello from a member of the Saab Club of North America who's living in Germany. I want to thank you and other Saab enthusiasts who contribute to NINES for saving me a bundle of money.

Last week my US spec '91 Talledega Red 9000 Turbo S started blowing hot air only thru the heating system. It appeared that the ACC was operating correctly as I did the calibration using the Auto and Vent buttons. As I did not smell anything unusual as in an electrical burnout, I checked all fuses and everything checked out. I decided it was time to go to the Saab dealer and say "fix-it".

Prior to going to Saab, I explained to a friend who is an avionic mechanic that I was an unhappy camper because of the problem. He asked if I would allow him to take a look and maybe diagnose the problem before I went to Saab. I agreed and within ten minutes and an 8mm socket, he found the

problem. The lever on the air mixing damper had been broken. As this was Friday, I said let's do an epoxy fix and I'll get it to Saab on Monday (today). Epoxy didn't work and so I went through another "hot air only" weekend.

Sunday morning while having coffee, I hit a brainstorm idea. Why not review the previous editions of NINES and see if by some chance there was a recall from Saab to fix such a problem. B-I-N-G-O! Edition #223 (Jul 94), pg 11 has the article referring to the Air Mixing Damper. Overjoyed as now I know that for about \$10.00 I can get this problem put to rest.

I proceeded to the most renowned Saab dealer here in Nürnberg, Germany, and explained my problem and requested an estimate for repair. I was told the repair of this item would cost me approximately \$200.00! I again asked and got the same reply!! I then whipped out NINES and said that all that was needed was the steel lever and a little rubber bushing but I didn't think Saab had them cast out of gold!! The mechanic informed me that in Germany, they only replaced the whole mixing damper door and the metal lever did not exist. I couldn't accept this and asked to speak with the head mechanic. I informed him of the part in question and showed him the NINES article complete with pictures!! He still insisted that this was only in *America* and the part obviously did not come from Saab. I read the part numbers to him and he typed them in the computer. I wish you could have seen his face. The part numbers and the part identification jumped up on the computer screen. I won't repeat what he said, but you can probably guess. I believe he is still washing egg off his face. He stated that he will immediately order my parts as well as reserve for his dealership. I'll have my parts on Wednesday afternoon and be rid of my "hot air".

I want to again state a word of thanks to you and the great crew who put NINES together and also to Daniel L. David of Saab Cars USA, Inc. My subscription has paid for itself many times over as of today!!

Part two of the story concerns me with the continuing education of Saab dealerships. The technical bulletin printed in NINES had to be available and forwarded to the Saab dealerships throughout the world sometime last year. In this day and age, most Saab dealerships are on an E-mail system linked directly to Saab to receive the latest bulletins on technical information. It appears this one fell through the crack and probably has

caused numerous Saab owners considerable money unnecessarily!! The question remains how many other Saab "fixes" are out there that have not been picked up on as of yet by the dealers that service us? I was lucky, NINES helped me out. What's happening to our fellow Saab owners who aren't so lucky ...they pay the price!!!! A letter will be sent to Saab in Trollhattan expressing my concerns and highlighting this incident. Ten dollars is a long way off from \$200!!

I have one last item before I close. A very close friend also has a '91 9000 Turbo S and he was told at his last service (Munich, Germany) that his timing belt and oil pump will be replaced at Saab expense on his next service or when he finds time to bring it in the shop. Do you know of any problems that Saab has uncovered to warrant these replacements? I have not been contacted by Saab but will be inquiring soonest to the dealer as to why and if my Saab is in this VIN group.

I thank you for your supportive ear and it would be great to meet you if you visit Germany for the June 95 International Saab Clubs Meet in Neuenahr/Ahrweiler, Germany. If you find the time, I'd like to hear your views on the continuing education of Saab dealerships.

Mack Everett McClure II  
Wachendorf, Germany  
via CompuServe

## Sonett Contest Update

*The Sonett contest continues!* Fewer entries needed! You may recall my ad to "Win a Saab Sonett" in issues 224-S and 225. You may even have entered. Thank you very much if you did. However, as of 3/6/95 I've received only 41 entries - a bit short of my desired 150 to hold the contest.

I've enjoyed reading all the entries and want someone to win this Saab. Therefore, I'm reducing the number of required entries from 150 to 100 (or even reasonably close to 100!) and extending the entry deadline to April 30, 1995. By the end of May, 1995, the car will be awarded or you'll have your money back.

Procrastinators unite - this is the last extension. Please check the above issues for entry information - everything's the same except for the dates and minimum entries required. Thanks and I hope to see you in the mail!

Tom Remedios  
233 Dorn Ave. #3  
Everett, WA 98208  
206/353-5358

## An open letter to James Crumlish

Dear Mr. Crumlish:

I am certain that you read the April *Car and Driver* Road Test of the 900 Turbo Coupe. While the review was generally favorable, the car was criticized by C&D for its apparent lack of low-rpm torque. While the 2.0L engine has a high torque rating at a relatively low 2100 rpm, that value is available only after the boost has come up.

I don't have any experience with the current 2.0L turbo engine, but my wife's 9000 with the older 2.0L engine is also a "dog" until the boost comes up. The 2.3L Turbo, on the other hand, seems to build torque from a much higher level, giving the sense of immediate thrust. I attribute this to the larger displacement (more mixture drawn in to burn), compounded by the longer stroke (the pressure of the burned mixture has a longer lever arm to press against. Thus, the basic 2.3L Turbo engine develops 25% more torque, even though the peak power is only 8% greater than the 2.0L Turbo).

So why does Saab put the 2.0L in the 900? It can't be for cost reasons; I doubt that the longer crank throws and higher block cost more than a couple of dollars extra. It can't be for packaging reasons; the 2.3L normally aspirated engine fits just fine. The EPA mileage ratings of the heavier and wider 9000 Turbo is the same as the 900's, so mileage isn't the reason. (Besides, Saabs are averaged with Geo Metros to calculate their CAFE.) Is it to avoid hurting the feelings of those who paid more for a 9000 Turbo but would have a slower car? Maybe that is a marketing reality in Europe, but with 5.0 L Mustangs costing \$15K that can run the pants of any Saab ever made, at least to 60, and with the safety Nazis in great abundance, that notion, in the U.S., is just silly.

From an engineering perspective, the current 2.0L architecture is an anachronism. The short stroke design follows from the 8-valve head, where the large valve openings necessary for decent breathing demand a large piston diameter, and the lack of balance shafts limit the stroke to reduce the shaking forces. The 16 valve head has ample breathing capability for the larger displacement engine, and the balance shafts obviate the need to limit the stroke.

Imagine the Road Test Report that *Car and Driver* would publish on a 2.3 Turbo 900!

Stephen Goldberger  
N. Canton OH

## From 96 to 9000

Having driven "pre-owned" Saabs for the past 19 years - starting with a two-stroke 96, then a V4 DeLuxe, a 99GL, a 900, and a 900 Turbo - and approaching major rebuild time on my 900 Turbo, it was finally time to fork out the dollars and purchase a new automobile. A new Saab was certainly high on the list, but with the plethora of new cars out there, I decided to look at everything I could. My constraints were: bigger than an econobox, good gas mileage, manual transmission, and ABS.

Well, those constraints threw every American car off the list. Ford, Chrysler, and GM dealers looked at me as a freak when I asked to test drive a car with a manual transmission. Replies were "we don't order them that way", "you mean stripped?", or "nobody ever asks for those." I guess I am "nobody".

The Asian cars were quite expensive, lifeless, and, well, tacky.....

So that left the Europeans, and I was very surprised by this investigation. At Volvo, I was told that less than 10% of production for the US has a manual, and that I would have to order one to test drive it! Mercedes-Benz has only automatics (and incredible sticker prices!) VW has a new Jetta, but it is terribly underpowered. Audis were all automatic and very expensive!

That left BMW and Saab. The only BMW in my mid-20s price range was the 318i, which was quite small. I found the body flimsy. Equally disconcerting was the "raked" windshield that ended up at my eyebrows. Poor BMW. The old 3 series was so airy.... (Come to think of it, Volvo was the only exception to the "raked" windshield interior. How do people get used to a windshield at one's eyebrows?!)

So, I went to my Saab dealer to test drive the new 900. The ride was quite busy, even on a newly paved road. I could barely see out to the back, and the view over my left shoulder was totally blocked by the seat belt pillar. What a surprise to be changing lanes, take a glance over my left shoulder, and see only black plastic. The build quality was great, but I can't warm to the styling. Unlike many others, I find the rear end the best looking part of the car. It is the front that is disconcerting. It is puffy and bulbous, and looks like it was just tacked on. Compare it to the beautiful, integrated, fighter-plane lines of the old 900.

So, as I was wagging my head, ready to abandon the search and replace the tranny, steering rack, etc. on my 900 Turbo, the

salesman said "have you ever driven a 9000?" I had in 1990, and was unimpressed with the ride and quality. The salesman said, "they are a lot better now, the new CS is a great re-design".

Well, my friends, the search ended with that test ride. The 9000CS is a truly lovely machine. It reminds me of the old 900 and 96 in its no nonsense, intelligent design. It rides quietly, handles beautifully, has a smooth powerful engine (2.3-16v non-turbo), shifts impeccably, and is noticeably devoid of glitzy apparatus. MPG is 28 on regular fuel. The fit and finish is exquisite, the tactile feel of everything top notch. The new CS is worthy of a serious look by anyone looking for a new Saab, even Saab diehards like me.

In the first 10K miles, there hasn't been a single problem, squeak, or rattle. The hatchback is a joy; in one trip last week I hauled 400 pounds of feed, a livestock watering tank, a bale of peat moss, and three 5 foot pine trees. Try that in most any other automobile! My only request: some more headroom.

With some special deals from Saab, the dealer dealt me a new CS at about the price of that tight 318i (or for that matter, a Bonneville or Taurus). It is a great pleasure to have such a fantastic car as my first new Saab.

Paul Henderson  
Far Hills, NJ

## Racing help?

I would like to request two items of information from my fellow members.

What are the best front suspension settings for a 99 used in Improved Touring racing. What are the ranges for caster, camber and tow-in?

The second question is what are your opinions on the best car for Pro-Rally, the 99 or the 900. Our old 99 chassis is about done in. After all, it was driven only on weekends by a little old grey headed man. Of course, the man was Jon Davis and in the course of the weekends, he drove to two Production Class championships. After this, the car sat in Michigan for a while before making its way to Dallas. Unfortunately, the combination of Michigan winters and yumps has caused the chassis to become swaybacked beyond my means of repair. Any advice would be appreciated.

Thanks for the help.

Richard J. Miller P.E.  
6505 Hilltop Trail  
Sachse, TX 75048

# 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: SAAB KLINIK, 2416 London Road, Unit 900, Duluth, MN 55812-2221

I have a 1985 900 Turbo with the ceiling coming undone. My mechanic said he's known others with the problem but wasn't sure of the solution. Could you help me in this matter?

Le Roy Bitzan  
Alexandria MN

*I know of three possible solutions:*

1. Purchase a new headliner from a Saab dealer. This is a moderately expensive part.

2. Purchase a repair kit to replace the cloth covering the deadliner. This can be found in the "Saab Swap" section of NINES.

3. Take the car to an auto upholstery or top shop for professional replacement of the material. This may be the best solution. I have seen several done nicely and at a reasonable price.

How do I cure squeaky brakes on my '88 9000? Factory equipment was replaced by the dealer (Fields - Glenview, IL) at 50,000 miles. Now at 60,000 miles in summer heat, the front brakes squeal like a CTA bus during start and stop driving. The dealer says they've got a "varnish" build-up and the cure is hard braking. I say that procedure will get me rear-ended. What will fix this problem?

Herbert H. Zuegel  
Park Ridge IL

*I believe your dealer was describing how brake pads can become glazed on the friction surface due to light brake application. Braking forcefully to a stop several times in a row from 40mph (when traffic and safety permit) may eliminate the sound at least temporarily. Your letter did not say if the brake rotors were resurfaced when the pads were replaced. This should be done when the pads are replaced to minimize squeal.*

I am experiencing difficulty with the locking mechanism on the hatchback door of my '93 900S 3 door. I bought it new in

September 94; for the first ten months there weren't any locking problems. Then for no apparent reason, the hatchback started to pop open once every other day, progressing to the point where it would open on every journey, no matter how short. There seems to be no pattern that I can detect. The door opens irrespective of load, road surface, weather conditions, etc.

I have taken it to two different dealers in Metropolitan Toronto; neither has been able to eliminate the problem, after endless adjustments, two lock replacements and assurances that "this time it is fixed".

Have you heard of this problem? I'm on my fourth 3 door since 1975, and this is the first time I have encountered a problem with locks. What do you think is the cause of the problem and what is the probable cure?

Norman W. Leslie  
Ontario Canada

*Saab issued a service information regarding this problem, #01/89-1105. It involves shimming and adjusting the hatch latch.*

I have a 1989 9000 Turbo 5-speed with 83,000 miles. It has been extremely reliable until recently, when the engine started dying between shifts. I have checked for vacuum leaks and found none. The engine RPMs drop to zero whenever the clutch is depressed, unless I allow the RPMs to drop to 1,000 RPM or less before shifting, at which point the engine maintains idle. Starting is fine, both cold and warm.

Anthony Greenway  
Ramona CA

*It sounds like you have a bad turbo bypass valve. This is a small black plastic valve located at the turbo air inlet pipe. To test the valve remove the small diameter vacuum hose from the valve and apply a vacuum to the valve. It should hold vacuum, if it does not, replace the valve. Also, if the valve is held in with plastic clamps replace*

*them with metal clamps. The plastic clamps can break causing a permanent stall.*

Do 9000 Turbo/Automatics have temperature gauge readings that run above the mid-mark? Mine runs to the 3/4 mark (never in the red) in hot weather. I have changed the water pump, thermostat, and coolant. I have asked at the dealer and they say this is normal.

Also, I recently changed the water pump as it was seeping coolant from the weep hole. I purchased an original Saab part, and I thought it odd that the new part has been redesigned without a weep hole. Anyway my tip of the month is that to remove and install the water pump in the car you need a special tool for the bolt hidden by the metal coolant pipe in front. You can really purchase a Toyota distributor wrench (12mm, about \$8.00). This will do the trick perfectly, even better than using a crowfoot wrench.

Another note when doing this job is that you must use phosphate-free Anti-freeze. Saab sells their coolant for some ridiculous price and meets a certain BASF specification. LO and BEHOLD, BASF is the manufacturer of ZEREX Anti-freeze. They sell a product call ZEREX Extreme which they claim meets Saab's and most other European manufacturers specifications.

Mark S. Dayan  
Pembroke Pines FL

*It sounds like your cooling system is functioning properly. It is normal for the engine temperature to rise in traffic to 212 degrees F (about 3/4 on the gauge), at which point the engine cooling fan should come on. The fan should shut off when coolant temp reaches 205 degrees F.*

My north-going 1992 900 recently made the acquaintance of an east-going 1992 German Shepherd in an unfortunate 40 mph impact. While most of the damage was confined to the canine, the Saab's headlight wiper system suffered serious trauma:



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After the accident, I removed and repaired the non-functioning wiper-motor assembly. For weeks, the reassembled part appeared to work fine.

This week, however, I've noticed that the wiper blade runs intermittently on its own, just after the ignition is turned on. It continues to cycle on and off without reason — and has now been unplugged.

During winter storms, I've noticed that the headlight wipers, which sometimes become misaligned after being frozen to the headlights, will magically realign themselves by cycling on and off at start up in a similar manner.

Has this magic now turned against me? If so, what can be done to correct it short of installing a used (read: expensive) or new (read: really expensive) motor assembly?

Leonard F. Johnson, Jr.  
Norwalk CT

*The only sure fix is to replace the wiper motor.*

My 900 seems to be riding harshly. Specifically joints and holes in the highway are very jarring. Is it possible for the shocks to get stiff as they age? How can I tell if this has happened?

We're due for the 60,000 mile service. Any hints on what to expect/avoid at the dealer?

Pat S. Broos  
Boalsburg PA

*Yes, it is possible for shocks to "get stiff" with age. Short of removing them and testing them on a shock dyno (a rare testing device), a good road test by an experienced Saab tech should give you a determination.*

*As to the 60,000 mile service: Ask to have all the old parts returned to you. Ask them to fill out and return the 60,000 mile service/inspection card in your service booklet.*

I purchased a 1989 900 Automatic with 39,700 miles. What can we expect from the 3-speed automatic in terms of service miles? Most of my GM cars have made 150K with no problems, will the Saab hold up? How often would you service the transmission, fluid change?

The RPM's run at about 3,000 to 3,300 when at 55 to 60mph road speed. Is that about the same in the five speeds? It seems

like the little 4 banger is really working out on the highway.

Chuck & Ian

*I would replace the ATF at 30,000 miles intervals. Be particularly careful of cleanliness when refilling, as even minute particles can fool valves in the transmission. Use Type F automatic transmission fluid. You should replace the final drive (differential) oil at the same time, use 10W-30 engine oil. With proper care you should be able to get similar life from this trans.*

*The RPMs run about 600-700 RPM higher on the highway with the auto trans as opposed to the 5-speed. Saab has gone to a 4-speed automatic on newer models for better economy and comfort.*

I own a White '92 900 3 door with the original paint. The car is regularly washed and waxed. For sometime there have been small rust spots appearing all over the car (hood, doors, top and tailgate). The spots are actually small holes in the paint down to the bare metal. The local Saab dealer wants to wet sand the paint and apply a sealer. Local paint shops do not agree with wet sanding, thinking the paint is already thin and causing the rust.

Have you heard of this before? What is done to correct the situation?

Scott Shiple  
Miami FL

*I have not heard of this problem before, but would suggest you contact your Saab dealer. Have him make an appointment for your regional DSM inspect the paint for defects.*

I've tried using halogen backup bulbs in two taillights of my '84 900 3-door. Unfortunately, the heat generated by the bulbs melts the plastic mounting base where the bulbs twist in, allowing the bulbs to migrate away from the electrical contacts and eventually fail to light up.

Bart Von Zastrow  
Monterey CA

*I use a Bosch 55W fog lamp (normally found on the front of a Saab 900T) under the rear bumper in the center, jumpered off of the reverse lamps. Besides excellent illumination it also looks racey.*

## Professional Perspective

### 16-valve Turbo transplant into a 99

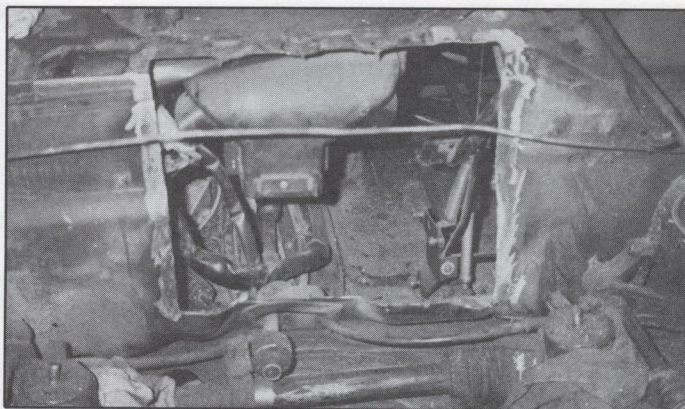
Many of us have been around the 99's since they were new and are reluctant to let them die. They are still nice to drive, have a nice seat position and, I suppose, just plain feel good.

At some point, those B engines become more than a little trying. The '78 99 Turbos are an example of "fun to drive", but have had and will always have a high maintenance factor. The car in the pictures belongs to Dan Duffy of Minneapolis. He has had to replace three heads and two turbos in 125,000 miles. Dan obviously still liked the car, but was tired of major repairs. His solution for this was an engine transplant.

The following pictures will demonstrate what it takes to get a 16-valve B202 Turbo engine into a "streetable", dependable configuration in a 99 Turbo body. This is not intended to be a step by step "how to", but a general why and what the procedure looks like. Every transplant will likely differ because of the owner's goal for the vehicle. The 99T pictured is a daily commuter car in Minneapolis and has been for thirteen years.

This conversion uses the stock 4-speed transmission and our first goal is to keep the stock geometry of the engine mounts. (Installing a 5-speed into a 99 chassis requires a whole different set of modifications.) The (rear) stock side mounts are used as shown in Picture #1. Also in Picture #1 we demonstrate the section of firewall that must be removed to clear the crankshaft dampener of the 16V. The new insert panel is shown in #2. Picture #3 shows the panel caulked and bolted into place. Inside the car the accelerator pedal must be relocated slightly and reattached. On the outside, the face of the heater housing is trimmed to give enough clearance for the belts and A/C compressor, if one is to be installed. Picture #4 shows completed firewall with engine mounts and heater, accelerator cable in view. The brake line, as you can see, must be re-routed. On the firewall end of the 16V engine we retain all stock pulleys, water pump, etc. By using the 99T's engine mount bracket on the driver's side and modifying a "B" engine right mount bracket, we now have the engine at the correct relationship to the wheels (CV joints and inner driver angles are stock, so dependability is maintained).

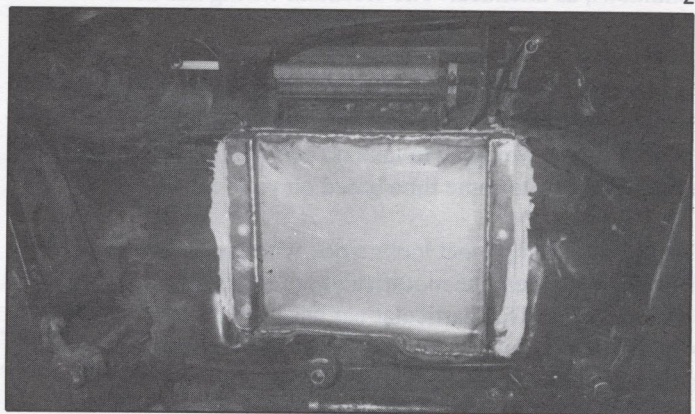
Because the head and valve cover are much taller on the B202 engine than on the older "B", we must lower the front of



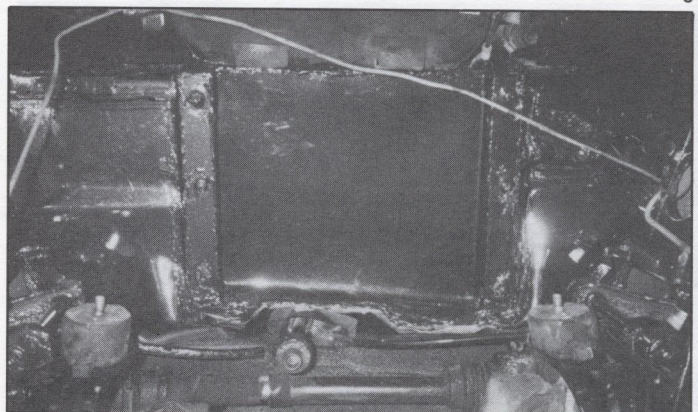
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the engine to gain enough hood clearance. This necessitates a small modification at the lower crossmember. Picture #5 shows the straightening ribs trimmed from the top of the member. Picture #6 shows the 1/4" plate that we form and weld in to retain the structural integrity. This small change gives enough clearance on the transmission so we don't have any rattle under hard acceleration.

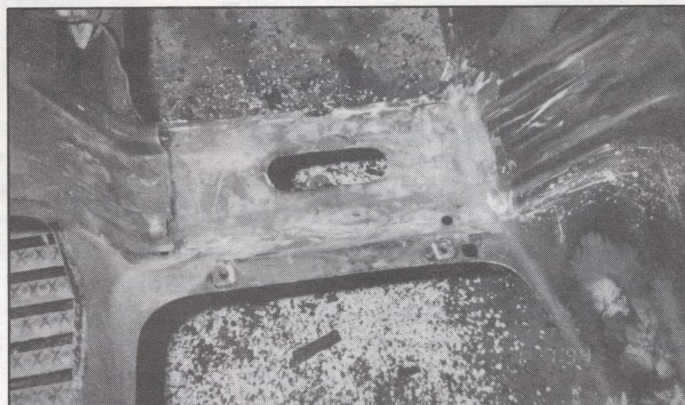
Picture #7 shows the stock 99 front engine mount and front crossmember. #8 shows the necessary trimming, forming and weld through primer applied ready for modification. #9 shows boxed and lowered mount area in the same position, but lower in the crossmember. #10 shows mount in place and lower crossmember finished, ready for the driveline.

In pictures #11 and 12, with drive line installed, you'll notice the battery has been removed and relocated to under the floor in the hatch area. Exhaust has plenty of clearance. The 16V header pipe is cut off and welded to trimmed original header so the stock exhaust is retained. Radiator clearance remains just as in the original 99T. 99T radiator and fans are held in stock position.

Picture #13 shows driver's side with CIS injection installed on 16V engine. Warmup regulator, auxiliary air valve, etc, are all installed so the engine will perform in all conditions, as intended. The electrical wiring has been modified so all components could be reached.

Our labor time to complete this job was about 50 hours. Bear in mind that we do body work and mechanical work every day, so if you plan to take on a project like this, you might want to add some time based on your experience.

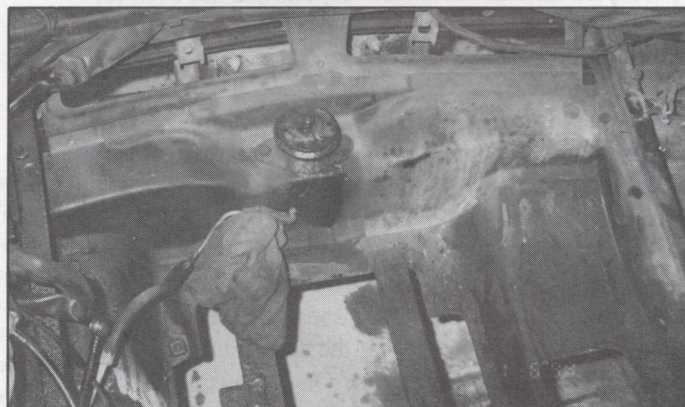
The finished project looks stock with the hood closed (the front spoiler covers the modification to the front lower crossmember). This particular car has been driven for over a year and 10,000 miles since the transplant was completed. Dan is currently contemplating the addition of air conditioning. He



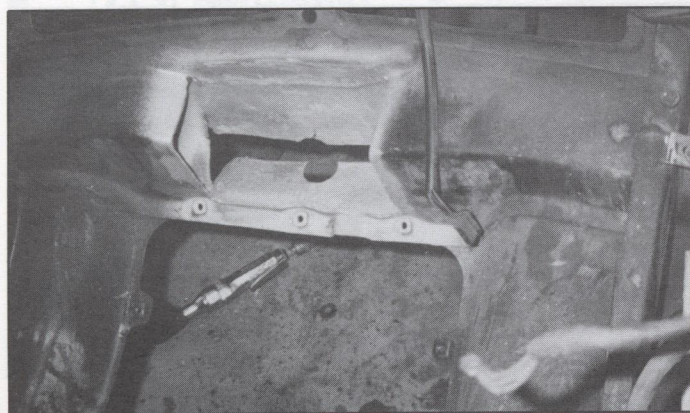
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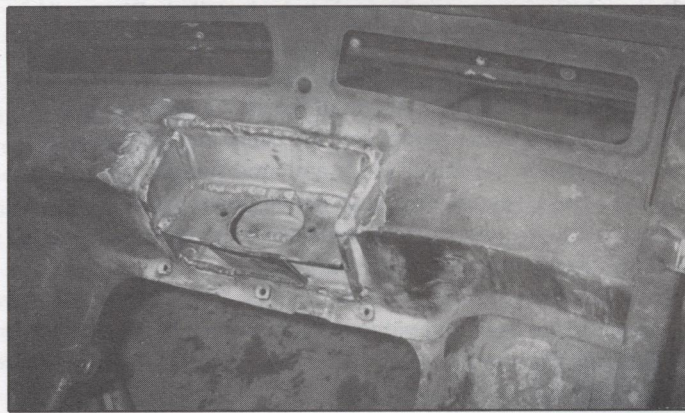
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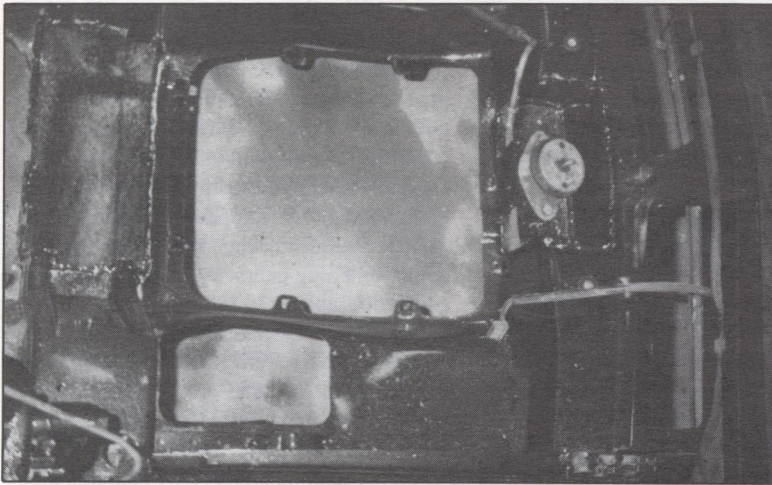


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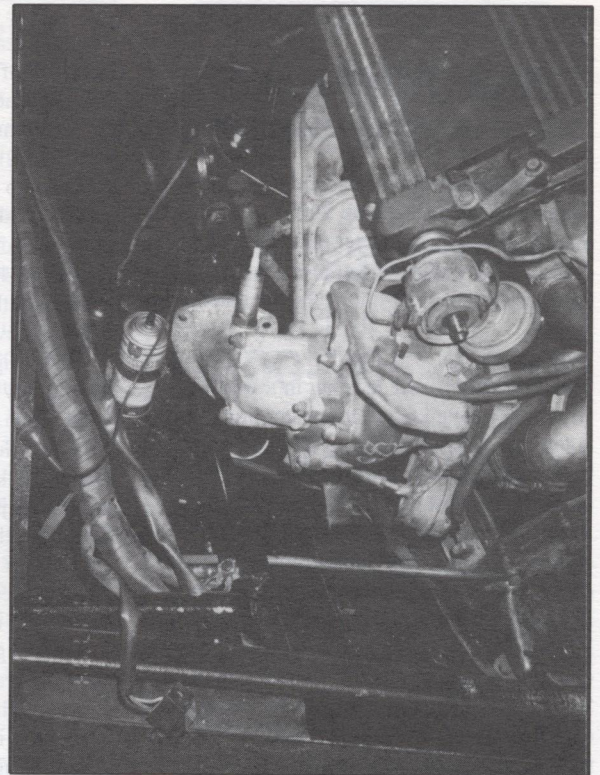
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reports the 99 averaged 21 mpg with the standard B-turbo engine; over the last 6,600 he has averaged 24.9 mpg.

Some of you might think the fuel system isn't up to the demands of the 16V engine, but we haven't found that to be the case. This unit is an every day, dependable, "go for it" type change. As many original parts as possible were used so replacement is not difficult. The goal for saving most 99's is not to re-invent the wheel, but to save the car at a reasonable cost. This will accomplish that goal.

Installing a non-turbo engine would require much the same process. The exhaust is a little more difficult, but other modifications are pretty much the same. We put a 16V into a '78 99 EMS and it now has 50,000 miles since the conversion.

Putting a 16V turbo into a non-turbo 99 chassis would probably require upgrading the fuel system with turbo components, but we haven't tried a conversion like that yet.

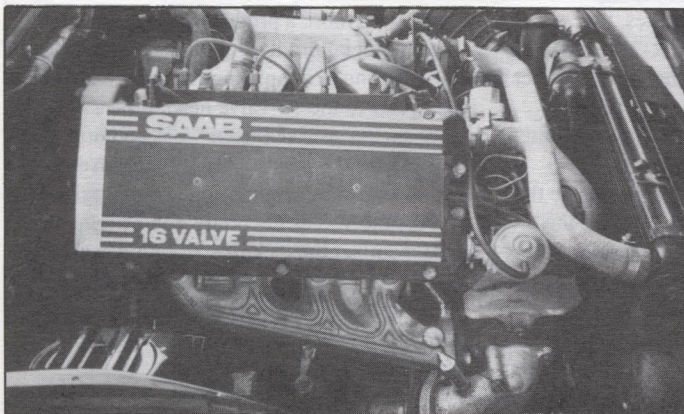


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The 16V engines - even with CIS - run quieter, smoother and have a reasonable gain in horsepower - from 135 hp to about 165 hp in stock form - making them very enjoyable to drive.

Long live the 99's!

Chuck Andrews  
Andrews, Inc.  
Princeton MN



12



13

## Notes in the Margin

In a show of familial support, the General has placed a Saab 900 coupe on display in its Epcot Center pavilion. This kind of high visibility, future-oriented exposure was simply out of Saab's reach before.

The Wall Street Journal, in a December 15, 1994, article incorrectly slamming commuter airplanes in general, quotes "aviation consultant" Michael Boyd as giving an operating cost of \$950.00 per hour for a Saab 340. Assuming that 2 pilots and a couple of flight attendants comprise \$120.00 of that cost, the airplane itself is flying for about \$.08 per seat mile (34 seats moving at 300 mph). A newish Saab automobile, counting depreciation and insurance, goes at \$.40 to \$.50 per mile, according to the AAA cost studies I remember. So, the cost per seat mile for a Saab automobile and a Saab airplane are about the same!

While on the subject of commuter planes: I have driven both the long departed and unlamented (French made) Simca and similar era Saabs in the winter. If I had to fly through wet, freezing air, there is no way I would use the French made ATR when Saab commuter planes are available.

Bob Shaw's Saab story (NINES #224, Letters) is an excellent synopsis of the trials all of us have suffered to some degree. I believe the frequent failure of seemingly minor components, like heater valves, stems from the small size of Saab's operation. The costs of accelerated aging tests on every component would be impossible to amortize against Saab's 80,000 cars per year. As Saab digs deeper into the General's bin of qualified parts, some of those problems should ease. The problems in the minor parts' longevity are also magnified by the longevity built into the major systems; the engine, chassis, and body. How many late '70s or early '80's cars with 150K+ are even out there, let alone in viable condition? For a Saab, its just middle age.

Anyway, I wish Bob the best. By the way, many, if not all, of the Volvo 850's are made in Belgium.

I have changed many, many spark plugs over the years, and until now I had been quite skeptical of the "100,000 mile" plug change interval claimed for some newer cars.

The most worn set of plugs I ever saw came from my father's '56 Buick. In those days, a gap of .030" was typical, and his measured about .060" from the spherical electrode to tapered tip. The mileage was something like 40,000. Amazingly, the car ran fine with the old plugs, and just as fine with the new ones.

The biggest improvement I ever wrought by a plug change was on the MG 1100 sedan. At the time I bought it, it had only one plug in good enough shape to fire whilst cranking in cold weather. This gave the engine just enough of a "pop" to disengage the starter from the ring gear, but not enough to make it start. Four new plugs and it started and ran like a champ. Well, it started and ran.

Through the 70's, my plug changes were motivated more by lead fouling than by wear, and these usually happened at 10,000 miles. My routine was to rotate three sets of plugs through 2 cars, cleaning and gapping the "out" set at my liesure. The 99's flat wouldn't make it to their proscribed 15,000 mile interval until I souped up the ignition with a CD unit.

The 900's used lead-free, and fouling was a thing of the past. At the 30,000 mile specified change point the plugs showed wear, but were still serviceable.

Now my wife's '88 9000T, with a basic Bosch EZK system, had NGK Platinum's (BCPR- 6EV, and yes, I know that is one step hotter than "Factory") installed by the dealer at the first major service. 30,000 miles later I pulled them, expecting to change. There is no way I could toss those babies out; they were clean, showed no signs of stress, and with minimal gap adjustment they will probably go another 30,000. In my '91 9000T, with SDI and 30K miles, the "Factory" plugs, NGK BCPR-7ES, suffered only a slight carbonizing, thanks to our local law enforcement agencies. The center electrode was worn uniquely concave, and there was not much wear at that.

It appears that the goings on inside the cylinder have changed mightily over the years. With no lead fouling and a carefully chosen heat range, with plugs originally having a gap on the narrow end of the tolerance range, and with the kind of ignition from controls which either of my Saabs seem

to have, 100,000 miles on a platinum plug may be a practical interval.

While on spark plugs: I find it hard to believe that only NGK plugs will do. We're talking spark plugs, not rocket motors, and while the materials and manufacturing methods have advanced over the years, the likelihood of one company being uniquely capable manufacturing a specific "heat range" and plug geometry is slim. I have no complaints against NGKs, they have given me excellent service. I have also had excellent service from Bosch and Champion in Saabs, and AC's in Fords and Chevys. Except that when I put AC's in a Ford, my son hit things with it.

That said, note that NGK platinum plugs are made differently than Bosch platinums, and owners' reports of unsatisfactory results with Bosch platinums in Saab Turbos give reason enough to avoid using those particular plugs. While the NGK platinums are great, I would not use anybody's platinum plugs with SDI or Trionic systems unless Saab approved it (which it does not, at least in my shop manual) because those systems are so unique. But using only NGK, with no Bosch and no Champion? And basing the rule on the fact that NGKs are used exclusively by Saab will fail when the General orders up ACs for next year. Again, I do not object to NGKs, and I have had excellent service with them when installed. I just think we should de-mystify the subject.

I don't see how anyone who has ever read my column could qualify as being "unwashed", as Ralph Beck has claimed to be. Nevertheless, a comment regarding the GM Europe V-6 seems to be in order.

Saabs have always been about more than motors. The "mighty three" has many advantages, but also some disadvantages, relative to other engines of its day. The Ford V-4, the mainstay of the 96 for some 10 years, was more a product of convenience than a special product. We won't even mention the Triumph engine in the early 99s, and prior to the 16-valve head, the Saab 2.0-liter engine suffered from "erosion corrosion" in the cylinder heads. Absent the current Saab 4-cylinder engines, one could easily accept the V-6 as the pretty good engine that it is, bemoan the lack of spark plug access, and go on about the rest of the car. But the 4-cyl engine is far from absent. Its known durability, low emmissions, fuel economy, specific power output, smoothness, and

serviceability make it the best 4-cylinder engine in mass production today, period.

If the Saab you want is available in a 4-cylinder model, you have the ideal combination: the perfect car with the best engine made. If, on the other hand, you want a 9000 5-door with leather, or if you want a 9000 CD, your choice is then between a Saab with a V-6 or no Saab at all. Obviously, the better choice is the Saab with a V-6. Either way, bitch to James Crumlish. The full range of models should be available in the U.S., Saab's largest single market. Perhaps the Direct Delivery system didn't work at first, and was abandoned. With a small, lean manufacturer, build and ship to order should be the order of the day.

*Stephen Goldberger*

*You can contact Steve Goldberger via MCI-mail at: sgoldberger@mcimail.com. Mr. Goldberger requests if you have any "flaming" comments about his column, please send them to NINES so that they may be shared with all the members.*

**Corrections & such to #225:**

The cover photo of Pat Greer and Andy Saksa in a SAAB 93B was taken by Paul Becker. Paul will receive a one year extension on his membership for providing the cover photo.

The drawings accompanying David Hueppchen's article on fog lights were used with permission of Hella Lighting Products.

The diagram of the 99 fog light circuit on page 30 was questioned by a couple of readers as the relay is not grounded, however, the diagram was made from an actual installation in a 1977 99 5-door and it did work. If you are wiring a 99 for fog lights, use the upper diagram.

A company mentioned as a supplier of Koni shock absorbers for Saab 9000s, Automotive Performance Systems, Inc., has moved. Their new address is 3300 Corte Malpaso, Camarillo, CA 93012. Phone number is 805-388-7171.

The story on the Saab 99 PRO Rally car neglected to mention the sponsor of the car, Scandia Autosports of Seattle, Washington.

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**Attention Saab repair shops, dealerships, parts specialists, body shops, and salvage companies!**

The SAAB Club is updating the list of independent Saab repair shops, body shops, parts suppliers and Saab dealers for an upcoming issue. If you *did not* fill out this questionnaire as published in NINES #223, please do so now and mail it as soon as possible to: The SAAB Club Mechanics List, 2416 London Road #900, Duluth, Minn. 55812, or fax it to 218-728-6307.

*Please furnish the following information for the SAAB Club Mechanics List.*

Company name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person/s \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (incl. area code) \_\_\_\_\_

Area of specialty (repair, parts, dealership, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Days and Hours of operation \_\_\_\_\_

Hourly labor rate \_\_\_\_\_

Number of mechanics \_\_\_\_\_

Mechanics' training (ASE, Saab, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of service bays \_\_\_\_\_

List any specialized work or equipment ( i.e. 4-gas analyzer, alignment rack, body work, performance tuning, two-stroke and V4 repair, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

# Parts and Service Information from Saab

## Corrosion in Knock Sensor Connector

PSI 11/93-0410, Sec. 3, Pg. 61

Application: 1988-92 9000 Models

It is possible that water can penetrate the wiring harness branching point and cause corrosion of the pins at the knock sensor connector. The result will be a low signal being generated. This can light the CHECK ENGINE lamp and record diagnostic trouble codes (DTC) even though nothing is wrong with the knock sensor.

If ISAT DTC 44661 or 24661 are indicated, or if the CHECK ENGINE lamp lights up/fault code 2 flashes, the knock sensor connecting pins should first be inspected for signs of corrosion. If the corrosion is minor, the pins can be cleaned and treated with rust-dissolving spray (Contact 61). Severe corrosion may necessitate replacement of the pins.

### Cars Affected:

1988-92 9000 models

### Parts Required:

Terminal (if needed) 91 20 668

### Action:

To prevent water from entering the wiring harness and causing the connector to corrode, cut away about 30mm of the protective sheathing at the lowest point. Be careful not to damage the signal wires while cutting the sheathing. See Figure 1.

Note that a new connector with individually sealed leads to prevent water from entering was introduced in production during 1992.

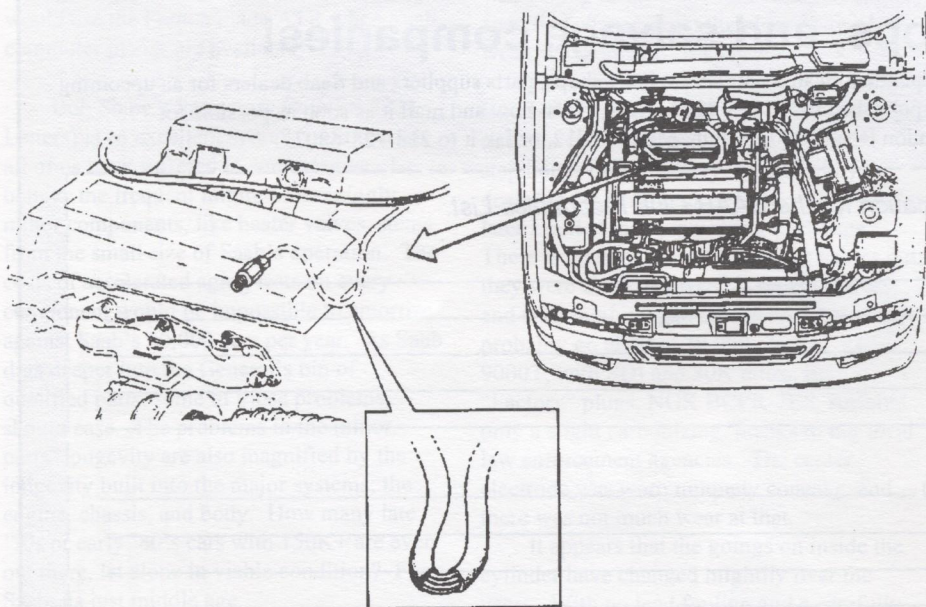


Figure 1: Cutting away protective sheathing on knock sensor wiring.

## Whistling Noise From Windshield

PSI 10/93-0383, Sec. 8, Pg. 79

Application: 9000 Models

Some customers may complain of a loud whistling noise coming from the center, upper part of the windshield. This noise is usually heard at higher speeds. It is possible for this noise to be easily misjudged as coming from the center dashboard air outlet.

The probable cause of this noise is lack of sealant between the windshield upper gutter and the roof panel, subsequently causing the gutter to act as a flute pipe. During hot weather (especially if vehicle left parked in the sun) the decor strip can soften which accentuates the problem. Also, if the vehicle has had the windshield replaced and it is incorrectly mounted, this could also contribute to this complaint.

### Cars Affected:

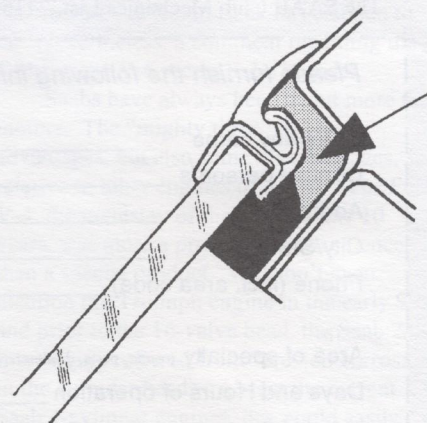
9000 models

### Parts:

Suitable glass sealant (not silicone: use an item such as 3M Window Weld)

### Action:

In order to rectify this complaint, fill in the gutter underneath the decor strip between the upper part of the windshield and the roof panel with glass sealant. Do not use silicone! See diagram. The light gray shaded area is where sealant should be added.



Saab Parts and Service Information updates are provided to NINES as a courtesy to Saab owners by Abe Buchbinder, Director, Service & Customer Retention, Saab Cars USA, Inc.

## Electrically-Heated Seats with Rheostat-Controlled Driver's Seat

PSI 01/93-0297, Sec. 3, Pg. 37

**Application:** M91-92 900 Models

In cars with seats having velour upholstery the rheostat for the driver's seat heating pad may be damaged due to a discharge of static electricity.

This damage and the build-up of an electrostatic charge may be prevented by connecting the heating pad to ground. The following repair should be performed anytime a rheostat is being replaced.

### Cars Affected:

900 Model Saabs with velour upholstery and electrically-heated front seats with rheostat-controlled driver's seat.

### Parts:

Connector Sleeve 71 55 203

Cable Tie 79 71 880

Rheostat (if necessary) 95 18 820

### Action:

Refer to the wiring diagram, Figure 1, and connect the heating pad to ground as follows:

1. Locate the 3-pole connector of the seat switch for the heating pad, which is located under the passenger's seat. The seat switch is to be bypassed. (Some cars also have a 3-pole connector for the seat switch which operates the seat-belt warning.)

### NOTE

To be sure of locating the right connector, use an ohmmeter or a buzzer to check that an electrical connection exists between pin 5 of the 8-pole connector under the passenger's seat and the 3-pole connector in question. When measuring with an ohmmeter, the 8-pole connector must be unplugged.

### NOTE

Once you have bypassed the seat switch, the seat heater will function as if someone is always sitting in the seat. When you turn the key on, the passenger seat heater will power up for less than a minute and then the thermistor will shut it off.

2. Unplug the 3-pole connector and cut off both leads before the connector.
3. Crimp the two ends together, using a connector sleeve (P/N 71 55 203) to bypass the seat switch. Secure the wiring using a cable tie (P/N 79 71 880).

## V6 timing belt replacement

Saab has initiated a program for more frequent replacement of the camshaft drive belt on the 2.5-liter V6 engine in the Saab 900SE and the 3.0-liter V6 in the Saab 9000. According to the recommended maintenance program, the timing belt should be replaced at 35,000 miles, 65,000 miles, and 95,000 miles. According to the Owner's Manual for both the 900 and 9000, "camshaft drive belt replacements (V6) prior to 100,000 miles will be performed at no charge by an authorized U.S. Saab dealer."

The replacement interval and free replacement of the camshaft drive belts will also apply to 1994 900s with the V6 engine.

Need to contact Saab? Here's where:

Saab Cars USA, Inc.  
P.O. Box 9000  
Norcross, Georgia 30091  
(404) 279-0100

Saab Customer Assistance Hotline  
1-800-955-9007 (8am - 8pm Eastern time)

## FIGHT THAT SPEEDING TICKET!

Most everyone has felt the frustration and anger that accompanies a speeding ticket. The ticket was probably issued on a clear day, with dry roads and light traffic. Your speed was reasonable for the conditions and within the safe capabilities of your car and the highway. The glitch was that you were exceeding the "posted limit". But, who wasn't?

So, why did you get the ticket, instead of someone else? Maybe it was the length of your hair, the color or make of your car, or you were unlucky enough to be the first car to enter Officer Quota's speed trap.

What's doubly maddening is if you weren't exceeding the speed limit, but an incompetent or unethical radar operator says you were, and issues a completely erroneous ticket.

It's decision time: To fight or not to fight your speeding ticket. You might believe that to fight is futile. After all, didn't the local district attorney just claim a 97% conviction rate on traffic tickets?

Here's what they don't tell you. Ninety-five percent of the traffic tickets are not contested! **And, half of those that are contested are won by the defendant.**

Here's something else our friends in traffic courts don't publicize: Almost any district attorney would rather reduce a fine or points, than spend time prosecuting a speeding ticket. If 10% of all traffic tickets were contested, the court system would come to a screeching halt. So would the practice of using traffic enforcement for revenue generation.

To fight the ticket is to automatically win. True, you may be found guilty, but you've still won. You had your day in court, your dignity is preserved, and the profit that the state or municipality expected from your ticket evaporated the minute you stood up and said "I plead not guilty".

**Radar is not infallible**, in fact, a long way from it. **Vascar is easily misused**. Many speed limits are illegally posted. There are legal justifications for exceeding the posted speed limit. Police officers often ignore proper procedures when clocking vehicle speeds, and confused, crowded court dockets can result in wholesale dismissals.

You can't win if you don't fight back, and you can't fight back if you're not prepared. Our organization, the National Motorists

Association, is dedicated to protecting motorists' rights, including your access to a fair trial for traffic law violations.

We offer our members books, videos, and personal information so they can ably represent themselves in traffic court. We also offer an attorney referral service for those who wish or need professional representation on traffic matters.

We're so confident in your ability to win in traffic court that after one year of continuous membership, should you receive a speeding ticket, plead not guilty, take your case to trial and subsequently are found guilty, we will pay the ticket!

That's right, we'll pay the ticket if you plead not guilty, go to trial, and lose.

We've paid very few tickets, because our members win their trials, have the charges dismissed on technicalities, or are offered a plea bargain that greatly diminishes the penalties.

Isn't it time to fight back?

Give us a call at 1-800-882-2785 for National Motorists Association membership information. Do it today!

## Changing the Timing Chain: Engine In Vehicle, 16-valve

PSI 07/93-0357, Sec. 2, Pg 34

Application: 900, 9000 1985-

A worn timing chain can result in a complaint of chain rattle and/or chatter. Fluctuations in timing may also occur on cars with an EZK (TZ59) ignition system, which can cause driveability or detonation complaints. When the chain wears and stretches, the chain tensioner compensates for this as the ratcheting mechanism allows movement in this manner. The chain can be replaced with a service chain developed for this purpose.

In order to replace the chain with the engine installed in the vehicle, the chain guides and camshaft sprockets must be in good condition. Inspect both items with the chain tensioner and camshaft cover removed prior to performing any additional work.

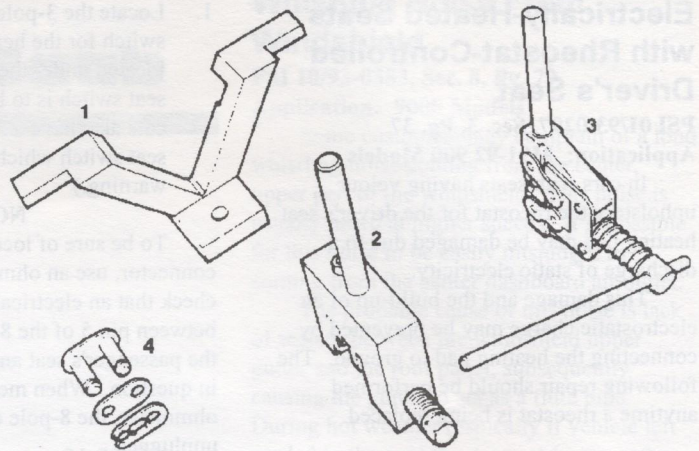


Figure 1: Tools required

### Cars Affected:

900 1985-

9000 1986-

### Parts (Figure 1):

Timing Chain Replacement Kit	83 94 678
Consists of:	
Holder for chain (over camshaft sprocket) (Fig. 1-1)	83 94 652
Assembly tool for chain riveting (Fig. 1-2)	83 94 645
Chain breaker (Fig. 1-3)	83 94 637
Chain link (Fig. 1-4)	83 94 660
Chain (2.0L)	75 00 697
Alternative chain, open with link	93 21 837
Chain (2.3L)	74 83 761
Alternative chain, open with link 1993-	93 21 845

The above tools are available from Kent-Moore.

### Action:

1. Disconnect the battery terminals.
2. Remove the ignition discharge module (IDM) if so fitted, spark plugs and camshaft cover. Place shop rags in the cylinder head to prevent debris from entering the engine through the spark plug holes.
3. Align the crankshaft and camshafts with their respective timing marks. Lock the flywheel in place using special tool P/N 83 92 987. See Figure 2, A & B.
4. Check the timing chain for wear by removing the chain tensioner plug with spring and locating stud (plastic) and then removing the chain tensioner. Do NOT change the position of the plunger. Under no circumstances should the chain tensioner extend by more than 11mm. If it exceeds this measurement, the chain should be replaced. The tensioner does not need to be replaced. See Figure 3-A.

**NOTE:** On 900 models the AC compressor must first be removed. On 9000 models equipped with a B234 engine, the power steering fluid reservoir must first be removed. On all 9000 models the torque stay must be removed.

5. Inspect the sprockets and chain guide for wear. The surface between the outer grooves of the chain guide should not indicate any contact marks.

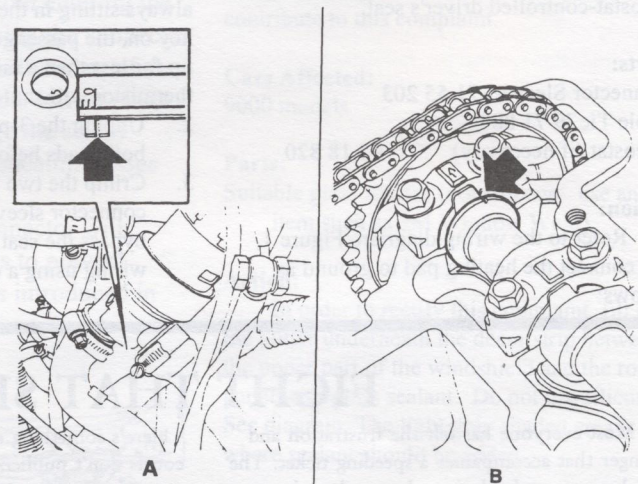


Figure 2: Aligning crankshaft and camshafts

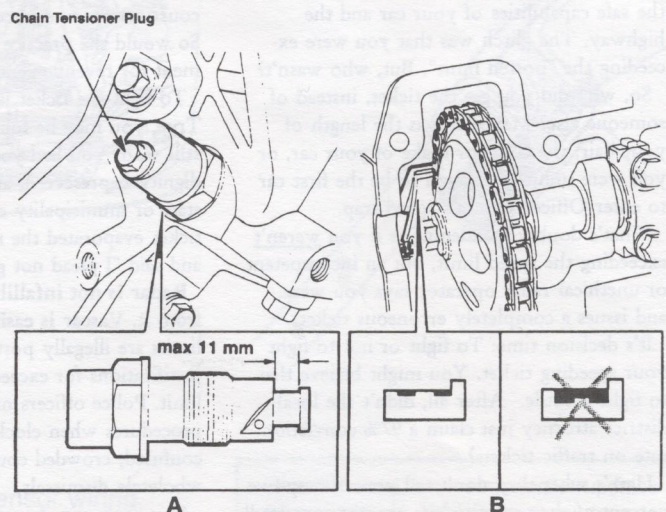


Figure 3-A: Checking chain for wear by measuring the chain tensioner with the plug removed.  
3-B: Checking the chain guides for wear.

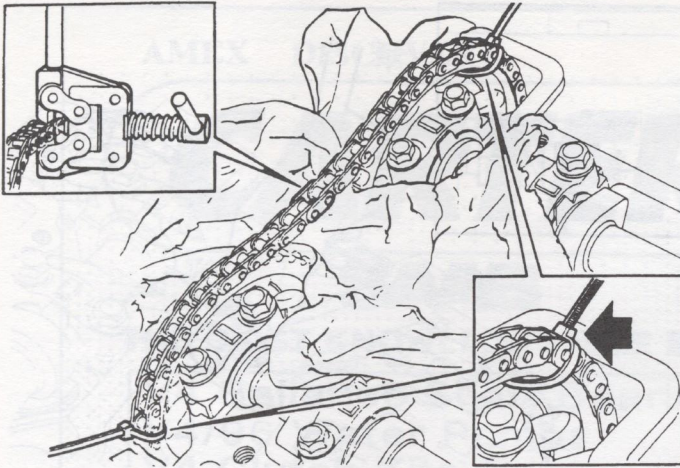


Figure 4: Securing chain.

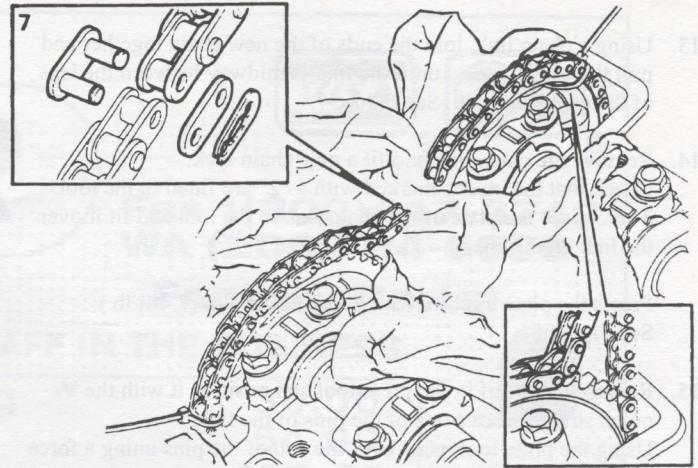


Figure 5: Joining new chain to old.

If this surface does show signs of wear, the guides will also have to be replaced (Figure 3-B). In that instance, the repair will have to be carried out in the usual way (i.e. engine out of the car). If the wear on both the sprockets and guides is acceptable, replace the chain as described below.

6. Cover the surrounding area of the chain with cloth. Secure the chain on both sides with tie straps. See Figure 4.
7. Separate the chain by pressing out a link with special tool P/N 84 94 637 and then use a pair of pliers to remove the link. See Figure 4.
8. Using chain link 83 94 660, join the new chain to the old. Be careful to prevent the chain from falling down and becoming entangled. See Figure 5.
9. Make certain that the new chain is properly positioned around the camshaft sprocket on the inlet side and fasten the end to the old chain.

**NOTE:** On the 1987 and earlier cars, remove the oil pipe.

10. Fit chain support 83 94 652. Remove the protective cloth and tie straps. See Figure 6. Remove the flywheel locking tool from Step 2.
11. Holding the old chain in your hand, with the new chain resting over your hand, carefully install the new chain by rotating the engine with the crankshaft pulley bolt wrench (P/N 83 92 961).

**NOTE:** To avoid the chain from doubling over at the crankshaft, be sure to keep it under tension the entire time as it is installed.

12. When the new chain has been installed so that only a few links are still resting on the camshaft sprocket on the inlet side, protect the area surrounding the chain with a cloth. Remove the old chain link and chain. (See Figure 7).

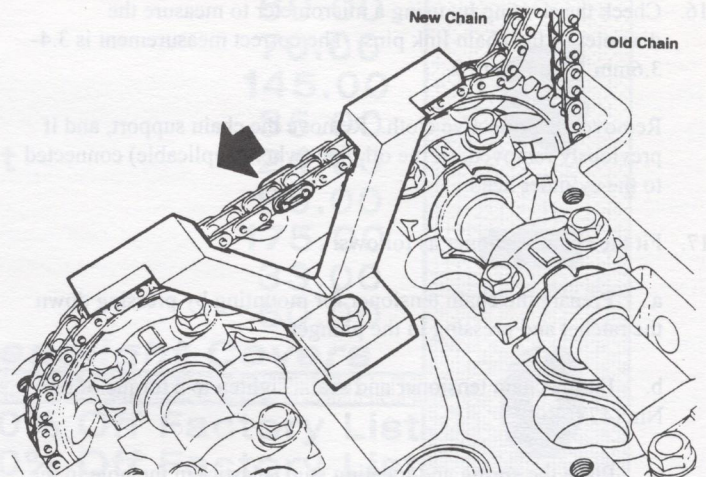


Figure 6: Fitting chain support.

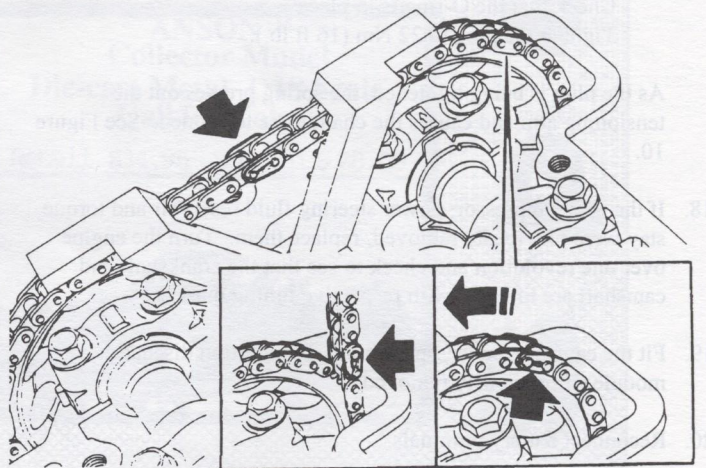


Figure 7: Joining ends of new chain.

13. Using a chain link, join the ends of the new chain together and pull the chain around until the link is midway between the legs of the chain support. See Figure 7.
14. Remove the chain link and fit a new chain lock. Check that the inserts marked with a "2" are fitted in the tool. Then, place the plate of the chain link in the tool and fit it over the link on the chain.

Press the plate in place with a force of 10Nm (7.4 ft.lb.). See Figure 8.

15. Reverse the insert in the press tool and position it with the V-notch straight above one of the pins of the link. Using the press tool, peen over the end of the pins using a force of 15Nm (11 ft.lb.).

Repeat on the other pin of the link.

16. Check the riveting by using a micrometer to measure the diameter of the chain link pins. The correct measurement is 3.4-3.6mm. See Figure 9.

Remove the protective cloth. Remove the chain support, and if previously removed, fit the oil pipe (where applicable) connected to the cylinder head.

17. Fit the chain tensioner as follows:

- a. Prepare the chain tensioner for mounting by pressing down the ratchet and pressing in the plunger.
- b. Fit the chain tensioner and seal. Tighten to a torque of 63 Nm (47 ft.lb.).
- c. Place the spring and locating stud (plastic) in the hole in the chain tensioner.
- d. Fit the plug. Check that the O-ring is in place. Tighten the plug to 22 Nm (16 ft.lb.).

As the plug is being tightened, the spring presses out the tensioning arm and causes the chain to be tensioned. See Figure 10.

18. If the AC compressor, power steering fluid reservoir and torque stay were previously removed, replace them. Turn the engine over one revolution and check to see that the crankshaft and camshaft are lined up with respective timing marks.
19. Fit the camshaft cover, spark plugs and ignition discharge module (if previously removed).
20. Reconnect battery terminals.

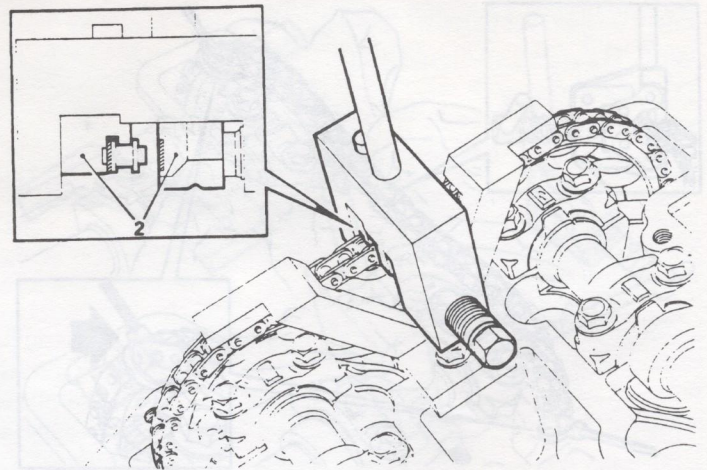


Figure 8: Fitting new chain lock.

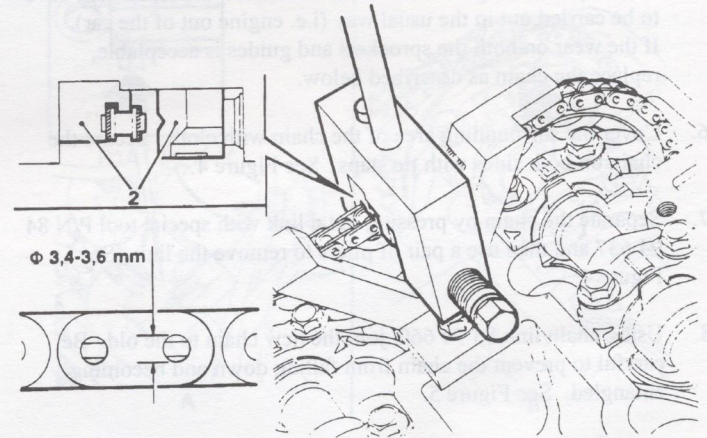


Figure 9: Measuring diameter of chain link pins.

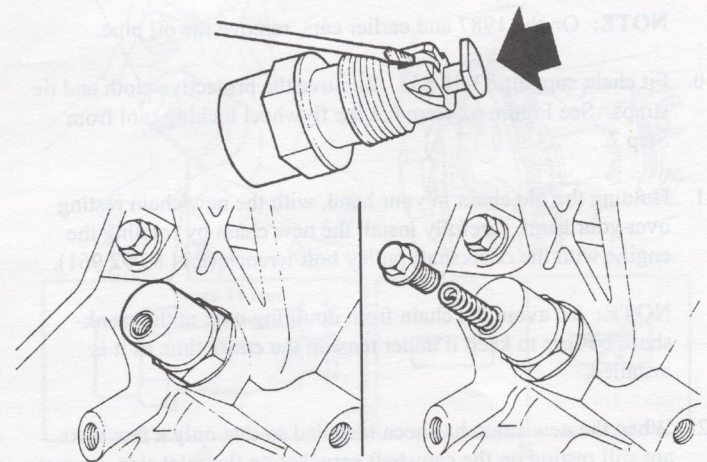


Figure 10: Fitting the chain tensioner.



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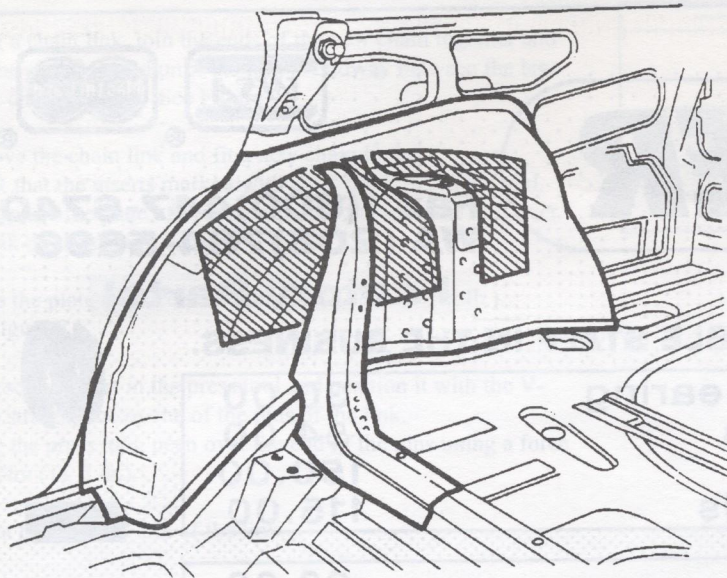


Figure 1: 9000 rear wheel housing.

## Repairing Minor Cracks in Rear Wheel Housings

PSI 06/93-0354, Sec. 8, Pg. 73

Application: 9000 Models

If a vehicle has been driven for long periods of time over rough road surfaces (particularly unpaved roads), there is a possibility that minor cracks may form in front of and behind the shock absorber mountings of the rear wheel housings. See the areas darkened in Figure 1.

### Cars Affected:

1986-90 9000 models

### Parts:

Primer

Seam sealer (such as Sherwin-Williams' E2-G980 G.B.P. Etching Filler)

Undercoating

Sheet metal, minimum 1.2mm thick

### Action:

The procedures detailed below refer to the repair of a crack forward of the shock absorber mounting. Cracks behind the shock mounting should be repaired in the same way, except that the supporting plate need not be cut away.

1. Tip the rear seat backrest forward. (Unbolt in the case of CD models.)
2. Remove the luggage compartment floor panel and fold down the trunk lining and insulation on the rear wheel housings.
3. Remove the shock absorber.
4. Place a protective covering over the trim and seat backrest.

5. Protect the windows from grinding dust which might cause damage to the glass.
6. Cut away the upper part of the supporting plate in the marked area. See Figure 2-1.
7. Grind away the seam welds securing the upper part of the supporting plate. Be careful not to damage the supporting plate. If it is undamaged, it can be refitted. See Figure 2-2.
8. Grind the area around the crack down to

bare metal. Weld the crack and grind the weld.

9. Fabricate a plate which covers the weld, approx. 6 3/4" x 5 3/4". This plate should butt against the shock tower. See Figure 2-3.
10. Grind away the paint on the wheel housing where the plate is to be welded on.
11. Seam weld the plate along the top edge. Shape the plate to the same contour as the wheel housing and seam weld it in place around the edges and finally along the lower edge. See Figure 2-4.
12. Fit the upper part of the supporting plate in position. See Figure 2-5. Then bead weld the supporting plate to the wheel housing. There should be the same number of welds in the same places as before.
13. Grind the welds. Apply primer to all areas that have been ground down to bare metal.
14. Seal joints and sheet metal folds with seam sealer. See Figure 2-6.
15. Paint the repaired area on the wheel housing.
16. Fit the shock absorber.
17. Sandblast and prime before re-undercoating the wheel housing.
18. Refit the trunk lining and insulation, luggage compartment floor panel and rear seat backrest.

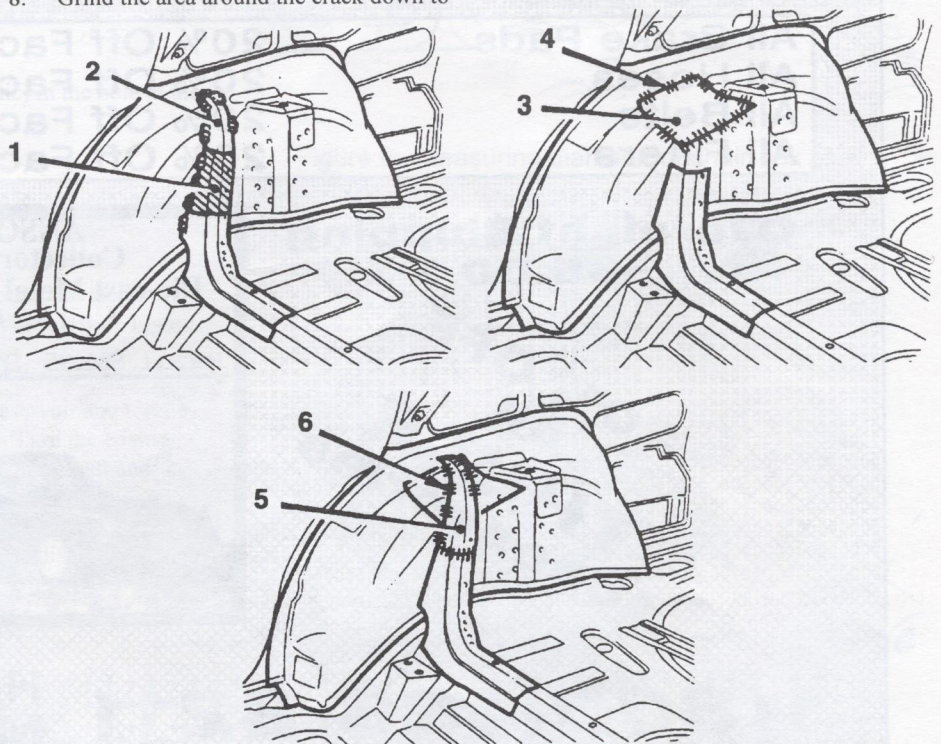


Figure 2: Preparing areas for repair.

# SAAB NEWS

*"Find Your Own Road"*

## New Saab ad campaign uses animation

Individuality and unconventionality, values common to most Saab owners, are the core themes to Saab's new national advertising campaign. The integrated broadcast and print campaign will feature cutting edge animation with the free-flowing illustrations of French artist Jean-Philippe Delhomme, and will use the tag line "Find Your Own Road".

Developed by the New York-based agency team of Angotti, Thomas, Hedge, Inc., the campaign has been engineered from a creative platform that mirrors the free thinking, self-assured nature of people who drive Saab automobiles.

Brand identification rather than products and features will be common in the early ads. The first phase of the campaign strategically positions the Saab marque as a natural extension of a buyer's lifestyle and core value system. By showing how Saab cars are a natural fit for these lifestyles, the Saab driver, instead of the product, becomes the star of the campaign.

"When we began to build a foundation for this campaign, we found that one of the fastest growing consumer groups within the premium automotive segment were individuals bored with mainstream status symbols, toys and trappings," said David Kryselek, Saab's director of marketing. "Instead of blindly buying 'up,' these consumers are attracted to products that are as confident, smart and as unapologetic about their unconventional attributes as they are."

As a part of the General Motors family, Saab was able to benefit from GM's market-analysis resources during development of the "Find Your Own Road" campaign. Saab also capitalized on lower GM-negotiated advertising rates, which allowed an expanded national media schedule.

## Saab Automobile AB announces a profitable 1994

Saab Automobile recorded a net income of 572 million SKr (\$77.7 million) for 1994, the first profitable year for the company since 50 percent of the car making operation of Saab-Scania AB was purchased by General Motors Europe AG in 1990. 1993 saw a loss of 1,374 million SKr (\$10 billion).

The profitable year was attributed to several factors: gains in productivity, the successful launch of the new 900 range, increasing volumes, and favorable exchange rates.

Retail sales of new cars rose to 88,700, a 21 percent increase over the 73,600 sold during 1993. The U.S. continues to be Saab's largest single market with 21,500 units sold in 1994, followed by Sweden with a strong recovery from 12,800 in 1993 to 17,800 new Saabs during 1994.

The total number of Saab employees at the end of 1994 was 7,830.

## Saab and Scania split into separate companies

The Board of Saab-Scania AB recently announced that it will split into two companies - Saab AB and Scania AB - effective at the Annual General Meeting in May of this year. It is believed that the reason was to put Scania, the more profitable arm of the company, in a position to take the company public. The former Saab-Scania AB and the new companies are all wholly owned subsidiaries of Investor, which also owns several other major Swedish firms.

Saab Automobile AB, which had been 50 percent owned by Saab-Scania AB, will become a separate company under the Investor umbrella. GM Europe will continue to own the other 50 percent of Saab Automobile.

The split returns Saab AB to its roots as an aircraft manufacturing company. SAAB (Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget) was formed in 1937 to produce aircraft for the Swedish Air Force.

The "new" Saab AB will consist of five product companies: Saab Military Aircraft, Saab Dynamics, Saab Training Systems, Saab Aircraft and Saab Combitech. Saab AB will also include Saab Service Partner. The three companies in the defense materiel sector - Military Aircraft, Dynamics and Training Systems - together form Business Area Saab Defense. The head office of Saab AB will be in Linköping, Sweden. Bengt Halse, president of Ericsson Microwave Systems, has been appointed president of Saab AB.

Scania AB, the truck and bus manufacturing company, will be headquartered in Södertälje, Sweden. The president of Scania AB is Leif Ostling.

Among Investor's other assets are an interest in the pharmaceutical company Astra, Incentive, STORA, Atlas Copco, SKF, Ericsson and Electrolux.

## No hatchback for next generation 9000

Look for the replacement for the Saab 9000 to debut as a 1997 model. And as it will be a "near-luxury" model competing with sedans from BMW, Audi, and Mercedes, there won't be a hatchback version. The next 9000 will initially be available only as a sedan, though a station wagon is a very strong possibility.

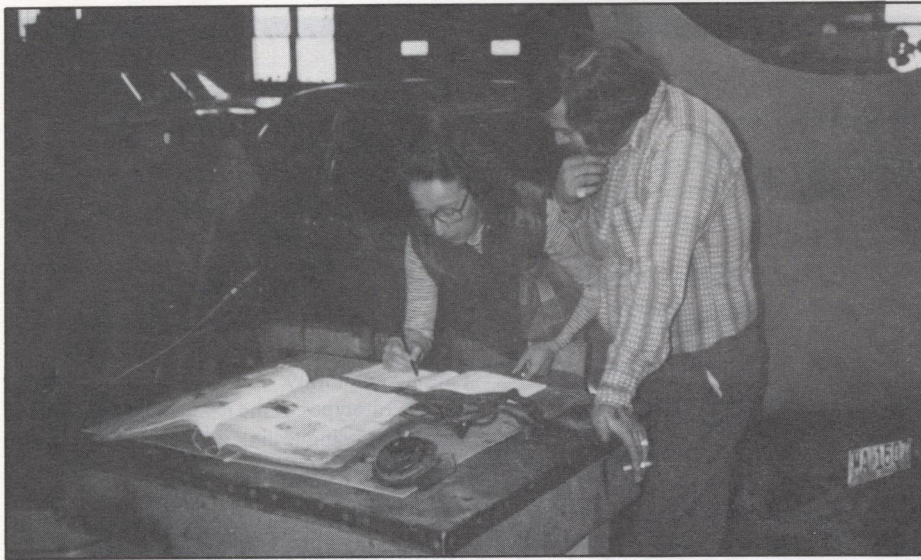
Prototypes of the next generation 9000 are undergoing testing now. It is not yet known which engines will power the future 9000.

Though the car was originally scheduled for introduction as a 1997 model, the introduction may be delayed to ensure a top quality product. When the 1994 900 was introduced, Saab felt it was the best prepared model they had ever brought to market, however, there were several minor faults, some of which were handled by recalls, making the car look less reliable than Saab had hoped. Saab would not like to see such problems with the next 9000.

## A 5-door 900 Turbo!

Sometime within the next year a much requested (at least by Saab Club members) Saab 900 model may become available in the U.S. - a 900 Turbo 5-door! Though the final details are still being ironed out, a limited number of 5-door 900s with the 2.0-liter turbo engine should make their way across the Atlantic as 1996 models. One possibility is that the 5-door turbo version will be available only with the 5-speed transmission, while the V6-engined 5-doors would only come with the automatic transmission.

And look for an Aero version of the 900 as well. Like the 9000 Aero, it would be a sportier version of the Turbo model, with additional aerodynamic body panels and a higher output engine. Saab may farm out the production of the Aero 900 to a specialty tuning company in Sweden, providing the bodies and letting the specialty company do the final assembly. No date of availability or specs on the 900 Aero as yet.



*Margrit Adler during a Saab clinic at Gibson Motors in Perrysville, Indiana*

## **Margrit Adler 1930-1995**

It is with deep sadness that I must report the loss of another longtime friend of the Saab community, this time my dear friend Margrit Adler. She passed away on March 9, 1995 in Urbana, Illinois, near her long-time home in Champaign.

I got to know Margrit in the mid-80's through her newsletter, the Central Illiana Saab Club newsletter, which she single-handedly wrote and published for who knows how many years from her home in Champaign, filling it with useful Saab advice and interesting news items. As a fledgling editor of our little Great Lakes Saab Club newsletter, I appreciated the news and advice that she provided. Margrit was a Saaber from way back, and I was just one of the new kids, my first Saab being a shiny new 900. By chance, we caught up with her as our club caravanned to the 1987 Tulsa Saab Convention, and she joined our group, as did several others, in an 80 mph train of 8 Saabs madly heading for Tulsa. After that, Margrit and I became fast friends (no pun intended), and soon began corresponding and occasionally picking up the phone as I needed some advice. She was always generous with the advice, and was always quick to add experiences she had had in her 30 years of Saabing.

Margrit was born on January 26, 1930 in Rheydt, Germany, spending only a small part of her life there before fleeing to England during World War II, eventually emigrating to the US. on a Dutch ship (closely followed by a German sub), where she settled in the Princeton, New Jersey area. It was there that she met future husband Milton, a returning soldier at the time, and the two were married in a little over a year. Milt later did his internship in Montana, and then in 1953 the Adlers moved to Illinois, eventually settling in Champaign in 1957, at the same house on University Avenue where they lived to this day. Not long after this, son Larry and daughter Sandy were born, and the Adlers were a family.

Margrit got into Saabs before some of us were even walking. She "drove" her first 93 in 1958, when husband Milt traded an automatic Nash Rambler in on a suicide-door 93. She hated the clutch, but eventually got the hang of it and then became a "convert", in her own words, after the first winter and a fanatic not long after. In the 60's she took some automotive classes, and was the only woman student. She claimed the only favors she received were from the male students that helped her lift heavy things. In three years of study, she did well, receiving an "A" in many classes and an "A" for her term paper on catalytic converters. About this time she also joined the 4th Cylinder; the first US. Saab club. At first she wrote recipes, and then genuine articles. She became Vice Chair for Membership and Vice President. She says she met many of her long term Saab friends back in those days through her association with the Saab Club. She also provided material for Dick Grossman and Jeff Delahorne, the first editors of what we now know as NINES. A long succession of Saabs followed, including a 1960 GT, a 1966 95, a 67 V4, 69 Sonett, 72 99, 73 Sonett and an 80 and 85 900. She owned

so many Subs that Saab exec Len Lonnegren once asked the people at her dealer, Gibson Motors in Perrysville, Indiana, if she drank 2-stroke oil for breakfast. She once told me she used to feed her children from the front seat of the 96 by turning the it around on the tracks so she could get at them!

In her later years, Margrit got out of driving Saabs, but not totally away from them. She continued to write her newsletter, and continued to answer "help" calls from Saabers with problems or questions. Always the writer, she provided interesting stories, entitled "The Way It Was", for Jack Ashcraft's magazine *The Saab Journal*. She also wrote a few human-interest stories for my *Saab Scene* newsletter, and even included a few copies of the old "4th Cylinder" for our club to enjoy.

A little over 2 years ago, Margrit was diagnosed with a malignant ovarian tumor. Intense chemotherapy at times seemed to arrest the awful disease, but cancer and the "battery acid", as we called it, eventually took it's toll. Her letters never showed how uncomfortable she must have been, merely relating her latest stories of tormenting doctors or making new friends with the nurses who were treating her. Phone calls, which I sometimes hesitated to make, always left me feeling upbeat, leading me to forget that I had just talked to a terminally ill cancer patient. While not losing her will to live, Margrit was losing the battle with cancer, and around last Thanksgiving her doctors told her she had about 3 months left. Eventually, all of the medications were dropped and she merely rested at home. In late February, things took a turn for the worse and around the first of March she entered a hospice in nearby Urbana. On the 5th, Milt joined her for their wedding anniversary, which she said she wanted to live to see. She and Milt celebrated with cupcakes, and she gradually began to slip away after that, sometimes not even recognizing Milt. Finally, on the morning on the 9th of March, Margrit Adler passed away quietly, as Milt said, "gracefully, like she lived".

Just a few weeks before, she wrote me that she was hoping for a red Sonett to roar through Heaven with. She said every time we heard thunder, it was really her with her foot to the floor in the Sonett. I'm sure she's up there enjoying it right now. We'll miss you Margrit.

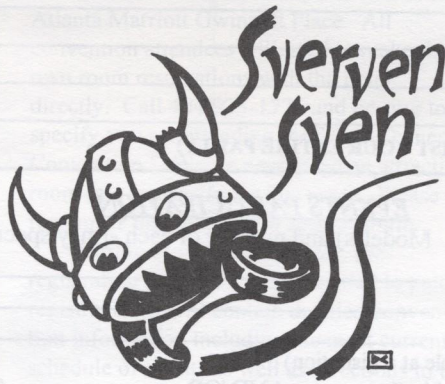
Jim Laman  
Holland MI  
Great Lakes Saab Club



### Saab Experts Open Shop in Lititz, PA

Tim Brown and Kevin Booth have combined their 20 years of experience in Saab repair to open Lititz Auto Service. The new business repairs all makes and models, but specializes in Saabs. The company goals are to provide prompt, courteous service, and open, friendly communication with the customer, as well as clean, comfortable working and waiting areas.

Kevin Booth brings many years of experience to the business from previous work at Chrysler/Dodge, Chevrolet, Jeep, Nissan, and Saab dealerships. His mechanical knowledge and expertise is vast. He is an ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) certified master autotechnician and factory schooled and trained transmission specialist. Kevin also has considerable skills as a fabricator/machinist, who can visualize and create tools and toys from raw materials. He has great mechanical ability that he applies to his work and fun pursuits. His hobbies involve anything with an engine, from radio controlled planes and helicopters, to motor bikes and race cars.



Tim Brown's experience is in the electronics field and 15 years of owning, servicing and selling Saab autos. Tim is a Juniata College graduate with an electronics and acoustic emphasis. He has worked in electronics and sound system fabrication businesses, building everything from concert sound systems to hi-tech radar devices. He worked for over 10 years at that "other" exclusive Saab shop in Lititz, building car electronics and sound systems from scratch, as well as performing all other facets of Saab automobile repair and supervising service operations. He knows his way around Bosch fuel and ignition systems quite well and all other Saab electrical and mechanical systems, in particular. He brings a friendly, congenial personality to the service and sales areas of Lititz Auto Service. His hobbies include mountain biking, golf, and kite flying.

Lititz Auto Service is located on Route 501 north of Lititz, 1 1/2 miles north of the town square, in the FMI building, at the top of the hill adjacent to High Sports. They can be reached at 717/626-5264, from 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday, with Wednesday evening and Saturday morning hours by appointment. There is a key slot for

after hours drop off. Call to learn more about their loaner and pick up service. As Brown and Booth put it, "We are serious about service!"

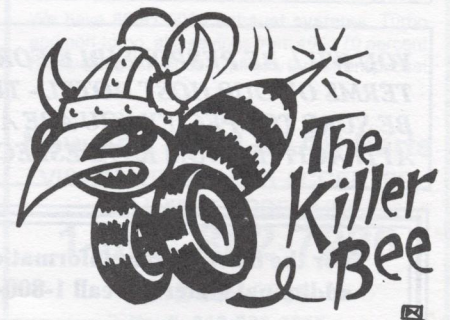
### Lititz Auto Service sponsors race team

With this new business and new year comes a Saab racing effort dubbed "Lititz Auto Services' Swedish Racing Team". Kevin 'Swerving Sven' Booth (#99X - yellow with red trim), Lynn 'Bjorn to Run' Hyle (#99 - yellow with blue trim), and Tim 'Killer Bee' Brown (#99B - yellow with black trim) will be driving Saab 99 notch-back coupes, in full race prep, at Linda's Speedway, in Jonestown (north of Lebanon), every Friday night, from April 7th through October 14th. The 99s run in the Thunder Car class on the one-quarter mile banked dirt track.

The Thunder Car class is a very restricted category for four-cylinder cars. Engines, transmissions, suspensions and the bodies must be stock. Glass and extra interior pieces are removed for safety reasons. To discourage competitors from making changes outside the rules, there is a \$600 claiming fee. A top five competitor may buy the feature winning car for \$600.

Several Lititz area businesses have signed on as co-sponsors on the 99s: Anthony's Orthodontics, Deli-L Market, Bob's Save-Rite Market, Entertainment, Inc., Sharkey's Pizza, NAPA, Interstate Batteries, Bowes Products, B.G. Products, and Bressler's Performance.

The action is fast and furious. Says Brown, "There will be open seats for warm up laps most Fridays. Sign up at Lititz Auto Service! Come out and cheer us on, or better yet, get into the hot seat for some fun warm up laps!"



**1995 NATIONAL SAAB OWNERS CONVENTION**

*Dedicated to the memory of Pelle Rudh*

August 18, 19, & 20, 1995  
Atlanta, Georgia

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Names:	Addresses (if different)	Ages (if children)

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<u>EVENTS PARTICIPATION</u>		
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CONCOURSE	_____	_____
AUTOCROSS*	_____	_____

\* (There is additional cost of \$12 Per Car - payable at registration)  
 SWAP MEET SPACES\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ Inside Spaces AND/OR \_\_\_\_\_ Outside Spaces  
 \*\* Both indoor and outdoor spaces MAY be limited - we will honor these requests on a first come first serve basis.

<u>REGISTRATION FEES:</u>	
_____ Adults at \$78 per person =	\$ _____
_____ Children at \$68 per person =	\$ _____
_____ Inside Spaces requested in SwapMeet @ \$36 each =	\$ _____
_____ Outside Spaces requested in SwapMeet @ \$28 each =	\$ _____
Less Early Registration Discount (if postmarked before 5/31/95) _____ Persons in party @ \$5.00 each =	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL REGISTRATION FEES:</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

Please help us make your convention a pleasant one by answering the following:  
 Would you request any sort of "sitter" service during the banquet, if it were available?  Yes  No  
 (If Yes above, please indicate the age(s) of the child(ren) \_\_\_\_\_)

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**For the most current information regarding the convention - or to leave your name and address to receive additional material - call 1-800-438-7222 (1-800-GET-SAAB) - from a touch-tone-phone [enter option #4]**

Mail Registration Form and Total Registration Fees to the following address no later than 7/20/1995  
**SAAB Club of Georgia; 4877 Pine Shadows Drive; Stone Mountain, Georgia 30088**  
 Contact Numbers - Daytime (404) 351-SAAB; Nighttime (404) 469-SAAB  
ss:\19509-4.wpd (revised 3/14/95)

## Designer Envall to be featured guest at '95 Saab Convention

Long time Saab design chief Bjorn Envall will be a featured guest at the 1995 Saab Owners National Convention to be held this summer in Norcross, GA. Envall will also be designing a logo for the convention. Each registered convention attendee will receive a signed limited edition poster of the event (one per family).

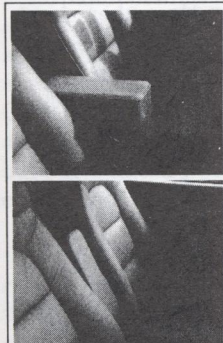
Envall started his career with Saab in the 1960s under Sixten Sason and worked on early designs for the Saab 99. He was head of the Saab Design Center when work was being done on the 9000 and the new 900 that was introduced in late 1993.

Envall was also guest speaker at the 1991 Saab Owners National Convention held in Columbus, Ohio.

Other Saab dignitaries who have confirmed that they will attend include Saab rally ace Erik Carlsson, Saab's first president for U.S. operations Ralph Millet, the head of Saab Automobile's P.R. department Peter Salzer, and Saab Cars CEO Jim Crumlish. Many other Saab executives and former executives have been invited, including Bob Sinclair, president of Saab-Scania of America from 1979 to 1991.

In addition to being the keynote speaker for the Saturday banquet, Envall will be giving a seminar on the design of Saab cars during the tech sessions. John Moss of Saab will also be giving one of his renowned tech sessions.

Saab Cars USA, Inc., is located only minutes away from the host hotel in Norcross and many Saab employees are expected to participate in the convention. In addition, tours of the U.S. headquarters may be arranged prior to the convention, most likely on Friday morning.



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## '95 Convention details

Dear Saab Friends:

The Saab Club of Georgia, in conjunction with Saab Cars USA, Inc. is pleased to announce that the 1995 National Saab Owners Convention will be held on August 18, 19, & 20th in our home state — just outside Atlanta, Georgia.

A copy of the registration form must be completed and returned along with all applicable fees to us no later than July 20, 1995. (Avoid the last minute rush, AND get your early registration discount! — fill out and mail your form today!)

Our host hotel for this event will be the Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place. All convention attendees will need to make their own room reservations with the hotel directly. Call 404/923-1775 and be sure to specify you are attending the "Saab Owners Convention." We've negotiated an attractive room rate especially for this event. Please remember that this is your responsibility.

During the week of July 24, pre-registration packages will be mailed to paid registrants. It will contain detailed convention information including the most current schedule of events as well as directions to the hotel and some information regarding non-convention attractions in the area. If you do not receive this secondary package by August 1, please contact us. In the interim, you may call our toll free information line at 1-800-438-7222 (1-800-GET-SAAB) - [enter option #4 for your touch tone phone] - for the most current recorded information regarding the convention — Or to leave your name and address to receive additional material.

The hope of every host club is to meet the expectations of previous conventions and the fear of every host club is no one will show up! We don't want you to miss this one — It will be a superior year for a convention. We plan to enhance an already well established schedule with a few new twists and turns. As usual, plan on informative tech sessions, a rally, swap meet, concourse, banquet and much more!

On behalf of the Saab Club of Georgia (and the population of greater Atlanta) — we hope you'll allow us to host you with our southern hospitality.

See y'all real soon!

Chris A. McPherson  
President - Saab Club of Georgia

Peggy C. Fields  
1995 Convention Registrar

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The consumed Gail Bishop's 1991 Saab 9000 last August.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER GARISTO

Gail Bishop and her son were in her 1991 Saab 9000 when she noticed smoke coming out of the dash. The car was destroyed by fire. "What would have happened if we... would not have been able to get out?"

# Fiery flaw

Saab denies fuse box fires are a serious safety problem

Seth Rosenfeld  
THE EXAMINER  
WRIGHT © 1995, BY HEARST CORPORATION  
The Saab

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

EXAMINER SPECIAL REPORT

## CHRONOLOGY OF SAAB'S INTERNAL

...tive and unsafe" and failed to warn consumers "in conscious disregard of their safety."  
The suit sought \$1.46 million for property damage and another \$1.5 million for punitive damages. It named as defendants Saab Automobile A.B., half of which is owned by General Motors, and Saab Cars, USA, Inc., its U.S. distributor.

...denied the allegations.  
Grady, a Saab lawyer, said that fire investigators had found a defect and caused

Internal Saab product problem reports describe a faulty fuse box connection that could cause some model 9000 cars to fill with smoke and catch fire. Top quality in report says Saab engineers to make not happen again.

There have been at least 24 reported Saab 9000s that have been linked to a fire. Saab has denied there was a defect in the fuse box.

February 1997: David Terry of Virginia caught fire, exploded and killed himself in the fire.

April 1998: Dr. Ron M. Severin was driving in his 1998 car and burst into flames. Saab memo cited a defect in the fuse box.

May 10, 1998: Saab's David Schurk in Sweden in memo saying it's a serious safety problem. We must investigate. We must make sure that no more cars are put in production until the problem is fixed.

## Federal probe of Saabs opened

Class action says company ignored flawed fuse boxes

By Seth Rosenfeld  
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

A federal auto safety agency has begun an inquiry into some Saab cars.

for evidence of the flaw in some Saab 9000s to determine whether a defect is warranted.  
"We'll gather some information while NHTSA will..."

REPORT PRODUCT PROBLEM-FAC

Issue	May 8, 1999	Page	24/29
Number	5266	Section	C1

# Flawed report

A front page newspaper story with inch-high headlines reading "Fiery flaw" and a burning car would catch anyone's attention. But the car is a Saab 9000 and the subheading reads "Saab denies fuse box fires are a serious safety problem". This isn't something out of the *National Enquirer* or the *New York Post* or some other sensationalist publication; this is in the Sunday edition of the *San Francisco Examiner*.

What's going on here? Saab, the company that issues recalls over the smallest things trying to cover up a problem? Especially a problem as serious as fire? Or has the Examiner stooped to tabloid tactics in an effort to sell papers. This doesn't make sense.

According to the copyrighted story in the February 5, 1995, edition, Examiner reporter Seth Rosenfeld claims Saab had documented 10 cases of smoking dashboards in Saab 9000s, five of which involved fires, between April 1988 and December 1991. The

**"Saab promptly and thoroughly investigated the issue, and concluded that there was no product problem to disclose."**

- Saab Cars USA, Inc.

Examiner story goes on to claim "the flaw potentially affected all 9000s in model years 1988, 1989, 1990 and the four-door 1991 - a total of 32,317 cars sold in the United States."

The story apparently was triggered by the lawyer for investment broker Jean Deleage of San Francisco, who had sued Saab for nearly \$3 million after his house was damaged by a 1992 fire traced to a 1988 9000 parked in the garage. An uninsured collection of contemporary Russian art was reportedly destroyed in the fire. The case was dismissed by San Francisco Superior Court Judge William Cahill in January, but Deleage's lawyer, Ernest

Thayer, plans to appeal, claiming, "Saab intentionally hid this life-threatening defect from the public." Thayer has now filed a class action suit against Saab in regard to the fusebox fires, representing two owners of 9000s.

Saab was required by the Deleage lawsuit to turn over any documents that related to non-collision vehicle fires in 9000s and 14 instances that might have been traced to the fusebox area were cited in the Examiner article. According to a preliminary product problem report written by Saab's David Schurk in December 1991, one of the fires could have been caused by a "loose +30 connection at position 230 where cable #5 is connected to the main distribution panel." Cable #5 is the main power supply wire to the fusebox, a 10mm grey wire that supplies power to fuses 16 through 24, plus relays 21 (ignition switch), 229 (main fuel injection relay) and 102 (fuel pump relay). When the ignition switch is turned on, the ignition relay supplies power to the other electrical systems in the car. The cable carries a high current and a loose connection at that



point could result in high resistance or arcing. It is on that flimsy evidence that Rosenfeld bases his premise that the fusebox connection is faulty. He uses phrases like "The Saab car company failed to tell customers and safety officials about a flaw...", "Saab never mounted a recall or a service campaign to correct the problem..." and "[Saab] denies the problem was a safety defect." to imply that there was a coverup by the manufacturer.

In a bulletin to U.S. Saab dealers on the day following the Examiner article, Saab states: "The term 'failure' implies that Saab has not fulfilled a duty to both owners and safety officials in disclosing a problem. In fact, Saab promptly and thoroughly investigated the issue, and concluded that there was no product problem to disclose." Consequently, it's impossible to call it a flaw or defect, or a coverup.

"Saab is extremely proactive when it comes to maintaining safety," said Elke Martin, Public Relations director for Saab Cars USA, Inc. "In several instances we have issued recalls when there were only a couple of confirmed problems." In some cases there were no consumer complaints as recalls were initiated as a result of ongoing factory testing.

"What's really frustrating is that we have no other outlet to defend ourselves against these accusations," said Martin. "The Examiner's reporter chose to use quotes that only supported his allegations or made Saab look like an uncaring corporate entity."

The addition of a cellular telephone, audio system, radar detector or other accessories wired into the 9000's electrical system that could have created a short circuit in the already tight panel behind the fusebox. Several instances of dashboard fires in 9000s are listed in the Examiner story, but in a letter to the Examiner from James Crumlish, CEO of Saab Cars USA, states, "...no fire has been shown to have originated from a loose fuse box connection."

Saab has issued recalls for electrical problems in the past. Around 70,000 1987 and 1988 900s were recalled to correct the possibility of wire chafing that could result in a short circuit or fire in the dashboard

(Saab Recall 273). All 9000s with the automatic transmission built through mid-1990, about 24,000 cars, were recalled to replace the combination neutral safety switch/backup switch which could overheat if the car was left in reverse for a long period of time with the ignition on (Saab Recall 278). Several fires in the console of 9000 automatics have been attributed to the neutral safety switch.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety maintains the largest

**"Nothing in our data shows the 9000 to be other than average."**

- Kim Hazelbaker, IIHS

database in the country on automobile insurance claims. IIHS can break down the data in many categories including type of claim or vehicle size, or by a particular vehicle. If there appears to be a trend that makes one vehicle stand out in the number of claims, IIHS could verify it from their data. "Non-collision vehicle fires are covered under comprehensive loss," said Kim Hazelbaker, senior vice-president at IIHS. "Non-collision fires amount to only 5 claims per 10,000 vehicles per year, which is very low. Even vehicles that have had known problems subject to recalls, the Nissan van being the worst in recent memory, are very few in the overall number of claims. The Nissan van had losses about 10 times the national average, or

**"Every car has under-dash fires. "**

- William Boehly, NHTSA

about 50 per 10,000 vehicles per year, and they were all eventually recalled by Nissan in a buy-back plan worked out with NHTSA."

"Nothing in our data shows the 9000 to be other than average." said Hazelbaker.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has begun an investigation of "passenger compartment fires" in 1986-91 Saab 9000s, but will not comment on the investigation until it has been completed. According to William Boehly, associate administrator for enforcement at NHTSA, "Every car has under-dash fires. So it's really trying to understand if there is information about a design problem, a performance problem or a manufacturing characteristic that is unique and different for these particular vehicles."

Saab welcomes the involvement of NHTSA, said Elke Martin. "We think NHTSA is an unbiased medium in which we can present the facts. We look forward to presenting our position - with full documentation."

The publicity surrounding the alleged fusebox problem in 9000s is part of a pattern in product liability cases, according to *Automotive News*. Once a suit is brought, the litigants' lawyers petition for internal company documents that may relate to the case, followed by a class action suit. The publicity is free advertising to sign up more unhappy consumers.

After a car has been totaled by an insurance company, it is sold as salvage. Consequently, if there were many Saab 9000s with defective fuseboxes that were resulting in fires, you would expect them to show up in Saab salvage yards across the country. As part of the investigation for this story, many salvage companies that specialize in Saabs, independent Saab repair shops, and Saab dealers were contacted to determine how widespread the problem might truly be. Or if there even was a problem.

Daryll Seelman at Gold Wing Used Saab Parts in Hastings, New York, reported "We just rebuilt a 9000 that had a fire in the relay panel in the left front, and we've seen some with the overheated [neutral safety] switch in the console, but never in the main fuse panel in the dash."

Dennis Sweeney runs a Saab salvage and service business in Pennsylvania. He, too, has seen a few 9000s that have had console fires caused by an overheated neutral safety switch, but none with fusebox fires.



*Though this fire appears to have started under the right side dash panel, the +30 power cable was intact and was not the source of the fire.*

Among other Saab repair shops consulted were ParrFormance, Lititz, Pennsylvania; S & J Automotive in Atlanta; Mile Hi Body Shop in Denver; Trollhattan Motors in Baltimore; and Scandia Autosports in Seattle. All of them reported never having seen any problem with 9000 fuseboxes.

Bud Clark at J&B Imports in Orange, California, believes the problem to random rather than across the board. "We have two 9000s in our family. I looked at one last week and there was no problem; the other one has almost 300,000 miles on the odometer and if there were a problem it would have surfaced by now. Still, I'm going to take a look at it very soon." While Clark agrees that the Examiner story was sensationalistic, he also thinks Saab probably shouldn't have brushed it off so easily. He says if the problem exists in a few cars, the bad publicity can end up giving the whole marque a bad name, much like happened to Audi over the unsubstantiated unintended acceleration problem of a few years ago.

Tom French, proprietor of French's Foreign Car Service in Irving, Texas, hasn't seen any fusebox fires in 9000s, but has been offered a couple that had dashboard fires. "My guess is that the problem was the cooling fan relay. I've seen a couple of those stick and that could make the wires hot enough to melt some plastic."

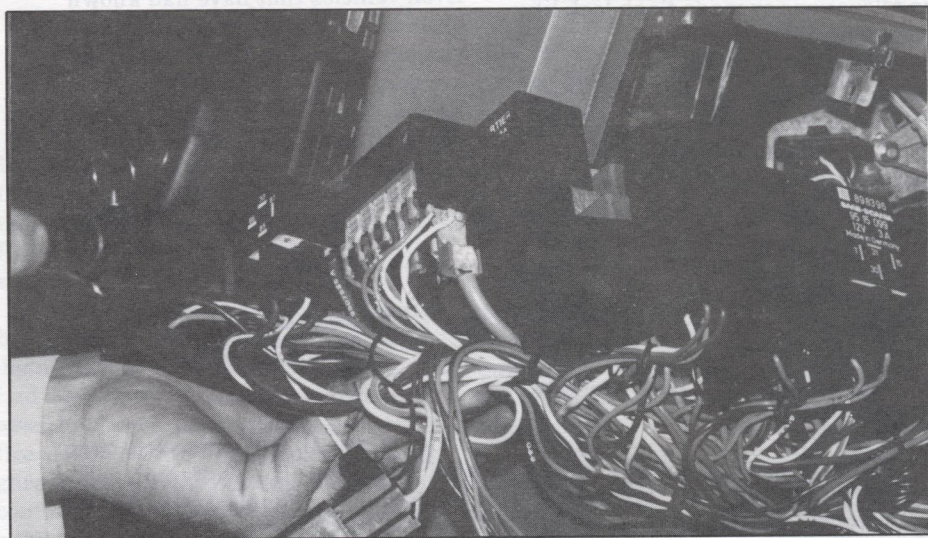
Don Andrews runs the repair side of the family business, Andrews, Inc., a Saab-only independent repair and body shop in Princeton, Minnesota. "What we've seen are fires caused by an overheated neutral safety switch, all automatics, all in the console. They've all been cars that haven't had the recall done," said Andrews. "I've never seen a burned 5-speed 9000."

Just a few minutes after that conversation, however, Don called back to tell me they had just purchased a totaled 1987 9000 automatic with what

appeared to be a fusebox fire. I grabbed a camera and drove the 100+ miles down to the Andrews' shop and took the photos that accompany this article. Don disassembled the fuse panel on the car, but the main power connection on the back of the panel was tight. It was ruled out as the cause of this particular fire, but a definite cause was not determined.

The service manager at a Saab dealership in New Jersey, who understandably wishes to remain anonymous, said they had a couple of 9000s several years ago that were towed in because they would not start. The cause was traced to the main power wire connection at the fusebox. In one case the lug that attaches the wire that distributes power to the fuse box had been improperly crimped and showed signs of excess resistance. In the other, the bolt that holds the lug to the fuse panel had worked loose, resulting in no power to the fuse block. In neither case were there any indications that it could have caused a fire. They were considered minor, isolated incidents and the repairs were not reported to Saab.

Bill Jacobson at Sports Car Service in Wilmington, Delaware, has seen a couple of fires in 1991 9000s, but they were not the result of any electrical problem. Both were caused by failure of the harmonic balancer on the engine. If not taken care of, the balancer,



*The Examiner story claims the heavy gauge grey wire to the fuse panel in some 9000s may become overheated and cause a fire. Saab dealers will check the wiring in the fuse panel at no charge.*

which is mounted on the front of the crankshaft, begins to contact the body of the engine, eventually wearing through the timing chain housing and setting the oil on fire. Of course, there would be considerable noise from the engine compartment once the balancer began to rub on the aluminum housing, and it should take some time before the balancer could wear through the housing and cause oil to leak out.

Though the Examiner thought the flaming 9000 story important enough to be front page news, it was given only minimal coverage in the rest of the news media. The Examiner went so far as to issue a press release touting its investigation. Cable News Network mentioned the story in newscasts on February 5th, and a few newspapers carried a brief summary of the Examiner release, but it was apparently considered of little consequence and received only minimal exposure.

Though stories of unintended acceleration in Audi 5000s - as promoted by CBS television's 60 Minutes program - and potentially hazardous gas tank locations in General Motors pickup trucks caught the public interest at the time, both stories later fell apart. In the case of Audi, NHTSA revealed that owner error was the cause of the accidents. The GM pickups met federal standards in effect at the time they were built and have not resulted in any more fatalities than Ford or Dodge pickups which have gas tanks mounted between the chassis rails.

A story on the GM pickups aired on NBC's Dateline showed a fuel tank exploding when hit in the side by a car. Dateline later admitted that the fuel was ignited by a small rocket engine and not the impact and issued an apology to GM and its viewers. It appears the media are skeptical of another unsubstantiated claim of a defect and coverup by an auto manufacturer.

There obviously is no coverup of any particular defect in the 9000 because Saab has not found a common failure to connect the fusebox fires. If they had, Saab would have notified NHTSA and recall notices would have been sent.

If you have a 9000, any year up through 1992, and are still concerned

### Saab's official response to the San Francisco Examiner's allegations:

February 10, 1995

Lee Guittar  
 Publisher & Editor  
 Phil Bronstein, Executive Editor  
 San Francisco Examiner  
 110 Fifth Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94103-2972

Gentlemen:

Saab has a long heritage of building safe cars. Any allegation of a possible safety problem is taken very seriously by us. Your newspaper carried two stories about 1988-91 Saab 9000s (February 5 and 6, 1995) which published inaccurate and unsubstantiated allegations by self-interest litigants. The net result was a sensationalized front page story which wrongfully damaged our company and the public's perception of Saab and its cars.

Your articles prominently feature two cases in which individuals were poised to sue Saab and have now done so. By featuring their self-serving allegations as supposed facts and giving prominence to them before they are resolved, your paper has simply served as a voluntary publicist for the unproven claims of the plaintiffs' lawyers.

While the articles cite 25 cases, a number of these do not even involve a fire. Of the remainder, no fire has been shown to have originated from a loose fuse box connection.

Your articles have needlessly harmed Saab and its customers, and discouraged potential new Saab buyers. In this regard, it should be stressed that there is no claim of any problem in current Saab models.

Saabs have always enjoyed an excellent safety record, and this is certainly true of the Saab 9000, regardless of model year.

Sincerely,

James P. Crumlish  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 Saab Cars USA, Inc.  
 Norcross GA

about the allegations, it is worth your peace of mind to have it checked for any loose connection in the fuse panel. The inspection should take a competent mechanic less than 20 minutes. Saab has issued a directive that their dealers will inspect any 9000 at no charge to see if there is a problem.

The only flaw in this episode was that the *San Francisco Examiner* allowed itself to be used as free publicity for a lawyer who was trying to build a case on poor evidence.

The Examiner's action may be explained in the words of former presidential press secretary Dee Dee Myers, who recently offered what she sees as the rules of media in today's world:

"No. 1: Be first rather than right. No. 2: Never let the facts stand in the way of a good story. No. 3: When in doubt analyze, and No. 4: Good news is no news, so create conflict."

*Tim Winker*

# Technical Talk

## Bent axle = twitchy feel

When we purchased our first Saab, a used '89 900 Turbo Convertible, we were excited by the thought of cruising to our favorite ski areas in the winter-wothy comfort of our new "snow machine". We were told by other Saab owners that the 900 was excellent on snow and ice, and could handle almost anything winter could throw at us. Valhalla with a ski rack, right? Wrong!! Our first foray into the white stuff left me white knuckled and sweating profusely, this despite having four studded snow tires mounted on new Saab steel wheels. The car felt as if it had a fifth tire mounted under the center of the car that was slightly taller than the other four. Whenever we were on a slick surface the car would feel loose and shift direction continuously, and it wasn't something that you could pin down to one axle or the other. I felt more like a terrified passenger than a driver.

My first thought was that the wheels were not true, but a quick check of radial runout proved that they were OK. Likewise the tires. Even replacing the snow tires with the summer tires showed no change on slick driving surfaces. We checked the brakes to make sure there was no dragging. When we purchased the car four months earlier the dealership assured us that they had completely serviced the car, including checking the alignment.

Then it hit me. I was describing the problem to a friend as very similar to the way a beginning skier's snowplow feels. As edge bite shifts from one ski to the other the direction and weight shift are changed. Using Neanderthal methods I determined that the rear alignment was toed in by 0.5 inches, which of course is way too much. So now it becomes obvious why the rear tires were worn on the outside when we purchased the car. Saab indicated that the tires should wear outside on the fronts and inside on the rears, so I presumed that they had been rotated

prior to our purchase. (Just how thorough was that "complete service", Sutherland Motors?) Once the car was on the alignment rack it was discovered that the front was toed in by 0.65 inches, and the back by 0.75 inches. Talk about a snowplow! But what to do? The front aligned easily, but you can't align the rear wheels on a 900, according to my mechanic and Saab. The general concurrence was that axle replacement was the only cure. My alignment shop (Casaday Beeline) disagreed. They suggested that if replacement was required, why not give axle bending a try. After all, what could it hurt. I stood and watched on the computer screen as their efforts slowly took effect. After 45 minutes of bending the axle, both toe-in and camber were perfect.

We now have great fun driving in winter weather. Having all four tires pointed in the same direction is a definite plus on icy roads.

Lon Howard  
Pasco, WA

## Clutch hydraulic work & headliner droop

On my '85 900T with over 140K (relatively reliable) miles, I recently had to rebuild both the brake and clutch master cylinders. Both gave plenty of warning by having an "over-center" feel when pushing on the pedals. The seal lips were probably folding over on themselves. The rebuilding process was done by the (Haynes) book, being especially careful to push the clutch piston all the way in so I wouldn't cut the seal, like I did to a '77 99 ten years ago. Unfortunately, the seal was worn so badly that the clutch cylinder wall was also worn too far to be usable, and had to be replaced.

My fix for the proverbial drooping headliner? (you'd think that in this day and age that Saab could work up a better headliner without a foam that disintegrates after a few years) I just used a few cents worth of thread and stitched the liner to the formed glass fiber substrate, pincushion style. It's not pretty, but it works. I re-lined that '77 99 way back when, but I later noticed that the foam on the material sample I kept also disintegrated after about three years.

T. T. Chuhay  
Panama City, FL

## DRLs: Safety vs. economy

I have noticed a bit of controversy over Daylight Running Lights (DRLs) in postings to the Saab Network. I'd like to make a few observations in NINES, because not everyone can "surf the net" or "browse the web." Actually I wish I didn't know what those terms meant.

Some people object to DRLs because the current consumed by the headlights imposes a load on the alternator which reduces gas mileage. I suspect it probably does to some degree (or the manufacturers wouldn't diddle with electrical loads to improve EPA figures) but I really wonder how much difference it makes in the real world. Whatever, I'm willing to use a little more gas to get a lot more light. A few messages to the Saabnet raised points about side and taillights not being on with DRLs. My '94 did not come with DRLs standard. Unlike the PSI in NINES #225 which is directed to those who want to delete DRLs, I wanted them. Sticking a fuse in slot 15 didn't get me DRLs, but it did activate the parking, side marker and taillights with the ignition. It wasn't until Indy Saab reprogrammed the computer to select "ALT 3" that I actually got DRLs. What I have are 100% power low beams. The taillights are on all the time. If I forget to turn the switch to "on" I can flash my lights but do not get high beams or fog lights. I can always live with that downside since I just turn the switch when I discover I don't have high beams. I don't know how DRLs were in prior generation 900s, or in 9000s, but I think anyone who is concerned about driving without taillights in a new 900 with DRLs can rest easy. I'm sure Indy Saab reprogrammed the computer properly.

Actually there is a downside: now nothing happens when I turn the headlight switch to try to alert the idiots who drive without lights after it is dark. (Don't they ever look at their instruments and wonder why they can't read them? Probably not, or they wouldn't drive without headlights.) \*

Paul J. Galanti  
Indianapolis, IN

Technical articles written by subscribers may recommend procedures or parts not approved by Saab Cars USA, 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.

## Keep that stroker popping

I just wrote a note to Bob Shapton in Caledon, Ontario, Canada. He was asking for info on the care and feeding of a 2-stroke Saab 95 he just purchased. Then NINES arrived and I saw your request for tech stuff even if written on the back of restroom paper! Hey! I haven't done that to you for years. So I'm sending you the same basic letter in hopes a 2-stroke lover out there saves a Saab from the junk man.

If you don't have a service manual get an owners manual, it even has drawings of which plug wire goes where! Along with basic ignition specs. it is a "how to book" to keep you out of trouble. [Note: A reprint of the 1961-64 service manual for 95, 96 and Monte Carlo is available from The Saab Club for \$25.00 plus \$3.00 shipping.]

**Oil/Fuel Mix:** The only thing different from the good book that I recommend is add no more than 6 gal. gas to 1 quart of oil. If you can't find 30 or 40 weight 2-stroke oil then use a regular oil of straight 30, 40 or even 50 weight, it stinks but it works. Don't use multi grade oil! Don't use this new 50 to 1 ratio oil, no matter what ratio it is mixed, it is still too damn thin! These old design engines need that old thick oil! There has been a time, too far from home when I heard a too noisy rod, so I only put in 4 gal. of gas to 1 quart of oil. The car ran fine and of course when I got home it sounded just like it all ways does, it was just me! So don't worry about adding extra oil.

Along with this oil system is the free wheel feature. Saab salesmen used to like to say it saved fuel but the real reason was to prevent the engine from seizing up! If you run with the free wheel "locked out" down a long hill at 65mph with your foot off the gas pedal, then the engine is only getting lube for idle RPM not 65 mph RPM.

Limit total mechanical timing to 20 degrees. I also plug off the vacuum advance.

Long nose cars (1965-'67) with the radiator up front run cooler than bull nose cars (thru 1964). In either car drive with the temperature gauge not the speedometer.

**Keep those RPMs UP:** In town I'll speed up then let it coast along free wheeling,

just leave the transmission in a lower gear. The idea is to not lug down the engine. I very seldom use 4th gear till I get over 40mph.

Low engine revs and big throttle openings will pound the rod bearings and eventually feed trash to the piston which feeds more trash back to the rod bearings which continues till the crank is seized up.

**Fuel pump:** As long as you asked, I won't use that diaphragm pump on the side of the block. I believe when they get weak the engine will still run but it is lean. A piece of gas line hose from inlet to outlet will plug it off. I have had a lot better luck running a electric inline pump (looks like a filter).

If you should flood the engine and foul the spark plugs, crank it over with the fuel pump shut off. In a worst case remove the plugs and crank the engine till it stops spewing out the fuel mist (it will blow clear over the fender). Wet plugs just won't fire. They can be black in color but they've gotta be dry to fire.

In a really bad case of fuel loaded up in the crankcase wetting the plugs I have laid the plugs on the head next to their openings with the wires hooked up and then cranked the engine over. Shoots about 4 foot of flame out the plug hole but it works! Just be sure you are way outside when you crank it over because the neighbor kids get a big kick out of it!

**Exhaust:** The front muffler is a tuned expansion chamber and usually gets hot enough to stay clean. The pipes and rear muffler will coke up. Pull the pipe loose from front muffler and tie it out of the way for a test drive. If power picks up you need a rear muffler and/or pipes. You can get creative here because these items are not tuned. The single V4 pipe and rear muffler are the same thing and can be found in parts houses other than Saab.

On long cross country trips I have carried a spare engine in the trunk, but it is like insurance, if you've got it, you don't need it.

I picked up our new 900 from the Meyer Garage last week. It has one too many cylinders, but I made a lot of points with Katha.

"Stroker" Williams  
Waterloo IA

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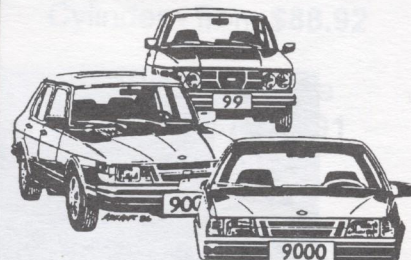
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# Tranny Trials

## Stretched primary chains

While owners of some Saab 900s seem to have trouble with pinion bearing housing failures, the gearbox problems on my 1985 900 Turbo have been of a nature I've not heard from any other source.

This all began several years ago when the transmission was destroyed by a nearly buried rock on a forest road (NINES #210). The housing cracked open like an egg, all the fluid drained out immediately, and the car had to be towed. A rebuilt transmission was obtained and installed.

About 26,000 miles and 18 months later, the transmission suddenly failed while passing another car on the highway. The diagnosis was that the oil passage to the primary gears at the front of the case may have been assembled incorrectly and there was insufficient oil getting to the gears and chains, resulting in a broken chain which quickly took the other two chains with it. Due to the damage to the inside of the primary case, a used primary section was obtained and installed.

Another 16 months and 14,000 miles (odometer reading 140K) and I noticed a problem under acceleration which I thought was related to the turbo system. When under boost, the car would buck, almost like a backfire, and the needle would not get much beyond halfway up the turbo boost gauge. I assumed something was signalling the wastegate to open under partial boost.

When the car was in for other work, I asked that the mechanic try to figure out what the problem might be, but he was unable to duplicate my complaint. He looked for a vacuum leak or a failed turbo by-pass valve, but everything checked out. Another mechanic friend brought over a bore-scope (a skinny) and we inspected the valves for possible deposits that might be causing pre-ignition, but the valves looked to be in good condition.

Finally, another mechanic took a ride with me while I made the car go through its fit of coughing. He diagnosed it as a transmission problem, or possibly an inner constant velocity joint. Transmission? Shortly after that the tranny began to rapidly lose fluid and there were large oil stains beginning to form in the driveway under the

900. I still had some doubts, but told them to go ahead with pulling the drivetrain again.

Sure enough, the chains and tensioners had lots of slop, so much that the lower gear would occasionally miss a hole in the chain under load and "spit" it out on the other side. In addition, the oil catcher - a cup-like structure that directs oil back into the main gearbox housing and through all the bearings - had been smashed by the looseness of the chain. The lack of oil to the bearings had caused some to fuse to the shaft. Fortunately they were able to obtain some good used parts to supplement new chains and sprocket gears. Another catastrophic failure was averted, possibly by only a few miles.

So, one more tranny bill, roughly equivalent to the budget for that new computer I've been looking at for the bookkeeping side of the business. On the plus side, there had been several little fluid leaks showing up on the engine and gearbox, and they have been attended to while the drivetrain was out of the car.

Tim Winker

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## Saab Guard Alarm settings

I recently had a problem trying to set the options on the Saab Guard Alarm system in my 1989 Saab. James at Saab Technical Assistance was able to answer my questions. The 1989 version has a series of six switches which can be set to On or Off. The functions are:

- |                   |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| #1 in On position | Chirp disabled                    |
| #2 in On position | Provides 20 second delay to entry |
| #3 in On position | Less sensitive to shock           |
| #4 in On position | Alarm duration is one minute      |
| #5 in On position | Provides 40 second arming time    |
| #6 in On position | Zero second delay to entry        |

Also: Counterclockwise rotation of the "pot" next to series of switches provides fine tuning in the "less sensitive" direction for the shock alarm. Fully clockwise provides maximum sensitivity.

If the remote control is lost and the receiver is a Linear Alert unit, a replacement can be purchased at Builders Square, Home Quarters, Home Depot or Hechingers under the name, "Keep Safer - Medical Pendant".

James C. Sears  
Roanoke VA

## Reformulated gas may cause fires in older cars

Chevron stations in California have added warning stickers to their pumps indicating that use of its reformulated gasoline in older cars may result in fire. Fuel system disintegration from corrosive chemicals in the gasoline may lead to fuel system leaks, and possibly engine fires. According to a story in the March 20, 1995 *Automotive News*, a Chevron spokesman says the warnings are based on lower levels of benzene used in reformulated gasolines.

The same edition of *Automotive News* says that Nissan is blaming the gasoline additive MTBE for engine fires in older vehicles. Nissan claims engine fires in its 1984-89 300ZX and 1985-89 Maxima models result from a weakening of bobbins in the fuel injectors caused by increased exposure to MTBE. The problem seems limited to the Nissan 3.0-liter V6 engine with multi-point fuel injection.

MTBE, or *methyl tertiary butyl ether*, has been added to gasoline since 1979 as an oxygenate. In 1988, the Environmental Protection Agency approved the use of up to 15 percent MTBE in pump gasoline as an anti-pollutant, but that concentration did not come into heavy use until the winter of 1992 when oxygenated fuels were required in areas of high carbon monoxide pollution. About 30 percent of the gasoline sold in the U.S. contains MTBE, primarily on the East and West coasts.

## The down side of technology

The Saab Network recently experienced a hard disk crash. Recent backups failed to restore properly and an older backup had to be used. Some more recent subscribers were lost as a result. If you joined the Saab Network in early February and have not been receiving messages, you will need to resubscribe by sending a message with the keyword SUBSCRIBE in the subject to:

saab@network.mhs.compuserve.com

or

INTERNET:saab@network.mhs.compuserve.com

## You could win a 1995 900 Turbo Convertible

The top prize in the 1995 Dream Car Raffle sponsored by the National Kidney Foundation of New York/New Jersey will again be a Saab Turbo Convertible. The drawing will be held on April 23rd, at the end of the New York International Auto Show at Jacob Javits Center. Tickets are \$5.00 each or a book of six is \$25.00. To participate, call Loretta at (212) 629-9770. The seller of the winning ticket receives a monetary prize as well.

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## High mileage Saabs

*In issue #225, we asked for information on high mileage Saabs. The common thread to all high mileage cars is that they have been maintained carefully, with preventative maintenance and regular oil changes of prime importance.*

*It is interesting to note that the Mercedes Benz Club did a similar survey recently and came up with two cars with over one million miles, and five others that have exceeded 500,000 miles. Only two Saab owners reported over 300,000 miles, though a few others are known.*

*Here are the stories of those who responded:*

I've been a member of the Saab Club since 1982 when I bought my **1982½ 900 APC Turbo**. The APC cars were originally scheduled for the 1983 model year, but some early production cars were sold as 1982½'s. Occasionally some research has to be done to determine whether I need a 1982 or a 1983 style part. This doesn't bother my mechanic (Tom Hayden of Hayden Automotive in Salem, Ore.) as he says that with Saabs, the stated model year of the car is the very last criteria you use to determine what parts are required.

My car has 309,000 miles on it. The major items replaced or repaired are:

- Turbo - 140k miles
- Valves and cam chain tensioner - 140k miles
- Transmission rebuild (1st, 2nd, & 3rd gears and synchros) - 160k miles
- Ring & pinion - 160k miles
- Steering rack - 188k miles
- Replacement cylinder head and valve job - 303k miles

Other standard service items:

- 2 complete brake system overhauls with 2 new rotors
- Inner drivers and inner & outer CV-joints
- Multiple heater control valves (I hope that designer never worked on the Draken & Viggen)
- Starter, Alternator and various electrical components
- Several clutches, master cylinders and slave cylinders
- The paint
- Radiator and water pumps
- Gas tank senders
- Various and sundry Bosch fuel injection components

The most important replacement item was the horrible Sony XR-70 radio that came with the car. I knew I had to do something when I found that a rental Ford Escort had a better sounding radio than my Saab.

I change the oil and filter religiously every 2500 miles. I use Valvoline 10-30 and Fram filters. Hayden said (at 303k miles) that my piston to cylinder bore clearances, cylinder walls and main & rod bearings are still within factory tolerances and there is no reason the block and internals couldn't go 500k miles. So, unless I wreck the car or just plain get sick and tired of it, my goal is to be driving the car in 2002 with 500k miles on it.

Tom Curran  
Goldendale WA  
via MCI Mail

Just got back from a road trip and read NINES #225. I last wrote you over a year or so ago. My '85 900T now has 255,300 and no major repairs since I last wrote. On one leg of the trip, I got 33 mpg.

I know your article asked for just year, model, and miles, but below is a brief history of major repairs of the 5-door.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Mileage</i>
Alternator	114,000
Fuel pump	120,000
Water pump	139,500 (AutoZone brand replacement)
Ignition Module	140,000
AIC valve	195,000
CV boots	200,000 & 223,000

All suspension parts are original (but are in need of replacement). Original ignition wires. I'm on my 4th battery, 5th set of tires, 3rd muffler, and 2nd front rotors. I will admit to using Slick 50 at 160,000 and am on Duralube at 225,000. Oh yes, 3rd windshield. No wrecks or major body damaged (nicks & dings). The interior is excellent except for the headliner starting to fall and even with a dash mat and sun shield the dash has several major

cracks (but hidden). The clutch is original and working fine. The only irritation at this point is a front seal leaking on the crank.

I will be disappointed when the engine does blow, but I should be thankful for the longevity the Saab achieved.

Gary L. Clower  
Alamogordo, NM

I just wanted to drop you a note concerning my high mileage Saab. I purchased this **Saab 900 Turbo** in March of 1984 new from a local dealer. It currently has 159,271 miles registered on the odometer. After numerous trips to the dealer to repair typical minor new car problems and an oil leak which they never could find, all these miles have been a pleasurable driving experience. The major repairs I have encountered are rebuilt transmission, new rack and pinion, starter, new ignition switch. The rebuilt transmission was partly my fault due to not repairing the pinion bearings when they first started singing. I have re-done the leather on the front seats and it is currently in the body shop getting the front hood painted due to cracking paint. The shop is also repairing some rust on the front wheel well. The turbo is still holding up well and I feel partly the reason for this are the frequent oil changes and a cool down period after a hard run.

I have since purchased in 1991 a used 1986 (900S) for my wife. This automobile has 72,175 miles on it with no major repairs since I have owned it.

I have been a Saab Club member since 1984 when I purchased the Turbo. While I am dropping you this note on my high mileage Saab, I also want to add how much I have enjoyed reading the newsletters. Keep up the good work!!

Nicholas F. Karras  
Dayton, OH

I have a **1991 9000S 5-speed** with 101,500 miles as of today. It is the best car that I have owned in terms of driving pleasure and all around use. In addition, it has been relatively inexpensive to maintain. It is hard to believe that the 9000 doesn't have more of a following or that the resale value of the car isn't higher. It is one hell of a car for the money. I've thought many times about selling it to buy a new one (or the new 900) but it runs so well I can't justify it.

Richard McCullough  
Durham, NC



I purchased my **3 door, 5 speed, 900 Turbo** new in August 1984. It was, and still is, the perfect combination of practicality and passion. It has been a faultless mode of daily transportation, and a joyful means of exploring the western and central United States. My little red hatchback has now gone 210,000 miles and shows no signs of stopping. I thought it might be informative to give a history of this high mileage Saab. Below is a list of the major repairs; excluding routine maintenance items such as fluid changes, tune-ups, brake pads, etc.

<i>mileage</i>	<i>description</i>
34,691	Replaced leaky A/C expansion valve
60,986	Replaced broken shift lever centering spring
110,942	Replaced faulty warm-up regulator
129,412	Replaced noisy left side CV joint
130,660	Replaced collapsed right side motor mount and worn clutch assembly
144,471	Replaced faulty heater control valve (could not completely turn off heater)
147,009	Replaced leaky A/C evaporator valve
149,806	Replaced sluggish power steering rack and worn ball joints
155,257	Replaced noisy water pump
161,419	Replaced both front brake calipers (emergency brake kept sticking "on")
166,608	Replaced leaking brake master cylinder
167,509	Replaced rusted exhaust system with Group 6 Performance unit (works well)
168,055	Replaced faulty warm-up regulator
180,057	Replaced faulty turbo boost valve/solenoid and all four shocks (replacement Bilsteins work well)
183,035	Replaced broken windshield wiper drive cable
192,926	Replaced leaky clutch master cylinder and worn clutch assembly
196,896	Replaced intermittent fuel pump relay
205,639	Replaced leaky power steering rack
209,897	Replaced worn alternator brushes/voltage regulator (worn brushes sounded like a bad alternator bearing)

I have used Mobil 1 oil since the car was new, changing the oil and filter every 5,000 miles. I originally used Mobil 1 oil in the transmission. However, I have found that Redline MTL allows for better shifting.

Some side notes:

The car has an upgraded stereo sound system, including a sub-woofer in the sub-trunk.

At approx. 130,000 miles the leather on the drivers seat became pretty distressed looking. A practical and relatively inexpensive solution was sheepskin seat covers on both front seats.

I have replaced the stock fog lamps with Hella 550's and moved the lamps closer to outside corners of the bumper for better side lighting of the road, although this position also increases the risk of damage from curbs and road debris.

Rob Mustard  
Maple Valley, WA

I have a friend who has a **1985 900T16** with a genuine 396,000 miles on the clock, 5 speed, leather and air in black and this car looks and drives like a dream. I've just helped put a new cylinder head gasket into it and I can tell you the engine is in tip top condition!

Any better out there?

Clark Wilson  
Great Britain  
via CompuServe

I only have 298,000 on my **1985 900 16VT** 5 speed 3 door. The car was bought new on 4/19/85 when we lived in the Metro Detroit area. NINES was of great help over the years on preventive maintenance and upgrades. Preventive maintenance is what I try to do to avoid unexpected breakdowns; I have not had any. I use Mobil 1 5w-30 and either Mann or Saab filters changed every 3,000 miles until I reached 100,000 miles, then went to 4,000 between changes. I use no oil between changes and still have the original turbo.

Performance was upgraded to Group 6 APC box, and the overboost screw was turned in 3 rotations, K&N air filter, stage 1 fuel pressure, stainless steel brake lines, higher output ignition, sway bars, Saab sport exhaust, and ordered new inlet ducts from Group 6. I went through my maintenance log to give you an idea what I did and why.

Mobil 1 was started after the car had 4,306 miles on it to allow the rings to seat. Saab sway bars were added at 30,000 miles, noticed a big improvement in tighten up the car, also

air springs were added for our trips out East. They have a lifetime warranty, these units work great if you carry heavy loads. I change the gear box oil every 15 to 20,000 miles using MTL from Red Line. I didn't learn about this until I had 50,000 miles on the car. The transmission was worked on at 207,000 miles.

I change all brake and clutch fluid every year now, clutch master cylinder lasted 284,630 miles, I use Castrol LMA D0T4. Saab antifreeze and distilled water is done every two years. I have had to do only one water pump with this method, changed at 142,384. Changed the brushes in the alternator at 270,000 miles, almost too late. Can be done in car with angled screwdriver, disconnect battery first. Had one interesting repair, once the air conditioner was turned on it would not shut off. To make a long story short (that was the problem) I replaced the ignition switch. While I was in there I removed the reverse lock out.

It might be wise to start changing power steering fluid. After two racks, I started to use Red Line's power steering fluid every two years. Replaced rear torque bushings at 269,500; I was getting uneven wear on the rear tires and I also noticed it during highway lane changes, but it did not make any noise. Every 5,000 miles when rotating tires, clean and check brakes. Use a good quality silcone on all rubber suspension parts, along with door trim.

With this many miles I have tried several types of shocks. I like either Koni or Bilstein shocks. I had to call Bilstein for replacement of top rubber bushing after installing them because the shock would pull through when jacking up the car. The new ones had a smaller hole. There have been no problems in 40,000 on the Bilstein and 113,000 on the Konis now on second setting on the rear.

I use Zymol products on the car and have been told more then once that they like my new car. I installed European head lights with 55/100 watt H4 bulbs, the car looks like Saab 900's as late as 1993 model. If the next convention is in Atlanta, GA in August, I hope to be there with well over 300,000 miles.

Larry Swanson  
Durham, NH

## A new car in the family

When it came time to buy a new family cruiser last May, I looked at my options.

Japanese cars were out - my experiences with several in my family have convinced me of that. The Japanese government has a policy of encouraging high domestic production of automobiles. To this end, they require the cars on the street to be kept up practically to new car standards. The manufacturers deal with this by building cars to require very little maintenance over a service life of 5 years or 150k kilometers. The cars are not designed to be repaired easily, either mechanically or when repairing from an accident. When a major part fails in Japan, they throw the car away - that's where they get all those low mile Japanese engines you see advertised - they are imported from Japan.

British cars were out. I once owned a Jaguar and Riley - a British car is like a bicycle - not really transportation, but rather a way of life.

German cars are desirable, but the unfavorable exchange rate diminishes the value for dollar equation. Notice BMW is now beginning to manufacture in the U.S.

Swedish cars - possible. I once owned a Volvo and currently own a Saab. Volvo is a truck manufacturer that expanded into cars. Saab is an airplane manufacturer that expanded into cars. Their respective heritages are evident in their products. I didn't want a new Volvo. With reluctance I had to give up on Saab. The 9000 is priced to compete with the small Mercedes and BMWs. If I have to pay that price, I want the real thing. The (new) 900 at that time had only the Opel V6 and the Saab atmo 4. If I could have gotten a real Turbo 4 4-door, I might have gone for it. I didn't want an Opel at Saab prices.

That left American cars. This was a stunning revelation. The newest Ford and Chrysler products actually could compete with the foreign cars head to head on looks, comfort, performance and economy. There was still room for improvement on fit and finish. The American cars had a marked advantage in value for the dollar. I ended up with a Chrysler LHS. My wife is ecstatic. My friends from Belgium (Volvo & BMW drivers) are impressed. Best of all, I still have my 900 Turbo.

A sidebar on a few recurring subjects on the Club news ---

### Saab pricing

When I bought my 1982 Turbo, it had manual windows, manual sunroof, no power door & trunk locks, and velour upholstery. A good friend was so impressed with my car that he bought a 1985 Turbo. Standard on his car were power windows, doorlocks and sunroof. When I looked again in 1987, leather seats had become standard. Saab attained the highest sales figures in the U.S. during the time when they kept "standard" luxury items to a minimum.

The former head of Saab U.S.A., Bob Sinclair convinced Saab management that Saab should take their car upscale because he could convince the American public that Saab could compete with Mercedes, BMW, and the big Volvos. He was wrong. He forgot that Volvo kept selling their basic economy 240 for years after they went upscale. In the U.S., the 240 was consistently Volvo's big volume seller for many years after the 700 series was getting all the attention. When Sinclair took Saab out of the value for dollar arena, he forced comparisons between Saab and its competition in areas other than Saab's traditional strengths, like innovation, engineering, efficiency, and durability. The result was that Saab, a "goofy" car did not appear to measure up well with it's German and Japanese competition. Slumping sales and loss of market presence forced Saab to make a marriage with the least desirable suitor..... G.M. who stands for everything Saab does not. Perhaps G.M. will be smart enough to let Saab return to its strengths and we will all be happy. I hope so.

### Turbo Gauges, pressure and "free-flow" exhaust systems

This subject is probably moot as most of the later "closed loop" engine management systems on turbo cars will not run well when you affect the exhaust gas flow materially.

The common belief among owners of turbocharged cars is that the higher the indicated intake manifold pressures, the higher the power output. When exhaust system modifications are made to improve the flow of exhaust gases (removing the cat),

the result is lower indicated intake manifold pressures and subsequent confusion on the part of all. You must remember that the boost gauge is not a power gauge - it is only a measure of the relative difference between the pressure in the manifold and ambient air pressure. If the turbo is not changed and the exhaust wastegate is not opened, you would expect that the boost needle would show higher pressures, because after all, you are getting more power.

What the boost gauge is showing is the amount of "unprocessed" air-fuel mixture in the manifold. If the pressure is high, there is a lot of unprocessed mixture in the manifold - if it is lower, there is less. Well, if it is lower, where did the mixture go? The answer is "out the tailpipe". The exhaust gasses are getting out of the engine faster (less back pressures). The cylinder can be more completely filled from the intake manifold and can make a bigger bang on this revolution. The engine is an air pump - if you make a change to improve the flow characteristics of the engine, you will get more flow through the engine. If the flow can get through the engine only by going into the cylinder, exploding (making power) and going through the tailpipe, it follows that the higher the flow (more air-fuel mixture into the cylinders), the more power you are going to get. This is what is happening.

The reason the boost gauge is lower is that the engine is taking it out of the manifold (flowing it faster) than before the exhaust modifications were made.

Similarly, in an atmospheric engine the intake manifold vacuum is lowest (closest to maximum atmospheric pressure) when the throttles are open widest. Assuming any degree of tune, the further open the throttles, the more air-fuel mixture that is getting into the cylinders and the more power that is being made.

If you don't agree with me, I have an alternate explanation which is equally valid - Murphy's law says that the boost gauge will start to fail the very next time you start the engine after making exhaust system improvements.

Tom Curran  
Goldendale WA  
via MCI Mail

## My First Saab

By Dennis O'Connor  
Copyright 1995

My first car was a jet black 1960 Saab 93. It had 3 port holes on each side of the hood and suicide doors that flipped open like clam shells ready to catch the wind. I bought the Saab in 1968 from an Australian who'd been savaged by a shark somewhere off the Barrier Reef and asymmetrically stitched back together. The experience left him literally talking out of the side of his mouth—"She's a fine drive, a sweet potato, mate." I believed every word he said and shelled out my life saving's of \$300. I'd bought my first car.

I had already narrowed my choices for my first car to a Saab or a Citroen 2CV. I was into the reverse status of odd cars. The 2CV looked (and drove) like a corrugated trash can on wheels; the Saab could have been the bastard child of a Porsche and a VW Bug. I think it was the bit part a Saab played in Richard Farina's ultra hip novel, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up To Me* and the portholes on the hood that finally convinced me. My Saab was sleek, black, and mysterious. I named her The Nautilus. I had a car that was 'way cool' long before the term was coined.

Eighteen hours after I bought The Nautilus, the engine seized. My girlfriend had driven it to the beach. There it died; it would two-stroke no more. The lady swore she had mixed the oil in with the gas. Less than a day into my first car and I started what would become a lifetime of Saab stories.

The Nautilus was towed to Lindqvist Saab in Culver City. A new engine would be \$300, thank-you-very-much. Exactly what I'd paid the Aussie for the whole beautiful sleek hunk of immobile Swedish metal. The Nautilus sat in Lindqvist's back lot for three months (no doubt Ingvar was away rallying through Baja) while I took a job as a car jockey at a Beverly Hills Cadillac agency to earn bail money. I slipped Detroit blimps in and out of the mechanic's stalls and saved the money for a rebuilt engine that would drive me north to Berkeley California in the summer of '68.

Eventually The Nautilus lived again. I took advantage of the fold down rear seat to turn The Nautilus into a spud shaped truck. I packed all my worldly goods into the car using every cubic inch of storage space to make the move north. I must have looked like the hippy version of the clown car act when I unloaded my Saab at my first

apartment in South Berkeley.

The Saab 93 had a pull chain operated radiator flap that sealed up the engine compartment for sub-zero Swedish driving. After a cruise over the Bay Bridge the heater could bring the red metal dashboard up to egg frying temperatures. The engine sounded like a revving, pinging, popcorn machine. I learned the rhythmic patterns of Saab driving. Free wheeling delivered a sensation akin to cliff diving every time you crested a hill. You scan the terrain, intuitively aware of every elevation. Climb then glide, I was always surprised after a long downhill coast when the engine cut back in instead of dying. Driving The Nautilus was a continual series of occasions for hope. What a great car.

I cruised California reveling in the "What is that?" looks of middle class America. I'd free wheel down silently on a Rambler wagon and fly by a black blur shrouded in two-stroke smoke. I drove the Saab from Berkeley to L.A. and back a dozen times, averaging about 40 miles to the gallon. I recall filling a dry gas tank with 98 octane Supreme for \$2.97. Station attendants would refuse to add two-stroke oil during a fill up. "You put oil in the gas and she'll blow buddy. I ain't doing it!" I'd end up tilting that blue and white Saab oil can trying not to dribble it down the fender while the attendant and his buddies would scratch their heads and point. The Nautilus really was way cool.

It was well after midnight on a return run from L. A. that I found the outside of the free wheeling envelope. I was coasting down the Grapevine on Highway 99, flying low on a long cruise to Bakersfield. 70, 80, 90, I tried the brakes but they weren't serious about stopping, besides I was calculating miles per gallon. With the speedometer bumping a hundred I began to worry about the tires. I felt like a skater on thin rickety blades. By now the brakes were useless, I had only myself to blame as I'd pointedly ignored the manuals advice about locking the free wheel "...to utilize the braking action of the engine when going down steep mountain grades..." Stiff armed, I pointed the 93 at the fast lane and held on.

Suddenly the tiny rear view mirror lit up with the blinding high beams of a 16 wheeler charging down on top of me. The trucker was on his own free wheeling break away doing at least 140 mph. The truck blew by belching clouds of burnt brake lining. The big truck's backwash blew me across three lanes. I wrestled The Nautilus back on the track and rolled on. I finally coasted down

to safe speeds on the flats. I didn't have any trouble staying awake that night. Bet I averaged 50 miles per gallon on that run too.

I was a complete mechanical ignoramus and had to depend on the local Berkeley Saab shop to get me going when I broke down. Finances dictated a "fix it when it stops" approach. Other than a set of brake pads and a slipping fan belt that sidelined me near Big Sur at 3 a.m., the Nautilus treated me well. I cringe now when I remember that due to the insidious effects of "Flower Power", the Saab acquired an Indian bed spread headliner—a green and tan paisley that also adorned the door panels.

It was a heavy foot and the feint ghostly call of Saab's rally heritage that finally did me in. I found myself sitting at a stoplight in Oakland next to a blue haired pensioner in a highly polished Plymouth Valiant four door sedan. She seemed to be eyeing me nervously. I, of course, accepted her challenge to drag. When the light changed I revved up the ping pong balls, blasted a cloud of blue two stroke smoke to the heavens, and popped the clutch.

The front tires chirped and stuttered. The Nautilus surged forward, lurched violently, and rolled to a clattering halt in the intersection. A shattered right axle clanked hideously from down below. I sat stranded and humiliated in the middle of the road. The Valiant, without so much as a glance from the driver, sedately rolled on.

I was broke, and a busted axle meant a dead Saab. I remember pushing dejectedly on the door jam. The open paw of the suicide door threatened to scoop me up as we gathered speed down the hill. The Nautilus and I took that last miserable free wheel on to a residential side street. There, my first car, a jet black 1960 Saab 93 with portholes on the hood, gathered dust, weeds, and bird droppings until it was tagged, towed, and totaled in an Emeryville car crusher.

I didn't know it at the time but I was permanently hooked on Saabs. This first experience would more or less set the pattern for the rest of my automotive life. I tried to kick the Saab habit with Corvairs and VW's, Rovers and Jaguars. Then I'd relapse, a two-stroke 94 here, a 900 EMS there. For years Volvo's were the best Methadone. Then last summer my will power collapsed again and I bought a 1971 Saab 96 V4, (Desert Sand, rally rigged).

Recently, while free wheeling through the Tahoe slush I found myself listening for the tell-tale two stroke ring and pop of The Nautilus. I still miss that car.

## Attack of the Arctic Road Swine 25th Ohio Winter Rally

When asked to navigate the Ohio Winter Rally in a Saab 900 Turbo 3-door with 300,000+ miles on the clock, I wasn't sure what to think. The car in question belongs to Ray Longhitano, Jr., a Saab mechanic at Ed Wolfe Shaker Saab in Cleveland, Ohio. Ray races, among other things, a Saab Sonett in Sports Car Club of America Club Racing, so his driving skills were not in question. It was the reliability of the car that concerned me. The Ohio Winter Rally is an all-night 275 mile brisk Time-Speed-Distance road rally through the Lake Erie "snow belt" counties of northeast Ohio. Weather and road conditions can be unforgiving, and the required speeds can be "challenging". I have as much propensity for warmth and sleep as anyone, and the thought of spending a subzero night huddled inside a crippled car far from town holds little appeal. I needn't have worried!

I first met the car on the Thursday evening preceding the rally. We had approximately four hours to turn it from daily beater to bad rally ride. In order of importance this meant 1) changing tires, 2) installing auxiliary lighting, and 3) installing rally navigation equipment.

If money were no object, we would have opted for a set of four new studded Hakkapeliitta NR-10's (and two more drive wheels). Instead, we mounted two new NR-10's on the front wheels, and left a used pair of Gislaved Nord Frosts on the rear, none studded. This compromise allowed us good driving traction, yet allowed Ray to lock up the rear wheels to rotate the car by left foot braking when necessary.

A new pair of Hella 200mm H4 conversion headlights with 55/100W bulbs took the place of the old, corroded headlights. Next, the car's grill was removed, and a pair of Hella Rallye 2000 driving lights took its place (hood clearance was marginal). One of the driving light housings still showed a

slight out-of-roundness from an encounter with a snowbank on the Cassiar Highway during the 1990 Alcan Winter Rally. A long-defunct air conditioning condenser protected the radiator from rock damage. Finally, a pair of Bosch fog lamps was bolted under the front bumper. Relays for the above fit easily over the right wheel well, near the battery, and switches fit neatly in the center console.

A wheel sensor for an ALFA Elite rally navigation computer was installed in the left rear hub. The probe that we used had survived two Alcan Winter Rallies, and still worked fine. The required magnets were epoxied directly to the back of the wheel studs, and the sensor fit into a hole drilled in the brake backing plate. The sensor cable was routed across the rear beam axle, and under the rear seat through a hole drilled in the floor pan next to the brake line feed-through. Anywhere that the cable was exposed to possible rock damage or chafing it was encased in protective "spiral wrap". The navigator's section of the rally computer was strapped to the glove box door with heavy cable ties, and the driver's display was attached to the dashboard with adhesive backed hook and loop fastener. Simple!

Finally, fused full-time 12 volt supplies were run from the battery to the center console to power the rally computer, and navigator's map lights.

The usual assortment of rally accessories (TimeKube radio, flares and reflective warning triangles, tow strap, extra warm clothing, first aid kit, etc.), and spares (belts, fluids, bulbs, etc.) completed the package. The only things left to do were odometer calibration and final light aiming on the night of the rally.

After an unusually warm, snow free January, it looked as if winter might be the missing element in the 1995 Ohio Winter Rally. Nature, thankfully, had other ideas! A large expanse of open water on Lake Erie coupled with a cold Northwest wind made heavy "lake effect" snow a certainty through the night.

Even though we had no practice

time before the start, Ray picked up the concept of Class A rallying quickly, as evidenced by a perfect "zero" score at the first checkpoint. The Saab was running fine, and we were having no trouble maintaining the speeds on the course's flatter portions. The hills, however, were another story. The Hakkas exhibited sufficient traction to pull us up every one, but we conceded a few points to the Audi Quattro's and 4WD Subaru's at each of the checkpoints inevitably placed at the top.

After midnight the rally's pace picked up considerably, as did the storm's intensity. Heavy snow squalls. High winds. Deep drifts. Real white outs. In short, the best conditions in years!

This was the first time in several years that I had run a 2WD car in a winter rally. Ray was doing a great job, and a third place overall finish (first 2WD, ahead of many 4WD entries) was looking like a real possibility. That is, before the Swine from Hell appeared. There it was: 100+ kg of frozen pork in the road just before an icy 90 degree left turn [Ed. note: Gives a new meaning to Pigs On Ice!]. We nosed lightly off the outside of the corner after avoiding this obstacle, dropping the front wheels into a shallow ditch, and ending any hope of a good finish (numerous other wheel tracks in the same vicinity attested to others' battle to escape the Swine's trap). We nearly had the car rocked out of the ditch when it stalled. Unfortunately, the starter motor had been rendered useless by its proximity to a red hot exhaust manifold. A quick tug on the tow strap from a following competitor saw us on our way, our egos bruised, but the car unscathed.

Our final placing was 10th overall out of the 35 entries. Were it not for the max caused by our "off", we would have been 3rd. As we rolled into the finish at dawn, and thoughts turned to future winter rallies, there was talk of avenging our loss next year. Imagine what we could accomplish with another two hours in the shop!

Greg Lester  
Akron OH

# SAAB SWAP

## Sonetts For Sale

'74 Sonett III, runs good, no leaks, driven daily. \$2,500 OBO. '74 trans, \$375 or trade. Gary Steinmetz, Box 700067, Tulsa OK 74170. 918/496-8494.

'71 Sonett, no rust, perfect body, new motor. \$3,300 OBO. William Hearn, 32 Alicia Lane, Middletown CT 06457. 203/346-6857.

'69 Sonett V4, excellent car, many new parts, been in the family for 20 years. Best offer. Daniel Ramsfield, PO Box 314, Greenland AR 72737. 501/839-2980 lv msg.

## 93s, 95s, & 96s For Sale

'71 96, blue, radio, Weber carb, Koni shocks, 81K, excellent condition. \$2,000. P. Corrado, 48 Center Ave, Cedar Grove NJ 07009. 201/256-9182.

'71 96, minor disassembly and rust repair recently performed including rally red paint. Running beautifully with operational freewheel. Interior very good to excellent. \$2,000. Steve Verkouteren, Box 71, Route 1, Swanton MD 21561. 301/387-4312.

'67 96 Monte Carlo 850, white (repaint), solid body, minor body repair, all original, needs engine work. \$500. Photos upon request. Jim Henderson, 2704 North A St, Tampa FL 33609. 813/879-5798.

'66 96, green, 38K mi, Georgia car, one owner, not on road since '82. Untouched vehicle includes orig title & bill of sale. Super straight, accessory driving lamp, needs forward floor work, very presentable. \$2,300. Chad E. Brown, 15 Millbrook St, Worcester MA 01606. 508/852-3136.

'64 96, solid body, good undercoat, 3 carb engine, hydraulics (brakes/clutch) okay, good interior, non-concours daily driver. Springtime fun! \$1,295. John Baird, 10 Oak St, Norwalk OH 44857. Days 419/668-2311, eves 419/668-3560.

## 2-Stroke & V4 Parts For Sale

Stainless steel wheel bolts & washers for Sonett Soccer ball wheels, \$8.50/bolt, sets of 20 \$8/bolt, \$1/washer.

Tim Ebner, 7695 Newton St, Westminster CO 80030. 303/427-4029.

## CLASSIFIED AD RATES

Ads offering parts or SAABs for sale or wanted are available to members and non-members. Ads are limited to 25 words, plus name address and phone number. Ad copy will be abbreviated and excess words deleted where possible. Enclose sufficient funds with your ad, we **do not** bill. No ads will be taken by phone. The Classified Ad rate is as follows:

	Members	Non-members
CARS FOR SALE	\$10.00	\$15.00
PARTS FOR SALE	\$5.00	\$7.50
WANTED ADS.	\$2.00	\$3.00
COMMERCIAL ADS (Parts & Services)	\$10.00	\$15.00
EVERY 5 EXTRA WORDS	\$1.00	\$1.50

DEADLINE: The 15th of each month for the following month's issue, e.g. January 15th for the February issue. Newsletters are mailed the first week of the cover month.

COMMERCIAL DISPLAY ADS: Contact the editor for rates and info. Deadline, the 10th of each month for the following month's issue.

**Head Gasket** - 2-Stroke 850cc, '65-'68 longnose & Sonett, \$36.50 ppd. G. LeBaron c/o PCI, 1145 Glenwood Ave, Mpls MN 55405. Fax only at 612/377-9885.

**Saab NOS Parts for 95, 96 Sonett:** Lockheed master cyl, \$125; Complete rack with tie rod ends, \$65; Brake drums, \$30; Hub caps and brake cables, \$15; Front A-arms upper & lower, \$45; A-arm bush, \$8; A-arm nut lock fold over washers, 75cents; Front & rear bearings & seals, \$25 per wheel; Sun visors, \$15; Front wheel brg spanner retaining collars, \$12; Brake hoses, \$12; Brake backing plates w/ cyl, shoes and hardware, \$75; 3-way brass brake line jct, \$8; Coil spring top rubber seats, \$15; Sonett transaxle 33K mi. Fred Bauer, 105 Chittenden Rd, Killingworth CT 06419. 203/663-1444.

**Out of control collection.** All from parted out cars. Send for list. Steve Verkouteren, Box 71, Route 1, Swanton MD 21561. 301/387-4312.

## 99s & 900s For Sale

'91 900 Turbo Convertible, special edition, 5 speed, Monte Carlo Yellow, grey leather, 53K mi, story in 1991 NINES #200/201, also cover photo on Saab Soundings Vol 28 #2. \$22,900. Elmer Sweppenheiser, Rd 2 Box 2002, Factoryville PA 18419. 717/945-5443.

'91 900 Turbo SPG, red, low mileage, ABS, SRS, all power/leather, tinted windows, wind deflector, 47K. No dings, excellent condition! Taking best offers. Steve Walker, 10104 Mt Auburn Dr, Clinton MD 20735. 301/856-0688.

'78 99 EMS, metallic maroon, body professionally restored, 100% rust free, new trans, Carrol Shelby Saab wheels +orig. wheels. 8 years of maintenance records, pampered car. Asking \$2,500. Kathy Kabricky, 1648 Westona, Dayton OH 45410. 513/253-6247.

'84 900, HB, 35K mi, meticulously maintained. Estate must sell! Thomas C. Hayden, 347 Reamer Pl, Oberlin OH 44074. Eves 216/775-1808.

'80 900 Turbo, 160,000 miles, 5 speed, rebuilt engine needs clutch. \$1,600 OBO. Kirk R. Hall, 19 Pinedale Rd, Newark DE 19711. 302/731-0115.

'80 900 Turbo, classic 5 door, 5 speed, blue, new rings & head at 180K mi, excellent cond, well maintained, 248 mi. \$900. Richard Gohn, 34 Aلسun Dr, Hollis NH 03049. 603/465-2108.

## 9000s For Sale

'92 9000 Turbo 5 dr, 41,000 mi, brand new Dunlop SP4000 Z-tires, Saab/Clarion CD player. Darrin Willer, 1116 Tobacco Rd, Clarksville TN 37042. 615/431-9872.

## 99, 900, & 9000

### Parts & Accessories

**900 Parts:** Glass, 8 & 16 valve heads, doors, hoods, trunk lids, radiator supports, distributors, turn signals. '82 Turbo engine, \$500. Much miscellaneous. Clearance priced. Alex P. Galyon, 3023 Woodland, Ames IA 50014. 515/292-0852.

**Hitch,** '92 900 model VGB, removable tongue, cover, wiring/converter, ball, complete. \$310 value, only \$150. Doug Wood, 32 Depot St, Westford MA 01886. 508/692-5645.

'80 to '94 parts. Many late models 900 & 9000 parts. New, used, rebuilt, engines, transmissions, doors, nose parts, interior, axles, wheels, wiring, suspension, radios, turbos, engine parts, transmission parts, exhaust. EUROPEAN CAR PARTS & RESTORATION INC, 57 N Plains Industrial Rd, Wallingford CT 06492. 203/949-4881.



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**4 Alloy sheels #8103524** for '88 and up, \$400. FOB. Reconditioned "B" head, ready to bolt on, \$225. Service manual for 99, \$25. Harry Fleury, 16 Towers Rd, Essex Jct. VT 05452-2611. 802/878-5423.

**NOS front exh. pipes**, (1) 8336232, '78T, \$75. (1) 9300773, '80T, \$75. (1) 1969-'71 99 3 bolt flange, \$10. Eng & trans. assembly, less starters & alt. (1) '78 & 4sp, approx 85K, \$450. '86 16 valve (1) & 5sp, approx. 110K, \$950. Both engs. plus crating & shipping. Used parts: '69-'74 wiper pivot assemblies, \$20. V4 FOMOCO carbs, very good, low mi, \$50. '78 99T inlet pipes & hardware. Al Phillips, c/o **Motor Sport Service**, 1400 E 2nd St, Jamestown NY 14701. 716/665-4200.

**900, 9000 locking wheel bolt set** complete, \$45. Car cig lighter adaptor, \$5. Charlie Byrd, 12483 Keeley Ct, Fishers IN 46038. 317/576-7041.

**99, 900 headliner kit** comes w/glue, 3 1/2 yds and complete instructions, \$87.50. Other parts available. TROLLHATTAN MOTORS, INC. 410/682-4688 or 1-800 32 TROLL.

**900 up to '86 European headlight wipers**, great shape, \$275. Many 900 parts for sale, cheap. Lewis Eig, Monsey, NY. 914/352-6124.

**Snows on 80 EMS alloys**, \$135 set. 24 spoke alloys with U+4, \$150 set. Disc brake sander, brake tool, FI tester, warm up regulator 136, antenna with remote motor (new), VDO voltmeter, 900 bin, \$10 to \$30 + shpg. Ram Rao, 53 Woodland Dr, Barrington IL 60010. Home 708/382-0040, work 708/248-5466.

**9000 15" take-off alloys**, '94 15-spoke, new. \$500 OBO. Doug, 9 Lidgerwood Place, Convent Station NJ 07961. 201/984-6543.

**9000 alloy wheels & tires**. '88 15-spoke plus Pirelli P600 205/55R15. Balanced, rims true, excellent condition. Tires 11K miles, \$650 all 4 + shpg. Carmen Pierce, 275 Barrington Dr, Bridgewater NJ 08807. 908/231-0363.

**MSS lowering springs w/spacers** for 99/900, barely used. Late style APC solenoid, new. 24 spoke 900 Alloys -'87, have 6 in good condition. 900 speedometer -'87 89K +mi. 9000 front seat lumbar knob. 8 valve fuel pressure reg. Turbo advance/retard regulator. Will accept any reasonable offer for any parts. Must liquidate. Also countless M.B. and Porsche parts. Carl Lomele, 93 Lincoln St, Elmont NY 11003. 516/326-2804.

**Wanted - All Models**

'85 or '86 **900 2dr sedan**, non-hatchback, little or no rust. Prefer low mileage 5spd. Will consider all. Will travel for right car. Pat Henderson, 1205 W Joy Rd, Ann Arbor MI 48105. 313/995-5007.

**Good transmission w/free wheeling**. Also water pump for '70 96. Virgil Lau, 5731 Walker Ave, Loves Park IL 61111. 815/654-1625.

**4 - 16" AERO used wheels**, with or without good tires. Reasonably priced. Tom Treska, 9439 Hammontree Dr, Urbandale IA 50322. 515/276-7332 eves.

**Auxiliary lights** for '74 Sonett. Hi beam ass'y located in the grill. Pat Stocks, 422 Reindollar Ave, Marina CA 93933. 408/384-6288.

**Sonett II intake manifold** for sidedraft carb. Mechanical clutch linkage parts for Sonett II. Chips Barry, 1027 Pontial St, Denver CO 80220. Work 303/628-6500, 303/355-8486.

**9000 3-spoke wheels** 16 x 6.5 with painted spokes and polished rim, p/n 8967036. Any condition. Bob Cann, 189 Mill Ln, Amherst MA 01002. 413/253-9423.

**Desperately seeking Ronal wheels** for Sonett II, will pay fair price, maybe more. Also, Sonett II owners manual in any shape. Please help. Lewis Eig, 407/933-0522.

**Saab Soundings** company newsletter sent out periodically. Need issues from 1950's and 60's. Will pay \$10 per issue. Bob McNary, 672 Sunvale Ave, Ventura CA 93003. Fax 805/988-1129, home 805/654-1646.

**900 convertible**, any year. Willing to travel to US to pick-up car. Bob Dupuis, 81 Upper Edison, St. Lambert Quebec, Canada J4R 2R2. 514/465-8898.

**Misc. For Sale**

**Saab original sales brochures** showing all Saab models, interiors/features for the year. Great for restorations or gifts! 1956-59, \$20 each year; 1960-69, \$15 each year; 1970-79, \$12 each year; 1980-present, \$9. Add \$3.50 shipping. VISA/MC. Specify year/model. WALTER MILLER, 6710 Brooklawn Pkwy, Syracuse NY 13211. 315/432-8282. Fax 315/432-8256.

**Official service manual**, Saab 900 16 valve, 1985-93, by Bentley Publishers. New \$38.00 ppd. John Murphy, PO Box 2649, Hayden Lake ID 83835. 208/772-7101 before 8pm.

**Back issues of NINES**. Sep '90 thru June '92, plus various earlier. 25 issues total. \$40 +shpg. Pat Henderson, 1205 W Joy Rd, Ann Arbor MI 48105. 313/995-5007 after 7pm.

Published April 1995

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## Rear View

Technology has given us some outstanding features on newer cars: Traction control, anti-lock brakes, engine management systems that control the fuel/air mixture and ignition. In just the past few years, computers have taken over much of the automobile, to the point where over 80 percent of the systems are computer regulated.

As long as the car is under warranty, the owner does not bear the expense of replacement. The advantage of the warranty is to catch any problems that may occur and to allow manufacturers the opportunity to track problem areas. Most warranty repairs occur during the first year of ownership as the weak components are sorted out in favor of stronger replacements. But what happens when those systems are out of warranty and begin to fail?

We're beginning to see the result already. In the late 1980s, the Federal government mandated passive safety systems, which resulted in air bags in many cars. Many manufacturers chose to use motorized shoulder harnesses which were less expensive to add to existing chassis. Saab went that route on 3-door 900s beginning with mid-1987 models. After eight years, those motors are beginning to fail and many owners are ignoring the belts instead of trying to have them repaired. Saab did provide a manual replacement in the form of two locking clips which were included in the tool kit. Another possibility would be to replace the motorized belts with standard active belts, meaning you have to actively pull the belt over your shoulder and clip it into the center clip. (If anyone has done this, please write it up and send it to NINES.)

All the little electric motors make for some really nifty toys, like electric windows,

electric sunroof, electric central locking, and electric seat adjustment. But when those motors fail you may be in for some discomfort, especially if the window or sunroof is in the open position when the motor quits.

Now the expensive items are beginning to fail. Some examples of other items that may fail on an older Saab:

'82-86 (8-valv) lambda control module	\$470.00
LH control module, '85 900T	\$819.00
Air mass meter, 1985 900T	\$375.00
ACC panel for '86-'90 9000 (rebuilt)	\$741.00
ABS control unit, 1988 9000	\$979.00

The Automatic Climate Control (ACC) panel is a good case in point. 1986 and '87 9000s now trade for less than \$5000, sometimes much less. If the ACC panel fails, the car has no heat or air conditioning. A buyer of such an inexpensive car would be hard pressed to throw another \$700 into it, so the replacement is either put off or they may try to locate a used ACC. Even then, the cost is not cheap.

This problem is not limited to Saab, of course. The 1982 Volvo 240 injection computer, available only from Volvo, used to be supplied aftermarket for under \$400, but is now over \$1000. To repair the automatic transmission on a Subaru Turbo AWD, expect a bill of \$2000 to \$2500. The driveshaft on a VW Quantum Synchro or Audi Quattro, over \$900 retail for the part alone. The same with the Honda AWD station wagon.

Camshaft timing belts are used in many cars because they are quieter than a timing chain. They should be replaced every 60,000 miles. But that repair isn't always listed in the maintenance schedules or is ignored by owners who don't take the car in for repair until something fails. When the timing belt on a 16-valve Honda gives up, expect a bill in the \$1500 range because most of the valves will have been bent when they hit the

tops of the pistons. Add \$500 to \$1000 for the same work on an Acura Legend V6.

The common thread to all high mileage cars, be they Saabs, Mercedes-Benz, or Dodge Aries is maintenance, as is shown in the article in this issue. As long as the cars are well maintained and problems fixed as they occur, they will continue to provide service. (In the case of some cars, however - certain Renaults, Fiats and all Yugos come to mind - maintenance becomes so frequent that it is economically more feasible to abandon the car in favor of something more reliable.)

Most American car owners tend to ignore maintenance. Oh, they have every intention of seeing to it that this latest one will get regular oil changes and tune-ups, but the money gets spent instead on useless plastic items purchased at the local shopping "mall". A few of the regular maintenance items start to fail - water pump, brakes, hoses and belts, clutch, transmission - and the car suddenly seems to be nothing more than a big money sink. Might as well just cut a hole in the floor, install a grate and pour the money down the drain.

The truth is, maintenance is cheaper than trying to fix failed parts. Often when a failure occurs, other components get taken out as well and the bills mushroom.

Originally this column was going to be about the relationship between Saab owners and Science Fiction, particularly SciFi television shows such as the many variations of Star Trek, Babylon 5, TekWar, Space Precinct, etc. I posted the question on the Saab Network and on CompuServe. However, the response was enough to make a full story, so look for it in the next issue.

If you have any strong feelings one way or the other about Science Fiction, send a note and see your vote counted in NINES.

Tim Winker  
Editor/Publisher

# NINES

The SAAB Club Magazine

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## It's Duct Hunting Season! *(Free Air Included)*

We now have an upgrade kit for the air ducts (pipes) on the 900 Turbo 16V engine. There are 2 ducts, the first runs from the turbo to the intercooler, the second from the intercooler to the throttle body on the intake manifold. Since an engine is basically an air pump, making it easier to pump air is what makes more horsepower. Our duct kit does just that. In the same way that our air inlet kit makes more power by removing the restrictions up to the mass air sensor, the new ducts remove the restriction for the rest of the intake system.

The first duct is made from 2 inch diameter steel tube, mandrel bent and actually fits better than the stock piece. The second duct is made from 2.5 inch steel, and both pieces are TIG welded and Zinc Chromate plated. The stock rubber couplers are retained except for the outlet of the intercooler, where we supply a new heavy duty coupler. The air flow capacity of the first duct is increased by 81 per cent, and the second duct gives a whopping 124 per cent increase in flow capacity. This

will translate to 7 to 10 horsepower more, depending on what else has been done to the engine. The more your engine has been modified, the more difference these ducts will make.

In addition to the power increase, these new ducts really dress up the engine. Either duct is just \$85, and if you order both ducts, the price is just \$150 for the pair! If you really want to do the job right, add our "super clamp" set. All 8 of these ultra-trick clamps, normally \$8.50 each, can be yours for just \$49.95! If you've got our air inlet kit, you'll love these new air ducts. If you haven't done the air inlet yet, now is the time. Get both ducts, the super clamp set and an air inlet kit for just \$250. That's a savings of \$68. Please note our area code change, effective 3/19/95.

## Group 6 Performance

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