

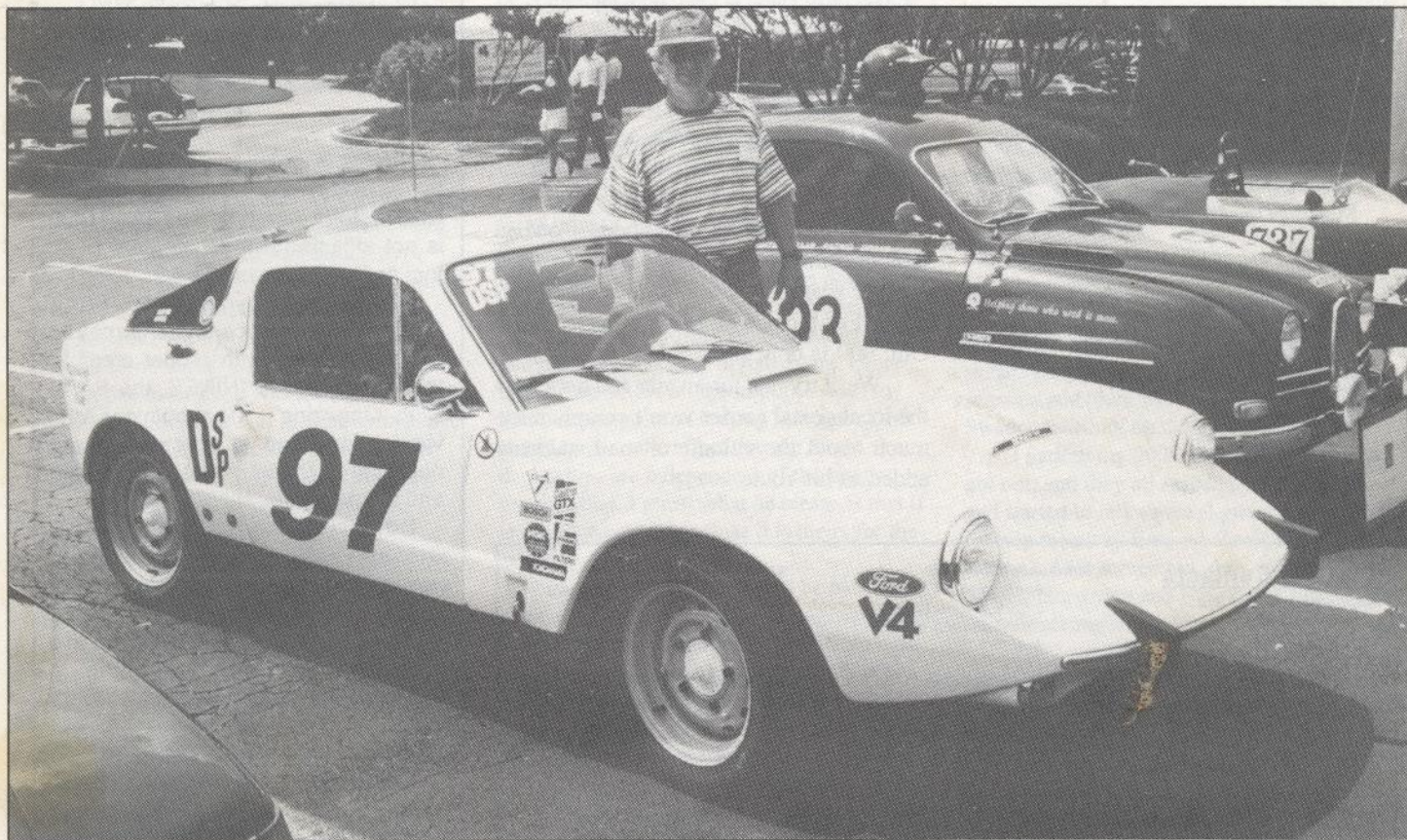


NINES

\$5.95

no. 228

The SAAB Club Magazine



Tim Winker photo

John Letterle and his 1968 Sonett V4, winner of the concours trophy for Modified Saabs.

Saab for '96 - The New Features pg. 13

Innovations from Saab pg. 14

'95 Saab Owners National Convention

Turnin' up the heat in Atlanta pg. 18

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*V4 Brake Master Cylinder Rebuilding,
Daytime Running Lights, Tires, Shocks....*

Competition: pg. 25

*Autocrossing a Sonett, Vintage Rally and
PRO Rally Reports, Racing a 99*

Saabs & Sci-Fi: A connection? pg. 34



Bruce Beauvais photo

Saabs 1st, 3rd & 4th at Lake Superior Rally.

Jerry Sweet's 99 on the paved Brockaway Mtn. stage.

Regional Club News

New Clubs:

New Jersey Saab Club

Bob Adams
448 Old Deal Road
Eatontown, NJ 07724

Saab Club of Iowa

P.O. Box 2329
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406-2329
319/ 364-4015
Meetings the 1st Saturday each month.

Tristate Saab Club

(Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana)
Paul Arel
9864 Baughman Rd
Harrison, Ohio 45030-1771
513/ 367-9864

New Address, New Phone

The Saab Club office has moved! Since your editor operates this business out of his home, it only makes sense that since he has moved to a different house (see Rear View in this issue), so has the office. Effective immediately, the Saab Club address is:

7675 Bear Trap Junction
Saginaw, Minnesota 55779

New phones (if they ever get connected) are supposed to be:

(218) 729-0826 voice
(218) 729-0827 fax

The old address on London Road in Duluth will also be effective for at least another year as it is a mail receiving business. (For those who may not have heard, Unit 900 is only about 5 by 6 inches.)

We'll try this for awhile and hopefully the local postal carrier won't complain too much about the volume of mail suddenly added to his route.

SAAB Club of North America
7675 Bear Trap Jct.
Saginaw, MN 55779

Phone: 218/ 729-0826,
9am - 6pm Mon - Sat CST
Fax: 218/ 729-0827
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NINES Editor & Publisher:
Tim Winker

Editorial Ass't / Membership
TBA

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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.

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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
1407 Oak Hill Road
Wilmington DE 19805
302/ 695-3125 or
302/ 994-8357

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612/ 636-3771.

Montreal SAAB Club
E. Peter McLoughlin
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514/ 451-5165.

New England Sonett Club
Meets: 1st weekend in March, June,
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Rocky Mountain SAAB Club
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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

Customer Dissatisfaction

I read Mr. Crumlish's letter on marketing in NINES #227.

I have owned four Saabs, having taken European delivery on two while on work assignments in Italy. Will I own Saab number five? Probably not! Why? Poor service/parts availability is the issue.

There are only two Saab dealers in Minnesota, both in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Reaching either dealer is a 200 mile round trip for me. The last two times I went to one of the dealers, the mechanics were very helpful and knew exactly what had to be repaired... But, "Sorry we don't have that part in stock. We will order it and you will have to come back."

In one instance, it was the resistor block for a '92 9000 heater fan. In another instance, the part out of stock was the Throttle Plate Sensor for the same 9000. Fortunately, the Throttle Plate fault seemed to self-correct after a "cold reboot."

The only other nearby dealer is in Iowa, a 100 mile trip. I had to make two trips for a faulty air bag sensor.

I may have to buy Big 3, because that is what is available where I live.

Mr. Crumlish, do you want happy customers? Get more dealers, or at the very least, authorized service centers. I don't need a big showroom, I only visit the showroom every few years. I do need service often. I need a pleasant, competent, accessible service center that STOCKS THE PARTS!

As Philip Kotler says, "Good service is good for business. It costs less to keep the goodwill of existing customers than it does to attract new customers or woo back lost customers." (Kotler and Armstrong, Principles of Marketing, 5th ed., Prentice Hall, 1991. p271.)

George Buharin
Rochester MN

Chuck Andrews' statements in NINES #227 regarding Saab customer satisfaction highlighted what is probably Saab's greatest weakness: its dealer network. While there are some dealerships which are outstanding and which demonstrate a dedication to Saab service, others miss the mark. The problem may be that Saab is such a distinctive car,

with systems unlike any other make, that a dealership which services many makes cannot possibly keep up. At the dealership here in Madison, Saab is one of six franchises under one roof, and the organization which runs this dealership probably sells every other make of car citywide. It is clear that their mechanics cannot have sufficient depth of Saab training.

Additionally, General Motors seems to be combined with Saab at many dealerships. Why this is so is beyond me as it seems to have started long before the Saab/GM partnership. Trying to satisfy customers from both Saab and GM camps is likely very difficult for these dealerships, not to mention the difficulty of training mechanics to work with equal competence on very different types of cars. Which group of customers get the short end of the stick - the group that buys the bulk of the cars from the dealership, or maybe the minority that buys Saabs?

I did write to Jim Crumlish about this, and his reply was very dissatisfying. Other than being a little on the impolite side (so that I see no point in writing him again), his answer was to the effect that the Saab dealerships are independent of the larger organization. I guess what he means is that if anybody wants a franchise it is theirs for the asking.

I am glad that NINES will be publishing a list of some independent Saab agencies, as I am not taking my cars to the dealership here any longer, after a brake fiasco on my 900S and hearing a few stories of how they couldn't begin to figure out what was wrong with other people's turbocharging systems. (These customers were told that their car's problems amounted to normal performance.) One such person here who I talked to will be trading his 9000 Aero for a Volvo. He loves the Aero but feels obligated to take it to the dealership for service as it is under warranty. I'd bet that nationwide, many others are

jumping ship like this, and for a small company like Saab, this should be worrisome.

The answer to all of this, at least in part, comes in exerting some control over the dealer network; being picky about who receives a franchise and insisting on recurrent training for salespeople and technicians. That or start making a boring product, so that buyers really don't care how it runs.

Erik Adams
Madison WI

Saab Testing Encounter

Last summer while driving my white 9000T on route 91 to Leadville, CO as I was coming up on Fremont Pass (11,320 ft). I noticed out of the corner of my eye, two white "Euro-Sedans" parked at a scenic overlook. Of course I just had to pull over and check them out.

It turned out that they were two 9000 test mules, one a hatchback and the other a sedan. They were covered with all sorts of sensors, and there were four engineers from Sweden working on them.

I parked my 9000 in line with theirs and got out, and they all rushed over to my car and started to talk to me (I guess they wanted to keep me away from whatever they were testing). As it turned out, they were from the powerplant group and were doing high altitude testing in the Rockies.

They wouldn't tell me much about the powerplant other than "it was like mine" but I did notice that one car had a DOHC 4 and the other looked like a V-6. They told me that they were working with new low mass turbochargers. Unfortunately, only two of the engineers spoke some English so communication was sporadic at best. Then they wanted to take a look at my engine, and were quite curious about what I thought of turbo lag. I told them that with my 2.0 litre, the lag was quite obvious in 1st gear but I had no



complaints in the other gears. Then they wanted to know how reliable the car had been and I told them about the obvious 9000 problems (crankshaft pulley, self-closing center vent, and the motor mount/oil filter leakage). Our last discussion was about horsepower, and I noted that their neighbor now had a FWD car with 240 HP. One of the engineers then commented that 250 HP was possible with the 9000 platform and that they had some cars in Europe that were already producing that. Finally they asked me if I was happy with the car and my wife piped up and told them that I would sleep in it if I could, and they could not have found a more enthusiastic owner.

Mark Dayan
Littleton CO

Butt ugly or ugly butt?

When one looks at the new 900 from every angle, except the rear, one can't help but conclude that the Saab stylists did an impressive job blending the old with the new. Today's 900 borrows enough styling cues from its predecessor to maintain its unique Saab identity while adding smoother lines, front to rear, giving it a fresher look.

The serious problems are in the tail section. Lost are the rakish trunk lid lines and tapered narrow back which were styling highpoints of the old 900. Now we see a heavy waisted, hippy design which is especially ugly to follow on the road. The flat, chopped-off back end when viewed from the car's profile is most detracting. What a pitiful way to end what would have been a beautiful car! The flat tail looks bad on the 9000, but far worse on the 900.

With Saab sales on the rise, people must not agree with my analysis, but I do wonder, how many of those buyers are first time Saab owners? I certainly could not trade my elegantly swooping tail section old style 900 for a new one.

David Cracchiolo
Grosse Pointe MI

Aging well

Just to update you on the vehicle that led to the subscription to NINES. The 1987 9000 Turbo just passed the 230,000 mile mark and is still going strong. Other than the valve cover gasket and a few pulleys neither the engine nor the turbo has been touched. We did a transmission rebuild at about 120,000 and experienced several other failures.

The car is getting a little "long of tooth" but still performs adequately if not marvelously. Saab is to be commended for such a well designed vehicle. I, obviously, drive a lot and have owned several autos over the years. These have ranged from Audi's to BMW's to several American makes. I still look forward to a ride in this car as much as any I have owned.

In 1993 I purchased a Ford SHO. While it's a fun ride and the engine is awesome, it cannot compete with the Saab from an engineering standpoint or that feeling of durability you have with the Saab. While it has 75,000 miles on the odometer, I cannot envision driving this car at 225,000 miles. Plus the "SHO Registry" cannot compete with the fine work you do.

John Calfee
Matthews NC

Revelations of a "Saab Widow"

I never had a chance; I was in trouble from the very start. When I first started seeing my future husband in college, it was fairly obvious he liked his '75 rusty brown 99, which the campus police were looking for due to at least \$30,000 in unpaid parking ticket violations. But that was okay, I mean most guys like cars to some extent.

As our relationship progressed more seriously, his family nicknamed me the "Saab Widow". It was at this time that I began noticing our weekends would start with a phrase like, "I just called this guy in the Catskills, and he's got a great Sonett III for sale. It's been in storage for 9 years, and the engine is in a barn, but I'll bet I could get it running in no time."

One year, his offer to go Christmas shopping turned out to be a sight seeing trip through Vermont, which of course included stop offs at several Saab spots. Dealerships, independent garages, and the sight of a 99 or 900 nose peaking out of a barn door would have us sidetracked for hours. He could look at a rusty, old 99 or 900 perched up on cinderblocks, with weeds growing in the engine, and squirrels nesting in the glovebox and go (Tim Allen-like grunting) OOOH,

OH, OOH .OHOOH! Look it's got the original steering wheel!

From our first studio apartment to our present domicile, Saab posters, toys and bric-a-brac dominate our decor styling. His own friends laugh, and claim that if they could spray paint "SAAB" on something he would buy it.

At the recent '95 owners convention, I overheard a guy relate that his girlfriend had sent him here to "get it out of his system". A futile effort at best. It's like sending an 8 year old loose at a dessert bar; it's limitless and they always want more.

Laura Kobasa
Asheboro NC

The Day of Reckoning Is Here!

I'm a MA 22-year Saab veteran who fell in love with her first Saab in 1967 during my first ride in a Saab 92 [?] at Watkins Glen, N.Y. at a SCCA racing school with my husband.

In 1973 I became a 99-er and purchased my first Saab, a '74 99LE. When I divorced in 1978, I was given custody of it and its growing engine problems as it approached 70,000 miles. I sadly traded it for a 1978 99L and though I was pleased with its 35 mpg mileage, it accumulated 12,000 complaining miles. Another Saab that couldn't function properly. I believed that new autos are purchased with no problems which was caused by my lack of experience.

I then purchased a 1980 Saab 900 and drove that for 24,000 of the worst problem miles before trading this one for my last Saab, a new 1983 and my nightmares began.

My names for this one went, "My alcoholic Saab", "My locomobile", "The worst lemon in the world", "My death car". Recently it has received a promotion and I now call it "My Big Boy 900". I naively believed they were the most intelligent car ever built.

I now know why God put me on this earth, "TO REPAIR SAABS!"

This all happened before the lemon laws and I decided to take on the endless expense and pursue my dream of owning a properly functioning Saab since the manufacturing warranty had expired with no improvements made by them and even though the dealership wanted to help. I would repair them both later.

As my story of repairs grew to be never ending, always changing directions, and never ceasing to amaze me, I was learning why my Saabs weren't functioning properly. I

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left my last three Saabs' dealership, Patrick Motors, in 1986 with 2,500 pounds of now "used junk" which I couldn't sell and make another victim for the manufacturer and my ex-dealership. I could no longer wait for hours at the dealership and have no improvements done and end up paying for it for I was now as disabled as my Saab.

I was on the road alone and my largest mountain was my increasing limitations. My mechanical skills were disadvantaged due to lack of fuel injection engine knowledge. I did have some background in automobile mechanics thanks to family backyard mechanics and a natural talent. I purchased Saab service manuals, Haynes manual (both aren't for educating) couldn't complete an adult night life auto mechanics class due to a relapse in my illness. I became a graduate of an automobile mechanics course through ICS. They have great knowledge for teaching but unfortunately not for fuel injection engines. I own my first set of Craftsman tools which I wasn't able to use.

I was still thinking another mechanic could make my dream come true. I found an independent used foreign auto dealership, Gino's Foreign Auto in Worcester, whose mechanic was great until my engine drained his knowledge as well as his other mechanics. The owner wanted to help me because he, too, wanted to know what was wrong with them because, "he like selling them." I started diagnosing my engines problems in 1988 and a mechanic or he would install the parts.

I then became interested in the newly forming lemon laws, became a consumer advocate and joined the West Mountain Saab Club in MA and tried to help them. I wrote items for them when my disability allowed it and my continuing complaining Saab started me writing a diagnostic manual for all Saabers.

I became a Saab diagnostician, joined the Center for Auto Safety, a member of Consumer Union, an independent Saab Consumer Advocate and presently assisting the Environmental Pollution Association.

As my engine repairs grew into thoroughly researching all systems, my illness relapsed and I had to withdraw from everything I was involved in and that lead to a major problem. In April, 1994, my engine did what I dreaded most. It failed the state's emissions test horrendously. I did a major repair and the two Mobil gas station mechanics who did the work couldn't believe the outcome. I finally found what a Saab engine was capable of and I didn't have all

my engines horsepower yet, but never have.

Sincer April, my '83 has been called a "95, 900". What an insult but it was from a non-Saab. I had a Midas brake inspection. Their employee said I had the best emergency brake he'd ever seen. It wasn't working properly. I have finished a year of no heat in my passenger compartment which in the past I had plenty of. I've been using solar heat. A New England Winter Rally for only the cold weather enthusiast.

This Spring research project was to try two new repair shops and to accomplish two minor research projects, replacing the brake fluid and clean the battery. This took me three return trips to each repair shop and four trips to two automobile parts stores. Results were neither completed the work properly, and I have another return trip back to my regular repair shop to correct what both repair shops couldn't do.

I am impossible to please. I expect that any mechanic who has been trained and smoe constantly retrained to do repairs properly the first time. I never take no for an answer either when any mechanic says it can't be repaired or that's normal for a Saab. I found my Saab adventure most incredible and usually they are just most interesting.

I am waiting for the day I have properly trained my Saab mechanics who will diagnose and install parts properly and no longer have to rely on the ?????????? [sic] that's been repairing our Saabs. I have removed the word mechanic, technician, dealership, auto manufacturer, specialist, advisor, warrantee, expiration date, repairs, lemon laws, from my Webster Dictionary and underlined LAWSUITS!!!!!!

I have completed and semi-enjoying my Saab 95' Cruising while awaiting for the next problem to develop for my first year in 20 and doing minor repairs myself. I am completing my research project barring any unforeseeable, Saab automobile challenges and ending unnecessary repairing expenses on my '83 and soon to be my properly operating unsafe and unintelligent 83', 900 Saab.

I found my own personal Saab Road and am calling it, "JUSTICE" and I hope to be helping all of you soon, and write an ending to my Saab story.

Marcia Lee
Shrewsbury MA

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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 recently purchased a **1990 900 Turbo Convertible** with 24,000 miles. Shortly after the purchase I noticed thick white smoke coming from the exhaust on start-up. This only happens once or twice a month. The smoke disappears after warm up.

I brought the car back to the dealer to have the turbo checked and no problem was found. The car did not smoke the three weeks the dealer had it.

Also the car has been in storage every winter since new. Any ideas?

Vicki Warren
Batavia NY

White smoke is usually indicative of water vapor, a blown turbo seal is usually indicated by blue smoke. I would recommend that you have your Saab's cooling system pressure tested with the spark plugs removed to check for coolant entering the combustion chamber through a leaking cylinder head gasket or cracked cylinder head. Your dealer should be familiar with this type of test.

My Saab is a **1989 Turbo 4-door** with manual transmission. Last year, a short or something created an electrical feedback in the instrument cluster. When the car was not running, the clock worked. However when the car was started, the clock ceased to function, the tachometer acted lethargic and the high beam, rear window defroster and left turn indicator lights on the instrument cluster all glowed dimly. The local dealership repaired the problem which they diagnosed as a bad ground from the instrument cluster printed circuit board. Approximately three months later the problem reappeared. It was noticed that when the knob for the instrument cluster rheostat (the one in the cluster itself) was wiggled, the problem would disappear. I replaced the switch which did not cure the big problem, and now when the switch is wiggled it does not affect anything.

It seems likely that the ground is faulty, but where is it behind the cluster? We had a great time dismantling the dashboard,

although the learning curve was steep. Once the removal of the radio chassis was sorted through it was a piece of cake! Two hours to dismantle and one half hour to reassemble. I remain in the dark nightly, with fuse #23 in hand, hoping for a cure to this curse.

Peter Martin
Dayton OH

I agree that you probably have a poor ground connection. Check ground point #3 which is located to the left of the steering wheel on the front side of the cross member behind the knee bolster. Also check ground #7 below the radiator on the crossmember. Other ground points to check, in order of likelihood for the problem you're having: #9 on the center brace at the rear under the spare tire compartment; #93 at the left front wheel near the ignition module; #117 under the center console next to the parking brake lever and driver's seat.

Checking means unbolting, cleaning, checking for broken wires, loose terminal ends and reassembling.

My technical questions concern my **1987 9000S** with manual transmission:

1. What is the idle dashpot and how is it adjusted?
2. When the car is started cold, it starts revs up to about 1500 rpm, then dies. It does this until the engine is warm. I've changed the AIC valve, the idle dashpot, and checked the hoses. Do you have any advice on how to solve this problem?

3. Do you know where I can get an aftermarket manual for the 9000 series?
Ray Min
San Francisco CA

1. *The idle dashpot slows the closing of the throttle plate to allow the AIC valve time to catch and stabilize the idle. Saab recommends adjusting the dashpot so that it allows the throttle to close in 4 ±1 seconds.*
2. *How is the basic tune of the car (cap, rotor, ignition wires, plugs, air and fuel*

filters, timing)? Also remove the air intake hose at the throttle housing and clean the plate and housing with choke cleaner and a brush.

Set the basic idle speed as follows:

Warm up the engine, shut the car off, loosen the throttle damper so it doesn't contact the throttle lever, unplug the throttle switch and jump across pins 1 and 2 in the harness plug. Loosen the two throttle switch retaining bolts so that the switch cannot hold the throttle open. Connect a wire from the negative battery cable terminal to the single spade hole at the engine test socket on the left side of the engine bay.

Start the engine and let it idle. Make sure all accessories (lights, A/C, etc.) are off. Adjust the idle speed to 750 rpm using the throttle stop screw. Be sure to lock the stop nut on the screw. Disconnect the ground wire to test socket. Idle should now be stable at 850 ±75 rpm. Shut the car off, reconnect the throttle switch wire plug, adjust the throttle switch so that a click is heard as soon as the throttle is slightly opened, tighten the throttle switch lock screws.

Adjust the throttle damper so that it allows the throttle to close in 4 ±1 seconds. Tighten the lock nut.

If after this procedure you still have a problem, I would recommend you take the car to a Saab dealer. You may need to have a replacement "chip" in your LH fuel injection module.

3. *There are no aftermarket repair manuals for the 9000 at this time. Haynes has produced a 9000 manual for the British market, but there are no plans to provide a version for the American market 9000s. The Bentley manual for the 9000 is still "in the works" according to an employee of the publisher. Saab is also considering a DIY book on the 9000 for the U.S. market.*

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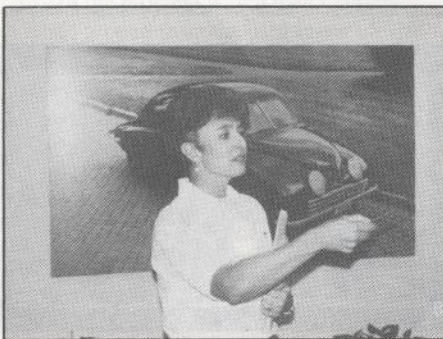
You missed the convention in Atlanta? Make plans for 1997. If 1997 is the culmination of what Saab Cars USA started this year, it will be an event no Saab owner should miss.

Saab has always supported the National Convention, but their participation at this year's gathering really impressed me. From the convention posters, designed by Bjorn Envall, to the tour of the Saab headquarters, to the John Moss tech sessions, everything was done well and really supported the event.

The tone for the convention was set Friday afternoon at Saab Headquarters in nearby Norcross. In the lobby, Erik Carlson was greeting people and Jim Crumlish was also talking with the visitors and answering questions. What other car company CEO is out front like this?

Elke Martin led the tour of the building. Even though it is basically an office building, there were people in each department to meet us and describe the function they have within the company. Very informative!

I could fill the page with descriptions of various sights, but one of the most unique was the electronic test board in the Warranty section. All of the electronic parts for one model - one each for 900 and 9000 - are mounted on a board. You can see in the photo that there is a complete electric circuit of a car on the board, from headlights to



Saab P.R. director Elke Martin showed off Saab's U.S. headquarters.



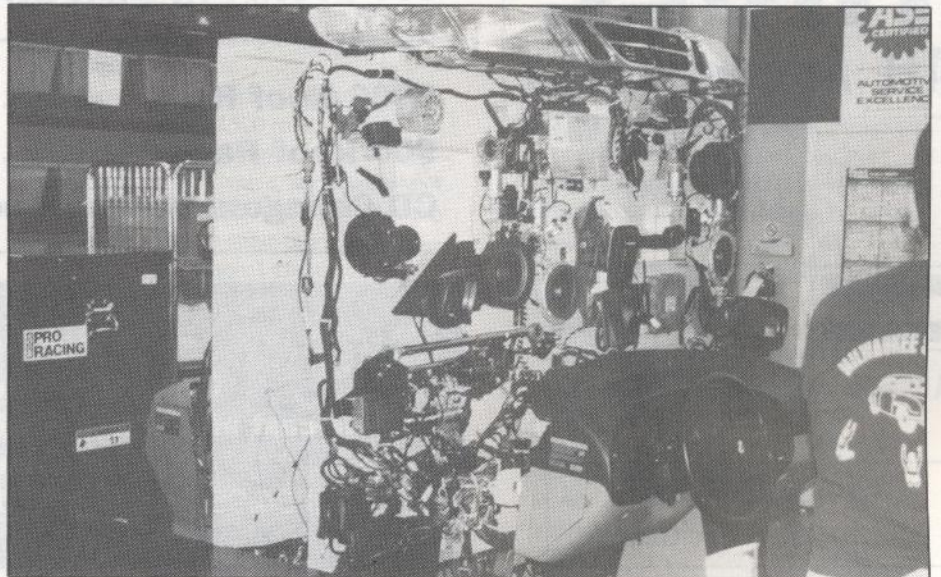
Chuck Andrews photos

The modifications to this 1985 900S were carried out by Chuck Andrews and the crew at his Saab-only body shop.

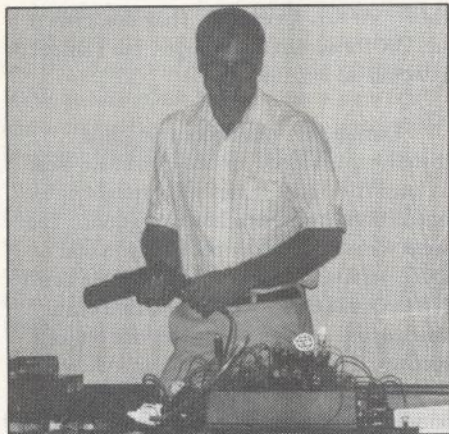
tallights and every component in between. Suppose a technician at a dealership decides that the heater motor in a customer's 1995 900S is defective and replaces it under warranty. The failed part is sent to Saab's warranty section. The technician at Norcross can walk over to the test panel, plug in the heater motor and engage the system just like it was in a car. Does it have a fault? He knows within seconds if the technician at the dealership made a correct diagnosis. If the warranty department finds a pattern of failure with a component, they can alert the Saab factory in Sweden to investigate further. In this way, Saab can work on an upgrade before it becomes a major issue. This test panel makes possible extremely quick

reaction to potential problems.

Then there were the tech sessions. This year I'm sure ALL were worthy of attendance, but one must choose the few that will fit into our time schedules. When I see John Moss listed as the presenter, my choice is easy. John is a long time Saab employee and one of the most knowledgeable Saab people I've ever talked with. Because he is a professional trainer who is dealing with pro technicians, he continually talks about service tips that the average owner wouldn't understand the significance of. As I looked around in the sessions I attended, there were several independent Saab shops represented. Since Saab won't let us soak up that training at other times, we utilize these opportunities!



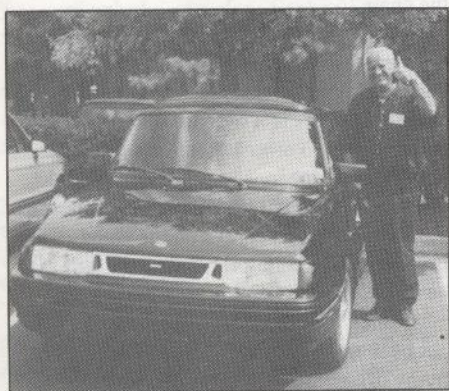
Test board contains all of the electrical components of a 900 to check the function of components returned for warranty.



Saab's John Moss demonstrated engine management systems in a tech session.

In the first session John discussed engine management systems and constructed a Direct Ignition based system on the table using a break-out box. He used a fan motor to rotate the magnetic ignition pick-up and attached all the electronic engine management components one at a time, explaining their functions and some of the tests as the component was installed. *Noid* lamps were installed in place of fuel injectors, and spark plug testers were used in the DI cassette. When the fan rotor was energized, sparks jumped, injectors (*noid* lamps) lit up and pulsated, though an engine were operating. The lights in the room were turned off and the display was an impressive demo.

John's second session was on the A/C retrofit kits that Saab has introduced. Much of the info in this column last year about the retro fit to change an R-12 air conditioning system over to 134a came right from Saab. Things have changed! The new kit has a receiver dryer and a new pressure switch. That's basically it. Flush the R-12 system to get as much of the oil out as possible, using



Bjorn Envall pronounced Chuck's modifications "Best of Saab Style."

R-12 as a flush agent. The cleaned system has the new receiver dryer installed, and the new pressure switch, which allow the system to run 3 bars higher pressure, then the new oil and 134a refrigerant is added. Once the system is leak checked, it's ready to go. The official line from Saab is no loss in efficiency in the 134a system from where it had been with the R-12.

John showed a video tape of the procedure and fielded questions, but with the proper equipment that most professional shops already own, or will have to purchase, the change is very simple. I should mention that this is not a job for the backyard mechanic as it requires an expensive R-12 recycling machine and another special machine to add the 134a. The part number for '84 to '86 900s is 7496342 and the price is \$110. '86 to '89 9000s use part number 7496375, the cost is \$170. Even though this retrofit is available, John said that it didn't make a lot of sense to install the retrofit kit unless the A/C system is in need of major repair. I believe R-12 will be around for quite awhile so I don't encourage the change. However, I will be putting the kit on my own 1985 900S (the one I had at the convention) for a personal observation of the efficiency that Saab is claiming.

The convention finale - the Round Table - turned out to be another example of Saab's willingness to listen to its customers and to explain the future. This had to be one of the more informative ever at a convention. At the '94 convention, Jim Crumlish led us to believe there could be some dialogue about independent technicians and shops receiving training from Saab in one form or another. We have waited one whole year with no word, but at this year's convention the dialogue may have started. The advent of OBD-II (On Board Diagnostics) rulings by the federal government make some future sharing of technology mandatory and I believe the desire by Saab USA is to be whatever it takes to make Saab owners happy. I think the independents are part of that loop. I believe that when the relationship between Saab, its dealer network and the independent shops becomes more like a partnership, you will get great service from the new car and throughout its lifespan. And of course, you, the owner, need to be able to pick who you want to deal with and know we all have the proper tools and knowledge to take care of your Saab.

Chuck Andrews
Andrews Inc.
Princeton MN

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Notes in the Margin

While virtually every automotive publication had predicted that the next 9000 model will be built on the Opel Omega platform, both readers who study my every word know (and I am too much an amateur columnist to not remind the rest) I predicted (Nines #225) that the absence of a large front drive Opel platform meant that the next 9000 would be a variation on the current platform. The published spy photos speak for themselves; the new model is built on the existing platform, not an Opel Omega's. I'll save you from running to the library if you haven't seen them. The styling brings the 9000 further back to classic Saab, with a full width, (old) 900 style hood overlapping the fender tops, a more rounded front bumper and hood line, a sharp-cornered 900 style windshield top, and a rear end treatment in keeping with both current models. The back doors' window line has a slight upward curve in keeping with the classic 99/900 profile, and the back window and "C" pillar shape are much like the current model. Car and Driver predicted normally aspirated, low-pressure turbo, and full-pressure turbo V-6s, with no mention of the "real" Saab engine, but current sales trends point the other way. At the convention "Captain C." revealed that the key is being relocated to the correct place, but there was no mention of that item of greatest importance: can the wiring harness, a passenger's airbag, and a glovebox all be contained within a single Saab 9000?

My dissertation on leasing generated this comment from a dealer. His lament was that a nationally advertised lease program, such as Saab's, with its "discounted cash price" printed in the fine print, has the effect of establishing a new (and lower) "sticker" price. Having two different sticker prices strikes him as a violation of the law which puts the sticker there in the first place. It also restricts his ability to make the customer feel good by discounting from an unrealistic MSRP. He said that Saab's original pricing of the new 900 with minimal mark-up created problems when negotiating with customers who were accustomed to the old 15% plus incentives way of doing business.

By way of observation, Saab sticker

prices in Canada seem a lot lower than those in the US when adjusted for currency and import duty. That Saabs in Canada are sold along side Saturns, with their traditional "one price" marketing plan, suggests that Saabs are also sold as "one price", which a convention attendee who works at "Downtown Saab" in Toronto confirmed. I hope our members in Canada will write in their experiences in both buying and servicing under the new regime.

The July, 1995 heat wave has provided additional data regarding Frank Freeman's alternator alterations. Recall in Nines #221, he reported a generic problem with Saab's Bosch alternator regulators, which he proposes to correct by retrofitting a Ford external regulator. I responded in the following issue with a dissertation on alternators, and suggested the possibility of heat sensitivity being part of the problem. It has been over a year since then, and I have been carefully following the indicated voltage and the ambient temperature on my 9000's read-out. I find that it holds about 13 1/2 volts from 80° F to about freezing, and then increases to over 14 volts at sub-zero readings. I also find that between 80° and 100° it drops to 12.7 volts, perilously close to the 12.6 volts of a fully charged lead-acid battery. Does this mean that the battery is being undercharged, or is the voltage intentionally being reduced at the higher temperatures to prevent excessive water loss? So far, the Delco "green eye" hydrometer reports a full charge, but even with this summer's heat I didn't get over 100 very often or for very long. Now, Frank lives in Tuscon, where 100 is just the starting point for hot on the thermometer, and cars live out on the blacktop, where the ambient temperature is often higher than that measured in the shade at the Weather Service's garden office. This begs the question: if Bosch regulators have this temperature sensitivity, why are there all those Mercedes running around the Middle East? And what about SAAB's fancy environmental test facility? And does the General know about this?

Speaking of Frank, his favorite Red Line Power Steering Fluid seems to come close to being a universal lubricant, according to the label. It is claimed to comply with GM specification 9985010 for power steering fluid, as required by Saab, as well as about 2 dozen other power steering specs. It also purports to satisfy the specs for Dexron (plain, II, and IIE), Ford type F, Mercon, and

SAE 75W GL-4 gear oil. They don't say if it's OK for screen door hinges, but I suspect it would do just fine.

During the Atlanta convention, a disturbing tendency toward cam chain wear in later 16-valve engines was brought up in one of John Moss's technical sessions. The wear was said to occur peculiarly in that some sections of chain wear and some don't (on the same chain!). The new cam chain change tool and procedure (service bulletin recently reprinted in Nines) is an indication that the problem is becoming widespread, and Saab's answer to the problem is to make it easier to change chains. John Moss speculated that the cause of the problem is inadequate lubrication of the chain, since the problem only appears on engines having the cam and follower lubrication channels drilled in the head, not the old design with the funky tube carrying oil across the tops of the cam bearing housings. Apparently the old way spilled lots of oil into the valve cover area, and the way back to the sump is through the chainway. In John's words, "the Swedes are getting a little stingy with the amount of oil released into the head."

From an owner's viewpoint, Saab's solution needs to be improved in two areas:

1) How do you know if your chain is wearing? The service bulletin specifies measuring the position of the cam chain tensioner. Has anyone out there removed a chain which measured "bad" and checked it for excessive wear? (The way to check for excessive wear is to cantlever the chain sideways off the end of a table. The amount of "droop" indicates the wear.) Has anyone had a chain which measured "good" subsequently experienced a chain failure?

2) Since the old engines, which threw lots of oil at the chain, didn't have the problem, why not come up with a way to oil the chain?

Therefore, I propose this challenge to the membership: can we modify something in the head so that we now spray oil on the chain? There is lots of extra oil available - remember the Turbo 2.3 engines spray the bottom of the pistons. Perhaps one could drill one of the cam bearing housings nearest the chain so that it sprays on the chain. This is an attractive solution because the part can be removed easily and drilled in the basement, then the chips cleaned out before being put back on the engine. The old engine had funny drilled bolts to carry oil from the cam bearings to the lifters - is this another part which can be modified? The bolts are steel,

and might be pretty hard, so the machining could require more professional equipment, but it is cheaper to replace in case you ruin it. It might even make sense to buy a new bolt and work on that, rather than take a part from the engine and hope it comes out OK. It would be nice if someone has access to engines out of the car (someone who works at a dealer, salvage yard, or independent repair shop) can try it and report. Perhaps the Club can patent the modification and let Saab buy the editor a new doghouse.

A brake fluid flush invariably leaves a partially used bottle, especially when using the economy quart sized bottles. To store a partially used bottle for the next time without risking moisture absorption, put the bottle in an appropriately sized "zip lock" bag and stick it into the freezer. Brake fluid won't freeze; it remains a fluid in Minnesota all winter! The freezer keeps the humidity down by condensing moisture on the coils as frost. Just remember to leave the brake fluid bottle in the baggie until its temperature is above the dew point!

Stephen Goldberger
N Canton OH

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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!

Service Subjects from Saab

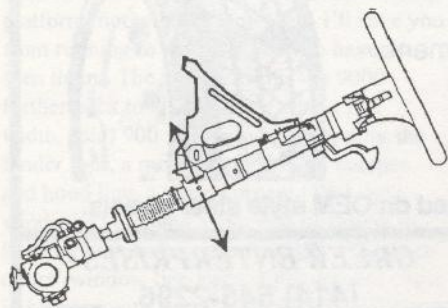
Squeaking Steering Column

Application: 1994- 900 Models except M94 Convertible

PSI 05/95-0580, Sec. 6/Pg. 7

Supersedes PSI 03/94-0453

In a small number of cars, the steering column may have been mounted in such a way during production that it causes tension on the steering column felt bearing. This may result in a squeaking or creaking noise when the steering wheel is turned and/or binding in the telescopic adjustment.



Cars Affected:

All 1994- 900 model cars, from VIN R2000563-, excluding the 1994 Convertible, but including the 1995 Convertible.

Adjustable Windshield Washer Nozzles

Application: Certain 1994-95 900 models
PSI 05/95-0581, Sec. 3/Pg. 84

NOTE: Model 9000 adjustable washer nozzles are being factory installed in Model 900 3-door and 5-door cars starting with VIN Serial No. S2022626 and higher, and in Model 900 Convertibles with VIN Serial No. S7016784 and higher. The nozzles listed in this bulletin are service parts only for 1994-1995 900 models built before these VIN serial numbers.

New washer nozzles have been developed that provide adjustability of the washer stream. These can be installed to address a complaint of inadequate cleaning for cars with the serial numbers listed below.

Cars Affected:

Certain 1994-95 900 3-dr and 5-dr car with VIN S2021625 or earlier

Certain 1995 900 Convertibles with VIN S7016783 or earlier

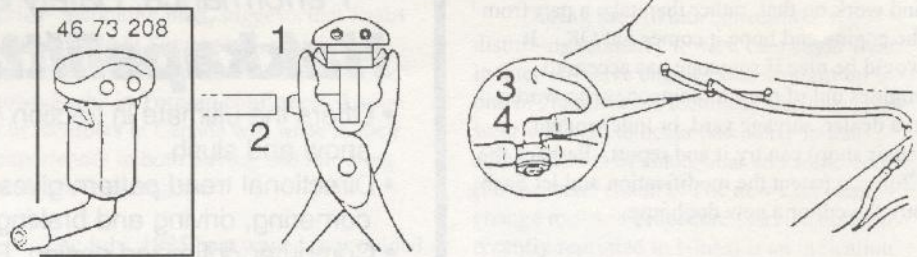


Figure 1. Removing the nozzles and non-return valve.

Parts:

Washer nozzle (2 per car) 46 73 208
Non-return valve 43 73 569

Action:

Both washer nozzles should be replaced and the non-return valve cleaned. If the non-return valve cannot be cleaned, replace it.

- Using a pair of pliers, remove each washer nozzle by squeezing the locking lugs located on the underside of the nozzles and lifting the top of the nozzle away from the hood (see item 1, Fig. 1).
- Slide the hose off each nozzle (see item 2, Figure 1).
- Slide the three hoses off the non-return valve (see items 3 and 4, Figure 1).
- Use compressed air to clean the non-return valve. If the valve remains clogged, replace it.
- Reinstall the non-return valve by reconnecting the three hoses to it.
- Reconnect the hose to each new nozzle.
- Replace each washer nozzle by fully lowering the nozzle assembly through the hood until the locking lugs lock in place.
- Top off the washer fluid reservoir. Follow the instruction on the washer fluid container to reduce the risk of freezing.
- Operate the washer. The pattern should dispense as shown in Figure 2.

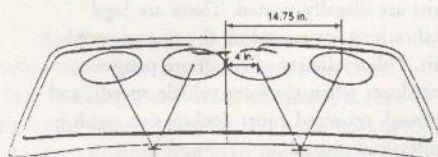


Figure 2. Correct washer pattern

- If the streams do not produce the pattern

shown, use a pin or needle to adjust the jet or jets (see Figure 3).

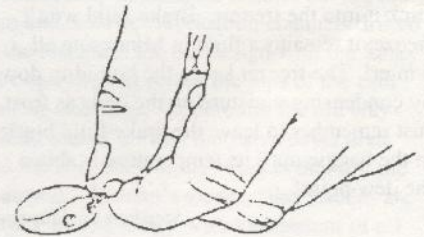


Figure 3. Adjusting the washer nozzles

- Operate the washer and recheck the pattern. Repeat steps 9 and 10 until the washer pattern is correct.

Replacing Upholstery on Backrest with Integrated Child Safety Seat

Application: 1994- 900 with integrated child safety seat
PSI 05/95-0586, Sec. 8/Pg. 118

A new method has been developed for changing the upholstery on backrests with an integrated child safety seat.

Cars Affected:

1994- 900s with integrated child safety seat

Parts:

Mounting kit, upholstery staples 84 71 062

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.



the road course at Atlanta Motor Speedway, but the initial soft feel of the pedal was unnerving. As C.W. McCall once put it, "... sorta like stompin' on a grape."

Other changes on the 900 for '96 include adjustable lumbar support for increased driver comfort, and a leather shift knob and boot for those models equipped with leather upholstery. A reflective rear panel is added between the taillights, and the 900S Coupe gets a rear spoiler as standard equipment.

As announced in the most recent issue of NINES, the sedan version of the 9000, the CD, has been dropped from the U.S. market. Traction Control has been deleted from the Aero, which remains as the top 9000 model.

Both 900 and 9000 models now come in a metallic Sky Blue, which replaces the darker LeMans Blue. Eucalyptus Green has also been dropped. Convertibles are now also available in Citrin Beige.

While at the '96 new model preview, journalists had an opportunity to watch the car handling prowess of the Saab Performance Team. Those who remember Joie Chitwood's Tournament of Thrills shows of the 1960s can make the connection, but instead of Chevy IIs and Camaros being put to the test, it's Saab 900s and 9000s. The Saab Performance Team is made up of employees of Saab who also happen to be outstanding drivers. The team was formed for the 1987 50th Anniversary of Saab (or S.A.A.B. - Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget) and was featured in the popular award winning video Saab Suite, where the ballet maneuvers of Saab 9000 Turbos were put to classical music.

You asked for it, you got it! A 5-door 900 Turbo

Every year at the annual Saab Owners' convention, someone has asked at the Saab round table why they can't buy a 5-door 900 Turbo. The response has always been that there isn't enough market demand for an additional model in the 900 lineup. If you wanted 4 doors, there was the sedan, if you wanted a hatch there was the 3-door. If you really wanted a 5-door turbo, there was always the 9000. Now that there is no longer a sedan version of the 900, the 5-door Turbo has been revived. Yes, you can finally go to your local Saab dealer and buy a family car with the Saab-built 185-hp 2.0-liter turbocharged four cylinder engine. So quit complaining and go buy one!

Once again, the family can have the best of all possible worlds: Utility and performance, economy and safety, luxury and exclusivity, for

under \$30,000. Even with the Dual Child Booster Seat option!

Like the 3-door Turbo Coupe, the 900 Turbo sedan includes a rear spoiler, lowered sports suspension, and 205/50 ZR-16 Michelin MXM tires on three-spoke "Viking Aero" wheels. Initially the 5-speed manual will be the only transmission available, but the 4-speed automatic will become available later in the model year on all 900 Turbo models - 5-door, Coupe and Convertible.

A new four-channel anti-lock braking system with Electronic Brake force Distribution (EBD) is standard on all 900s. By precisely controlling distribution of the braking effort between front and rear wheels, regardless of the load in the car, EBD results in shorter braking distances and lower pedal effort.

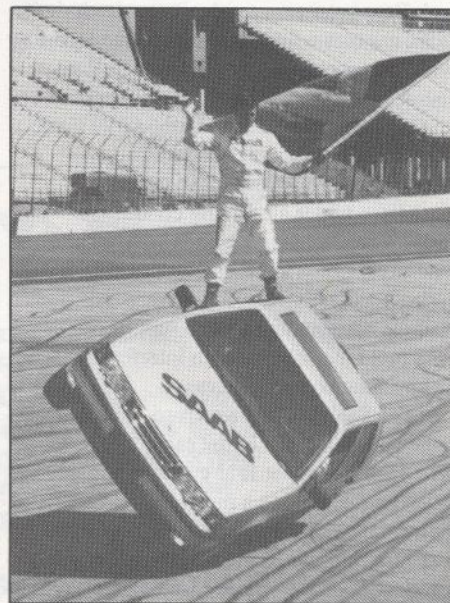
During a test of the new 900s, however, the brake pedal felt very close to the floor. Braking was quite adequate as journalists had a chance to push the '96 Saabs to their limits on



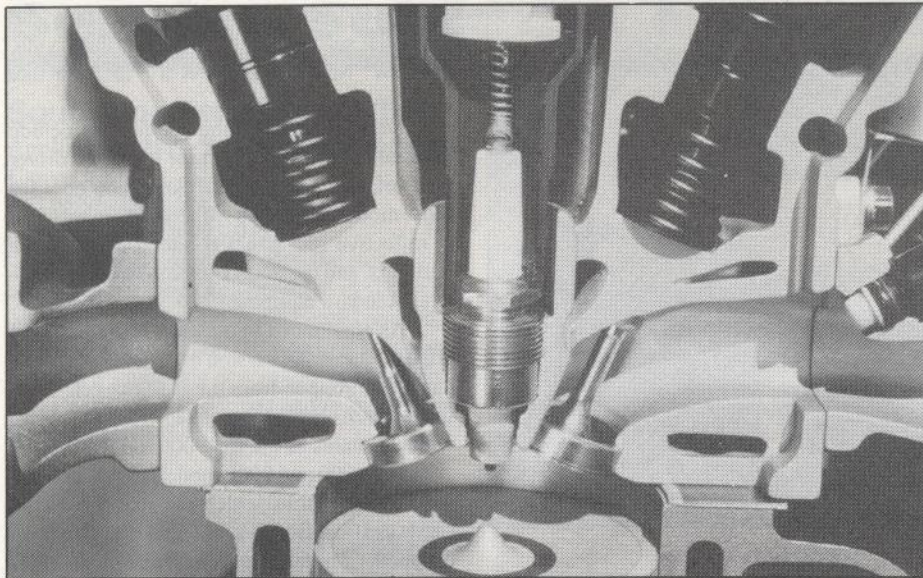
All 1996 900s get a reflective rear panel, and all coupes now have a rear spoiler



A few Saabs were "damaged" before this trick was perfected.



Professional driver, closed course. Do not attempt this maneuver.



New spark plug system uses the piston as an electrode, allowing higher voltage, improved combustion and never requires maintenance.

Saab Ecopower demonstrates "Green" technology for the near future

Saab chose the Frankfurt Auto Show to unveil several developments in automotive technology that it has been working on. Remaining true to the company's heritage of producing more energy from a small powerplant, such as the turbocharger for sedans, Saab introduced improvements in fuel utilization and decreased emissions. The Saab Ecopower concept demonstrates how its future engines will meet these demands, often exceeding government mandates.

An important target in future engine development is to achieve Lambda 1 - the ideal fuel/air ratio which ensures best possible performance of the catalytic converter - under all driving conditions. Today's cars achieve Lambda 1 only under conditions which are most critical from the environmental aspect. At higher speeds, for example, the engine must be supplied with extra fuel for cooling which interferes with the emission control process.

The Saab 99 Turbo arrived in response to the gasoline crisis of the early 1970s. It gave Saab's 2.0-liter four cylinder engine power comparable to a much larger V6 or V8 engine, but with the lower fuel consumption of the four. In the 18 years since that introduction, the turbocharger's reliability now rivals that of other major components such as the alternator or starter motor.

Turbochargers can last over 200,000 miles without needing replacement.

New spark plug system uses the piston as an electrode

Conventional constant-gap spark plugs have reached the limit of their development potential. Future engine development will require a variable gap to enable the engine to run at the lowest possible fuel consumption and exhaust emission at all loads. Saab has therefore developed a new system for igniting the fuel/air mixture in the combustion chamber that uses the piston as one of the electrodes. The second electrode remains in the spark plug in the head as it is today.

Firing the spark between the spark plug and piston crown offers several benefits. The ceramic insulation on the spark plug can be made much wider since it has only one electrode. Consequently, the firing voltage can be much higher, 50,000 volts as compared to 15,000 volts in a standard spark plug. And the system is maintenance free for the life of the engine.

The spark gap is variable between 1.5 mm at high load and 8 mm at low load, so the same high voltage can be used at both high and low engine loads. The arrangement of the electrodes on opposite ends of the combustion chamber also ensures better combustion

since the mixture burns across the entire combustion chamber face.

Testing at the Saab engine laboratories has shown that fuel consumption with this system is decreased by 3 to 8 percent, and engine emissions are lowered by as much as 40 percent.

V6 with asymmetrical turbo

Asymmetrical turbocharging is a new engine concept in which the Saab 3.0-liter V6 engine is equipped with one turbocharger mounted on the front cylinder bank and driven by the exhaust gases from only those three cylinders. But the turbocharger then delivers air to all six cylinders, and this eliminates the need for a wastegate for controlling the boost pressure. The entire turbocharger is integrated into the exhaust manifold instead of being a separate unit. As a result, the turbo system of the Saab V6 Ecopower is a much more compact, reliable and cost-effective unit.

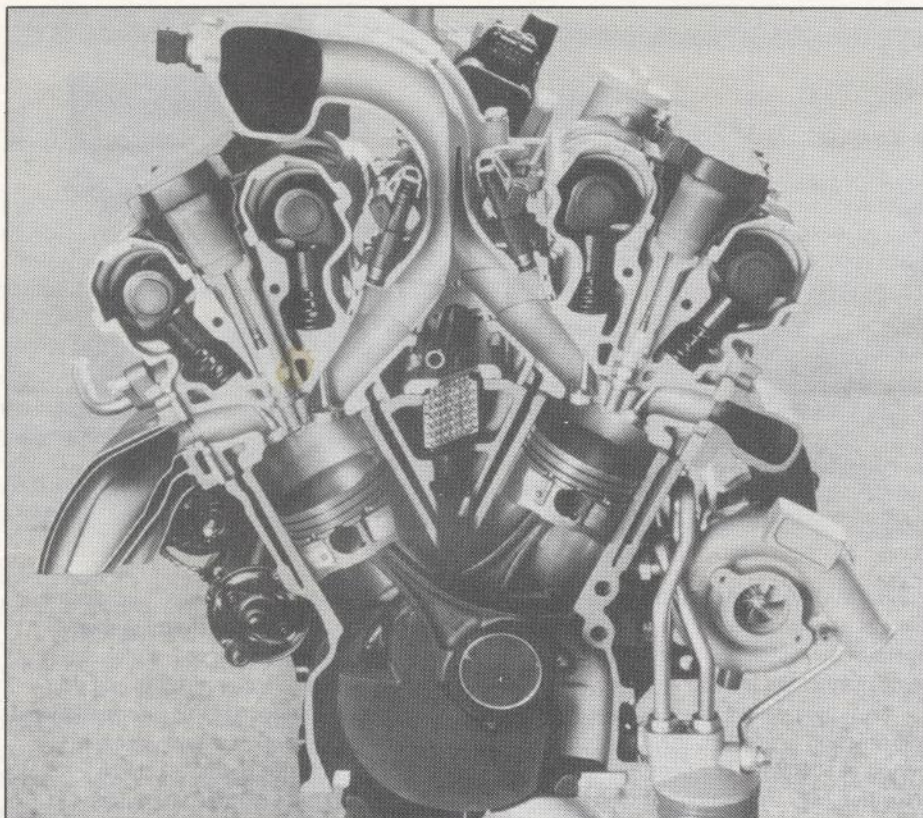
The light pressure turbo coupled to the V6 results in high torque at low revs. That allows higher reduction ratios in the drivetrain without the loss of acceleration and with lower fuel consumption. Since the engine has the Saab Trionic engine management system, the fuel injection and ignition timing can be controlled to allow Lambda 1 even at full throttle.

Torque in this LPT V6 is 230 ft. lbs. at 2000 rpm and peaks at 265 ft. lbs. at 3000 rpm. In the current application of this V6, peak torque is 200 ft. lbs. at 3300 rpm. The higher torque of the V6 Ecopower engine allows for a higher final drive ratio, which results in lower fuel consumption and quieter running at highway speeds. In spite of that, the car has better flexibility for passing. In top gear it can accelerate from 50 to 75 mph in 10.0 seconds, as compared to 11.5 seconds with the 1996 version of the same engine.

Water injection

Under hard acceleration, fuel is wasted. Another Saab Ecopower project being evaluated injects water into the cylinders to achieve Lambda 1 under full-throttle and high speed conditions. Water is injected through special nozzles in the intake manifold at high engine loads and at speeds above 120 mph, which lowers the temperature in the combustion chambers and allows for complete emission control and reduced fuel consumption.

The water is taken from the windshield washer reservoir. Saab is now conducting



Saab's V6 Ecopower concept engine uses a single turbocharger to deliver air under pressure to all cylinders.

tests to determine whether washer fluid antifreeze or other additives can influence the effect of water injection, and whether the additives can create new problems in the exhaust system.

Better fuel economy through electricity

A car's fuel consumption and engine emissions are at their highest when started from cold, defined as when the engine temperature is below 185°F (85°C). Another way of reducing emissions is to make sure the engine is warm when started. This is best done by an electric engine block heater.

At an ambient temperature of 30°F, for instance, hydrocarbon emissions (HC) are cut by 83 percent, and carbon monoxide (CO) emissions by 88 percent during the first few miles of driving if the engine is warm. Fuel consumption is also reduced by 20 percent. The information is drawn from a study carried out in Sweden on 1989 model cars with average odometer readings of 30,000 to 60,000 km (approx. 20,000 to 40,000 miles).

While current block heaters offer significant results in reduced emissions and fuel usage, the electric heating system

proposed by Saab heats the engine block, engine oil and catalytic converter. It can also be connected so that the interior will be heated or cooled (air conditioned) and the car battery charged before the engine is started.

Significant environmental gains can be made by equipping cars with electric engine heaters. Saab estimates that if all cars in Sweden were fitted with block heaters, carbon dioxide emissions would be reduced

by more than 500,000 tons a year. Toward that effort, an engine heater is now standard equipment on all 1996 Saab 9000s with the 2.0-liter light pressure turbo engine (not available in the U.S. market). In order to eliminate the difficulties associated with traditional aftermarket engine heaters, Saab has devised a spiral type cable which can be stowed in an easily accessible location under a cover in the body.



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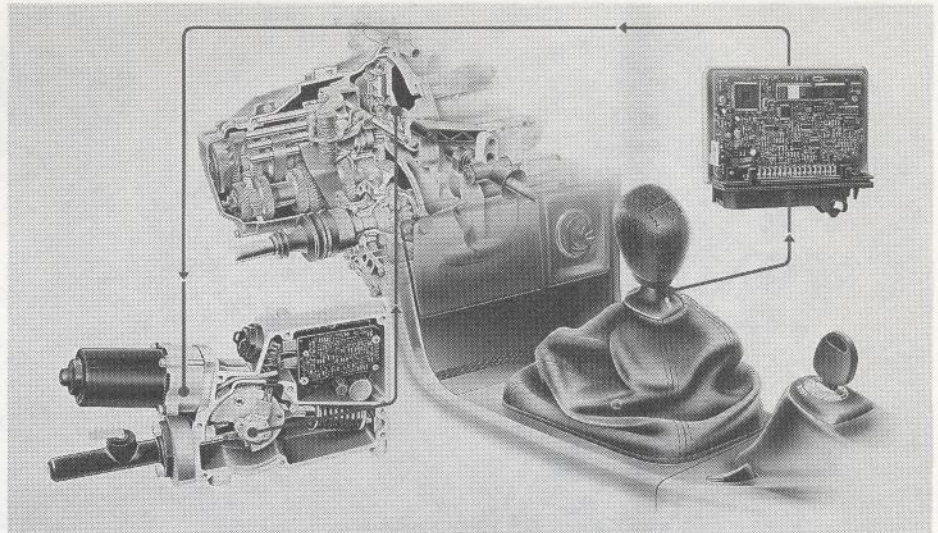
WE DON'T JUST DRIVE SAAB'S WE RACE THEM TOO!

It Makes Sense!

Automatic clutches for manual transmissions are not new. Saab - and several other European manufacturers - offered the Saxomat back in the early 1960s, which consisted of a centrifugal clutch and a servo clutch. And many of us are familiar with the Volkswagen Automatic Stickshift of the mid-'70s. More recently, Porsche and Ferrari have introduced clutchless shifting to performance cars. Formula 1 Grand Prix cars and World Rally Championship cars also rely on automatic clutches of this type so the driver can concentrate more on car control.

The Saab Sensonic system has been available on the 900 models since the introduction of the new body style as a 1994 model, but only in Europe. Unlike Porsche's Tiptronic and similar automatic transmissions from Audi, Eagle and BMW that can be shifted manually, Sensonic takes over the job of the left foot, that of manipulating the clutch, and does it more smoothly than most drivers can manage.

Those who attended the 1995 Saab Owners Convention in Atlanta had the rare opportunity to drive a new 900 Turbo equipped with Sensonic. There were no indications that the car was anything other than a European-spec 900, until you sat in the driver's seat. The shifter is the same as in a



normal 900 with a manual transmission, but there is no clutch pedal. An electric motor operates the clutch master cylinder in the same manner the left foot does via the pedal.

Anytime you switch from one type of transmission to another, there is a short period of adapting. The Sensonic makes that transition easy. It is smoother than the average driver in applying the right amount of clutch. Whether pulling away from a stop conservatively or briskly, the clutch reads the accelerator input and reacts accordingly. And it won't allow you to trick it. If you're sitting at a stop in anything but first or second gear, after about five seconds a warning chime alerts you and a message appears on the Saab Information Display (SID) to "DOWN-SHIFT". It also gives a warning if you are stopped with the brake off. In trying to photograph the display, I left the car in gear with the parking brake on and got out to focus the camera, only to have the engine shut off! If there is a way to fool this contraption, I haven't found it.

After starting the engine with the shifter in neutral, the driver can select first, second or reverse before pressing on the accelerator pedal. (Starting in second gear is available for easier starts under slippery conditions.) A conventional dry-plate clutch then engages smoothly, regardless of the throttle opening. To change gears, the driver releases the accelerator pedal as he would if engaging the clutch, simultaneously moving the shifter to the desired next gear and pressing the accelerator again.

The clutch actuator, which replaces the driver's muscle power, contains a powerful electric motor instead of a pedal. The motor rotates a cam which actuates the hydraulic

master cylinder for the clutch. The electronic control system receives information on engine speed, gearbox speed, clutch temperature, accelerator position and gear lever position, processes this information and delivers an appropriate output signal to control the actuator so that all clutch engagements are performed as quickly as possible but without any transmission jerks.

Those who took time to try the Sensonic 900 at the convention were quite universal in their praise. Drivers who have to deal with stop-and-go traffic were most enthusiastic about being able to shift without the tedium of constantly fussing with the clutch.

In the October 1995 edition of Britain's *CAR* magazine, James May notes of his long-term 900 SE Turbo Cabrio: "I'm not yet totally accustomed to Sensonic, as my left leg still twitches restlessly at each gearchange like one not yet accustomed to retirement. But I reckon this system, not Porsche's Tiptronic, is the first step towards a genuine F1-type semi-auto for the road."

The Sensonic was recently awarded the 1995 Technology Award by another British magazine, *Autocar*. *Autocar* called the Sensonic "quick, precise, effective and intelligently developed," and predicts it will be the next "Big Thing" in automotive engineering.

Saab has not yet made a decision whether to offer the Sensonic automatic clutch in the U.S. market. It adds about \$1000 to the price of the 900, roughly the same as if equipped with Saab's 4-speed automatic transmission. If the enthusiasm of those who drove the car at the convention is any indication, it is already overdue.

Tim Winker

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SAAB NEWS

Saab to become a GM subsidiary?

A third quarter loss of \$49 million at Saab Automobile AB has set the rumor mill working again. Some industry analysts speculate that Investor AB, the conglomerate that owns 50 percent of Saab Automobile, may turn over its share of the car company to partner General Motors by writing off a \$381 million loan. Saab showed a profit of \$22 million in third quarter 1994. The shortfall meant an overall loss for the first nine months of \$19 million, compared to a profit of \$43 million in '94.

A stronger krona/weaker dollar have cut Saab's already small per-car margins, coupled with lower than predicted sales volumes. Saab had predicted worldwide sales of 100,000 new cars during 1995, but will fall about 10 percent short. Saab sales in the U.S., however, are up, with a projection of about 26,000 units for '95, over 25 percent above last year. It is estimated that Saab will have to sell 150,000 cars a year to sustain profitability.

Investor Chief Executive Claes Dahlback told a news conference after reporting the nine month results, "We are worried. We are discussing with GM what we can do about it."

GM says the losses are to be expected because of the drop in the dollar and the heavy investment in future projects such as the next 9000 and a smaller Saab to debut in five years. Saab has also spent heavily on improved manufacturing facilities during the past year.

"There's no doubt they [Investor] will get out, it's just a matter of timing," according to Karl-Johan Bonnevier, an analyst at Kleinwort Benson in London.

Investor, headed by Peter Wallenberg, reportedly has tried several times in the past year to sell its half of Saab Automobile to GM once the company had returned to profitability. But GM says it is happy with the current partnership and sees no reason to purchase Investor's portion. "The Saab brand is a very important asset, which we fully intend to further develop," said Lou Hughes, chairman of Saab Automobile and president of GM's International Operations.

Saab Automobile AB was formed in 1990 as a 50-50 business venture with GM Europe on one side and Saab-Scania AB, controlled by Investor, on the other. The automobile company has reportedly lost \$1.55 billion in that time.

Saab directs Information Highway users to take a Side Road

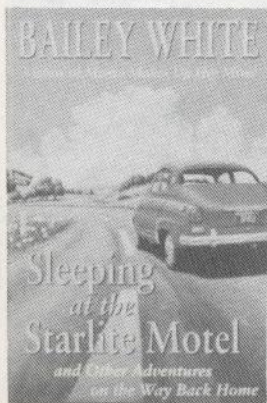
In keeping with its recently launched advertising campaign, "Follow Your Own Road," Saab Cars USA, Inc., has chosen to call their site on the World Wide Web "The Side Road."

The site allows on-line visitors an opportunity to create their own Saab with their own options preferences such as colors and wheels. In addition, *Saab Soundings*, Saab's twice-a-year magazine for owners, will be on line, plus there will be updates on the news at Saab including stories about the people in the company and service news for consumers, a list of Saab dealers, a chat line to ask questions about the company, and occasional contests. Someone at Saab Cars will monitor the web site for quick responses. Answers to questions of a technical nature will not be attempted.

The address for the site, which went on line in early December, is:

<http://www.saabusa.com>

One more book for the hard core Saab fanatic



Bailey White's book, *Sleeping at the Starlite Motel*, catches the eye of Saab owners immediately: The cover illustration by Peter Pahl features a late '60s Saab 96. Unfortunately, there isn't a single reference to Saabs within the pages of the book. The reason for the Saab, according to John Bell of Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, is that White owns a 96, though not a red one as on the cover.

Despite the lack of a story featuring a Saab, the book does feature a cast of true characters, brought to life by White's insight into detail. It's easy to see why White would be drawn to driving an older Saab.

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Saab Motors founder Ralph Millet looks over Shawn Mulvey's customized 95-V4.

A Hot Time in Atlanta

From Maine to California, Minnesota to Texas, and most states in between, Saab fanatics converged on Georgia for the 1995 National Saab Owners Convention the weekend of August 18 thru 20. Though it's called the "National" Convention, Saab owners came from as far away as Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, to participate, this year held near the headquarters of Saab Cars USA, Inc., in Norcross, Georgia. The annual event was put on by the Georgia Saab Club with assistance from Saab Cars USA.

Saab invited convention goers to tour the headquarters facility and hundreds of the Saab faithful took them up on it, greeted at the door by company CEO Jim Crumlish, Erik Carlsson and the brightly painted 9000 Aero that competed in this year's One Lap of America. Part of the tour included a quiz to answer questions about Saabs and Saab celebrities pictured on the "Wall of Fame." That was the prelude to a weekend full of Saabs.

The event was dedicated to the late Per Olof "Pelle" Rudh, curator of the Saab Car Museum in Trollhattan, Sweden, who passed away late last year after a brief illness. Rudh had attended his first U.S. Saab convention last year. Saab also invited recently retired chief designer Bjorn Envall to participate.

As can be expected in Georgia in August, temperatures on Friday and Saturday were over 100 degrees. (Tom Remedios

remarked that the alternator on the '88 9000 Turbo I had borrowed from S&J Automotive must not be working correctly as it only read 11.6 volts on the display. I pointed out that the display was set for outside temp! Make that 116 degrees.)

In addition to the usual swap meet and social gatherings, there were seminars to learn more about Saab's cars and the mystique of being a part of the Saab family. Saab technical trainer John Moss gave a talk on Saab's engine management systems beginning from 1975; High Performance braking, clutch and engine building were covered by Frank Freeman of Group 6; a look at Cold Starting problems was presented by Bob Sullivan, owner of Sovereign Automotive, an independent Saab repair shop; and a look at how Saab cars have evolved compared to other automobiles by former Saab dealer Jack Ashcraft. Bjorn Envall, chief designer at Saab for many years, shared photos summing up the Evolution of Saab Cars; while Erik Carlsson shared tales of Saab's running of the Baja 1000 in the late 1960s; and Magnus Roland spoke on the Spirit of Saab.

When car people gather, there must be activities involving the cars, so there was a concours - or beauty contest - with judging by employees of Saab Cars USA, and a car rally through the roads in the area. An autocross (slalom) could not be scheduled,

but those with racing in their blood got a chance to work out their aggressions at the local Malibu Grand Prix track, where small formula race cars can be rented by the lap. Participants included Jack Baxter, who races an ITB Saab 99; Jack Lawrence, several time SCCA Regional and National Champion with a Saab Sonett III; and plenty of other Saab drivers with competition experience. When the scoring was finished, fastest time and the trophy went to Jeremy Henson of Toronto.

Over 450 people participated at the awards banquet. Trophies were given out to winners in the rally, concours and racing competitions. Prizes donated by Saab related businesses were also given out in a drawing. A special poster designed by Bjorn Envall was given to each participant. A limited edition of 300 were signed by Envall.

The convention ended following a Round Table discussion where officials of Saab Cars USA and Saab Automobile AB answered questions on the company, its policies and its products. A few hints on future Saab models were also given out, including some possible ventures into different market segments such as mini-vans, sport utility vehicles or smaller cars.

Special recognition should go to those who worked so hard to make this year's convention a success, especially Peggy Fields of the Saab Club of Georgia and Marie Prezioso of Saab Cars USA.

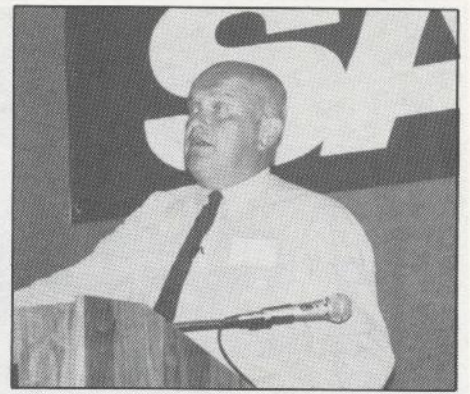
As announced at the Saturday evening banquet, next year's Saab convention will be held near San Francisco, California, and organized by the Bay Area Saab Club.

Tim Winker



Riley Lorenz, age 2½, finds a make believe road with a cardboard Saab.

photo by Ed Lorenz



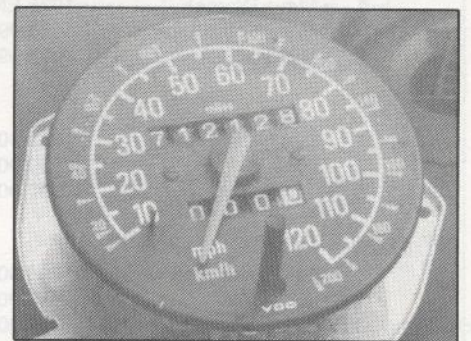
Left: Bill Jacobsen's Concours winning 1965 95 stroker.

Above: Guest speaker was Bjorn Envall, whose design expertise influenced the 99, 900, 9000 and the new 900.



Above: Chris McPherson shows off one of the more popular door prizes.

Right: The restored Quantum Formula S of Kevin Pampuch.



Ken Edwards showed a '78 99 EMS that has traveled over 800,000 miles. The original odometer (above) made it to 712,128. Owned by Joanne Maupin of Knoxville, Tennessee, the car was used for many trips to Washington state.



Instead of an autocross, drivers tested their skills in identical Malibu Grand Prix cars.

Rally Results

Expert

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|------|
| 1. | Thomas Greig/Marty Friedman | 2:05 |
| 2. | Tim Crumlish/Jim Crumlish | 2:46 |
| 3. | Dave Parps/Dave Rochester | 4:37 |

Novice

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | David Snider/Susan Houstein | 1:20 |
| 2. | Don Brown/Wiley Crutchfield | 1:36 |
| 3. | Bill Theriault, Jr./Bill Theriault, Sr. | 1:47 |

Concours Awards

93/95/96

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|------------|
| 1. | Bill Jacobsen | 1965 95 |
| 2. | Bud Allen | 1960 93F |
| 3. | Joseph Caparosa | 1967 96 V4 |

Sonett

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Ralph Bockoven | 1968 Sonett V4 |
| 2. | Joseph Caparosa | 1973 Sonett III |
| 3. | John Betsill | 1974 Sonett III |

99

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|----------|
| 1. | Steve Warner | 1978 EMS |
| 2. | Greg & Nick Lepera | 1974 99 |
| 3. | Michael Senger | 1972 99 |

900

- | | | |
|----|-------------|----------------|
| 1. | Tad Gilliam | 1986 900S |
| 2. | Paul Murray | 1980 900 Turbo |
| 3. | James Baran | 1987 900S |

9000

- | | | |
|----|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Len Burke | 1993 9000 CSE |
| 2. | John Betsil | 1987 9000 Turbo |
| 3. | Jason Henske | 1991 9000 Turbo |

Modified

- | | | |
|----|----------------|------------------------|
| 1. | John Letterle | 1968 Sonett V4 |
| 2. | Jeff Proproski | 1988 900 SPG |
| 3. | Kevin Pampuch | 1965 Quantum Formula S |

People's Choice Award

- | | |
|----------|-------------------|
| 1960 93F | Bud & Donna Allen |
|----------|-------------------|

Thanks!

While it is impossible to list every name, the Saab Club of Georgia and Saab Cars USA, Inc., would like to take this opportunity to thank all who attended the 1995 National Saab Owners' Convention in Atlanta in August. Without you, the attendees, there would be no convention and that fact did not escape our thoughts. Despite blistering heat and slow elevators and inexperienced workers, we sincerely hope that you had a good time and enjoyed your brief visit to our area. Throughout the planning process that was our goal. The total attendance this year was in excess of 450 participants, and we feel that was excellent considering the relatively "short notice" that you all had to make your plans. That number reflects the dedication that so many Saab enthusiasts possess towards their car and the culture associated with it.

Again, listing names is space prohibitive, however, the Saab Club of Georgia would also like to thank Saab Cars USA, Inc., for their support during the entire process. Their willingness to assist added to their contacts in the Saab automotive world were indeed valuable. In other words, we could not have done this without them. We sincerely hope that their commitment to the owners of their cars continues to extend to all of our events. We believe they make a valuable contribution.

As we look forward to the 1996 convention, please make every effort to reserve time to attend the gathering hosted by the Bay Area Saab Club. We are certain they will be working hard with the same objectives as we had - to host an enjoyable event that is well attended by the best automobile associated group around - Saab Owners.

Sincere Thanks Again!

The Saab Club of Georgia

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*T-shirts are available in XL and XXL only, We are still contemplating a second order for S, M or L depending on demand. If we get enough orders for these sizes, we will make that second order - if not, your money will be refunded.

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Winner of the People's Choice award, the rare sunroof model 1960 93F of Bud and Donna Allen.



Top honors in the 9000 judging went to this '93 9000 CSE owned by Len Burke.

Future Saab Meets Kirkwood Resort in '96

There was plenty of speculation prior to this year's convention as to who would host the 1996 event. In the months leading up to the Atlanta convention, I heard from no less than four groups who were interested in putting on the event for '96. They included organizations in Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Toronto and Northern California. One by one, however, they dropped out for various reasons, leaving only the Bay Area Saab Club to carry the banner.

Initially, the Bay Area club talked about several very scenic locations, including the Napa/Sonoma Valleys, Monterey Peninsula and the Lake Tahoe area. While the well known California wine region or the picturesque coastal area would certainly provide a luxurious atmosphere for a Saab owners gathering, both would also be more expensive than past conventions. It was hoped, however, that track time could be arranged at a famous nearby race course, either Sears Point (Sonoma) or Laguna Seca (Monterey). Instead, the club chose Kirkwood Resort, about 30 miles south of Lake Tahoe. The selected weekend is August 9-11.

In making the announcement that next year's National meet would be in California, it was also announced that Saab Cars USA would take on the task of the 1997 event. It will be a multiple anniversary for Saab - 60 years since the formation of SAAB, the Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget; 50 years since the decision to build cars; 40 years

since the Saab distribution network was first established in the United States. You could also add 30 years since the first Sonetts and 20 years since the introduction of the 99 Turbo. While Saab Cars USA may be putting on the convention in '97, a location has yet to be chosen.

Let's hope that the other groups that expressed an interest in hosting the 1996 event can see fit to put on a convention in the future. We're still looking to fill out the schedule for 1998 and beyond.

'96 Vintage Meet in Lake Placid, NY

Those New England Saab owners are at it again, putting on a meet for Vintage Saabs in 1996. The success of the Vermont "Out of the Woods" meet in 1994 has prompted a second event for older Saabs, this one primarily for cars older than 1980. Since it will be held at Lake Placid, New York, it has been dubbed, "Out at the Lake."

The host location will be the Holiday In Spree Resort, with the car show to be held at the Olympic Speed Skating rink in the center of town. Tech sessions, a scenic tour, a parade through town, and a parts swap are the highlights of the schedule. Tours of the town of Lake Placid, site of the 1964 Winter Olympics.

The dates for Out at the Lake will be July 12-14, 1996. You can make reservations or inquiries by contacting:

Dean Gordon
204 Paris Road
New Hartford, NY 13413
(315) 735-7432 6pm-9pm EST.

Sweden in 1997

1997 will be an important year for Saab, and as a result, for the hard core Saab fan. As already mentioned, Saab Cars USA has offered to put on the National Saab Owners Convention for North America. At the same time, Saab Automobile AB will be organizing a 50th Anniversary celebration in Sweden and would like Saab Club members from around the world to participate.

Peter Salzer, outgoing head of the public relations department at Saab headquarters in Sweden, was at the recent convention in Atlanta to get some input on what would draw American (and Canadian) Saab fans to Trollhattan. He is part of a committee that will be organizing the 1997 festivities.

Tentative dates for the 1997 Jubilee are sometime in June or possibly the 3rd weekend in July. The Norwegian club, Gammalsaabens Venner, has already announced a Northern Lights Challenge tour (NINES #224, page 22) prior to the Saab festival. Reportedly, drivers of over 100 Saabs have already indicated an interest in taking part in the 4250 km (2640 mi.) event, which is to start in Oslo, head north to the Arctic Circle, then down to Trollhattan for the Jubilee.

The 1996 International Saab Clubs Meet is scheduled for Billund, Denmark, the weekend of May 24-27. No contact name has been sent to NINES as yet, however.

More details will be announced here as they become available.

Technical Talk

V4 brake master cylinder rebuilding

There have been a lot of useful information on rebuilding old brake master cylinders in NINES and I wanted to add a few hints.

Not all cylinders are pitted within; I have had some just as smooth as new. However, they have gotten rust under the rubber grommets where the reservoir plugs in (a bit of fluid catches there and absorbs water). After cleaning that and reinstalling the reservoir, I rubbed some blue RTV silicone cement around the outside of the grommets to exclude water. I had previously conducted an experiment with this stuff with brake fluid, and after a week of soaking it appears that blue RTV is resistant to Castrol LMA DOT 4 brake fluid. I would not use blue RTV for sealing but only externally to keep the metal from rusting.

Rebuild kits usually come with new pistons and the four main seals, which are really two pairs of seals. The pairs have very slight but important differences. I tend to use the old assembly, which worked for years, as a pattern for the new so that the seals get assembled in the proper order and places.

Some master cylinders must be built "under fluid" to eliminate air from the system. I made a trough out of a large pineapple juice can for this purpose. Removed the juice with only one can-opener hole, saved it for refreshment, opened the can with tinsnips till I had a half-cylinder lengthwise. Made holes for the master cylinder and its bolts, cleaned and dried it thoroughly. Extra metal gaskets and rubber gasket, and RTV silicone, I bolted the cylinder onto the trough. Plugged the M/C drainhole with wire. This trough worked fine, best at a slight angle upwards so the air comes out. It is best to cover all sharp edges of metal on the can so hands are not cut, as brake fluid is very bad stuff to absorb through the skin (likewise don't do it if your hands are cut or chapped).

Old brake lines make handy patterns for

new lines, and I found it convenient to bleed the unit held in a vise before installation.

It has always been a mystery to me how water could allegedly enter the system through the master cylinder and then "sink" to the lower reaches, despite the uphill climb at the firewall, without rusting the M/C or other internal parts along the way. It did not seem logical, so I put on my thinking cap and produced a theory which may not be correct but which is fascinating:

The water enters past the cylinder seals! Of course these seals are not only supposed to maintain pressure and keep fluid in, but wipe the walls dry as they pass. However, just as with piston rings in the engine, there is always a very slight film of fluid left. When this hygroscopic (water-absorbing) film is on the outside, it picks up water from the admittedly moist climate of the wheelwells, and when the seal slides over again the water molecules disperse within the cylinder. Of course some molecules find their way out again, but the result is a slow net increase of water content within the cylinder. Any system needs topping up now and then due to fluid loss of the thin film, but the added water keeps the volume up, so the driver who is meticulous about checking his reservoir and never finding its level drop is fooled into thinking all is well. The result is a rusting of internal cylinder parts until the seals finally fail or the whole thing rusts solid. I am not quite sure how air gets into the rear brake line, but it pays to service the brake fluid. It is a good idea to bleed it enough and regularly at least to get the nasty fluid out.

Essential hints: Silicone fluid (DOT 5) is not compatible with polyglycol fluid (DOT 4), and unless the whole system is flushed out with alcohol and then dried out completely, the fluids will curdle with each other making clots which plug lines. Most people find it convenient to switch to silicone fluid when revamping the whole system at once, and after experience with brakes, I wish I had done so also. It might be a good idea to mark on the reservoir or its cap exactly which brake fluid to use so that nobody forgets and uses the wrong type.

Another essential hint is that not all polyglycol fluids are equal. Some are incompatible with the rubber of brake seals. I learned this the hard way: I had used a cheap domestic brand of DOT 3 brake fluid (someone had given me the can) on the

rebuild job, with the rebuild kit I'd bought from NAPA. After that I learned, from the parts store I usually frequent (not NAPA) that some domestic fluids will slowly dissolve imported brake seals as they are incompatible. I thought I'd be alright as NAPA parts were domestic, as was the brake fluid, but a few weeks later I got the same old brake-MC-seals-gone feeling in the pedal, and upon inspection the brake fluid was discolored with eaten brake seal. I am disgusted with NAPA for not even specifying the type of brake fluid in the assembly directions; one would think that in this lawsuit-ready culture that they would have enough sense to specify some compatible brand, especially as the brakes are essential to safety. I could have had a serious collision and sustained injury due to their negligence of failed brake parts. I tried to find their home office in directories in which I have previously done research into major companies, but they seem to be conspicuously absent from them. Also the sales slip gives only 10 days for return of parts, so unless I wanted to sue them I was stuck with their negligence.

I had to spend another \$50 or so for another master cylinder rebuild kit, this time a Beck/Arnley part (#071-2653) from my reliable parts store, and used Castrol LMA DOT 4 brake fluid and flushed the whole system with it to clear out the DOT 3 fluid. It also cost me nearly \$50 more and labor for new rear cylinders, as the cheap fluid had eaten those seals too.

I write this so that others won't have to pay the nearly extra \$100 plus labor I spent, so someone else may benefit from my experience.

Dana Morong
Madbury NH

Daytime Running Lights

As I run with the headlights on most of the time, I wanted my 1994 9000 CSE set up with the Daytime Running Lights (DRLs). My dealer had the necessary relay in stock and I was told it went in the relay assembly in back of the fuses. Then they would give no more information. I was thrown a bit as the relay is a five-pin and the only available socket was only four pins. After I traced the wire from the DRL fuse I realized that it had to be the correct socket. I put in the relay and it works. After I had done this, Saab 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.

Norcross sent me the information which gave the relay location.

My understanding is that the '95 models still need the relay, but then also the computer needs to be programmed.

The relay lists for \$25.00 according to Saab. My dealer wanted \$34.51*, gave me a 10 percent discount, and since they had it, I bought. Paul Walser Saab in Phoenix listed it for \$25.00 and would sell it at their cost plus 20 percent, but did not have it.

The information from Saab seems to indicate that the dipped beam lights (low) are the DRLs, but my car has a separate bulb on the bottom side of the high beam lens that lights.

To add Daytime Running Lights to a U.S. model 1994 9000:

1. Remove the fuse box surround and upper kick panel. It is held in at the front by 3 black plastic pins. Push the center pin completely through and the retainer comes out. Watch the upper row of fuses as they may get knocked out by the panel when removing it.
2. Remove the heater duct. It is held in by a snap on the right side. Just pull straight down.
3. The fuse and relay assembly is held in by two visible screws above the fuses. The whole assembly will swing down to access the relays.
4. The correct relay is Saab #95-56-390. It goes into the last row of relays, forward away from the fuses, in the right hand socket. (Socket is 4-pin, the relay is 5-pin, but is correct.)
5. Put a 15-amp fuse in #31 socket.
6. A jumper (p/n T8598526B) needs to go in a grey, half round, waterproof connector located just below the fuse/relay panel in the engine bay and in back of the left headlights. The connector has two yellow/white wires to it. Without the jumper you will only have parking lights on with the ignition switch. With the jumper you will have low beams.
7. Check lights and reassemble.

* Standard for my dealer as they always mark up parts.

T. A. "Woody" Boyles
Lakeside FL

Reluctant '95 900 horn

The design of the horn switch on the '95 Saab 900s is a safety problem. It requires an unusually high force to actuate which precludes it from being used quickly in an

emergency, and may be impractical to use at all by those with lesser strength. If the reader doubts this, try to depress the horn pad without firmly grasping the steering wheel nor tensing your arm, and have some of your weaker family members try it.

We all know that good drivers never need to use the horn. Nevertheless, some time there will be an emergency where it will be of the utmost importance to quickly blow the horn. Or there may be a need to give a polite toot to make another driver aware of moving into your space.

Actuating the horn should require only a few pounds of pressure. There don't appear to be any standards covering this (there are standards for the sound level and the horn icon - apparently assuming if you can find the horn "button" that you are strong enough to operate it). The human factors literature gives some guidance:

Control forces - push buttons 1 to 3 lbs recommended (Dreyfuss, "The Measure of Man", 1960, p.8).

Push buttons - 0.25 lb min. force, 1-3 lb optimum, 31 lb max. (ob cit, Chart P).

"...the resistance should not be so great that it prevents some operators from using it satisfactorily. ...If the full weight of the arm and hand rest on a control, the minimum resistance should be 10-12 lb; if only the forearm and hand, 5 lb; if only the hand, 2 lb {Dempster, 1955}." (Morgan, et al., "Human Engineering Guide to Equipment Design", 1963, p. 264.)

Design recommendation for fingertip control-resistance, 10 oz. minimum, 40 oz. maximum (ob cit, Table 6-3, p. 267).

I did some crude measurements which gave 15 to 20 pounds of force to actuate the horn. This is far beyond what is considered appropriate in the human factors literature and is a force which is not easily applied, especially in an emergency. Supposedly this high force is required because there is an air bag beneath, however the horn in the 9000 models with a similar setup operate with less pressure. Other cars with air bags, e.g., Honda, have horns that operate easily. This is a design problem unique to the new Saab 900s.

I would like to hear from other 900 owners about their reactions to this horn switch. Perhaps collectively we can research this problem and convince Saab that there ought to be a change.

Incidentally, my experience is in research engineering, human factors, and industrial design. I believe change is possible. When I was with the federal Trade Commission my

analysis forced the plastics industry to acknowledge the fire hazard of foam plastic and to require that it be covered with drywall.

John Christian

6502 Ridge Dr

Bethesda MD 20816-2636

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INTERNET:JonXian@AOL.com

Tires: Pirelli P 6000

Wow! Did I say wow? Sorry about that. Wow! Oops. I'll try and hold it for awhile. But I should let you know that this boy is excited. Daddy got new shoes for the baby. Uh-huh. The sled is happy. The 9000T has brand spanking new P6000s to help keep it on the road and it was about time. Slicks, even during a California summer, aren't the best of ideas, especially when the cord is starting to show. Credit card in hand, I went hunting and the new P6000 is what I set my sights on.

The P6000 is an all new generation of high performance tire. It's made of sand. Silica. Yeah, that's right. Mixed with traditional black fillers and synthetic polymers, the result is very low rolling resistance and exceptional wet grip. The new silica based compound also provides exceptional handling on uneven surfaces. Also that nasty electro-static build-up is a thing of the past. Ooooh.

Overall, the weight of the tire itself has been reduced by 10%, which is good news for all those suspension parts bouncing up and down cruising down America's byways. Less weight, less to bounce. Simple, huh? Along for the ride is reduced rolling resistance and up to 186mph zoom limit (that's 300 km/hr metrichead!).

According to the wizards at Pirelli, the average car's (Hey! What about Saab? Okay... as I was saying) contact patch through four tires has a net working surface of less than 200 cm. About the size of adult male footprint. The P6000 makes it seem like a bigger foot. It can handle aforementioned 186 mph, over 1 gee of lateral force, 1,102 lbs (500 kgs) of vertical force in temperatures from -4° F to +214° (-20 C to +100 C) and do it all with quiet dignity.

The P6000 provides grip with its CAD/CAM computer designed tread with a wide center groove and wide elliptical lateral channels and maximum adhesion when the going gets wet. The design combines tread block stability while minimizing noise allowing all to hear the latest in John Tesch tunes on your CD even while riding in the

trunk.

Hold the phone. What about the important details: Price. About \$127 for a 205/55R-15 from a mail order tire company found in the pages of your favorite auto mag.

Now I am sure that those razor sharp minds at Pirelli have all sorts of cool neat jet test equipment, nasty test tracks and bad rides to play with, but I don't. I have to use the only test instruments that I have. My 9000 and my butt. (All right... shuddup already!) And from the seat of pants feel of these tires, WOW. They are quiet, smooth and wickedly fast through the twisties of the San Bernardino mountains that I drive on a weekly basis from sea level to 7200'. Do I like them? Oh yeah. Please note the wow. And you can quote me on that.

And for those that really want to push the envelope... Start thinking about the newest member of the Pirelli family. The new P7000... WOWZER! Now just where is that Aero so I can test 'em..? My butt is fine tuned and ready!

Paul Florance
Seal Beach CA

Shocks: Koni

Doktor Nio's comments on shock absorbers for the 1987 900 Turbo belonging to Stanley Morris (NINES #227) seem not to be based on any actual experience with the modern, digressively-valved Koni brand. It is important to know that Koni makes two main types of shock absorber: Special, which are usually red; and Sport, which are yellow. Only the Special type, the better-riding ones, are made for the older 900. We had a full set installed in our 1991 900 in February, 1994 (Koni #30-1085 front, #26-1087 rear). After 19,000 miles they feel the same as when new, and provide a firm but kick-free ride with unusually good control, much better than the original Sachs. The 1995 Koni catalog also lists for 900 Turbos a #30-1088 for the front with the same rears. These will be a good all-around choice. Call Koni at 1-800-922-2616 for a catalog (and Automotive Performance Systems, Camarillo, California, 1-800-423-3623, for low prices).

Konis are warranted as long as you own the vehicle (passenger car). Unlike KYB which will replace shocks only for leaks or cracks, Koni will replace them when they perform poorly, and all adjustments to the shocks have been made or are of no benefit.

Koni dose not make Sport models for the old style 900.

The fears that Sport models ride too firmly for road use are totally unfounded. As it happens, Koni makes only Sport models for the 9000 (8641-1114 front kits, and 8040-1057 rear whole shocks). We had a complete set installed in our 1990 9000 S with no problems, and 23,000 miles later, the improvement in both ride and handling over the Sachs OE is still astonishing. We had a complete set installed in our 1993 9000 CS Turbo with the same excellent result after 4000 miles, finding the Dunlop D60 A2 tire to ride uncommonly well with the Koni Sport shocks. In this case, the improvement over younger Sachs front struts was not so great; but the improvement at the rear over the OE Saab brand shocks was great. However, some changes in the 1993 front strut housings resulted in a loose fit at the top, and some diagrams in the instructions no longer resembled reality. We cannot thank Kevin Booth of Lititz Auto Service enough for fabricating steel rings to compensate for the loose fit. The Koni folks are aware of this problem, and made a satisfactory adjustment for me.

Joel M. Kauffman
Wayne PA

Is Your SAAB's Throttle Body Bored?

Just when you thought there was nothing else you could add to your 16 valve SAAB to make it go faster, we turn around and introduce something new! This time it is our **Big Bore Throttle Body**. As the name implies, it is a throttle body that has been modified to take a larger butterfly valve.

As you drive your car, you push down on the accelerator to open the butterfly, which gives you a larger flow area, so the engine makes more power. With our **Big Bore**, the net result is the same as being able to push the accelerator further down. Wide open throttle simply has a larger flow area than stock, so air goes into the engine easier, and you get more power. The same principal applies for either turbo or non-turbo cars.

Installation is simple. You just remove your stock throttle body and bolt the **Big Bore** on in it's place. Because it is a modified version of the stock unit, it bolts on easily, and all the connections are the same. Then you send the stock piece back to us as a core. Your car will now have better throttle response as well

as more power at full throttle. There are no driveability problems and mileage will not change, except that you may drive around with your foot in it more.

This modification is the perfect addition to those engines which already have our air inlet kit and turbocharger ducts. The idea behind all those pieces is to make it easier for the air to flow to the engine. This is simply the last link in the chain. The actual power increase you get will depend on which other pieces you have upgraded, but if you have done them all, it will be about 15 horsepower!

So what is the cost of this magic? **Just \$275 exchange!** We have **Big Bores** available for all SAABs made after 1985, and other fuel injected cars on request. Give us a call and discover that missing horsepower now!

Group 6 Performance

1634 S. Research Loop, Ste.150
Tucson, AZ 85710 (520) 290-2442

Vintage Saab, Novice Autocrosser

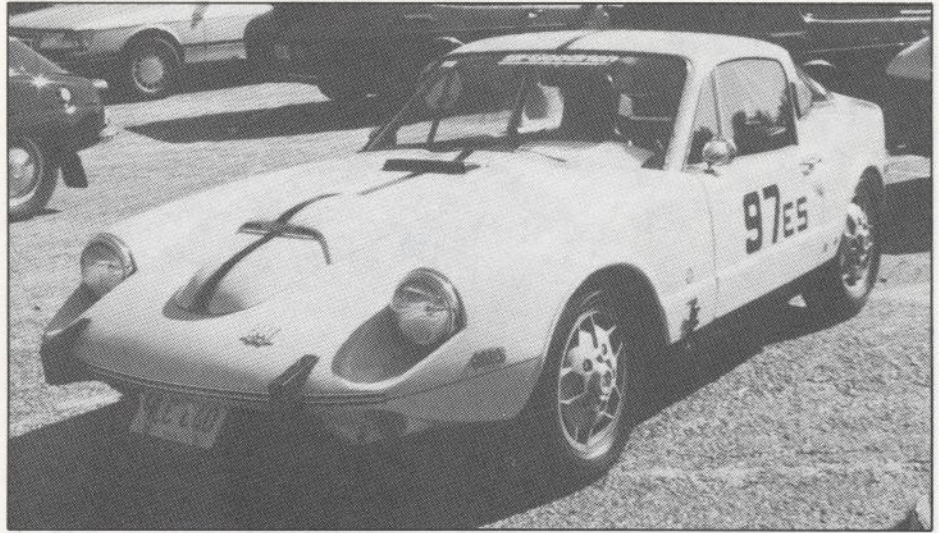
My first event in Solo II with my 1969 Sonett V4 was May 22, 1994. I showed up with a dirt stock (except for a Motor Sport Service exhaust from Jack Lawrence, a great system!) Sonett with old Goodyear Arriva 165/80R15s on stock Sonett soccerball rims.

The event started at Noon. I went through tech inspection and everything passed except my helmet. My old motorcycle helmet from 1973 did not meet the minimum Snell 1975 rating required by SCCA. They did have a loaner helmet available so I paid my entry fee. The Sonett was placed in E-stock and I chose number 97 to put on the side. I took the idea from Jack Lawrence's GT-4 racing Sonett. It is also the model number Saab gave the Sonett for production.

We made our mandatory walk of the course. My nerves were starting to go about this time. My only exposure to a live autocross was at the 1993 Saab Owners National Convention in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and I worked the course but did not race.

Autocrossing looks a little easier than it is. My first run was on course, but I think I had the slowest time of the day. Everyone was starting in the high 50 second range; I was at about 70 seconds. I was off course on the second run and the car was scored as a DNF (Did Not Finish) for the run, though I was not sure where I went off. My third run was better, about 67 seconds. I got down to 65 seconds on the last run, showing some improvement for the day. My main concern this event was just to stay on course and get used to left foot braking and higher revs in lower gears. I also had to remember to keep thinking: late brake, late brake, turn, over and over again.

The next event was about a month later and competition began to show up. The Novice Class lumps all the drivers



and cars together for points. In our area there are three cup series sponsors: Heart of Illinois Spots Car Club (HISCC), Champaign County Sports Car Club (CCSCC) and Central Illinois Region of SCCA (CIR). There were 13 Novice drivers who accumulated points in the CIR cup series in 1994. In my class - ESN (E Stock Novice) - there were seven drivers.

There are other events throughout the summer in between Cup events, so you can gauge your progress against other drivers from these additional events.

After about four events I was placed in ES - not Novice. Getting bumped out of Novice was okay and my competition was very good. Barney Gaylord from Naperville, Illinois, is the best in an MGB. He was consistently 6 to 7 seconds faster than I was. Then he bought some Yokohama 008RS tires and mounted them on his stock MG rims. He was beating me by 10 seconds then.

Don Carl, in a Honda Civic with Yokos, beat both of us consistently until Barney switched to the 008RSs.

Some Novices accumulated more points in the 1994 series than I did, but they were from CCSCC or CIR. I only competed in two Cup events and accumulated 8 points. Andy Lasco in a Pontiac Fiero was my nearest competitor in Novice, at 7 points. HISCC, my local

club, awarded me First Place Novice for 1994.

For 1995, the saga continues with Barney Gaylord leading ES points in his MGB. Don Carl is a close second. I am continuing the chase in third place.

Some changes I've made for 1995 include:

1) New Yokohama 008RS tires in size 195/50ZR15, on the stock soccerball rims, a very tight fit.

2) Rebuilt rear wheel cylinders. They were beginning to leak at the end of last season. All the brake lines were flushed and the brake fluid replaced with Castrol LMA.

3) Fixed my Solex carb so the car stopped hesitating on starts. The float had become detached from the float arm.

My first event this year started a new learning curve. With the new competition tires the car handles much better. The ride is very hard, but I love the handling. My best time was still about 5 seconds behind Carl in the Honda. I expect to catch him as soon as I break in these new tires and get comfortable with them.

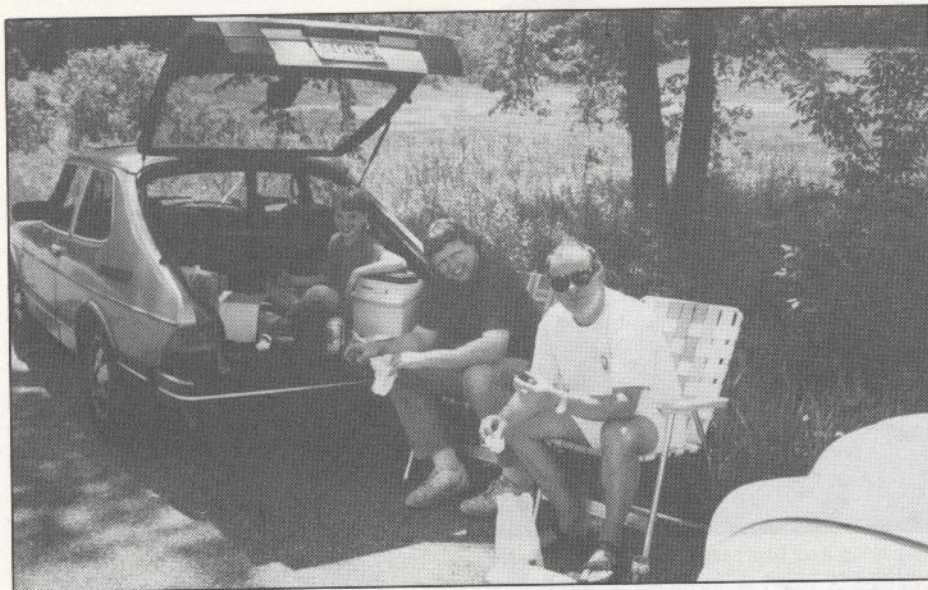
Someday I will try to make it to the SCCA National Solo II Runoffs in Salina, Kansas, when I think I can handle some real tough competition.

Keep those old Saabs racing

Jim Lamkin

1969 Saab Sonett #97es

Peoria IL

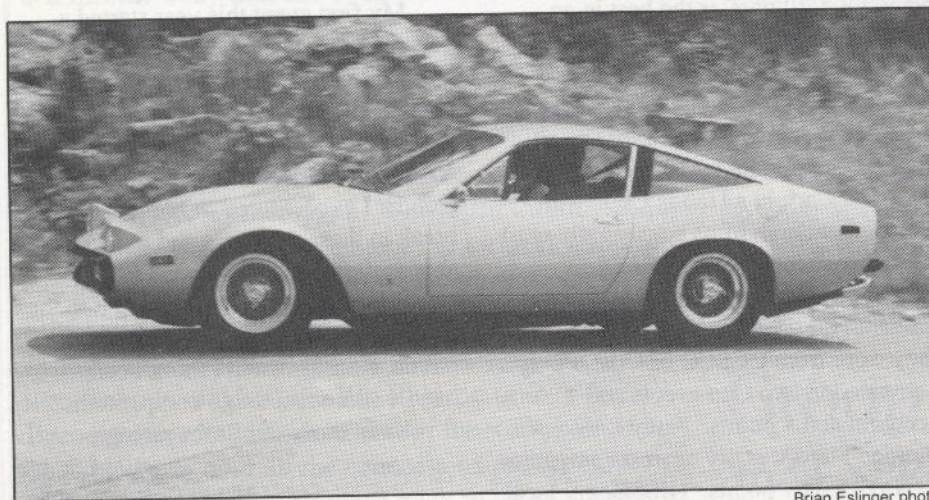


Lunch alongside the road, waiting for vintage rally cars to arrive. (L to R) Axel and Dean Nelson, Greg LeBaron.

Over the Great River and through the woods.

Working checkpoints for the Great River Road Rally (GRRR) the past two years have been wonderful times. The GRRR is a two-day, 500 mile tour for vintage automobiles from St. Paul, Minnesota, to LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and back, along the roads where the Mississippi River valley forms the border between the two states. The sight and sound of rare sports cars in action is an experience not to be soon forgotten. This year's entrants included a Ferrari 365 GTC, a Maserati Indy, a Morgan +4, a Lotus Elan Plus 2, and an assortment of Alfa Romeos and Mercedes Benzes since the event was put on under the auspices of the local Alfa and Mercedes clubs.

My son Axel and I along with two other members of the Saab Club, Greg LeBaron and Phil Duckert, enlisted in the Control Crew Corps (GRRR CCC) for this year's rally. Axel and I were in the family '86 900S 3-door, while Greg and Phil rode in Greg's 1964 SAAB 96 (with only 12,000 miles on the odo). For the most part we enjoyed our day of assignments in No-One-Remembers-Where, Wisconsin. The prominent display of our SAAB banner and the Swedish colors at our controls would alert all to our festive mood. Add to this day delicious box lunches from the Jenny Lind Cafe in Stockholm (Wisconsin, not Sweden) and the perfect



Brian Eslinger photo

A Ferrari 365 GTC claws its way through a corner on the '95 GRRR.

weather, I am already looking forward to next year.

Just getting to the control locations can be an adventure, often a rally within a rally. We had such an unforgettable control adventure that I would be remiss if I did not share.

We have thoroughly enjoyed our lunches and luncheon conversations and have timed all but two cars through our third checkpoint when Axel says, "Dad, the directions say we may want to send half our crew ahead to the next control at 2:00."

Since the directions did say "may" and it was already 2:18 and we were just having too much fun chumming around, we decide to leave at our closing time. After all, we have a 35 minute transit allowance and an additional 20 minutes before the first car is due. I should have known something was up.

Rallymaster Ed Solstad had written a note on our instructions saying, "You should find this an interesting transit." Unknown to us, and we found out later to the rallymaster as well, this transit was 62 miles across good ol' Wisconsin spaghetti roads! An interesting transit!? Will I ever understand Ed's penchant toward understatement?

"Could he possibly have found a road with a few more twists in it?" I asked rhetorically, thrashing Mrs. SAAB Farm's daily driver through yet another 25 m.p.h. turn.

"Mom would be pissed. Mom would be pissed!" squawked my co-driver suddenly turned parrot.

"How much longer does this go on? We're not even to Map 3 yet!" An interesting transit!?

Further enhancement of the mythical proportions of our adventure came 20 miles shy of the control as Greg's 96 began sucking a lot of gunk from the ancient fuel tank, agitated by exuberant driving after years of inactivity, clogging the fuel filters. This had a profound impact on his corn popper's ability to pop corn (2-stroke humor, sorry) and this lack of pop-ability meant that Greg and Phil and the gallant little SAAB were left doing a little bonding on the grassy shoulder of a very remote hillside. Axel and I pressed on toward the mark, finally arriving at our control in time to close it! Luckily for the rally, Pat Stanley and Mike Evens were running lead car and were able to time everyone through the SAAB Crew's Waterloo checkpoint.

As I walked up to Pat and Mike, "62 bloody miles in 35 ****ing minutes!?" were the first words to escape my agitated lips.

"That sounds like Edward," Pat said calmly as she timed in the second to the last car.

"Hey, that's almost 120 miles an hour," said Mike.

"Truly a challenge befitting at SAAB," I said. It had been a challenge for the Saab, met with aplomb.

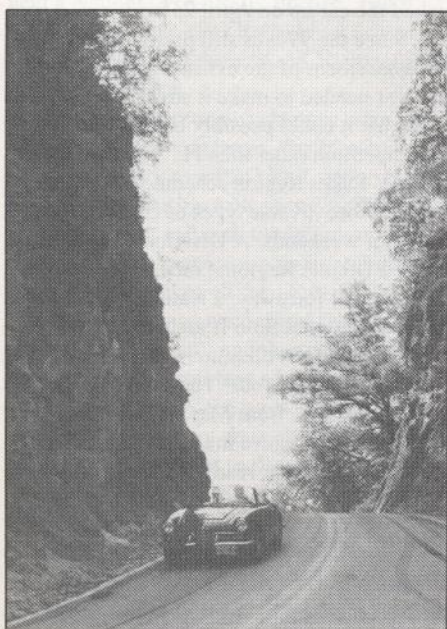
We met Greg and Phil half way back to fetch them. Back flushing the filters allowed Greg to get the engine popping again. An interesting transit indeed.

But this wasn't the end of our problems. The Brie and crackers, the kippers and flatbread, the chilled Chardonnay, all brought to be shared at our checkpoint finale with the rally participants ("Thank you for allowing us to be your control crew today.") had to be returned to the SAAB Farm for consumption by the Farm's proprietors. It was tough but we couldn't let it go to waste.

With our adventure behind us, next year's SAAB Club controls will be bigger and better than ever! Interactive checkpoints and special Lutefisk treats (without the messy white sauce) are already being planned for the "GRRR SAAB Festival '96" in the hills of Wisconsin next June. For other marque clubs despondent over the lost opportunity of 1995, I challenge you to field an effort for 1996. You're already behind. Remember, imagination is a terrible thing to waste!

Ciao, a' dopo amichi!

Dean Nelson
New Brighton MN



Brian Eslinger photo

An Alfa Romeo Giulia Spider Veloce negotiates the Mindoro Cut near LaCrosse.



Saabs place well at Lake Superior PRO Rally

About a dozen spectators were standing on a pile of freshly cut pulpwood near the end of the final stage of the D&N Bank Lake Superior PRO Rally on the Keeweenaw Peninsula of Upper Michigan. Over the crackle of scanner radios we learned that another front running car was out, this one a Mitsubishi Eclipse due to transmission failure. Pretty soon the first car came through; a right-hand drive Mitsubishi driven by Henry Joy, who would shortly win his first PRO Rally. Next up was the Group 2 leader, Sam Bryan in his Saab 900. A minute later came the Group 2 Nissan 200SX of Mike Hurst. Fourth on the road was... A SAAB 96!!! Driver John Vanlandingham had brought the 20-plus year old car through one of the toughest rallies in the country. Less than a minute later came the Saab 99 of Jerry Sweet.

Three Saabs in the top 5 on a National caliber PRO Rally? Close, but not quite.

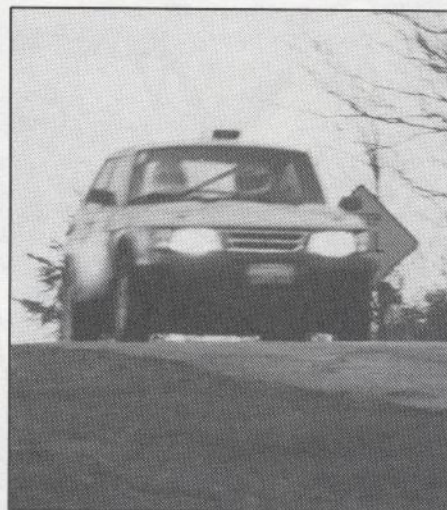
Once scoring was settled, an all-wheel drive hot rod, a Mitsubishi Eclipse, had snuck into 4th, with Sweet's 99 EMS finishing 5th overall. Due to "road points" - showing up too early at stage start controls - the 96 dropped from 6th overall to 8th, but remained 4th in Group 2.

Sam Bryan and Rob Walden from Seattle took the win in Group 2, a class for 2-wheel drive cars with normally aspirated engines under 2.4-liters (or 2.0 liters with 4 valves per cylinder). The Scandia Autosport prepared 900 stands close to winning the championship for '95; all they have to do is start the Maine Forest Rally in December. Bryan was second in Group 2 points in 1994, finishing behind the Scandia Autosport

stablemate Saab 99 driven by Goran Ostlund.

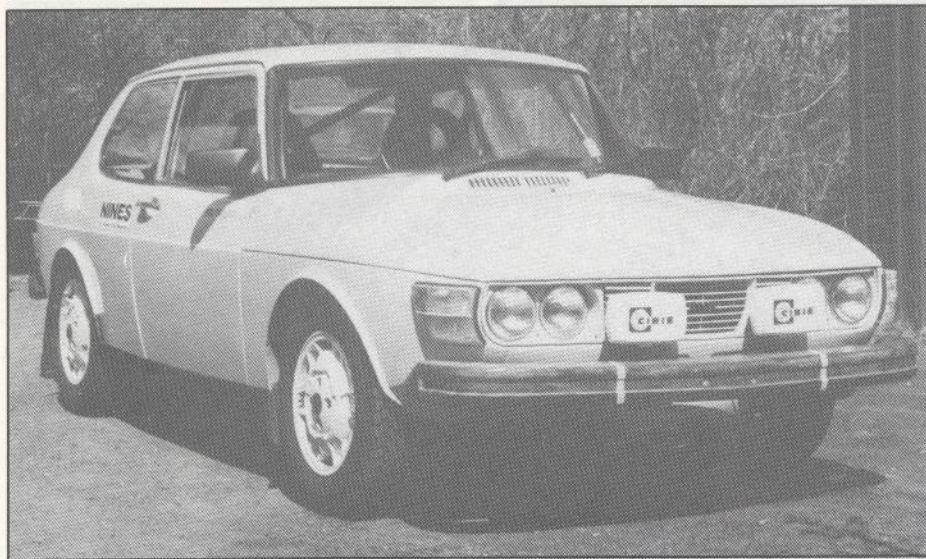
Jerry Sweet and Stuart Spark's 3rd place in Group 2 kept them second in the points, with a chance of tying Bryan if the 900 does not start in Maine and Sweet takes first in class there. Bryan would still get the championship, however, due to more class wins during the season. The New Jersey team has yet to win Group 2 in their 99 EMS.

But it was the 96-V4 of John Vanlandingham, with Tom Gillespie as co-driver, that captured the hearts of most rally workers and spectators at LSPR. Quite a few rally fans still remember Saab's rally history, and most either drive Saabs or have owned Saabs at some time. There was considerable chauvinistic pride in watching an old V4 trounce much newer all-wheel-drive turbocharged machinery on the famously tough stages of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.



Bruce Beauvais photo

Sam Bryan and Rob Walden on their way to another Group 2 win and the '95 title in the Scandia Autosports Saab 900.



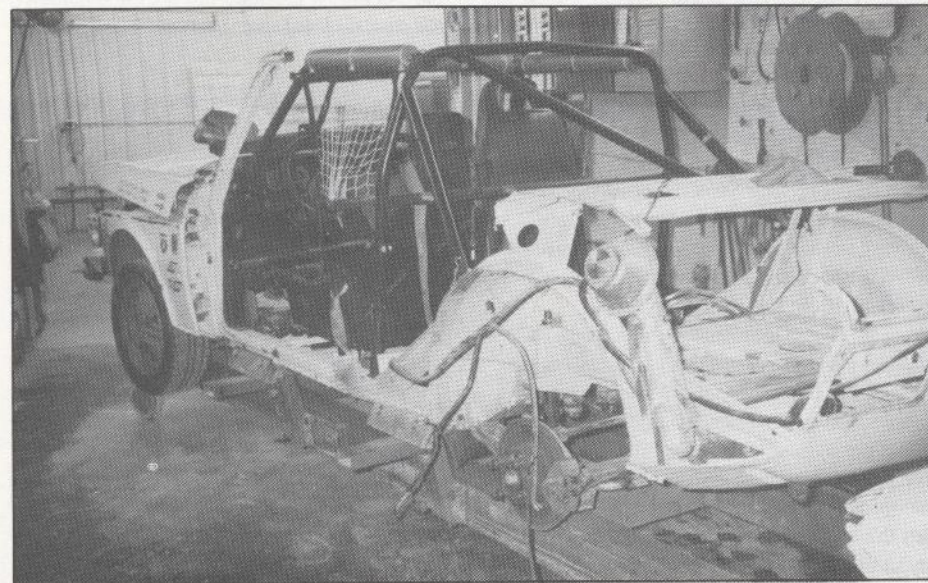
A MONTH OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY

PROLOGUE

Racing has been a part of my life since 1969, when a high school buddy invited me to Donnybrooke Speedway in Brainerd, Minnesota, to see a Trans Am race. Early on, my budget would not allow for racing, so I worked many Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) races, both professional and amateur.

In 1991 I purchased a 1979 Saab 99GL two-door in Seattle, Washington, (in Alabaster yellow, the twin the my earlier '79

99 GL, the "NINE-T9"; the latter car is referred to as the "Second Banana") with the intention of turning it into a race car. SCCA had come up with a category of racing several years prior that allowed streetable sedans to compete with some modifications. Dubbed Improved Touring (IT) the class gives an opportunity of competitive racing for those on a tighter budget. There are those in IT whose budgets resemble professional efforts, but the bulk get by spending only a few thousand a year for the thrill of door-to-door racing. As a result, IT is one of SCCA's



Undergoing reconstruction at Andrews. Ready for the replacement panels.

most popular racing categories.

The 99 saw its first race in May of 1993, running in the IT-B class against VW Rabbits and Sciroccos, a Dodge Omni GLH, a Toyota Corolla, a Plymouth Fire Arrow and an Opel Manta. Details of that first race weekend were published in NINES #219.

Early in the '94 racing season, the 99 rolled over during a practice session and the roof and rear quarter panels instantly became wrinkled. I turned the car over to Chuck Andrews for evaluation and, hopefully, repair. The options were to a) locate another unrusted 99 2-door body and transfer all the race parts to it, or b) find a useable roof, rear quarters and doors and fix the current chassis. Fortunately, Rob Walden at Scandia Autosports in Seattle had a '79 99 2-door that he was about to send to the crusher. The body was in good shape, but he had removed the drivetrain for another car. He offered to cut off the parts I needed and drop them off at Andrews when he made a trip east with the Saab 900 he and Sam Bryan were running in the SCCA PRO Rally series. Unfortunately, that arrangement didn't take place until after the '94 racing season was nearly over.

The 99 was left at Andrews over the winter so their body shop could work on it during slack times. In addition to the above mentioned body repairs, dents were taken out of the front fenders and hood, and the entire car was given a paint job, in Alabaster Yellow, of course. It wasn't until early Spring that the repairs were complete. I picked the car up on April 25th.

Since the 99 was still pretty much stock - a replacement of the exhaust system was all that was needed to make it street legal - I knew that it could possibly be used for forms of competition other than IT. A look at the Land O' Lakes Region schedule of events revealed four diverse types of competition in only four weekends: A Divisional PRO Rally, a Double Regional race at Brainerd International Raceway, a National Road Rally, a Regional Solo II and all within 150 miles of home. With minor changes, the Saab could run all four! The period covered only four weeks, from May 13th to June 10th, 1995. That gave me only a couple of weeks to get the car ready for the first event.

CHAPTER ONE

INTO THE WOODS!

It's been a long time since the name "Eric Carlson" has been seen on the side of a Saab rally car in active competition. Any Saab owner who knows the history of the

marque knows it was Swedish driver Erik Carlsson who put Saab in the record books during the late 1950s and early 1960s with wins at such prestigious events as the British RAC Rally and the Monte Carlo Rally driving the 850cc Saab 96.

But you may have noticed a discrepancy in spelling. Eric does not equal Erik, Carlson does not equal Carlsson, and the name was on the co-driver's door, not the driver's door.

The driver was your humble author, and the co-driver was, indeed, named Eric Carlson. He was a recent transplant to Duluth and had co-driving experience in a very quick Plymouth Arrow. The event was not an international caliber marathon rally, but a four-hour bash through the woods of Northern Minnesota called the Headwaters Divisional PRO Rally. The rally got its name from its proximity to the source of the Mississippi River.

Modifications to the car included the addition of Cibie quartz halogen headlights (cheap non-functional headlights fill the headlight buckets for racing) and Cibie 175 auxiliary driving lights, an extra set of safety belts (borrowed from another IT race car), a skid plate to protect the transmission and suspension, an ALFA Pro electronic odometer/clock (to confirm mileages given in the course directions), and four 185SR15 Hakkapeliitta mud-and-snow tires. The most difficult task was welding some bracing to the roll cage required under PRO Rally rules. Licensing wasn't a problem since I had once held a National PRO Rally license. But it would be the first PRO Rally I had driven since the 1981 100 Acre Wood National PRO Rally in Missouri.

Though the required changes were not terribly difficult to arrange, the 99 would be giving up plenty as a PRO Rally ride. It still had the stock engine with over 130,000 miles on it. The street exhaust, though more open than stock, was more restrictive - and much quieter - than that of all the other rally cars. The suspension was unchanged from the racing setup so it still had the stiffer, shorter springs with anti-roll bars. Most important, I had been warned by the guys at Andrews' body shop and by my crew chief/spouse equivalent, Diane, not to damage the car!

As we headed to the first stage, I warned Eric that I would be driving very conservatively. We were out to finish, not to win. And with an inch of rain the previous day, the normally fun sandy roads of the Paul Bunyan State Forest were treacherously slimy.

The only problem we encountered was with the ALFA Pro electronic odometer. It



Rick Corwine photos

lost power on the first stage and we had to guess where the instructions occurred. On a PRO Rally, this usually isn't terribly difficult if the instruction is to advise the rally teams of a curve or a sideroad. If the instruction is to warn of a hazard, however, the odometer is more important so the driver can keep pushing until just prior to the mileage for the hazard. Near the end of the stage, the ALFA began working again and we didn't have any further trouble with it, though the possibility of it quitting again was a concern.

The roads in the Paul Bunyan State Forest are great for rallies; lots of tight curves and short hills with minimal straightaways. Most of the time I kept the Saab in second gear, able to get only to 35 or 40 miles an hour between corners. There were a few straights where I could get up to third gear, but very few. I drove my conservative race, allowing several faster but lower seeded (i.e., less experienced) competitors to pass. I figured that some would succumb to the slippery conditions and we would probably finish mid-pack due to attrition. I was right. We passed several that had slid off the muddy roads, most with no damage other than to egos.

We finished third in the Under 2-liter class out of five cars, and eighth overall of fourteen starters. The only damage was to the underside of the car where a football sized rock had dented the muffler.

CHAPTER TWO THE REAL TEST

Before the 99 race car could take to the track again, the PRO Rally gear had to be removed. That was the easy part, but still took a full evening. There were plenty of



other jobs that needed to be done, most relatively minor, but many time consuming. Virtually every evening and the one available weekend were consumed in making sure the 99 was ready for its return to the 3-mile road course at Brainerd International Raceway.

Rule changes mandated some work: a new safety harness and window net, and "metal or metal-braided fuel line where it passes through the passenger compartment." That was solved by replacing the stock plastic fuel hose with 1/4-inch brake line, grafted to the stock hose at the fuel tank and in the engine compartment. Brake line must be able to withstand over a thousand pounds of pressure, while fuel pressures in the Bosch CIS are only 70 to 80 p.s.i.

Another problem area was to devise a shield for the stock fuel filler. Despite the fact that the car met all the requirements in the SCCA General Competition Rules (GCR) and the Improved Touring Category Specifications (ITCS), tech inspectors were concerned that the reinforced rubber hose to the fuel tank could tear open in case of an impact to the left rear quarter panel. They requested a metal bulkhead, but didn't have any better recommendations. Due to the number of small gaps, a flat aluminum sheet across the back seat opening would not be



completely effective. Instead, we encased the filler neck in a piece of flexible exhaust pipe. A fuel cell would be a better solution, and one is in the future plans.

I wanted to replace the seat mounting as the mount that was on the racing seat when I purchased it (used) was designed for a Jeep pickup. Though it bolted to the floor of the Saab, it tilted the seat assembly to the left. An evening of cutting, welding, drilling, fitting and painting and the seat was one with the floor.

Lest you think I tackled all of these jobs myself, I should give plenty of credit to my crew: Of course there is my spouse equivalent, Diane Sargent, who is quite willing to get her hands dirty on a car. Then there are the Page's, Dan Sr. and Dan Jr., plus Junior's intimate associate, Linda. Junior works for Tires Plus, a chain of retail tire stores in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and spent three years working for Archer Brothers race team. Senior has built several race cars for the ice and for SCCA racing, and currently works for a recreational vehicle shop. It was this latter connection which led to the tow vehicle to take us to Brainerd - a 33-foot Allegro motor home. The combination of that plus a

freshly repaired and painted race car led many to wonder whether I had recently come into a sudden influx of dollars. Reality was exactly the opposite.

Another advantage our race team has is that it is not a solitary effort, but rather part of a group of IT racers that camps together at the track and shares meals, crew people and some tools. There are six Improved Touring cars from the Duluth area, plus another three IT cars from the Minneapolis area who camp next to us. We call ourselves the Duluth Area Motorsports Network - Improved Touring, or "DAMN-IT."

The event was held over the three-day Memorial Day weekend. Saturday was a driver's school, Sunday and Monday were two regional races. That meant we didn't take to the track until Sunday morning. There were still some final touches to do on the car, so the crew and I finished up on Saturday at the track.

Sunday morning began with a light rain and a threat of day-long showers. The car went through tech inspection with no difficulty. The usual final preparations - check air in the tires, fluid levels, torque the wheels one last time - and the 99 was on the track for the practice session. A few laps to make sure everything felt good and into the pits to check tire temperatures.

Qualifying was more of the same: See how the car felt under braking for turn 3, the 120 degree right-hander, the hardest corner on brakes at this track. The cars are being brought down from top speed after going flat out down the long straightaway, through the banked turn 1 and flat turn 2. The 99, due to its front-wheel drive layout, is a little nose

heavy and the rear end gets very light under braking. With braking and turning - especially thanks to Saab's diagonal braking system - the right rear wheel locks up and billows tire smoke. At times, the car begins to sway and it takes much corrective action to keep from sliding off the course. With four-wheel disc brakes, the 99 theoretically has an advantage over the other cars in the class, most of which have the more standard front disc, rear drum braking setup. But due to the rear lockup, I am being very cautious, moving the braking point up and giving most other drivers the advantage on turn 3.

I have also slowed for the turn 7/8 esses. The left turn into 7 can be done without lifting, then brake for the right hand turn 8, very crucial for a good entry into turn 9 and onto the back straightaway. I let up a bit for 7, braking a little harder for 8 and giving up some time to my competition. It is this corner combination where the 99 has ended up with a wrinkled roof the past two Memorial Day weekends. I'll take it slow, learn the corner at slower speed and work my way up. That way the car spends less time in the body shop and I still have a car to go racing.

The true measure of progress with a race car is the lap times. My fastest lap during the 1993 season came during a 55 minute enduro on Labor Day weekend when the 99 recorded a time of 2:14.887. That was still nearly 9 seconds above the track record in ITB. I shaved a couple of hundredths off that in qualifying prior to the 1994 rollover. The car never made the race as it went off backwards in turn 8 and caught a small drainage ditch sideways, tossing the car into the air and doing considerable damage to the roof and rear quarter panels.

I took it easy during the qualifying session, reasoning it was better to finish a couple of races and get the experience than to push it and risk the opportunity, as well as the new bodywork. I qualified with a 2:17.850, tenth among the 13 ITB cars entered. One car didn't start the race and a couple of others dropped off the pace, but I was able to get ahead of a couple of VW Rabbits and finished 7th in class. The best part was a personal best lap time of 2:13.593, another second off my previous quick lap. That time was only 4.33 seconds off the fast lap of the class winner, DAMN-IT teammate Harry Goldfine in a Plymouth Fire Arrow.

After the race the Dan and Dan informed me that the car was going on a diet and they would be trying to improve aerodynamics a little. Weather stripping between the body and hood was removed to

allow air to flow better through the grill and engine compartment. The trunk weather strip was also taken out so air had a release from the trunk area. The holes provided in the air dam for an oil cooler or brake cooling were taped over as the car had no oil cooler (oil temp ran about 250 to 260 degrees), and front brakes didn't seem to be a problem. The car had weighed in at 2422 pounds, well above the rulebook minimum of 2360 pounds for the 99. Anything that resembled excess weight, down to the bolts for the old seat belts, was also removed.

The second regional race on Monday was in much nicer and warmer weather. Everyone was a little faster, and, though I was a bit more confident than I had been on Sunday, I continued to take it easy through the tough turns. It also looked as though the car had picked up some speed on the straightaway. Where I had previously been able to turn only about 5800 rpm in top gear, the tach now touched 6200 rpm entering turn 1. The quickest qualifying lap was 2:14.433, good for 9th among the 13 ITB cars. Three of those were immediately ahead of me on the grid and within a second. Three more were immediately behind and within a second. It could be a very tight race within that group of seven ITB cars. After the session, the 99 weighed in at 2386 pounds.

The race did not go quite so well. I stayed to the outside on the first lap, immediately behind the ITB VW GTI that was ahead of me on the outside row, but someone several cars ahead was either having trouble getting up to speed or was being overly cautious. All the cars to the inside whizzed past and by turn 3, I was in last place. I was able to pick off a couple of ITC cars and one ITB Golf, but there was an ITC Datsun 210 driver who blocked me every time I attempted to pass. The 210 seemed to have more torque out of the corners, but the 99 had a higher top speed on the long BIR straightaway. I could pull alongside by the end of the straight, but he would always drop down to the inside of turn 1 as if he didn't know I was there. Not wanting to rub fenders at over 100 mph, I would lift and give him the line. Though I did manage one lap in the 2:15 range, most were in the 2:17s as he held me up. After a few laps of this frustration, I decided that I had learned what I wanted to learn over the weekend, the car was still in one piece and I would be classified as a finisher. With six laps to go, I was too far behind the next ITB car to catch up before the checkered flag. I pulled into the pits and out of the race.

Most importantly, the crew and I learned some things about the car: We know that we can still remove some weight, and the sound deadening and undercoating are the logical places to start. Re-plumbing the brakes to eliminate the diagonal braking system and the addition of a brake bias adjustment would help with the rear lockup problem. A fresh, balanced engine would be ready prior to the next race, so more torque should be possible coming out of the corners. On the recommendation of Jack Baxter, another ITB 99 racer, shimming the steering rack should eliminate (or at least reduce) bump steer, the unsettled condition noticed under hard braking.

CHAPTER 3 GOIN' SOLO

It has been many years since I have run an autocross - or as SCCA calls it, a Solo II - and this was the first one put on by the local sports car club in several years. It was part of the Land O' Lakes Region championship series and my younger brother is chair of the series this season, so I felt an obligation to participate. Besides, maybe I'd learn something on the tight parking lot circuit that I can't on the high speed race course.

The only thing that really needed to be done to ready the 99 for an autocross was to put on the street exhaust. In addition, the window net and door bar were removed for ease of access. The car was still licensed and insured for street use.

It was only a couple of miles from the house to the local college where the Solo II was being staged, so I left the race tires on the car. Though the race tires are DOT legal, the rubber compound is so soft that if used on the street they'd probably only last a few thousand miles.

Only two other cars are entered in my class, D-Street Prepared. One, an MGB, has been used in solo events for several years and is well sorted. The other is a Fiat X-1/9, not quite as prepared but with a driver who has been competing in autocrosses much more recently than I have. I figure I'll be lucky if I can even close in on their times.

With a small field and a small course, each driver got plenty of track time; three or four practice runs in the morning and nine timed runs in the afternoon. As I expected, the MG driver set a very quick time on his first run; 30.676 seconds to my 33.292, but I hit a pylon which added another two seconds to my total. The Fiat was only 0.35 seconds quicker, so maybe there was a chance of



catching him. Unfortunately, he trimmed over a second on his next run, while I managed only 2/10ths of a second. All three of us continued to shave hundredths and thousandths of a second from our times, but in the end, experience showed. The MGB set its quickest time on the final run, a 29.379; the Fiat came in at 31.054, while I got down to 31.970.

After the official timed runs, I let my brother take the 99 for a few runs, offering to buy the beer if he could beat my best time. I fully expected he would, as he runs autocrosses nearly every weekend in a tired Mazda GLC. It took three runs, but he did it. His quick time of 31.519 was still not fast enough to move the Saab up in class.

Part of my reason for letting him drive was to watch how the car took the tight corners, and it was a revelation. The course was clockwise, so most of the turns were right-handers. In most of those right turns, the right rear wheel lifted off the ground. Though the Saab's chassis seemed to have less flex thanks to the rollcage, it appeared the front springs were not up to the rigors of hard cornering. Maybe stiffer front springs would improve the racetrack handling as well and reduce or eliminate the rear brake lockup problem. It's worth further investigation.

CHAPTER 4 THE EASY PART

Road rallying is probably the easiest form of motorsport to get into. It is best described as a drive through the countryside, but with a set of instructions to be followed. The easiest of road rallies are the tours, where the only purpose is to follow the instructions to stay on course and on time.

While rallying may be easy on the car, on a national level it requires a high level of concentration and skill. The Chippewa Trail National Road Rally celebrated its 30th Anniversary this year, though there were a few years when the event was not put on. My first experience with "The Chip" was in 1970, when I worked a checkpoint. Jim Putnam and I first ran the rally in 1976 in his Toyota Corolla, and were on our way to a

class win when we missed a sign late in the event and dropped to 3rd.

Preparation included re-installation of the Cibic halogen headlights and 195/60x15 street tires, as well as a spare tire and jack. The stock driver's seat was reinstated as the race seat is not very padded and can become quite uncomfortable on longer drives. The stock speedometer/odometer didn't work so the ALFA Pro electronic rally odometer/clock was again installed. If the ALFA failed as it had on the Headwaters PRO Rally there would be no way of measuring distance, but as a backup I printed out a chart that gave theoretical road speed based on engine speed, gearbox ratios and tire size.

The only real problem was in the steering: The front end alignment had been set up for racing with lots of negative camber. While that produces better handling in high speed turns, at low speed or stopped, with no power assist, the steering takes plenty of muscle. It was particularly noticeable on twisty uphill sections where the speed ranged from 20 to 35 mph.

There were a total of 32 cars entered in the Chippewa Trail, competing for points in the National Course Rally Championship (traps), the National Touring Rally Championship (non-trap), Regional Course or Touring rally, and the Great Northern Historic Rally Championship (GNHRC) for vintage cars. Diane and I normally run in the Limited Equipment category (Class L) in Touring rallies. Equipment is limited to an electronic odometer and clock, with a hand held calculator. There can be no direct interface between the odometer and calculator which computes whether the car is early or late. The interface must be human, which of course means the chance of error that a computer would not make. In reality, an expert Class L rally team can earn scores equal with a computer. Most teams chose the computer route simply because it's easier - the navigator sets the speed and only has to throw a switch at the proper moment.

Diane and I both have plenty of experience at navigating, the more important job on a rally, but she's a little more consistent than I am, while I have learned the art of keeping the car at a constant speed to maintain "on time." Consequently she navigates, I drive.

There was only one team registered for Class L on the National Touring Rally, so we signed up there, realizing the worst we could do would be second in class. The other team, Dave Jameson and Karl Broberg, run plenty of national rallies each year and can compete

with the computer teams. Only a few weeks earlier, they had won a National Touring Rally overall, beating all the computer equipped teams. Although we had one of our best rallies ever, a total of 83 points over 24 controls, there were several controls where we were a bit sloppy. Our goal was to tally less than 50 points for the event. Even that wouldn't have been near enough as Jameson and Broberg ended up winning the class and taking second overall with only 14 points! We finished in sixth place overall on the National Tour, ahead of a couple former National champions who must have had a really bad day.

We did better against those entered in the Regional Tour. Ed Solstad and Pat Stanley, a couple that we compete against in many local rallies, collected 117 points. In the GNHRC class, Lynn Anderson and Lois Bjelke in a 1963 Buick Riviera tallied 195. Though we were not technically entered in either of those categories, we were given first place trophies for having a better score than the winners of both. Though the 99 is only 16 years old, the model was in production twenty years ago, a concession by the GNHRC rulesmakers to life in the snow belt where few cars last beyond ten years. One more pair of beer mug trophies for the cupboard, to be brought out for special occasions only.

CHAPTER 5

THE REST OF THE STORY

While the Second Banana did not do overly well at any one of the four types of motorsport, a little tweaking could have improved the results in any of the speed contests. The 130,000+ mile drivetrain certainly was in need of replacement, as we discovered in the weeks following the intense month of competition. Though the engine still ran strong, the transmission probably would not have lasted another race.

With Mark Strohm of Foreign Affairs acting as consultant, I had rebuilt a 4-speed transmission for the car over the winter. He had started work on an engine for the Saab a couple of years prior but had never finished it, so his wife Deb and 11-year-old daughter Laurel, with advice from Mark, completed the engine.

One problem we ran into was in trying to change the jackshaft - the shaft that drives the water pump, distributor and oil pump - from the later 12-tooth gears to the earlier and stronger 8-tooth gears. The pin for the 8-tooth distributor gear is a different size from

the 12-tooth pin and an evening was lost trying to drill the hardened steel of the earlier gear. Eventually it took a machine shop - who had to special order the correct drill bit - to make the proper sized hole. Myriad small problems occupied too many hours and time was getting short.

The rebuilt drivetrain was installed and the new engine fired up on the Friday afternoon before the Far North Sprints, an Improved Touring/Showroom Stock race at Brainerd held as a support event to the American Speed Association stock car race in late June.

The steering rack shims and brake bias switch had been installed during the previous weeks as well. The shims were nothing more than 1/4-inch steel plate with holes drilled in it to drop the steering rack a little. When the shorter springs were installed in the car, the steering arm geometry changed which resulted in a bump steer condition and made the 99 difficult to manage especially in tight corners. Shimming the rack offsets the angles created when the car is lowered.

The brake bias adjustment is a simple valve that regulates the amount of fluid in the brake lines. Instead of the dual-diagonal brake system, the lines to the front calipers were joined with a tee fitting in the stock location on the firewall. The brake lines to the rear were likewise joined with a tee fitting, but in the back seat area, with a single brake line from the master cylinder to the brake bias adjuster located next to the driver's seat, and a continuation of the single line to the tee fitting. The system was flushed with ATE Super Blue Racing Brake Fluid which has a higher boiling point than most DOT 4 brake fluids.

In order to help break in the new engine before the race, Diane drove the 99 to the racetrack, a little over 100 miles. I followed in the tow vehicle (the ex-ambulance written up in NINES #226). The racing exhaust was installed on the 99 upon arrival at the track.

The changes did make the car quicker in lap times. Most noticeable was the change in steering. Where the 99 had previously been a handful in tighter corners, it now drove as though on rails. I could steer it through corners instead of muscling it. The brake bias change gave a much more solid feel to the brake pedal, and the rear brakes did perform better, though there was still occasional lockup of the right rear tire coming into turn three. Lap times dropped consistently into the 2:13s with one down to 2:12.894. The newness of the engine was also apparent as the straightline speed was actually less than



with the old engine, topping out at about 5,800 rpm. Once the new engine is fully broken in, lap times should fall even further.

The final outing for the Second Banana in the 1995 racing season was over the Labor Day weekend, again at BIR. This time there was to be a 55-minute enduro for IT and SS cars on Sunday with a 30-minute qualifying race on Saturday, and a 12-lap regional race on Monday. Very few changes were made to the 99 from the June race -- a change of oil and filter, a set of new injectors and an adjustment of the air-fuel mixture.

There were surprisingly few IT cars entered, ITB making up a good portion with 7 entries. In Saturday's qualifier, I started from the back of the pack and ended up 5th in ITB. Fast lap was 2:13.255, 6.2 seconds slower than the class winner's quickest lap.

Sunday's race went smoother. The only challenge came from an ITC VW Scirocco that caught and passed me, and we were able to dice a bit, including some bumper-to-bumper drafting down the long Brainerd straightaway, until his clutch started to slip and he dropped back. Again the Saab was 5th in class, but with a fast lap of 2:12.910; only 4.5 seconds behind the winner's fast lap.

The Monday race looked more promising. The 99 qualified amidst a group of ITB cars, all within a second on their lap times. By the fifth lap I was again 5th in class, but this time the 3rd and 4th place cars were only a few seconds ahead and I started to close the gap. That's when the water temp gauge began creeping up. Rather than wreck the new engine, I backed off and kept an eye on the gauge and on the oil temp gauge which showed about 270 degrees F (acceptable when the outside temp is 90F and there is no oil cooler). I was able to stay ahead of the next ITB car, a normally faster Toyota Corolla, until the final lap when the temp gauge pegged. The culprit was a leaky radiator, caused by a rock tossed up by another car. The result was 7th out of 8 in

ITB, still ahead of an Opel that had spun off the track during the race. On the plus side, I turned a fast lap of 2:12.233, a 2.6 second improvement over the quickest lap from previous years, and came home from a season of racing with no dents in the bodywork!

ÉPILOGUE

You may not think of mid-pack racing as a successful season, but considering that the 99 gives up several hundred pounds of weight to most cars in the class, I think it is developing well. After the frustrations of the first race weekend, the car has progressed. The Saab is not near prepped to the limits of the class as some of the front runners are, and it was raced only three weekends this year. Before the first race next year, there is plenty of tweaking that can be done, but much of the heavy work is finished. There is still sound deadening to be removed, a fuel cell and oil cooler added, try slightly stiffer springs up front, and I plan to experiment with transmission final drive ratios. In addition, the driver needs a bit of work with bravery in a couple of places at BIR, and experience at different race tracks certainly couldn't hurt.

The Second Banana will now become a single purpose vehicle, in Improved Touring. It's too much work trying to keep it up for more than one form of competition. There is, however, some discussion with the crew chief that it should become a full-time Divisional PRO Rally car or ice racer instead. Or I might sell it to concentrate on building and driving the SAAB 93F vintage racer. Maybe after a few more seasons of IT....

Tim Winker

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It's a small Class M planet after all...

The engineering of Saab cars fascinates many Saab owners. The aircraft background gives us bragging rights unknown to most other marques (though it can be argued that Rolls Royce, BMW and Mitsubishi have aircraft heritage, I suppose). Many Saab buyers make their living in computer or technology related fields.

It is with this in mind that I began to wonder how many Saab owners are also fans of science fiction. The question arose while several of my drinkin' buddies and I were sittin' at a local bar, drinkin' Leinenkugels and watching Star Trek: Voyager. Given their fondness for the technology of Saabs, what percentage of Saab owners watch Deep Space 9, Voyager, TekWar, Babylon 5, Space Precinct or other SciFi shows, and why?

My own interest in SciFi goes back to TV shows like Twilight Zone, Men Into Space (I even had a Men Into Space lunch box when I was in grade school), those marionette shows Super Car and Fireball, and books by Jules Verne, Ray Bradbury and Isaac Asimov. My father was an aeronautical engineer for Honeywell who worked on such projects as the gyroscope which stabilized the Vanguard satellite, guidance systems for the Polaris submarine-launched missiles, and hand controls for the Space Shuttle. Space maps and models of jet planes and rocket ships filled my childhood bedroom.

My purchase of a Saab 93 in 1969 was a result of the fascination with a car that had true (i.e. functional) aerodynamic styling, a small displacement engine, front-wheel drive and built by an aircraft company. While there have been many other cars of various makes since, few have been "normal".

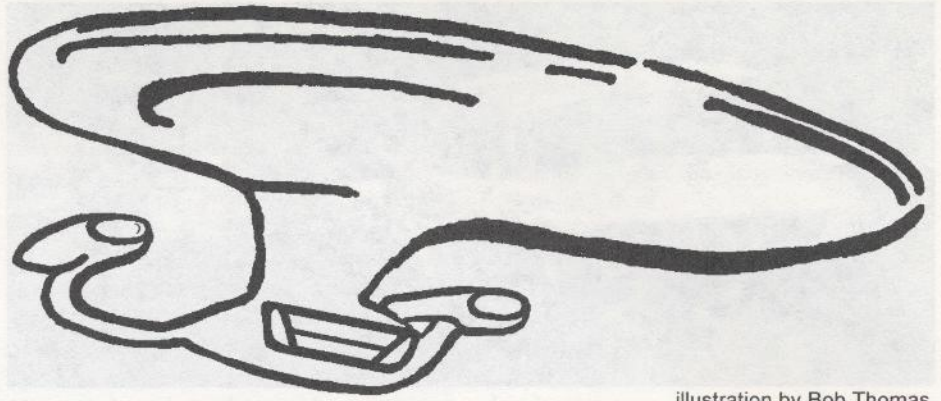


illustration by Bob Thomas

I'll admit that I have watched most of the Star Trek and Next Generation shows and do take in Voyager and Deep Space 9 on a regular basis, though I wouldn't call myself a serious Trekker. I haven't caught TekWar or Space Precinct yet. While I enjoy the computer graphics work on Babylon 5, I haven't found the writing to be as creative as the Star Trek shows.

To take this informal survey to the next step, I posted the question on CompuServe and The Saab Network. Here are some of the replies:

You'd have to ask this question of a randomly generated list of Saab owners, of course. I personally watch the Star Trek shows; I didn't like TNG when it first came out, but it grew on me. DS9 and Voyager are both part of my "regular" TV viewing (I don't watch TV that regularly, so I still miss many shows). I don't like Babylon 5 or Tek Wars...I just never got into them. I accept that they may be just as good as the Star Trek shows, but I have a prior "relationship" with Star Trek that motivates me to try it again even after I see an episode I think is dumb. :)

The responses that you get from this list are probably going to be skewed, since by asking the question on a computer email list, you've already enriched your sample with sci-fi fans. Likewise, if your friends are anything like mine (they may not be, of course!) you have a higher proportion of sci-fi fans among your friends than you'd normally find in a random sample of people.

I often find myself wondering

how many of the people that buy Saabs buy them for the reasons that we "enthusiasts" buy them. That is, are there actually people out there that think of their Saabs as merely transportation, and don't appreciate their unique style and personality? I suspect that as long as you leave those people out of your survey, you'd find that Saab owners *do* follow sci-fi TV at a higher rate; it's the desire to have extra variety in one's life and to attempt to depart from the norm (in-as-much as one could actually do that watching TV).

Pete Duniho,
<peted@microsoft.com>

Between us, my brother and I have owned eight SAABs, and neither of us watches or reads SciFi. I'm much more likely to be watching Pierre Franey on public TV or listening to the Car Guys on Public Radio — at least until Newtie gets through with public funding for such elitist stuff — and my brother would go fishing or read Dave Barry before he would turn on the tube.

Brian Bergstralh,
<CIS: 73363,331>

I'm not a Saab owner, but I do have a rock band named "The Romulans"!!!

Mike Troyer, <CIS: 73323,432>

I used to enjoy watching the original Star Trek and really enjoyed watching the movies and TNG. What I've seen of Deep Space 9 I haven't liked much. I think I would like Voyager but would you believe I haven't even seen it yet? I didn't realize until a week ago that a station

in my area was carrying it!

I've only seen B5 maybe twice and didn't really like it but, you're right, the graphics are cool. I also haven't seen Tek Wars yet.

Brian Rutter, <CIS: 73210,2331>

I think you may be on to something here, but as it relates to quality and vision.

I think that many Saab owners are into quality and are more than a bit in to the environment (at least from the standpoint of using minimal resources).

Most Sci-Fi shows portray vision of the future, and the environment with a desire to show that the "human" side eventually triumphs.

Personally, I'm into the X-files now. The quality of the show is unbelievable and if you like Sci-Fi/fantasy, it's every bit as good as the Next Generation.

I've tried Tek-Wars and B-5 a few times but they remind me of Hyundais.

Mark Dayan, <CIS: 74472,2145>

I think the real link between Saab and Star Trek is Mark Lenard. I love his voiceovers on the Saab commercials, and as Spock's father Sarek he's one of my favorite Trek characters.

Michael Mangold
<CIS: 73762,1750>

[Editor's Note: Lenard was dropped when Saab switched to the recent "Find Your Own Road" advertising campaign.]

My best friend and I are both long time Saab fanatics. I currently own 2, a 87 900T SPG, and a 72 96...he owns a 68 96.

We are also big Trek fans (I have opinions about DS9 vs. Voyager, but this is not the place)...

Anyhow, I would anticipate that most SAAB owners, even those who are not Trek "Fans" are able to appreciate Star Trek. There are a lot of similarities between the design philosophy which makes a SAAB unique (i.e. Form following function, and attention to detail, not to mention those splendid ergonomics) and the design look, and feeling emanated by all things related to Star

Trek, especially TNG.

Brian B.

<bbeaver@ix.netcom.com>

Well, I like Saabs and I enjoy Star Trek (TOS,TNG,Voyager). The inverse is not necessarily true. My roommates like Star Trek, but they aren't Saab worshippers.

The Saab Network home page will be located on a host called Warp.org which was thought up while holding the Star Trek encyclopedia. Brief thoughts of Tachyon.org were put aside.

R. Scott V. Paterson
<rsvp@warp.relay.net>

Increment your counter by 1 - I've been a Trek fan for quite a while. One question, though... where do you find a bar with Leinies AND Voyager?

I enjoy Mr. Roddenberry's vision because the shows make you think - about plot, about characters, and about current social conditions. The shows possess great internal consistency from one to the next, and from one series to the next. SAABs seem to share these attributes. I appreciate their thoughtful design, and their consistency in feel and innovation from one series of cars to the next. Plus, like the shows, they're FUN!

Doug Shelton
<TigerDog@aol.com>
Oakland, CA

OFFICIAL STARFLEET COMMUNIQUE
CLASSIFIED:

Alert to presence of another Trekkie. Drives two Saabs; both are Turbos. Suspected origin: MAUSAEarth Federation. Potentially aggressive: active club member.

Betsy J Todd
Methuen MA

"Saab Trekkers" in Dutch means "Saab tractors." I had never seen a Saab tractor, so thought I'd see what you were talking about!

Unknown

[Editor's Note: Consequently "Volvo Trekkers" would make perfect sense.]

I'm of an age where I watched all the original Star Trek episodes. I

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could tell which episode it was after seeing just a few seconds :-}

I struggled mightily to watch Star Trek The Next Generation but twin boys put an end to that. (Diapers - They're not a job, they're a dooty.)

TV is pretty much in the past for me, although I did see one episode of X-Files.

Watch your assumptions. I don't have a fondness "for the technology of Saabs". I have a fondness (my wife says bordering on religious fervor ;-} for the efficacy of Saabs.

Mick <gmiller@bostech.com>
84 900, 207k mi., original clutch

I'm crazy about SAABs, and really into technology, but for some reason the entire Star Trek genre of shows have never really interested me.

Mike Vande Weghe
Cambridge MA

I never made any connection between being a SAAB owner and watching Star Trek shows, but since you mentioned it.... Somehow it makes sense to me, the appreciation

of a well thought out product.

Which makes me wonder, does any of the cast drive SAAB's? Any famous people you know drive a SAAB (beside's OJ's daughter)? I KNOW that S.F. 49ers coach George Siefert drives one. Another question for the club.

Mark Lennartz
<MLennartz@aol.com>

I watch most of the Sci fi stuff on TV. There's a new one called VR.5 you might enjoy.

Jim Babcock
<Babcock@po1.rb.unisys.com>
[Editor's Note: VR5 was cancelled by the Fox Network after only a few weeks on the air.]

I watch all four that you mention and can add VR.5 to the list. I used to love Max Headroom and Dr. Who, too, along with most other good SciFi shows. (And even some NOT so good shows! :-}) I guess because I enjoy science and technology, from air-planes to zoology with a major thrust in computers, I find SciFi shows

interesting. Yes, they're re-telling the same old stories we've seen from other non-SciFi shows (e.g. Bonanza), but I find them more fun this way.

Actually, I am finding myself enjoying B5 more than DS9 or Voyager. I guess it's because I have found out that the whole B5 show has been planned out over five years, with each year covering a part of the big story. Besides, B5 is a more realistic view of the future for us; aggressive and war-like.

You know, you can get this discussion to fit the group if you start to talk about fixing the Aero's warp drive. :-}

Enjoy, and check out B5 more closely!

Greg Welych
Syracuse University

There is a new show on the Fox Network for the 1995-96 season called "Space: Above and Beyond." When reduced to an acronym, it could be argued that it's aimed at SAAB fans.

Tim Winker

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Sonetts For Sale

'74 Sonett III, 60K mi, Yellow, mint original cond, was in storage for past 7 years. Photos/fax avail. \$4,700. Can rendezvous to deliver. Rex Davison, Evanson WY. 307-789-8817.

'74 Sonett III, 42K mi, Yellow, exc condition, always garaged, Saab mechanic maintained. New exhaust, tires, clutch, shocks, etc. \$3,600. Robert L. Cooper, 2115 39th St, Des Moines IA 50310. 515-986-2222 days.

'73 Sonett III, Dark Yellow, 94K mi. Always runs good, structurally sound, missing front bumper & fog lights, new exhaust system. \$850. Jon Stoewer, 4320 Douglas Dr N, Minneapolis MN 55422. 612-535-1784.

'73 Sonett III, 72K mi, Black & silver repaint. New brakes, elec fuel pump. Very good body & mechanicals, needs floor repair, some upholstery & mufflers. \$750. Mel Cameron, R1 Box 83, Windsor IL 61957. 217-459-2266.

'72 Sonett III, Good glass, good seats, 5 alloys, 30K on rebuild, rebuilt brakes. Needs: rocker panels, floor, exhaust, minor body work, paint. Parts car? Delivery negotiable. Make offer. Tim Brown, 7307 Norfield Dr, Mt Vernon IN 47620. 812-985-0702.

'71 Sonett III, Orange, 30K mi, garaged, all original except exhaust. New brakes, factory air needs repair, excellent collector car, runs great, original Pirellis. \$3,800 firm. Michael Monezis, 2204 Drayton Ave, Thousand Oaks CA 91360. 805-494-0547 PM.

'71 Sonett III, Black, eng & trans completely rebuilt 10K mi ago. Frame in very good condition, interior fair. \$2,950. Dee Rees, Durham NC 919-489-4186.

'71 Sonett III, runs, \$600. Iron River WI, 715-372-5408.

1969 Sonett II-V4. Red w/black interior. All original, great shape. \$3000 or make offer. Must sell. James Burnitt, Salt Lake City UT. 801-268-1135, fax 801-575-4409.

93s, 95s & 96s For Sale

2 SAABs for sale: '68 96 Deluxe & '72 95. Both running, sound & restorable. 15 yrs of parts: clips to doors. Everything \$3,000 firm. Ben Schawinsky, New York NY. 212-255-4698 or 413-229-3326.

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'68 96-V4 with '71 engine, newly rebuilt trans, 84K mi, pale blue w/red tweed interior, new windshield, exc cond, rust free. \$2,200. Bob or Louis Doan, Burke VA. 703-250-8969.

'69 96-V4, solid pan, UT car, CA doors, MSS carb, manifold & exhaust. Many new parts, compl overhaul of hydraulics, Deluxe dash, needs paint. Also several good & parts transmissions, parts engines & a huge pile of parts. \$2,000 obo. Robert Thatcher, 707 S Main St #3, Telford PA 18969. 215-721-1332.

'66 96. White. \$1,000 obo. Ashfield MA. 413-628-4014 after 5pm EST.

'59 93, restorable body, Free. '71 95, runs but needs rebuild, Free. Located in northeastern California. Ron Lunder, 916-256-3920.

2-Stroke & V4 Parts

2-stroke crankshaft repair, \$150. Ship UPS to: David Baugher, 9704 Lomond Dr, Manassas VA 22110. 703-556-5894.

95, 96 & 97 parts: 20 years accumulation, priced to go. Also, manuals & brochures. Send SASE for list or call. Bernie Wassertzug, 11825 Enid Dr, Potomac MD 20854-3455. 301-299-8561.

99s For Sale

'80 99, Yellow/tan, extensive restoration. 16V turbo, intercooled, 5-spd, bal/blueprinted, Recaros, roll cage, rally suspension, Euro headlights, front spoiler. Beautiful & fast. \$6,000 firm. Boe Kalinoski, Automotion, 876 Boston Rd (RT 3A), Billerica MA 01821. 508-667-5373 or 667-8134.

'78 99 Turbo, 50K mi on engine, rblt trans, turbo good, many other new parts, body fair (no big holes) Incas, air dam. \$1,000 obo. Everett McEwan, 2 Longview Dr, Chatham NY 12037. 518-392-5345.

'78 99 Turbo, Silver, 26K on engine, rebuilt tranny, Inca wheels, good body. \$325. Matt Kirsch, 536 Finley St, Durham NC 27705. 919-382-3049.

'78 99 Turbo, 115K mi, Black, rusted. Good engine, turbo, Incas, Ansa. Restore or parts. \$500 obo. Extra 99 parts. Lew Gaskell, 57 Long Meadow Rd, Bethlehem CT 06751. 203-266-5593.

'78 99 Turbo, recent paint, turbo, clutch, fuel pump, alternator, battery, shocks, heater control valve & panel, much more. Sound body, looks very good. Steve McCoy 514 W Sycamore Circle, Louisville CO 80027. 303-665-5187.

'78 99 EMS, Metallic Maroon. Body professionally restored. 100% rust free. New transmission, Carrol Shelby SAAB wheels plus original wheels. 8 yrs of maintenance records, pampered car. Asking \$2,200. Kathy Fay, 1648 Westona, Dayton OH 45410. 513-253-6247.

'74 99LE, '78 99 GLE mostly complete, rust free Arizona cars, not running, free to a good home. Ray Beckage, 7600 Hwy 180, Flagstaff AZ 86001. 520-774-7627.

Family fleet of 99s: two '69s, two '72s, '78 hatchback, '69-'80 parts & cars. '66 95 GT for restoration, 25 yr collection. Charlie Woodward, PO Box 91, Victor ID 83455. 208-787-2495.

900s For Sale

'87 900 SPG Turbo, gray, 70K mi. New brakes, exhaust. \$7,000. Keri Gray, Newburyport MA. 508-462-7074 after 6pm EST.

'87 900 Turbo, Black/Tan leather, beautiful & reliable, all options including Saab gauges and phone. 168K hwy mi, original owner, complete records. \$4,950. Paul. 401-846-8607.

9000s For Sale

'92 9000 Turbo, 5dr, 5-spd, Scarbe Green/Tan leather, 77K mi, exc cond, all options & svcs incl 4 snows on wheels. \$16,500. Patrick Sobock, 8571 Forrest St, Highlands Ranch CO 80126. 303-791-6672 days, 791-6682 eves & wknds.

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Parts & Accessories

Factory service manuals: 1975-78 99, 1978 99 Turbo, 1979-80 900 engine. Yours for shpg + cost of ad. Rod Bedayn, 49 Oakwood Rd, Orinda CA 94563. 510-254-4073.

1980 900T 5-door with H-engine (1984). Bad transmission and head, good turbo, body, etc. Make offer. Tim Robinson, 914 Indianwood Dr, Stroudsburg PA 18360. 717-620-2160.

1982 900T 3dr, Bad automatic trans, good engine, turbo, body, etc. Make offer. Tim Robinson, 914 Indianwood Dr, Stroudsburg PA 18360. 717-620-2160.

Trailer hitch for 79-86 900, removeable receiver type, \$130 obo. 3 soccerball mags, \$75 obo for all. Robert Thatcher, 707 S Main St #3, Telford PA 18969. 215-721-1332.

Parting out '85 900 Turbo, not hit, 3-spoke alloys, pwr sunroof, lower body trim OK, reasonable. Joe Henrich, 8 Walton Dr, New Hope PA 18938. 215-862-2983.

'84 Turbo 8V engine, 30K mi, in storage 9 yrs, \$500. Saab newsletters: #67 (1/79) to #227, plus misc Saab articles, \$200 or offer. Jim Walsh, 315 Leslie Ave, Brielle NJ 08730. 908-528-0753.

Saab accessories: Set wheel locks, fits 900 & 9000, \$40 obo. Cig. lighter adaptor, \$3. Trunk rubber mat, fits 9000 CSE, \$30 +P&P obo. Charles Byrd, 9935 Wellsford Cir, Indianapolis IN 46236. 317-576-7044.

For pre-94 900: 4 Vredestein 185x15 snow tires on steel rims, \$140. Thule roof rack w/ 1 bike carrier, \$95. Mike Roberts, 3459 Observatory Ave, Cincinnati OH 45208. 513-871-2917.

9000 parts: Thule roof carrier, \$80. Ski carrier, \$75. Both for \$150, excellent! Four MSW alloys w/Semperit Top Grip M&S 185/65R15 87T, 2 to 3/32" tread, \$280. Jerome Zechiel, 26 Fleet Pkwy, Culver IN 46511. 219-842-2171 after 1pm except Mon & Tue, 219-842-2668.

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'79 3dr 900 body; straight, not crashed or rusted out; all glass except windshield good. Perfect start for a ground up restoration. Must sell, \$150 obo. Jeff Rininger, Cayucos CA. 805-995-2503 eves/wknds.

Cruise electronic module, \$25. Heater resistor pack, \$15. Rebuilt clutch M/C, \$25. Front caliper kits, \$15. KYB shocks: new fronts, \$50; used rears, \$20. Dave Thomas, 5136 Hazel Rd, Edwardsville IL 62025. 618-656-5249.

900 parts: From Cherry Red '83 HB (body color 127H). Hood, \$250. Pass door, \$200. Hatch, \$200. All in excellent shape & complete. Other 900 & 99 parts available. Bernie Wassertzug, 11825 Enid Dr, Potomac MD 20854-3455. 301-299-8561.

99, 900 headliner kit, comes w/ glue, 3/4 yds and complete instructions, \$87.50. Other parts available. Trollhattan Motors, Inc. Baltimore MD. 410-682-4688 or 1-800-32-TROLL.

Parts cars: '78 99GL & EMS, Saab/Shelby alloy rims, EC; Nokia snows; starter in box; body rotted, will part out. Ken Bundy, 40538 Vrooman Hill Rd, Theresa NY 13691. 315-628-5921.

Snow tires: fit 99s & 900s thru '87. nearly new Gislaved on factory rims, 2 sets - 4 studded, 4 not. \$175/set +shpg. Jay Rowland, 5494 Arrowhead PI NE, Poulsbo WA 98370. 360-598-4770, fax 360-779-3425.

4 Saab Sport & Rally Ronal silver 8-spoke alloys w/Kleber C50H 195/60 tires, fit 99s & 900s thru '87. \$160 +shpg. Jay Rowland, 5494 Arrowhead PI NE, Poulsbo WA 98370. 360-598-4770, fax 360-779-3425.

9000 Factory shop manual, like new \$125. 4 locking lug bolts with 2 keys, \$25. Bill Hamilton, 144 Hollywood Ave, Tracy CA 95376. 209-835-7979.

4 new 3-spoke 16" alloys to fit 9000 Turbo, \$400. Judy Bones, Sunrise FL 305-846-9234.

1988-91 900T radio & EQ, exc cond, \$275. 88-90 in-dash CD player, factory refurb, \$325. Saab Anti-theft system, p/n 0246140, for 88-93 900, new in box, \$295. All incl shpg. Chris McPherson, Atlanta GA. 770-469-7222 H, 404-351-7222W.

Wanted, All Models

'93 9000 CS/CD, turbo or non-turbo. Prefer white. Records & 5-spd a must. Nick, Peapack NJ, 908-781-7362.

900 SPG, '88 to '90 with less than 80K mi, in the New England area. Kevin Godfrey, Portsmouth NH. 603-431-0622.

To fit '72 96: mudflaps, window shields, tool kit, rear window defogger, seat heating strip, fog lamps & shields, wooden steering wheel, Saab gas can, soccerball wheels. Bill South, 13101 Foster Rd, Anchorage AK 99516. 907-345-9006.

Trailer hitch for '87 2-dr. James Walsh, 315 Leslie Ave, Brielle NJ 08730. 908-528-0753.

'76 99 GLE 4dr sedan parts: Center console, alloy wheel centers (steel), power rack. New or used. David Andrews, 660 Central Ave S, Milaca MN 56353. 612-983-2743.

All NOS or "As New" parts for a 1963 95. All interior (red/grey), chrome, trim, rubber & mechanical parts considered for purchase. Bruce Turk, 333 St Andrews Rd, Walden NY 12586. 914-778-2469 eves, Fax 914-647-9778.

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Rear View

People choose a particular make and model of car for many reasons, but safety is seldom near the top of the list. It's nice to know a car has a reputation for being safe, but we never expect to have to test it. I did.

While attending the National Saab Owners Convention near Atlanta, I was given the loan of a 1987 Saab 9000 Turbo. The 9000 was a recent acquisition of S&J Automotive in Atlanta, a 130,000 mile car with an automatic to be used as the shop parts runner. It was a pretty nice car, mechanically in very good condition, but beginning to show some wear.

Tuesday after the convention, I planned to visit a couple of other Saab repair shops in the area before catching a flight home. S&J's service manager, Chris McPherson (and his future spouse Peggy Fields) had put me up for a couple of nights, and I left his suburban home about 9:00 a.m. I was waiting to make a left turn at a stop sign, with a steady line of traffic coming from my right. After a few cars had passed, I noticed a small pickup flashing its lights and slowing down. I finally realized the driver was signalling me to pull in ahead of him, but I didn't realize in time and let the break in traffic pass. A half dozen cars later, and someone again slowed and waved for me to pull in, but I shook my head and waved them on. I began to wonder if there was some strange law in Georgia that I hadn't heard about that a driver can relinquish the right-of-way by a hand gesture - a friendly one that is. A few cars later it happened again, only this time the driver stopped and waved for me to pull in ahead of him. I didn't think, I just reacted, stepping on the gas to get me into traffic. I didn't look to the left until I was in the lane and only had seconds before the impact. The only thought I had was, "I sure am glad this is a Saab!"

The other car, an '87 Olds Toronado, hit the front portion of the driver's door, pushing it in about 16 inches. I did a quick personal inventory and didn't feel anything terribly out of place, but I couldn't catch my breath. Did I break a rib? Puncture a lung? No, everything seemed to be okay, but I did have pain lower down on my left side. People started to run toward the cars asking if we were all right. I held up my hands and nodded my head, but I still couldn't breathe. After an eternity, maybe 10 seconds, I inhaled again. I knew the driver's door was useless and pulled myself across the shattered console to open the passenger door. My left side was very sore, but that seemed to be all. The armrest must have punched me in the kidney.

The other driver was not wearing her seatbelt, but fortunately received only a bruise when her head hit the visor. Despite the cushioning of the visor, the impact cracked the windshield. The police arrived, took statements, including one from a witness who was behind the driver who waved me in and collaborated my story.

A wrecker came for the Olds, while I crawled back into the Saab and drove it back to Chris' house. The driver's seat was much narrower, and the dash and center console were destroyed. Knowing the street value of an '87 9000T, I was pretty sure it would be totaled. I called Chris and he sent a flat bed to pick up the car and me.

Once at S&J, we took a closer look at the 9000. The floor pan was definitely kinked. The doors on the passenger side would open, but they didn't close squarely. Both doors on the driver's side were scrap, though the windows had not broken.

Fortunately, Jack Baxter, owner of S&J, was able to come to a reasonable settlement with his insurance company and to buy back the car as salvage. It still has a good drivetrain, and most mechanical components

still work.

The trip home on the airplane was more uncomfortable than usual due to my injury. Fortunately, the soreness in my side disappeared after a few days of taking it easy and a steady diet of ibuprofen.

Instead of borrowing the Saab, I had intended to rent a cheap mini-car, a Ford Festiva or a Hyundai, for a couple of days. I don't believe I would have fared anywhere near as well in one of those. I'll stick to the Saabs from now on.

As I mentioned in the last issue, much of the summer was spent in painting and fixing my old domicile in hopes that a new one could be located. It has, and of this writing, we are moving in. The new Saab Club HQ is a 30 acre hobby farm 25 miles from downtown Duluth. There is garage space for four or five cars, plus a 30 by 40 foot pole barn for cold storage. The house is a spacious 5 bedroom affair, with two downstairs rooms set aside for Saab Club office and storage.

The last few warm days of summer and early autumn were spent painting the old place, and there have been many days (adding up to many weeks) of packing, moving the household stuff, working on the new place, unpacking, adding electrical and telephone wiring to the new office, moving the office, moving cars, more unpacking... and occasionally squeezing in a few hours of working on this issue.

One more thing: This place needs a name. Suggestions are welcome. Something Saabish or Swedish possibly. Despite the fact that the house sits on a hill overlooking the nearby fields and forests, "Cloud Nine" is out; that's the name of Erik and Pat Moss Carlsson's farm in England.

Happy Holidays!

Tim Winker
Editor/Publisher

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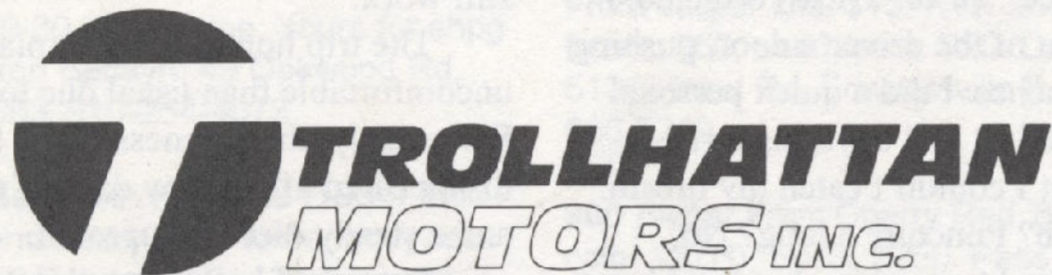
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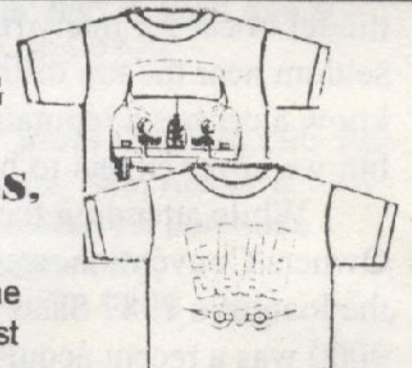
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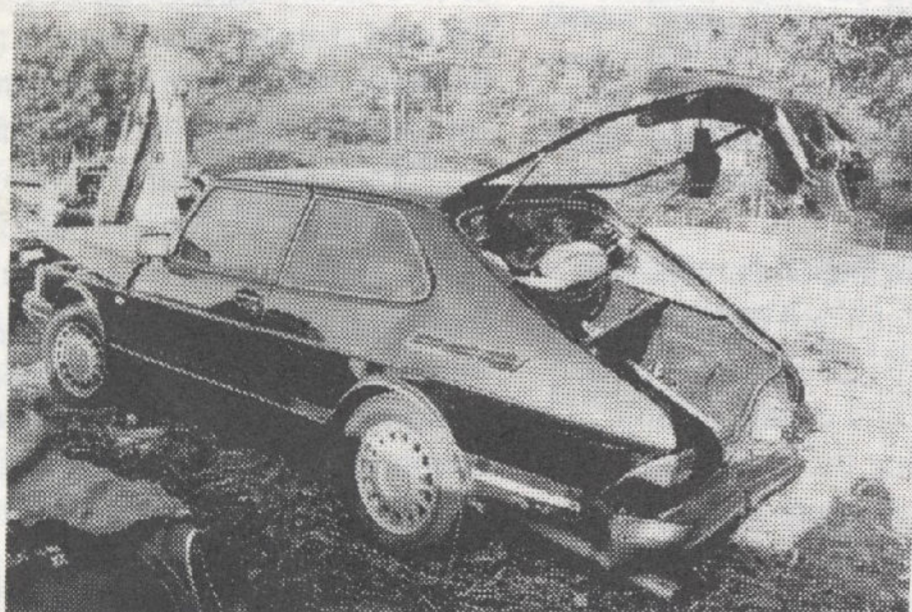


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