

#273

January/February

2005

Nines

The Saab Club Magazine



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NINES The Saab Club Magazine

(ISSN 1530-0730) issued November, 2004.

Published bimonthly by SB Productions of Port Chester, NY.

SB Productions

30 Puritan Drive
Port Chester, NY 10573-2504
Phone: 914-937-6075

E-mail the editor: nineseditor@earthlink.net
E-mail the publisher: ninespublisher@earthlink.net
Web Site: www.saabclub.com

The Saab Club is not affiliated in any way with Saab Cars USA, Inc. or Saab Automobile AB.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE is \$30.00 per year in the US. Please see the form on the inside cover wrap for complete information.

Periodicals Postage Paid Port Chester, NY and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NINES, 30 Puritan Drive, Port Chester, NY 10573-2504

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Front Cover: Gary Stottler works on a 99 transmission during the New Jersey Saab Owners' Club tech session. Story on page 36. *Photographed by Seth D. Bengelsdorf.*

Cover Wrap: The Saab Museum, as seen during John Betsill's tour during the overseas delivery of his new 9-3. Story on page 8. *Photographed by John Betsill.*

Spring is coming. Not now, but soon. New Saabs are coming as well. In January, Saab will be showing the 9-7X at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan. Not the prototype, but one of the first 9-7Xs to trundle down the assembly line. The first Saab to be built in the US of A. They will be for sale in the spring.

The 9-3 SportHatch is coming. Not in the spring, but soon. Then the second Saab/Subaru collaboration. Not in the spring of next year, but soon. Then perhaps a re-think of the first Saab/Subaru collaboration. Not real soon. Enjoy the winter!

Seth D. Bengelsdorf, Editor and Publisher

Letters

Love That Saab

When I first bought my 1992 900S I went through it as I would an aircraft. I installed a genuine Saab radiator, front and rear brakes, clutch master cylinder, tires, thermostat, antenna, as well as the usual hoses, drive belts, rotor and distributor cap, spark plugs, wires, filters and all fluids.

Even though I worked for American Honda and many magazines over the years, nothing - no new Acuras, BMWs - nothing gives me such great feelings, sounds and inputs as my beloved Saab.

George Wegner
Steamboat Springs, CO

Love Those Saab Owners

Karl Vogelheim's letter in the November/December NINES (#272) was thought provoking, and I spent time reflecting on his points. While I mostly get what he was talking about, I just can't agree

with a number of his conclusions.

Probably the main theme of Karl's letter was "enthusiasm." As it turns out, this same issue of NINES was chock-full of enthusiasm. Chuck Andrews' column was titled "Enthusiasts" and he talked about several. James Fox's reprinted speech telling the story of how he got into professional rallying was certainly inspiring. The various reports of Saab events that were lots of fun for those in attendance provide more examples of enthusiasm in action. I could find some aspect of enthusiasm on almost every page!

Like all car clubs, members have varied interests and tend to direct their enthusiasm towards them. For others, their interests are broader. Many of the local Saab club events throughout the country bring people together to share in those varied interests. Just a willingness to participate in an event or share something Saab-related indicates a level of

enthusiasm! The key is in the sharing and that's why "clubs" sprout to support that enthusiasm.

As to some of the other things Karl talked about, I can't agree with his conclusion that only the first generation 900 and older models are "real Saabs." While this kind of discussion gets more interesting when talking about the 9-2X and 9-7X, the 9000, the next generation 900, the 9-5 line and the current 9-3 line are wonderful Saabs that carry the heritage and attributes of the marque into our more modern times. And they all come out of Trollhattan.

I had to chuckle when I read Karl's comments about the 9-2X on one hand and his comments about the lack of information on getting more performance out of our cars. The advantage of the 9-2X coming from Subaru is the availability of all the tuner gear that goes with the platform the car is based on. Perhaps the perceived lack of information comes from the fact that it was

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published for the older Saabs in NINES before Karl became a subscriber. Additionally, consider that the various Saab forums on the Internet are where the information has gravitated.

With all that said, I think almost everyone would agree that more participation from the Saab community would be great - whatever that may entail. Certainly, the local and national clubs could use more help to bring about more opportunities for participation. For example, that may be the only way to get more track events like those put on by the BMW Car Club. And, we also need to expand the Saab community. If someone likes their Saab so much, for whatever reason, why don't they join the club to enhance their experience?

Perhaps it was best said in Chuck's column by Peter Backstrom, curator of the Saab Museum, when he commented that the ultimate success of Saab depends upon enthusiasts and how their enthusiasm would help sell Saab all over the world. Peter should know.

Steve Carrellas
Berkeley Heights, NJ



That's My Car!

Regarding the article in #272 November/December issue of NINES entitled "Where Saab Trolls Come From," the small picture on page 36 is of my 1973 Sonett at the Saab Owners' Convention at Crystal Mountain this past August! Parents always recognize their children.

Ray Kopcznski
Albany, OR

Ray's car in the corral at the Saab Owners' Convention, 2004. Photo by Ray Kopcznski.

Rumor mill: The next major car manufacturer to provide integration with Apple's iPod is said to be Saab! The iPod connection will be stowed in the 9-3's center console, and song selection will be available via the steering wheel controls.

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A Troubled Saab Owner

I wanted to take this opportunity to ask the membership for its input and help regarding a situation with my Saab and Saab Cars USA.

In February of 2002 I purchased a 1999 9-3 SE Convertible with only 18,000 miles. In the fall of 2003, with 31,000 miles, the car experienced a complete failure to its convertible top. If you have been reading NINES, you have no doubt seen the detailed article on how to check and top off the convertible pump oil in the 9-3. As the author stated, this procedure is not mentioned or described in the owner's manual, yet if it is not done, you end up with an expensive catastrophe, which is what befell me.

The car was returned to the purchasing dealership for service, and I immediately contacted Saab's Customer Service department regarding the untimely failure. The response from Saab was to cover parts, but not labor. Personally, I felt Saab should have covered both because it seemed apparent either poor parts or poor construction were responsible for this failure, both of which are Saab's responsibility, not mine. It wasn't until later that I found out how common top failure is due to the oil's "disappearing act."

I next contacted Ms. Kelly-Ennis to ask for her assistance. Unfortunately, her response echoed that of Saab's Customer Service. I was also informed that since the car was out of warranty, they were being extremely generous by offering me parts. While I appreciated Saab's offer of covering the cost of parts, they knew this was a widespread problem in all their convertibles, and in good faith, they should have completely covered the repair of my car, warranty or not.

I felt their response was dismissive and very poor customer service to say the least. In short, I didn't appreciate the brush-off I received from Saab Customer Service, or from Ms. Kelly-Ennis concerning this matter. This was a four year old car, with 31,000 miles. If it was twice the age, with twice the mileage, I certainly wouldn't have contacted Saab Cars for any assistance.

The following year after this incident, I discovered that my car suffered from head bolts that were under-torqued during manufacture. A bulletin with the NHTSA was issued concerning this problem. My independent Saab mechanic identified the problem, and re-torqued the bolts. He informed me of the NHTSA bulletin, and encouraged me to contact Saab for reimbursement.

Saab's response to my request read something like, "Since your mechanic provides no service to Saab, but is requesting money from Saab, we can't see how that helps Saab." Essentially, they are telling me I should have gone to the dealership, and only then might they have paid for the service. So, while they admitted the problem was caused by them during manufacture, they denied my request for payment because I chose to have it repaired at an independent shop. In my opinion, I felt that this was yet another example of poor customer service.

Since I am so entrenched in this issue, I wanted to query the membership and see their response. Am I off base asking for reimbursement of my repairs in the two situations I mentioned above?

If not, then I would humbly ask for your help in contacting Ms. Kelly-Ennis on my behalf and letting her know of your disappointment concerning my situation. I believe we have strength as a club, and we have the power to help our situation by approaching Saab Cars USA with one voice on issues such as these. Your letters or e-mails to Ms. Kelly-Ennis would not only help my situation, but help our club members with future problems.

Repairs aren't cheap, and I have done all the preventative maintenance necessary to keep my Saab healthy and trouble free. When I am faced with a repair caused by poor construction and parts, I would expect the manufacturer to step up to the plate and accept responsibility, not give me the runaround and stick me with the bill which, by the way, was close to \$1500.00 for the top repair (even after Saab covered parts), and around \$350 for the head bolt repair.

I appreciate your input and your help with this situation.

Michael Laflamme
San Francisco, CA

More 900 Upgrades Update

I'd like to answer the fellow who wonders why there are so few folks doing tweaks and upgrades to New Gens. The answer is simple—numbers. Saab didn't export many New Gens to North America, and the New Gens that came over in greater numbers were five door sedans. In 1995 alone (the year of Saabrina's birth and arrival in America) Saab exported 25,000 cars to America.

The bulk of these were New Gens (I think the 900 outsold the 9000 by something like 2 to 1) and the bulk of the 900s were five doors. Who wants to spend the time and money on a sedan? The coupes were much better looking, but in much shorter supply. And, only a small percentage of coupes came over as SEs. Most of them were base S cars. S cars are tweakable, but it's a lot harder and more expensive to do a transformation on an S than it is on an SE.

I think I once heard someone say that there were only a few thousand (less than 5,000) coupes sent to America in 1995 alone. Now, if you look at the classic 900, the ratio of coupes to sedans is just the opposite. For every sedan sold, there were at least 3 coupes. (It probably helped that the C900 sedan was dog-ugly).

My advice to anyone who owns a New Gen coupe is guard it with your life if you love it, because there aren't too many copies around!! (As I type this, Saabrina is sleeping under a cover, semi-retired for the winter.)

Linnea Krajewski
Newton, NH

Read more on Linnea's brood on page 34.



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Sometimes we get letters with news we would rather not hear. The following came to our desk in the place of a renewal:

Daniel Pepelko died of brain cancer on September 5, 2004 at age 31. He was a Saab enthusiast to the end.

Our thought and prayers are with Daniel's family and friends.

Submissions to Letters are always gratefully accepted! Make sure you include your name and address. Letters may be edited for content and length. Send them to:

Seth D. Bengelsdorf

Editor

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I recently reread a 20 year old issue of the Saab Club Newsletter #127. At that time, the editor and publisher was Jeff Delahorne from Duluth, Minnesota. On the front page was a picture of a new model of Saab, with an accompanying article, which in part, I will quote, titled *NEW SAAB 9000 UNVEILED DUE HERE IN '86 KOLMARDEN, Sweden, May 25 - - Saab-Scania AB of Sweden today unveiled the Saab 9000, an entirely new model that will further strengthen Saab's position in the upper segment of the European sedan market.*

The Saab 9000 is a high-performance, well-appointed large car, with a five-door hatchback body. It will be available this fall in Scandinavia, and during the 1986 model year in the United States.

Saab's new model is powered by the third generation Saab Turbo engine, with four valves per cylinder, double overhead camshaft and intercooler. The transversely - mounted engine powers the front wheels through a newly designed five-speed transmission. The Saab 9000 has a top speed of 137 mph, and can travel from 0-100 kph (62.1 mph) in 8.3 seconds.

The 9000 is a logical extension of the Saab model lineup, which also includes the 900 series in the United States.

"By producing cars that cover a broader range, but within the market segment in which we are well established, we can face the future with confidence", said Sten Wenlo, Managing Director of the Saab Car Division. "With the Saab 9000, we are ready for the 1990s."

The article goes on to talk about the "joy of driving," "the relationship between the car and it's driver," "exceptional road-holding" and "timeless styling".

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In my opinion, the 9000 met and even exceeded those long - held Saab design criteria, as many NINES' readers already know.

In the same issue, there is a letter/article by a member from Wyoming who mentioned the poor quality of the Saab jack and what he did to remedy the situation. He bought a better quality scissors jack from Sears and added the top of the OEM Saab jack to it by welding and drilling. That letter brought back a memory of my Colorado dealer's experience.

Starting in 1968, Saab supplied a nice heavy-duty scissors jack, blue or turquoise in color, along with a nice handle/crank. Ten years later or so, the handle/crank attachment on the jack was changed from a heavy ring to a tube with a "slot" in it, and the handle/crank was made from thinner stock. These jacks were black in color. The "improved" handle/crank attachment would frequently nearly twist off when used. We solved the problem at our dealership by cutting off the tube and welding on an eyebolt that could take the strain, in other words, backdating the design. The later gray-colored jacks went back to a "ring type" design.

Bruce Harbison is currently a board member of SCNA and Communications Director of the Rocky Mountain Saab Club. Bruce has been involved with Saabs since 1971.

IDS Number Four

The Great Paperwork Snafu

The Memsahib and I just returned from our fourth overseas delivery of a Saab on the International & Diplomat Sales program (October 2004). Our adventures to get Deborah's two 900Ss were documented in NINES issues 153 (Nov '86) and 232 (Dec '96). I failed to report on the 1998 trip to get my '99 9-3 convertible. That trip was fine except for the speed trap in Norway, but I digress.

One of the big draws to the IDS delivery program is touring Europe in your own car. This time we barely got a chance to do it. It seems the registration paper Deb signed before we left didn't make it to the factory in Trollhattan. The power-of-attorney paper did, though, so Saab could handle shipment home, but not the application for the Swedish export plates needed to drive in Europe. Go figure. Deb signed new paper on the spot, but the plates - which are made in Germany - wouldn't be ready for another week. What to do?

The IDS Delivery Supervisor, Monica Pettersson, did all she could to alleviate the problem. She arranged for a 9-3 Linear rental - at Saab's expense - from the Avis outlet at the Saab ANA Trollhattan dealership, where the IDS delivery center is now located. We could then continue on our planned itinerary, but cut it short to return to Trollhattan and pick up Deb's new 2005 9-3 Arc before heading home. That worked, but we put less than 140 miles on the new car in the day or so we had it. That's an order of magnitude less than we have driven our cars on past trips.

Saab had a taxi meet us at the Gothenburg airport and take us to the Park Inn Ronnums Herrgard. It's a comfortable country hotel that

dates from 1730 in the village of Vargön, practically within sight of the Saab plant. Saab paid for the first night, with dinner, but we stayed an additional night. We had planned to tour the Saab Bilmuseum and the factory before striking out on the road, but only the museum was available. The factory tour was booked solid, but Monica did manage to get us in upon our return the following week after getting the Arc. We stayed two more nights at Ronnum Manor on the return, and Saab again paid for one night, thanks to Ms. Pettersson.

Saab also provides \$2,000 travel assistance after you pay for the car in the States. (Full payment is due

additional fee, and prepay for your entire stay rather than just guarantee the first night with a credit card. They agreed to the latter approach when I suggested canceling our reservations.

We piled into the rental Linear and journeyed up Highway 45 to Fryksas, a village just west of Orsa on the northern shore of Orsasjön. Being at the end of the season, we were the only guests that night in the Fryksas Hotell & Gestgifveri. It's a rustic hotel set among wooden cabins originally used by farmers from the lower valley while grazing their herds on the mountain. We were treated to great views and an excellent dinner.



John's Saab At Smögen. Photo by the author.

30 days before delivery.) This is in lieu of their previous policy of making airline arrangements for you and, if requested, arranging for discounted accommodations with the Countryside Hotels group. Countryside no longer gives discounts to IDS customers, but we still made use of the Countryside brochure that Saab included in the IDS package and selected three hotels in the places we planned to visit. Be advised that the Countryside booking office will try to have you buy "vouchers," for an

From there we drove through forested country to Bräcke on the E 14 between Ostersund and Sundsvall, and stayed three nights in the Björknäsgården Hotel on the shore of a nearby lake. There were beautiful sunsets, walks along the lake and country lanes, and of course, great Swedish cuisine. The leaves changing color made it particularly scenic. This was the most relaxing part of the trip. We had planned six nights there, but this is where we had to adjust our

trip and head back south towards Trollhattan.

Our next stay was at the Ländsmansgarden Hotel just north of Sunne. The manor's first owner is listed in records from 1540, and it later became the home of the local sheriff by royal decree. We had a charming suite in a separate building, but chose to investigate the cuisine at the China Palace in Sunne for a change of pace. Here as in Bräcke we refueled the Linear but again were confronted by the Swedish PIN requirements for credit cards. Pay-at-the-pump was not possible, so we had to find pay-inside stations where the system could be overridden for us PIN-less Yanks. By the way, gas was about \$5.50 per US gallon.

Back in Trollhattan we picked up Deb's car a week and a day after the scheduled delivery. The plates were brought over from the factory and installed while we shopped the parts department at the dealership for some duty-free accoutrements. The list included a full-size steel wheel to make a real spare, a rubber trunk mat, trunk cargo box, cargo net, phone mount, touch-up paint, and the requisite mud flaps, front and rear (it's a Saab, isn't it?).

The trunk mat stayed in the car for shipment home, but the rest was neatly packaged and ready to go with us as checked baggage. Our thanks to Tom Andersen and Tom Nilsson in the parts department for their expert help. I fashioned a handle of sorts for the box the night before departure using a coat hanger with a cardboard tube and tape supplied by the front desk. The package made it safely to Atlanta after a plane change in Amsterdam. Upon return home I got a new accessories brochure and found that most of what we bought could be had here for about the same price or a few dollars less. That was

probably due to the decline of the dollar against the Swedish crown in the past few weeks. The real steel wheel for the 9-3 Sport Sedan is not available here in the US, so it was worth the effort lugging it through customs.

One other thing we bought went with the car, too. For some bizarre reason, US-specification 9-3 sedans no longer come with a locking gas door for 2005. The US convertibles do, as do all 9-3s for the Swedish and other markets, but not US-bound sedans. "Market forces" at play here? Anyway, the wiring is still there for the lock motor, so installing it is straightforward using the Tech II to tell the car's system it's there. We had Saab install the lock motor while we were on our journey north, for the added cost of about \$31 for the part and \$64 for installation. For the time being, Deb's 9-3 probably will be the only 2005 sedan in the US with a locking gas door.

After taking delivery, we just had time for a drive over to the west coast island of Smögen, as Monica suggested. That proved most enjoyable as we strolled along the boardwalk and photographed the car and the picturesque buildings around the harbor. We stayed a night in the only hotel there and returned to Trollhattan for the factory tour the next day.

Saab has five lines running in Trollhattan, producing a total of 500 cars per day. It takes a car 24 hours to come to life from sheet steel pounded out by 7,800-ton presses and supplier parts arriving on a just-in-time schedule. There is some local concern that GM may be contemplating a shutdown of the Trollhattan plant. Our personal tour guide, Roger, said that GM had recently spent over \$600M to modernize the plant; so closing it anytime soon was not likely. Saab provided us with our own guide

and translator as the train tour through the plant was conducted in Swedish.

After the tour we scurried over to the Saab dealership to drop off the car with Ms. Pettersson. She had offered to have it trucked to Gothenburg for shipment home instead of our driving it there as before. She also provided us with a taxi to the airport hotel, something that is usually not on the agenda. Normally, once you leave it with a drop-off agent you're on your own. Drop offs in Gothenburg or Bremerhaven are free. All other drop-off points around Europe incur a fee.

Do you save enough on an IDS delivery to pay for the trip? That depends on the duration or lavishness of your trip. By flying steerage on KLM, we managed a 12-day trip that cost roughly \$1,200 less than the combination of the nine percent IDS savings over list plus the \$2,000 travel assistance. Of course we did have one extra night at Ronnum Manor and the return taxi ride on Saab, in addition to the usual benefits of the IDS program. On the other hand, we still have to pay state and local sales taxes to get the car registered here, seven percent in our case. That more than nullifies any savings in our case.

We wouldn't recommend doing an IDS delivery just to save money, though some do. Monica told us it wasn't unusual for customers to come over, take delivery, and then turn the car back immediately for shipment home. That's why they initially didn't suspect the lack of a registration application in our case. No, the best reason for going IDS is to get a vacation and a car together, and tour Europe in your own car. Just contact the IDS Delivery Center in Trollhattan a couple of weeks before delivery to make sure all is in order!

Happy 2005!

It's during this time of year, with much of the country in winter's grip, that I come to appreciate some of the features that Saabs are famous for (not that I don't appreciate them all year-round).

Front-wheel drive (or all-wheel for you 9-2X owners), heated seats, excellent road feel, great brakes (even without anti-lock) and so on. Even though central Ohio doesn't usually get the snow that our friends to the north receive, I always mount four snow tires just in case, or to be secure when I decide to point my Saab in a direction that will take me to more white stuff on the ground than where I live.

But since I'm not a winter fan, I'm always looking forward to warmer temperatures and the day when I can mount the performance tires and take the Viggen out for a spring romp. And I look forward to the few days in the summer when I can join my friends and fellow Saab owners at the annual national convention.

This summer, you can point your Saab to the northeast, as the New England Saab Association hosts our annual Saab-fest. Check out page 16 for more details and keep an eye on NINES, www.saabclub.com or www.saabnet.com for future announcements and registration information.

Please welcome to the board of your Saab club a new member, Darren Aklan. Some of you may know Darren from previous conventions when he helped coordinate the popular Saab parts "tent." Darren was a huge help to us in making sure lots of Saab goodies arrived in time for the convention and he spent countless hours working to make sure everything ran smoothly. Darren was one of the unfortunate many in Norcross who did not move to Detroit when Saab Cars left Georgia. He recently joined a new company and he's going to be an excellent addition to the board.






As of this writing in late December, your president, Garry Grimes, and I may be close to getting ourselves replaced on the board after our "overtime" service tenure. I hope in the next edition of NINES that a new name will appear in this President's Column. But the next election cycle will be here this summer during the convention and several positions will be up for vote, so please think about being a candidate for the board. We need you, the membership, to take a more active role in the management of your club if we are to continue to grow and offer the services you want. More information on this issue will be provided in future columns and also posted on both web sites noted above.

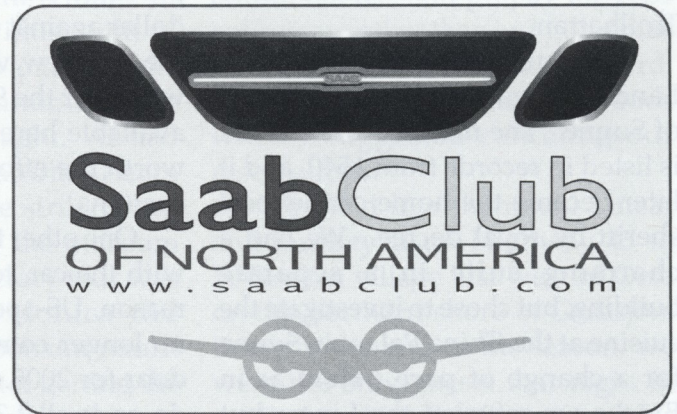
Best wishes to all for a happy, healthy and safe 2005.

Dan Orzano
Vice President
SCNA

These Saabss will keep you happy in the winter! The winning entry from Best Fleet Business/Corporate entry from the SOC 2004. A list of winners can be found on page 13. Photographed by Stefan Vapaa.

George & Andrea Vapaa's SAAB Fleet

 2002 9-5 Aero	 1999 9-3 Viggen	
From Road ...  1968 Sonett V4 Spyder This car's truly "one-of-a-kind" bodywork complements the performance modifications that make "SONETT" competitive with more modern cars in SCCA Solo II competition.	 1959 Quantum I This is the prototype SAAB-based sportscar designed and built by Walter Kern; it raced in SCCA events in New England in the early 1960's. Since 1989, it has been raced in VSCCA events.	... To Track  1964 Quantum IV One of approximately 65 cars originally produced as \$1,097.00 kits by Quantum Motorcar Corp., the "Formula S" has standard SAAB 96 engine, gearbox, brakes and suspension components.



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The dealers listed below honor a generous courtesy discount to all SCNA members on most Saab parts, service and accessories. This discount is off the regular everyday prices. Here's reason enough to be a member! Please present your membership card before service and remember to say "Thanks!" for their continued support of the Saab Club of North America.

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SOC 2004 Results

These are the results from the first ever Saab Owners' Convention Best Fleet Competition, conducted to recognize the most interesting Saab fleets owned throughout North America. Next year, submit your photos to see how your fleet of three to five Saabs stacks up! Photos of all SOC '04 entries are posted on the nwsoc.org Web Site. Entry Rules will be posted on the official SOC Web Site.

Best Fleet - Business/Corporate Category - Only one entry

1st Place - Sports Car Service - Bill Jacobson

Best Fleet - Individual/Family Category - 11 Entries

**1st Place - Avis & Tom Nelson
2nd Place - Garry Grimes
3rd Place - Five (5) ENTRIES
TIED**

**Mark Rheude
Galanti Family
George Vapaa
Jerry Danner
Bruce Harbison**

Results - Attendance Challenge Competition

This is the annual competition to recognize and award regional and local Saab Clubs, as well as individuals, for bringing a great many Saabs - especially vintage models, as well as lots of people, a long distance to attend the SOC. Rules, as well as past winners, are posted on the official SOC Web Site.

Club Category

**1st Place - Rocky Mountain Saab Club (RMSC)
2nd Place - Bay Area Saab Club (BASC)
3rd Place - North East Saab Association (NESA)**

Note - The Iowa Saab Club and the NWSOC came in 4th and 5th respectively.

Individual Category

1st Place - Peter Maitland & David Cronin from Massachusetts

**2nd Place - Bill & Joanne Clark from Pennsylvania
3rd Place - Jerry Danner & Paul Callahan from Colorado (900CV towing a 96 2-stroke).**

Note - Jim Beetham & Miles Bendixson were a close 4th (9000T towing Laura).

Longest Pure Miles Driven in a Saab:

Bill & Joanne Clark who drove 3,970 miles taking a northern route through upper Michigan to get to the 2004 SOC.

The Board of Directors of the Rocky Mountain Saab Club of Colorado (RMSC) met to elect officers for the coming year. Per our bylaws, the Club officers are elected for one-year terms from among the members of our seven-member board.

Elected were:

**President - Tom Nelson
Secretary - Paul Bottone
Treasurer - Jerry Danner**

The other members of the current BOD are:

**Bruce Harbison
Stan Bietscher
Jim Beetham
Karl Kingery**

It is an honor for me to follow in the footsteps of Jerry Danner, who has been our president for the past 10 years. His leadership has certainly put the RMSC "on the map," so to speak.

Please make any changes to your records to reflect our new officers. - Tom Nelson

SOC04 Best Saab Fleet Competition

SAAB 2004 Owners Convention Crystal Mountain, Washington

1980 99 GLI

Owners: Avis & Tom Nelson Evergreen, CO

1966 MC850

1991 900 SPG

2003 95 Aero SportWagon

Individual/Family
 Business/Corporate

Here's the winning Best Fleet entry of Avis and Tom Nelson.
Photographed by Tom Nelson.

Summer Vacation

It all started when my brother finally got a house. Removing his street rod from my garage, I saw the empty space and decided that I would finally get to the Saab Sonett I had in the barn. I first just wanted to take a nice drive and then down the road with the top off (more on the top off issue later).

The road to hell is paved with good intentions, I'm told.

After lugging the old beast into the garage I discovered that it had forgotten how to run. After lengthy diagnostics and much fiddling around it magically started running. I'm still at a loss as to what actually fixed it. I think one of the magic relays was stuck. I should have left well enough alone.

It was then that I remembered why I parked it several years ago. The engine was attached to a bad water pump. As soon as I recovered from the shock that a local import shop actually had the pump in stock, I proceeded to discover that Swedes apparently live for unsolvable puzzles. For no apparent engineering reason they decided to bolt the pump on backwards.

If you're willing to pull the timing cover off the water pump, then replacement is a breeze... but why stop there? Heck, all those hoses you needed to fiddle with should be replaced, and if you're willing to stand behind a parts counter and visualize what bends can be chopped out of what hoses for real cars, that's a snap as well.

So there she is just running quite nicely, when I discover the car forgot how to move and the clutch seemed to have no connection to the

problem. Being the genius I am, I deduced it must be a hydraulic problem so I embarked on rebuilding the hydraulics. In case you are wondering, it is possible to remove the master cylinder.

That didn't help at all as the car still seemed unable to release the clutch. After much rocking and rolling, the car maintained a permanent connection from the engine to the wheels. It would start in gear and the thought of a direct drive Sonett, as appealing as it was, just wasn't going to cut it.

So it was obviously time to pull the engine, which is a snap if you had the foresight to put brand new hoses on everywhere (and have a power saw). I find that all those years of suffering with three female children had a side benefit - - they date boys. They date strong boys who seem to be so polite and helpful to the girls' father. One shout of "Lift that engine out of there and put it on that bench," was all it took to liberate the V4 from its resting place.

To my amazement, when I got to it, it seemed the clutch disc and flywheel had become a single monolithic unit. A brief encounter with a chisel got them to go their separate ways. Everything looked fine so I put it back together. I did toss in a new release bearing just because it seemed to justify taking it all apart.

So there I was with a functional Sonett that I could drive as much as I wanted (if it wasn't raining). You see, some previous owner thought it would be cool to have a topless Sonett. Mind you they did a nice job making it that way but overlooked a few things:

1. It's bad to flex the windshield frame (the windshield periodically liberates itself from the car).

2. One needs to fashion secure latches (as the roof blew off at 80 m.p.h. some time ago).

I figured it was time to address those issues along with some other impact related body modifications that had mostly been fixed with duct tape.

Some things seem like a good idea but they are not. One bad idea is to let 15-year-old boys park cars when there are 15-year-old girls around. I'm unsure exactly why, but they think spinning a tire in a confined space is cool. As it turned out, said boy, while moving a Cavalier, got the brake pedal and gas pedal mixed up which ended up with me running to the garage and shutting off the Chevy. After assuring that the boy was in good health so I could kill him later, I began the damage assessment.

Chevy rammed Saab, Saab rammed Kawasaki. Kawasaki, in a vain attempt to save itself, jumped through the back wall of the garage.

We all know the ultra strength of the fiberglass Sonett body and how impact resistant it is, so the good news was, believe it or not, there was zero damage on the mini hood! Every other part of fiberglass was either shattered, cracked, broken or distressed in some unholy manner.

Not too bad, I thought. It's only completely totaled. I did begin to wonder what that green blood was all over the floor on both ends of the car. It seems the nose took out

the radiator.

Now for a look at the rear radiator. Hmm, there is no rear radiator.

The stubborn Swede apparently wasn't about to give up without a fight! It used its Monza resonators to stab the radiator of the offensive Cavalier.

Now regarding radiators, I had a spare Saab one. Unfortunately, it had been leaning on the foot peg of the Kawasaki between the bike and wall, so you can guess its fate.

I decided to invent a new form of body repair. It seems that the fragile glass fiber shell could be glued together fairly easily provided you clean and align everything really well. On a side note, never go to a hardware store and ask, "Is this the biggest container of acetone you sell?"

And buy five gallons.

The police and DEA guys get a big laugh out of it when they see you're actually using that much acetone for a legal endeavor.

After numerous gallons of body filler and much fiberglass resin, I had something resembling an old Swedish car, a brace of steel or aluminum here and there and the roof and windshield were attached for good.

I then discovered that I did in fact know how to paint a car! How hard could it be, I paint model airplanes all the time and this is just, well, bigger. Thanks to my ability to convince my daughters that putting masking tape on a car is fun,

it went quite well for a first attempt.

I found some nice vintage stickers and ended up with a nice shiny Saab that looked like a racer. You would think I'm done now, wouldn't you?

Being somewhat of an eBay addict, I look for Saab parts all the time. And wouldn't you know that before the paint had a chance to cure I found the holy grail of V4 parts on eBay, the "mythical" 2-barrel Rally intake manifold. So after some fierce bidding, I managed to secure it.

Oh, when someone's address ends in "de" it might not always be Delaware. Sometimes that means Germany, as it did in this case.

After writing the gentleman several times, I discovered he had an ability to uncover original Saab rally parts, so after parting with appalling semi-enormous sums of money and figuring out what a euro dollar is, I was waiting for a box of goodies from Germany. I still needed a Weber carburetor so I began looking for one, missed several on eBay but finally secured one. One that the owner said had idle problems. Why buy a good carburetor when you can inherit someone else's problems for less money?

And what are the odds of an exhaust manifold from Germany and rally stripes from Italy arriving on the same day? Well, they did. So there I was with all these goodies. Time to take the freaking car apart again.

I put the cam in, put the

manifold on, and after some serious metal removal managed to get the 32/36 Weber on. Instead of taking the easy route and using the riser plate, I decided I liked my hood and decided to fit everything under it.

There I was, as proud as could be, looking at the pretty motor when I realized that I had more coolant hoses than places to connect them. I figured the choke lines would be good enough for a heater. This is Wisconsin, who needs a choke?

Realizing that it's very important to note the position of the rotor on the distributor before removing it, I spent the better part of a day playing guess which tooth I'm on for timing the beast.

At this point it sort of ran if you consider 3000 r.p.m. a decent idle speed, so I set forth trying to figure out what went wrong. I made no discernible progress on any sort of timing or carburetor adjustments. Remembering that the carburetor had idle issues, I fiddled around with it to no avail. Finally, in utter frustration, I stuck an air hose where the idle screw goes, removed the idle jet and barely put the screw in. Vroom! There she went! Finally got her tuned and purring like a kitty.

I have yet to drive it. Probably this weekend, although my girlfriend tells me that if the front end of that car is in her parking spot much longer she will leave me.

Oh, my brother's neighbor has a 1970 99 under a tarp. Rumor has it he'll take a few hundred.

Saab Owners' Convention News

Attention Saab Owners!

**The Green Mountains of Vermont are the Location
For The 2005 Saab Owners' Convention**



The New England Saab Association will be hosting the 2005 Convention at Stratton Mountain in Southern Vermont. The event will take place August 11th - 14th, so mark your calendars and make your vacation requests!

Stratton has many types of accommodations to choose from. Those on a budget can choose from The Lifeline Lodge and The Inn at Stratton Mountain. For those of you traveling as a group or with your family, or for those looking for larger and more upscale accommodations Stratton offers studio, one and two bedroom condos. All of these condos come with kitchenettes and most have a queen sleeper sofa in the living room. If you have a larger group they also have some three, four, and five bedroom condos.

For those not interested in spending the weekend surrounded by Saabs, Stratton Resort has many other activities available on location and in nearby communities. There are mountain bike rentals and trails. There is a horseback riding stable offering guided tours. The Mountain also offers golf, tennis and fly-fishing and kayak lessons and rentals. For those who need a little pampering there is a full service spa on site. You can also travel to nearby areas for fun family activities and a plethora of shopping outlets in nearby Manchester, VT.

We are still working on the grand details of the different events that will take place at this year's Saab Owners' Convention. Rather than having a track day, we are working on a rallycross, an autocross, and a charity benefit ride with a rally driver on a closed course! There will be the usual concours, tech seminars, test drives, etc.

The registration forms for the Convention will soon be posted on the official SOC Web Site and can either be completed online, or hard copy printed and mailed in. Registration for this year's SOC will be \$130.⁰⁰ This will include food and registration fees for the weekend. Alcoholic beverages are not included at that price.

Pricing for resort accommodations range from \$69.⁰⁰ - \$180.⁰⁰. Rates are per night, not per person. Additional lodging information is available upon request.

So get yourself ready for a memorable weekend of Saab camaraderie, fun, and lots of fresh air in the Green Mountains. We hope that you will join us for what promises to be a great Saab Owners' Convention in Vermont.

For more information and to register online go to <http://www.saabconvention.org>

To check out Stratton Mountain go to <http://www.stratton.com>

My initial forays into Saab regional events and Internet lists left me lost amid discussions of parts and wrenching. I had some knowledge of parts in general, but was completely ignorant of Saabs. I wondered if all this information was something Saab owners just learned over time. Maybe it was an unspoken rite of passage of some sort and if so, exactly what purpose did knowing part numbers serve? Then, as I began needing parts for my Saabs, the answer became clear. You must know the mechanical parts of your Saab because sometimes even the dealership doesn't know what on earth you need.

I simply wanted spark plugs, four of them to be exact. I went to the nearest Saab dealership for the plugs. I even called the day prior to make sure they were in stock. Sounds like an easy purchase, right? Apparently not.

Me: I'd like spark plugs for a 1997 Saab 9000 CSE Turbo.

Parts guy: Hmm, what I really need is your vehicle identification number to make sure you get the right part.

At this point I have to wonder exactly what information he hopes to garner from the VIN that I cannot tell him, but I decide to play along.

Me: You should have my VIN, I've been here before.

Parts guy: OK. (Minutes pass.) "Um, the computer says it is a 1995. Are you sure it's a 1997?"

Are there really people who don't know what year their car is? I guess so. I assure him it is a 1997. I even explain that he must be seeing the VIN for my previous Saab, which was a 1995. Much later, I leave with the correct spark plugs. It takes less time for me to change the plugs than it did for me to purchase them.

From the same dealership – you'd think I'd learn, but it's the only dealer around for miles – I attempted to order a new direct ignition cassette for the same 9000 over the phone. I was at work and, in my haste, I forgot to ask the exact cost of the part, so I called back. The part would be seventy-eight dollars. Wow, there's nothing more I'd like than a three hundred dollar part for only seventy-eight dollars, but unfortunately it was the wrong part. The parts department staff seemed frighteningly baffled over the words "direct ignition cassette." It's the big red thing on top of the engine, I say in frustration. Moments of silence pass before someone comes back on the phone and quotes me a more appropriate price.

I start to wonder about this phenomenon. Is it purely restricted to Saab, or does it happen with domestic cars as well? Prior to owning Saabs I did little wrenching, so my question remains a mystery. Perhaps this problem is not widespread, however, in northern Ohio Saabs are scarce, and sometimes they are another automobile entirely. When I tried to buy a replacement blinker light bulb for my 1987 900, the young man behind the counter at the local Auto Zone paused for a moment and then said, "Saab, that's an Oldsmobile, right?" Um, no.

There are times when I think it's only because I'm a female, but it doesn't seem as if anyone is being condescending to me, they really just don't know. Even things that seemed insignificant, like understanding tire speed rating, which is an indicator of the performance capability, become convenient knowledge.

When I discovered a crack along the sidewall of a tire while at work, I called the three places nearby that

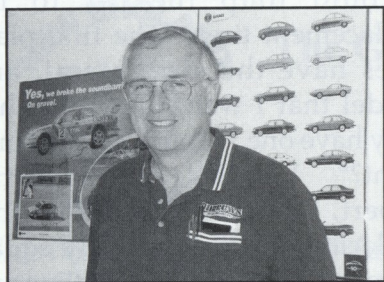
I could limp the car to for replacement tires. The first place does have the size, brand, and model that I want, however they only have one. "You only need one, right?" I am by no means a tire expert, however, I do know that replacing one tire generally equals a great decline in both handling and comfort.

Sure, if I'm stranded in the desert and the only place available for a hundred miles only has one tire, I'll take it. As this is not the case, I decided to call elsewhere. Third try is a charm. Well, sort of. They have the size, brand, and model I want, but only in an H speed rating. I explain that no, I want the V rated tires. Mind you, I'm not racing the 9000, but I drive a lot and I like to push the performance of my cars. I need good tires. "Really?" The nice salesman asks. No, not really, I just have a ton of extra money and nothing better to do than buy tires (I wish). Lucky for me, they had a set of V rated tires in the warehouse.

Overall, searching for parts puts a fun, if challenging, twist on wrenching. Really, what excitement is there in going to the parts store and simply finding the part you need right there on the shelf? Not much. I've tried. I don't get so much as a tickle when buying replacement headlight bulbs, however I frequently have a good laugh when I try to find something unusual like license plate bolts. Am I still lost in the parts discussions? Mostly, but I can participate in them more and more as time goes on.

C. Calhoun lives in Toledo, OH. Her Saab collection includes a C900 always in need of parts, a shiny black 9000 and, purely by coincidence, a dog named Troll.

Professional Perspective



CERAMIC BRAKE PAD UPDATE

In the NINES #256 issue, (March/April 2002), I wrote about the comparison of ceramic semi-metallic and non-asbestos organic brake pads. The supply of ceramic products that I thought would include Saab has just recently arrived on the market. We had expected ceramics to be on the market by late 2002 but the wait has been worthwhile. We have been installing them for several months.

Ceramic pads now account for

CERAMICS vs. SEMI-METALLICS
Performance Comparison

Friction Material	Cold Friction	Wear			Noise				Friction Stability
		Fade Low Temp	Low Temp	High Temp	Roughness	Vibration	Squeal	Groan	
Akebono Ceramics	●	◆	●	◆	●	◆	●	◆	●
Semi-Metallics	■	◆	■	●	■	◆	■	■	■

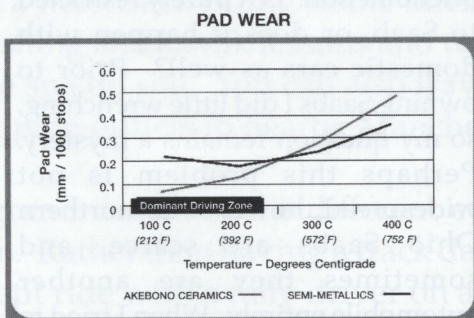
Excellent ● Good ◆ Fair ■

Charts provided by
akebonobrakes.com

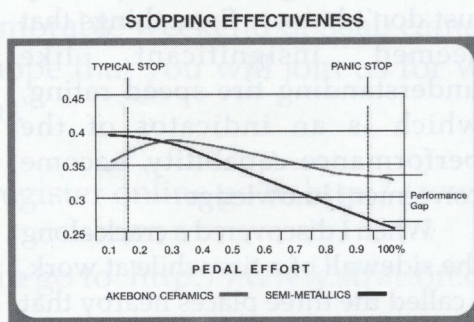
more than 40% of the market on OEMs and 9% of the replacement market in 2003 and is expected to double to 18% by 2007 in this country. With the increase in popularity come many more players in the market. Akebono is the leading supplier of ceramic pads and has expressed concern about the

type and quality of products that have now appeared in the market. There is no agreed formula as to what constitutes a ceramic pad. Many of the products now on the market that are called ceramic could also be called low-metallic, semi-metallic or carbon metallic. Akebono, on the other hand, uses a unique formula of 20 raw materials to formulate pads for individual brands of cars. All of this is to be sure that NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) is controlled. The ceramic particle size, distribution, shape, hardness, and thermal characteristics are scientifically formulated. Each pad has scientifically engineered chamfers and slots applied to help with the NVH.

Pad wear is considerably



improved over the semi-metallic (See chart). Akebono says most drivers' brake pad temperatures do not go over 482 degrees. At this temperature the ceramics wear less and consequently have less dusting

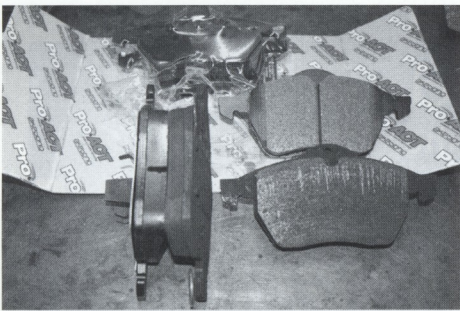


on the wheels. Because of the unique shape of the ceramic particles in the Akebono pads they are less abrasive to the rotors while still providing excellent braking power. (See chart). Akebono's test says that 80% less rotor wear occurs with their ceramic formulation which increases brake rotor life to as much as 400%. In NINES #256, I wrote that the ceramics could become the choice pad for performance cars. That hasn't happened yet. Brake temperatures approaching 600+ degrees can occur and the true ceramic pads that I am aware of are not made to work at those temperatures.

The pictures shown are of our 2001 Aero wagon. You can see the



dirty front wheel (drenched in brake dust) and a cleaner rear wheel. These wheels were new 8,500 miles ago and have been cleaned several times during that period. This car is on its second set of brake pads (original and a replacement set of semi-metallic). The rotors shown are with 68,000 miles and are below the minimum thickness, so they required replacement. As you can see in one of the pictures, the brake



The old pads on the lower right and center have a quarter standing on edge for a size perspective. Notice that the ceramic pads are split and cambered on the edges. The old pads had worn about 50% of their thickness.

pads had about 50% left on them (I just hate all that black dust on my wheels!) It is typical on 9-5s to replace the rotors on the second set of pads. Many times, resurfacing the original rotors can be done after the first set of pads providing the rotors are thick enough. The remainder of the pictures show some of the practices that we use when doing a brake job.

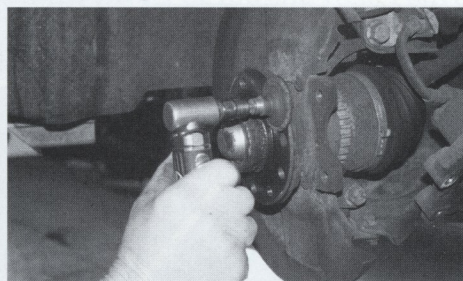
The additional cost of the Akebono pads is a small price to pay for cleaner wheels and longer pad and rotor life. Saab list price on 9-5 rotors is \$116 each, and brake pads



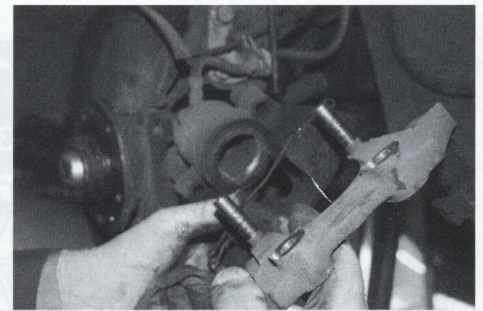
Here you can see the wear on the brake rotor. There is a ridge on the inner and outer edge where the pad does not make contact. These rotors are worn beyond the acceptable thickness.



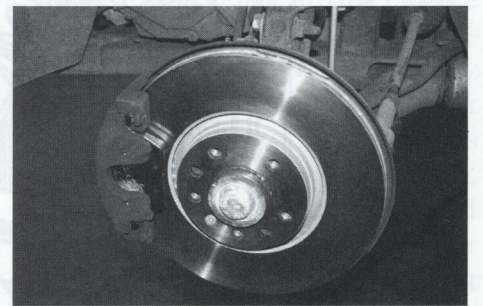
The brake caliper has been unbolted and hung with a bungee cord so as not to damage the brake hose, and a hose has been hooked to the brake bleeder which is connected to the container hanging below. A pair of large channel lock pliers are used to squeeze the caliper together with the brake bleeder open. Sediment, contaminants, etc. can be removed from the system instead of being forced back to the master cylinder.



With the rotor removed and the caliper out of the way it is very important to remove the rust and debris from the mounting surfaces of the spindle. If you want to be able to get your wheels on and off it is a good idea to keep these areas free of corrosion.



The slide must be cleaned before reassembly. Photos by the author.



New rotor and ceramic pads installed and ready for the wheel. Notice that we use Wurth Cu 1100 on the pad. This is a copper anticorrosion paste (adhesive and lubricant) to further help prevent NVH.

are \$104 per set. Akebono Ceramic pads should be less than \$120 for any Saab application. If you drive your Saab for a period of time you should see substantial savings!

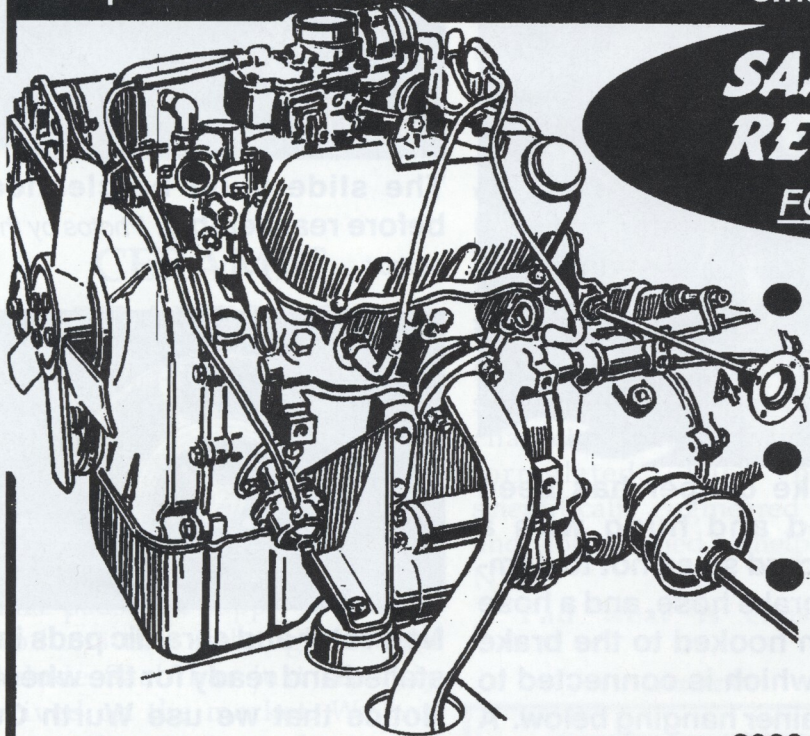
Akebono has a great product and we use it. There are other brands that may be as good or even better. I would make them prove it. If you are interested, Akebono has lots of information on the Web Site, www.akebonobrakes.com.

I will pull the wheels and report on the rotor and pad wear and dusting at regular intervals. In the meantime, I would suggest that you specify ceramic pads for all available replacements. I think you will be as impressed as we are with the results.

Jack Ashcraft's Orphan Saab Parts

phone: 541-779-0731

email: jackashcraft@charter.net



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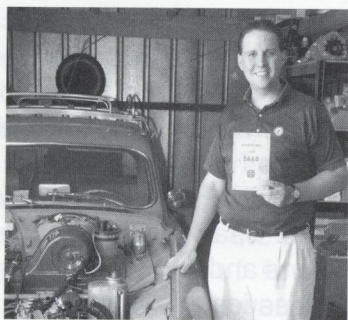
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Ho Ho Hum

I came in a bit ago after dropping a rather heavy warning triangle on the side of my foot. It smarts. I was on the phone with one of you looking for an odd bit on a shelf when the triangle toppled from an adjacent shelf, and in batting it off, holding the phone and keeping a box from following it, it hit its target with the utmost precision. I apologize to the individual in particular, if you have stooped low enough to read this Column on a regular basis, for the exclamation of pain and surprise uttered in your ear during that call.

Anyway, I digress. This foot pain is keeping me from the reassembly of the 1971 95V4 perched on jackstands right in the middle of the mess all freshly undercoated with two shockingly good looking lower A-arms already bolted up. The repainted steering rack is sitting beside it, and I guess I'm still hoping it will leap from the cardboard it sits on right into the car. Hasn't happened yet. Actually, said rack was on the list to do today, were it not for a deluge of calls this afternoon. My foot, my lousy excuses and my innate laziness are not only to blame, for I've endeavoured to clean up the alignment shims before putting them back in the car, and the Mar-Hyde One Step is still drying. In any event, progress ensues anew tomorrow. I bet you've heard that one before, let alone said it yourself.

Said 95V4 is the second one I've bought this year – and, for that matter, in about six years. I don't know what got me back into wagons, but here I am, with the 1978 awaiting some TLC and the 1971 getting some. The car was previously owned by a customer of mine in Pennsylvania, who, after learning that not doing your own work costs about five times more than doing it yourself, abandoned many thousands more than I paid for said car. Seeking some needless adventure, after agreeing to buy the car (and after repeatedly reminding the customer that she would never find another one like it), I drove up with a friend and had him follow me home. I haven't done a long distance rescue of that sort in years, and it was fun! Better still, I put a few hundred more 'evaluation' miles on the car, including a wine tasting run with one of the British clubs around here. A Moto-Lita steering wheel and a JVC CD player were also deemed important.

Naturally, there were some neglect issues to deal with. A long open-to-the-elements steering rack with the most atrociously ripped apart boots and one of the worst cases of inner tie rod end wear I have experienced in a pre-99 was one. A nasty pull to the left was the second. A paper thin clutch and a gearbox which sounded like the UPS truck pulling up yet a third. Undaunted, I pulled it all down within a week and began the cleaning, painting and grooming process afforded to a driver. Looking at the front end, it was clear that the same sort of 'fix it later' attitude had been employed, and while grease was not coming out of the rims yet, it was close. The decision to tear it all down was not hard to come by. And of course, without the special pinion wrench for the rack, it's near impossible to retrieve it, let alone replace it with

engine and transmission in car. There. That just made getting at those stuck lower A-arm nuts that much easier.

As those of you not too terribly afraid of finding dormant rot in your engine bay will know, slogging through 25+ years of caked on crud is no fun. I'm pleased to say that there were no such rotten areas on this 95, and while a few were getting close, they were stoppable and not structural to boot. However, there was plenty of caked on crud – everywhere. I took a Sunday afternoon to hose down the motor and begin laying on some Gloss Black high-temp paint. Since then, it's been on the engine stand awaiting re-insertion. A fresh water pump rounded off the "I don't want to touch that in the car" preventative work, while a freshly machined flywheel and new clutch sit on a nearby shelf.

Unlike some of you, contemplating your winter projects (and don't worry – I have mine planned) we have very little if any salt on roads down here in the winter, and I plan on driving the '71 95 V4 throughout the colder months. It currently sports a stock powerplant albeit with Weber 1 barrel carb (came with it), breakerless ignition (put on when I got home) and sport header and exhaust (awaiting install). Despite some of us being more and more HP junkies, this is plenty fair enough for me, and I can never scoff at a 1700cc V4's 28mpg around town and more than 30mpg highway. Yes, there are a couple of 1700s in performance build right now and one will likely find its way into this car, but it's not imperative for now.

Please Turn To Page 32.

Saab In Motorsports

Barber SAAB **Pro Series**

Soon after I joined Saab as U.S. President in May of 1979 I was already thinking of ways to get Saab involved in serious motorsports in the United States. Among the numerous possibilities I looked at was the GTP series of the International Motor Sport Association (IMSA), which was getting headlines with its full season of events at race courses around the country, each race attracting huge crowds of spectators and each with nationwide television coverage.

cost of the car and a backup car, or of course rebuilding the car if I happen to crash hard." That brought my thinking to a screeching halt.

There was no way Saab's marketing budget could handle that level of expenditure.

Then one morning Saab Cars USA, Inc. PR boss Len Lonnegren happened to mention he heard a rumor that Skip Barber was planning to launch an open-wheel "spec car" series using a fleet of identical race cars, with the races planned to run on the same IMSA programs as the big GTP cars and the Camel Lights!

he needed for the planned 30 cars. Of course I had no authorization to do any such thing; but then nobody at the Saab Car Division in Sweden had told me I couldn't.

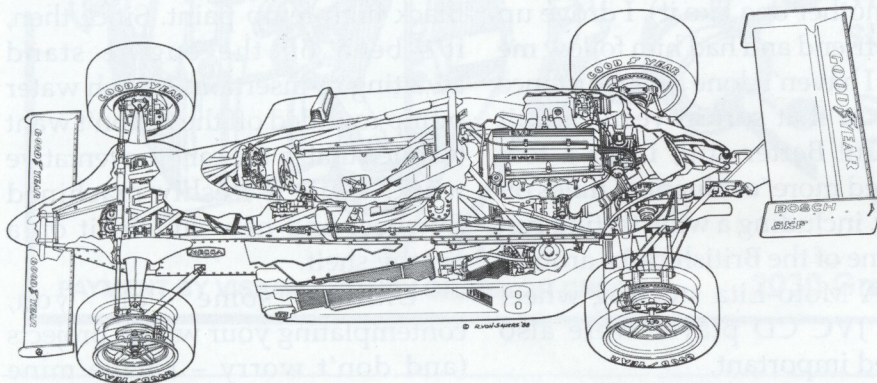
From that point all quickly fell into place. Saab provided engines, spare parts and technical guidance. Once the series was announced and I had explained what was up to my Board of Directors, I was pleased to get good cooperation from my boss in Sweden, President of the Saab Car Division.

Sten Wennlo, including the services of a very competent engineer nicknamed "Turbo Anders" who flew over from Sweden rather frequently when things got rolling.

I don't recall the horsepower of the engines as installed in the race cars, or whether that changed over the more than a decade that the Barber Saab Pro Series ran. I believe the engines were essentially "stock" at around 225 hp, with only a conversion to dry sump lubrication to save space, and a few other modifications necessary to adapt the engines for installation in the mild steel tubular frame Mondiale chassis; a design very similar to Mondiale Cars' Formula Ford 2000 open wheel race cars.

Since the Barber Saab Pro Series was campaigning a fleet of identical Saab turbo-powered cars, not against other makes, engine reliability was far more important than maximum power. There was no point in tuning the engines for increased output.

The series gave Saab Cars USA, Inc. the opportunity for entertainment at each event during the racing season. In my opinion, this made a major contribution to the morale and esprit de corps of Saab dealers and their Saab owner guests, as well as of our own employees who were invited to attend and take part in the fun.



Detailed cutaway of the Barber Saab Pro Series race car.

Obviously, given the limited financial resources of Saab's U.S. company, I couldn't even think of getting Saab involved at that level of competition; but there was a parallel IMSA series - "Camel Lights" which competed in the same races with the big GTP cars, but utilized smaller and much less powerful engines.

While still quite expensive, the Camel Lights cars clearly were far less costly than the GTP cars. At first, a Saab Turbo-powered Camel Lights team looked like a possibility. I happened to know the then Camel Lights Series champion. I phoned him and asked what his approximate racing budget was for a season. His reply, "Around one and a half million dollars...but that doesn't include the

I phoned Skip and invited him to lunch, mentioning I had heard a rumor about his working on a new race series, and that I would like to know more about it.

Over lunch I learned he had contracted with Mondiale Cars of Northern Ireland for the manufacture of a fleet of identical cars that were to be powered by small 1600 cc naturally aspirated Dodge engines. But he added that as yet no contract had been signed with Chrysler Corporation's Dodge Division. I asked if he didn't think turbocharged Saab engines sounded a lot better.

We briefly discussed this concept, with me suggesting I might be able to handle supplying the number of engines and spare parts

Some 25 to 30 cars came to the starting line at each of Barber Saab Pro Series races, with multiple TV broadcasts of each (including global television coverage of many of them), all for a total annual cost roughly equivalent to the price of a couple of pages of four-color magazine ads. I felt then and still feel



Andy Swett runs the track in Miami in 1988.

THE COST

The Best Value in Racing

A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR in the strong appeal the Barber Saab Series has for a driver is the amount of competitive racing experience and public exposure available for a comparatively low cost. In a sport where it's possible to spend tens of thousands of dollars on amateur racing, a Barber Saab driver can compete in a professional series in front of thousands of track-side fans and before a television audience of millions for less than \$100,000.

A driver pays \$5,400 per race. For that, at each track he will find a professionally prepared race car ready to run. Throughout the weekend, designated Skip Barber Organization technicians maintain that peak level of preparation. Insurance is provided by the driver and the Skip Barber Organization.

Autoweek estimates a driver in serious pursuit of the professional Super Vee championship will spend \$300,000-plus for equipment, transportation,

lodging, food/and crew salaries. Contesting the Barber Saab Pro Series costs \$64,800 plus transportation, food and lodging.



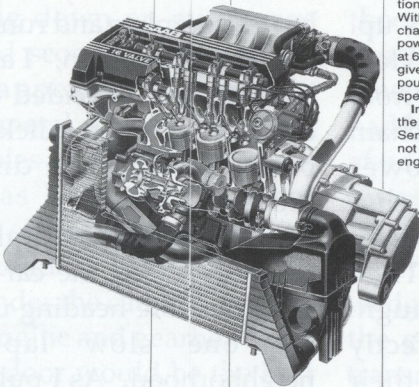
THE ENGINE

The Same Saab Turbo That's on the Street

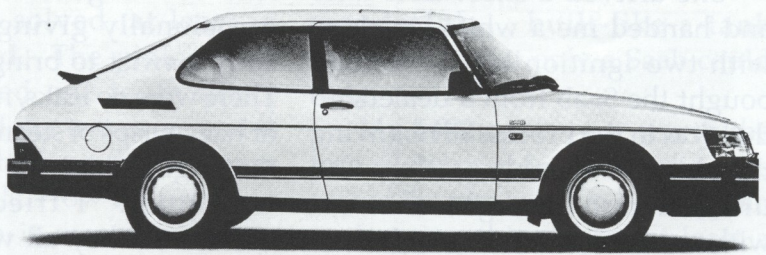
THE ENGINE THAT POWERS the Barber Saab cars is the same engine on daily street and highway duty in the Saab 900 and 9000 Turbos. It is a 16-valve, double overhead-cam, 4-cylinder that displaces 2.0 liters. It uses Bosch fuel injection and has an intercooled turbo-charger. On the street it produces

160 horsepower. After millions of highway miles it has produced a remarkable record for dependability and durability.

For the Series, the only changes are the removal of emission control equipment, an open exhaust system, an increase in turbo-charger boost pressure, an adjustment of the Automatic Performance Control fuel management system, dry sump lubrication system and the use of racing fuel. There are no special racing parts, no internal modifications of any kind. With those few changes, horsepower jumps to 225 at 6000 rpm which gives the 1200-pound car a top speed of 165 mph. In two seasons of the Barber Saab Series, there has not been a single engine failure.



THE SAAB 16-VALVE TURBO.



ALSO AVAILABLE IN THIS DISCREET UNMARKED WRAPPER.

The engine most carmakers build for the track bears little resemblance to the one they build for the street. With one stirring exception.

The turbocharged powerplant in the Barber Saab Pro Series race cars is internally identical to the intercooled, DOHC engine you'll find in every Saab 900 Turbo.

In all, Saab engines have garnered some 21 separate international and two world's records for speed and endurance. While logging an incredible 150,000 grueling race miles without overhaul.

Of course, the achievements of the 900 Turbo extend far beyond the engine compartment. They include a cargo bay that can swallow a six-foot sofa, a sumptuous leather interior, and a host of safety features ranging from a driver's-side air bag to Saab's unique anti-lock braking system.

So to witness racing engine performance from the driver's seat, instead of the grandstand, see your Saab dealer for a test drive of the 900 Turbo.



(L) Part of the Barber brochure. (R) Saab ad from the day. All photos supplied by the author.

that the Barber Saab Pro Series offered Saab tremendous "bang for the buck," as well as being a very effective marketing tool in a hotly competitive imported car market.

When I retired in September of 1991, Sten Helling briefly followed me in the corner office, then Bill Kelly, and then GM longtimer Jim Crumlish. It seems the Barber Saab Pro Series didn't fit into Mr. Crumlish's marketing strategy, since by that time Saab was doing virtually nothing to support the series other than supplying the engines.

Skip phoned me one day, saying he really needed a bit more support from Saab, or he was going to have to find support elsewhere, which most likely would mean changing engine suppliers. By this time the cars were getting quite elderly and tired. Skip felt obliged to order an entirely new fleet of cars for the series, so this was the time

I flew to Georgia. Skip and I presented the cost/value scenario as we both saw it, and suggested a reasonable level of financial and other support from Saab. The answer from Mr. Crumlish was a polite "No."

The next year the series became known as the Barber Dodge Pro Series, with Dodge power, and subsequently with an entirely new fleet of carbon fibre composite monocoque race cars built by Reynard in the UK, powered by 3.5 liter V6 Dodge engines tuned to about 265 hp and coupled to Hewland six speed Hewland sequential gearboxes.

I leave it to others to judge whether dropping out of the picture was the most appropriate marketing decision for Saab.

to change engine suppliers if that had to happen.

He asked if I would be willing to participate in a meeting with Mr. Crumlish, helping present a case for continuing the race series with Saab engines.

Robert "Bob" Sinclair is known as the "father of the Saab convertible." He joined Saab in 1958 as a field rep, calling on Saab dealers. After a stint at Volvo, he rejoined Saab in 1979 as President and CEO, Saab Cars USA.

\$400 can buy you a lot of things in today's world. I could have spent that amount and paid off a couple of bills or gotten some new hand tools from Sears. I would like a new home stereo amplifier to replace the one that self-destructed two years ago and \$400 would just about cover that. Instead, I bought another Saab, which arrived on the back of a flat-bed tow truck one fall afternoon.

The car was a fairly clean 1987 900S four-door that my wife, Susan, suggested we buy to replace our dog-eared 1989 Ford Aerostar van. I pulled into my driveway to find the Saab parked in front of the garage with a carpet of yellow maple leaves covering the hood and roof. I brushed the leaves away and opened the garage door so I could push the car inside. After scrabbling for traction I managed to get my "new" car parked in the exact center of the garage floor. I switched on the garage lights and gave the car another thorough inspection before heading inside to wait for Susan to arrive home from work.

She arrived a short time later and handed me a white envelope with two ignition keys. We had bought the Saab from a dealership that was in the process of removing the shifter assembly as they had unknowingly bought the car without the ignition key. After we had paid for the car I called a local Saab dealer to see if they could cut a key from the VIN number. The service technician that answered the phone said, "Sure, we just need the VIN number and proof of ownership, like the title or license registration."

And the cost? "If you want genuine Saab key blanks, six dollars each. Otherwise, the plain steel ones are about two bucks." Susan left work a little early and handed over \$12 for two brand-new keys. Since

we did not know if the engine would even start, we were taking a big gamble that we had not bought an overpriced parts car.

I took one of the keys, threaded it onto a Saab key fob, and headed back to the garage.

I checked the oil and coolant levels, dropped in a spare battery, and sat down in the driver's seat. I put the key in the ignition and turned it to the right. The warning buzzer sounded and the "idiot" lights came on. So far so good. No sparks or clouds of smoke from the engine bay. I paused before turning the ignition key the rest of the way. The engine cranked several times but did not fire. I tried again and this time I was rewarded with a couple of coughs and a solitary "choof" from the exhaust. "Third times the charm," I said, and this time the engine caught, stumbled and fired up into a perfect 850 r.p.m. idle. I made sure the gearbox was in neutral before climbing out and placing a large sheet of cardboard under the engine bay. I let the car idle for a good ten minutes, occasionally giving the throttle body a twist to bring the revs up. There were no leaks, no funny odors or hazy wisps of steam coming from the engine, and the timing chain was quiet. I tried the power windows. They all worked. I shut the engine off and removed the key. I tried the power locks. They worked as well. I had to laugh. Fools! They had let a perfectly running Saab slip through their fingers, with almost a half tank of gas in it to boot.

Not that the car didn't need work. The front brakes and hubs were from a newer Saab and I wanted to replace them with the proper running gear from my old platinum blue 900S 3-door. The exhaust was suspect as well. It

looked as if it was cobbled together from various cars before being welded together. The catalytic converter was roughly the size of a Campbell's Chunky Soup can that probably came off a Geo Metro. The rear resonator had a definite agricultural look to it. I threw a white sheet over the car and went back inside.

I decided against working on the car before winter. I knew there would be minor snags along the way and I did not relish the thoughts of working on the car in my unheated garage. "Besides," I told my wife, "I would rather run the van in the salt and slush. This car is still in nice shape." She agreed and the car sat in the corner of the garage all winter while I slid and clipped snow banks on my way to and from work. I allowed the car to sit until early May when the threat of late spring blizzards is nearly gone here in Wisconsin. Susan decided to go shopping with our two girls one Saturday morning to give me uninterrupted freedom in the garage. "It will probably take me most of the day but we should have a complete and running car by the time you return," I assured her. She left, and I decided to start the car and take one quick test drive before starting the disassembly process.

The engine fired right up and I carefully eased the car out of the garage before heading up the road for one slow lap of our neighborhood. As I pulled out the engine hesitated and I depressed the clutch before giving the gas pedal a quick jab. The engine continued to buck and stall under load and I worked the pedals as I lurched up road. What the hell? Bad gas? Fuel pump not working? I continued on, looking like a high school driver's education student discovering the

mysteries of operating a car with three pedals on the floor. I cut my trip short, thoroughly perplexed, and as I started back toward my house the car began to run better. I shifted into third and at the brisk pace of 30 m.p.h. the gearbox exploded with a loud bang.

"What in the name of salted peanuts just happened?" I asked myself, or words to that effect. "Blasted car, should have known better." I continued on, sounding like a construction worker that just doubled the size of his thumb with a hammer. Either that, or a Saab owner that just realized his \$400 steal from a suspicious car dealer may indeed be an overpriced parts car. I managed to get the car into reverse and backed up to the garage door as the transmission made noises similar to a coffee can full of loose bolts. I climbed out, slammed the door and went into the house for a beer. It was 10:30 AM.

After my blood pressure returned to normal, I went back outside and looked at the underside of the car over. I jacked the car up and put a stand under each corner before lying down on my garage creeper and scooting underneath. Nothing appeared wrong. No chunks of metal were sticking out of large holes in the transmission case, but as I rotated the front wheels a slight grinding and clunking could be heard. I rolled out from under the car and decided that a full engine and gearbox swap from my 3-door would be the best way to go. Susan came home later in the afternoon to find me pulling the radiator and cooling fans out. "What happened? I thought you would have been done by now," she said. "There is a problem with the transmission," I replied as I kept working. She started to ask another question but, sensing that there was

more to the story, stopped in mid-sentence and let it go at that.

So began the longest engine swap in modern history. It took a full nine months to get the engines exchanged, along with numerous other parts. Since my employer expects me to keep regular hours in return for a paycheck, I worked on the car at odd hours after work and on the occasional free weekend. My cousin, Andy Saksa, helped me pull the engine from the 4-door. Underneath the layers of oil and grime we found out that the new car's transmission case had split around the flange for the passenger side inner CV joint. Further disassembly caused the rear corner of the transmission to crumble to the garage floor in several pieces. Andy shook his head at the bits scattered around the floor, saying, "20 years of wrenching on Saabs and I have never seen a gearbox fall apart like that." I pulled the differential, finding one large gear tooth among the chips, and then I noticed that the pinion gear was completely void of teeth.

"Mystery solved, at least in theory," I said. The pinion gear must have had one tooth intact when I started my test drive and it had been catching on the ring gear at odd intervals. How the previous owner drove it was anybody's guess. The stress was too great and when the tooth sheared off it wedged in the differential, jacking the gears apart and splitting the transmission open. Andy looked at the bright side. "At least now you have a good spare engine." I nodded in agreement and we loaded the engine onto a cart and pushed it into a corner of the garage.

I continued on by myself, swapping in the 200,000 mile plus engine and gearbox from my 1987 3-door. I also changed the power

steering rack, engine mounts, brakes and drive axles. I removed the cobbled exhaust system, replacing it with the MSS bits I had put on the 3-door a few years ago. Some of the snags I encountered included having both brake lines on the rear axle disintegrate when I touched them, and having two of the lower ball joint bolts fuse themselves to the joint itself, requiring careful drilling and grinding with a Dremel tool to remove them. I finished the project in early March and other than replacing a bad fuel pressure regulator and fuel filter, the car has been trouble free.

How does it run? Just fine, thank you. I miss the wider door openings of the 3-door body style but the rest is pure Saab. It runs and handles extremely well (even though I'm running on old snow tires) and the braking is phenomenal, due in large part to stainless steel brake hoses I bought on eBay. Only a boat anchor tied to the rear bumper could stop the car better. The entire car has that wonderful, built-like-a-tank ruggedness that only a Saab could have.

My \$400 car is now worth the princely sum of \$600, including the cost of the two ignition keys. I plan on keeping this car for at least a couple of years before the dreaded tin worms start eating the floor out from under me. When that finally happens I will look for another Saab, with or without keys, and start the process all over again.

Mike has written for the Milwaukee Saab Club newsletter and is also a past contributor to NINES. He was crew chief for Jerry Sweet, owner of Sweet Motors, who ran a SAAB 99 in the SCCA Pro Rally series.

Corporate Saab News

Saab to Launch 9-5 BioPower Flex-Fuel Vehicle in Sweden

Saab Automobile AB will build a new 9-5 BioPower model fueled by ethanol, an eco-friendly renewable energy source. Sales will begin next summer, initially only in Sweden. Plans to expand into other markets have not been announced. Pricing is expected to show only a very small increase in comparison to standard models.

The Saab 9-5 BioPower flexible-fuel vehicle (FFV) will provide customers with a premium-class car for the first time in a rapidly growing market niche that is supported by favorable environmental and business tax concessions. Its 2.0-liter turbo engine also delivers a significant performance improvement when running on ethanol-based fuel, while still being able to use gasoline if necessary.

In Sweden, Saab 9-5 BioPower customers will be able to use E85 fuel (85% ethanol/15% gasoline) which costs about 25 percent less at the pumps than gasoline. They will also be exempt from projected city congestion and parking charges. In addition, company car drivers will qualify for a 20 percent reduction in Sweden's car benefit tax.

On the road, the 180-hp Saab 9-5 BioPower running on E85 delivers sportier performance due to a significant 30-hp boost in maximum power and 30 lb.-ft. more torque, for a maximum of 206 lb.-ft., compared to its gasoline-powered equivalent. While fuel economy in city and mixed driving conditions is unlikely to show an improvement, preliminary testing indicates that up to a 15 percent gain can be expected at cruising speeds because of better combustion with higher efficiency.

Ethanol fuel is produced commercially from agricultural crops and, unlike gasoline, its consumption does not significantly

run on gasoline at any time," said Kjell Bergstrom, President and CEO of Saab Automobile Powertrain AB. Saab Automobile Chairman and



Photo from Saab.

raise atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the 'greenhouse' gas that contributes to global warming. This is because emissions during driving are essentially balanced by the amount of CO₂ that is removed from the atmosphere when crops for conversion are grown. In contrast, the use of fossil fuels continues to inject into the atmosphere additional new quantities of CO₂ that have remained underground in oil deposits for millions of years.

The adaptability of Saab's Trionic engine management system has facilitated re-programming to accommodate the different ignition timing characteristics and fuel/air mixture requirements of ethanol. Other significant modifications required are the use of ethanol-compatible materials for the fuel tank, fuel lines and connectors.

During the development of the BioPower engine, Saab engineers worked with General Motors colleagues in Brazil where 100 percent ethanol (E100), produced locally from sugar cane, is the dominant fuel on the market.

"Our engine management system automatically adjusts for the type of fuel so, if there is no ethanol available, the customer can simply

CEO Peter Augustsson called on Sweden to lead Europe's switch to the wide-scale production and use of ethanol. "The Swedish government and its agencies are to be congratulated in rising to the challenge of encouraging an alternative and renewable energy source for transport," he commented. "Ethanol provides an effective first step. It is a bridge that will be built in time, one that will help lead us from oil-based fuels towards new future technologies that are still under development, such as hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles.



Here's a spy photo from informant of Subaru's new 7-passenger crossover vehicle. This will be the basis for Saab's next new vehicle, after the 9-7X and 9-3 SportHatch. Think Saabaru Murano. Both the Saab and Subaru will be built in the US. The Subaru is called the B9X. No word on the Saab nomenclature, but it could be the 9-6X.

**More Corporate Saab News
On Page 32.**



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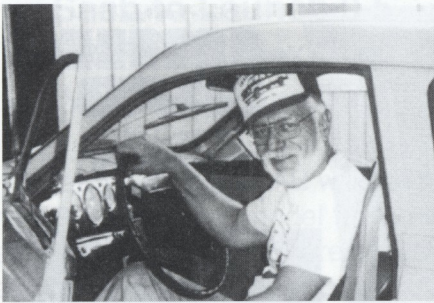
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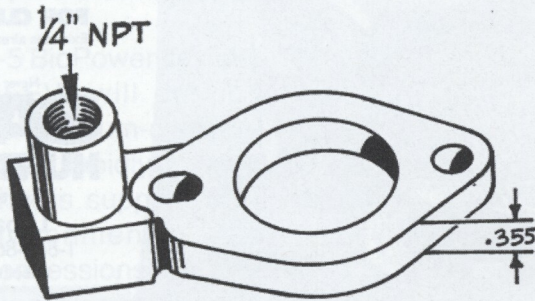
THE PCV VALVE SYSTEM—PART 2



ALTERING THE INTERMEDIATE PLATE

There are at least four different intermediate plates, two of which were on Sonett V4 and Sonett III cars and 95/96 V4 cars through 1968 (without power boosted brakes). There were two different intermediate plates for 95/96 cars WITH power boosted brakes, essentially 1969-70 cars with power boosted brakes but without deceleration valves, and later cars with both.

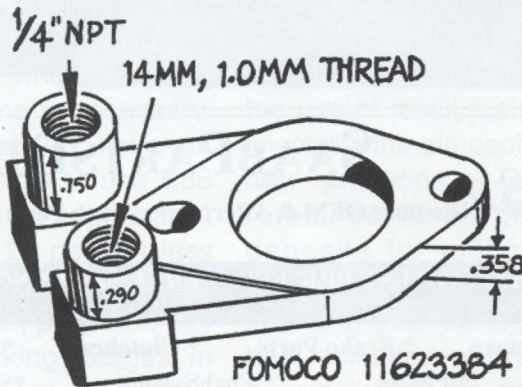
For Sonett V4 cars, it's easy. Put an NPT plug in the single hole in the intermediate plate. For 1967-68 Model 95/96 V4 cars, same thing.



TYPE ONE

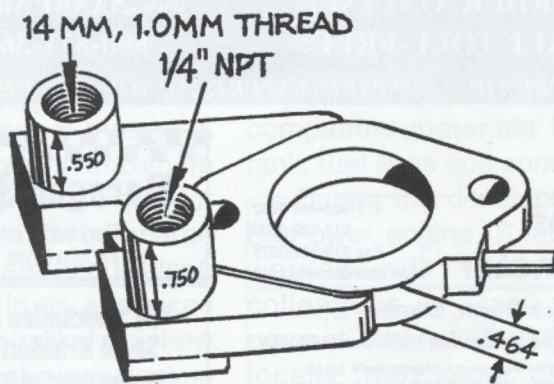
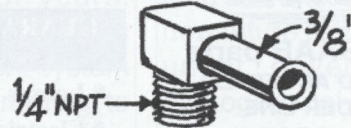
PLUG HOLE WITH
1/4" NPT PLUG

SONETT V4,
1967-68 95/96 V4



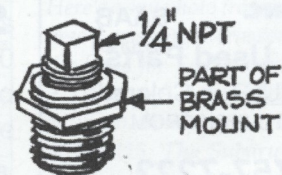
TYPE TWO 1969-70 95/96V4

PLUG FWD HOLE
WITH 1/4" NPT PLUG.
TAP 1/4" NPT THREADS
IN AFT HOLE. SCREW
IN A 90° 1/4" NPT FITTING,
SECURE WITH JB WELD:



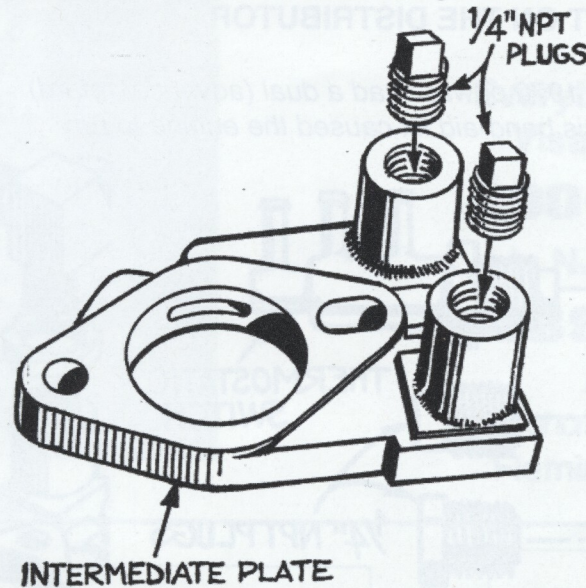
TYPE THREE 1971-73 95/96V4 & SONETT III 1971→

PLUG REAR HOLE WITH
1/4" NPT PLUG. USE PART
OF BRASS MOUNT WITH
1/4" NPT PLUG, IN FWD
HOLE:



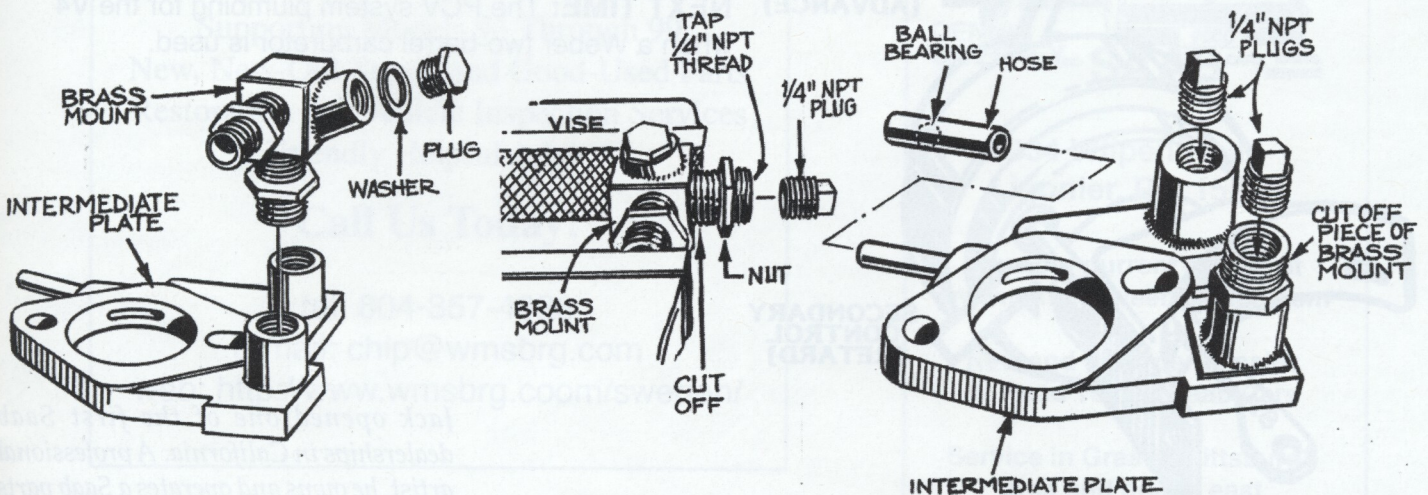
For 1969-70 Model 95/96 V4 cars, the intermediate plate is a type two (FoMoCo No. 11623384). Screw a 1/4" NPT plug in the forward hole, which has NPT threads. The rear hole, which is 14.0mm x 1.0mm size, must be tapped with an NPT tap. Thread in a brass 90 degree fitting, and "set" the fitting in place with JB Weld.

For 1971-73 Model 95/96 V4 cars, the intermediate plate is a type 3 (FoMoCo No. 71TF94580AA). This plate has the 1/4" NPT hole at the rear, so install an NPT plug in that hole. You must use a portion of the brass mount assembly that the deceleration valve was mounted to. Secure the brass 3-way fitting in your vise as shown. Tap 1/4" NPT threads in the hole. Install the 1/4" NPT plug in the newly threaded hole, using No. 2



Permatex on the threads. Tighten the plug. Leave the big nut on the threads and cut off the outlet 1/8" away from the body of the fitting. Smooth the threads at the saw cut. Install the cut off piece into the intermediate plate, using No. 2 Permatex on the threads. Tighten.

THE DECELERATION VALVE



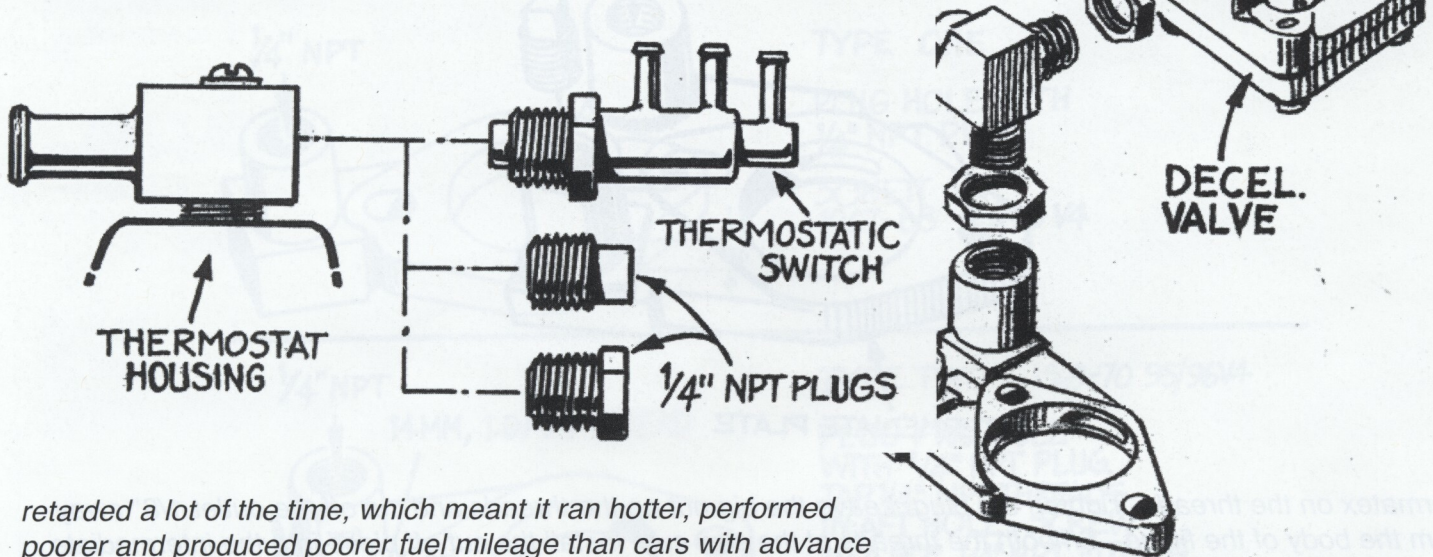
Shoptech Cont'd.

This band-aid fix item has to go . . . in ANY Weber carburetor conversion. You will unscrew it from the brass adaptor that mounts to the intermediate plate. You will also need to remove the three-way thermostatic valve on the thermostat housing. This—and the deceleration valve—was found on ALL V4 cars sold in the USA from 1970 onwards.

Simply unscrew the thermostatic switch from the thermostat housing adaptor, and screw in a 1/4" NPT plug, using No. 2 Permatex on the threads.

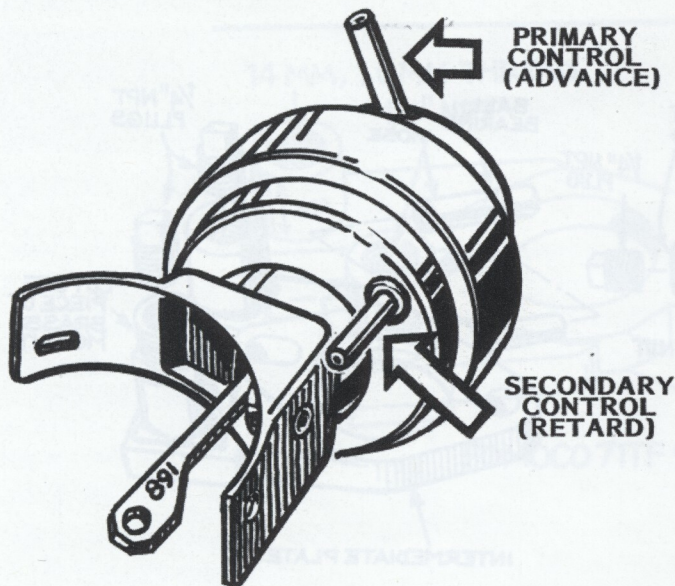
THE VACUUM CONTROL UNIT ON THE DISTRIBUTOR

The V4 cars sold in the USA from 1970 onward had a dual (advance/retard) unit installed on the distributor. This band-aid fix caused the engine to run



retarded a lot of the time, which meant it ran hotter, performed poorer and produced poorer fuel mileage than cars with advance only vacuum control. These units had an ADVANCE pipe on the OUTSIDE (away from the distributor), and a RETARD pipe on the INSIDE (next to the distributor) of the vacuum control "pot."

Make sure the ADVANCE side is working, and simply disconnect the RETARD side. Be sure to plug off the HOSE to the retard side on cars still using the FoMoCo carburetor.



NEXT TIME: The PCV system plumbing for the V4 when a Weber two-barrel carburetor is used.

Jack opened one of the first Saab dealerships in California. A professional artist, he owns and operates a Saab parts business.



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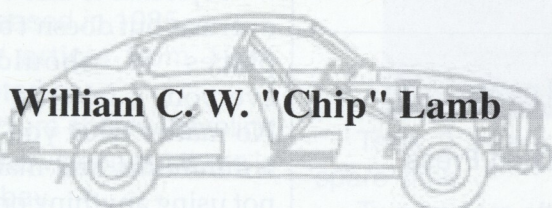
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Saab 9-5 and Its Drivers Top HLDI Safety Study

DETROIT – Drivers of the Saab 9-5 sedan and 9-5 SportWagon are among the safest group of drivers in the market. According to the recently published Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI) report, the Saab 9-5 sedan topped the luxury midsize category for relative frequency of injury insurance claims.

HLDI's study, covering model years 2001-2003, compares cars on the basis of cost of injuries sustained following on-road crashes. The study indicates the relative frequencies of injury compensation claims from an insurance company, per insured vehicle year.

Both the 9-5 sedan and SportWagon achieved a rating of "substantially better than average" for injury claims in the luxury midsize category. According to the HLDI formula, the Saab 9-5 sedan's top ranking for injury claims is 53 percent better than average, and the Saab 9-5 SportWagon's ranking is 39 percent better than average. Saab congratulates its drivers who significantly helped achieve these top scores.

Saab's real-life safety philosophy puts priority on systems and structures that help protect Saab occupants during a real-world collision. Although Saab conducts numerous laboratory crash tests and other tests on the 9-5, it is real-life collisions and their infinite variables that drive Saab safety engineers and their work.

One feature that distinguishes the Saab 9-5 from its competitors is the Saab Active Head Restraint (SAHR) system in the front seats. Investigations have shown that this system reduces the risk of whiplash to front-seat occupants in rear-end

collisions by as much as 75 percent, compared with older Saab vehicles without active head restraints.

A vehicle's safety performance is the product of many factors, including driver and occupant behavior, personal judgment and other variables. The design of the car also influences its real-life safety integrity. The 2004 HLDI data supports that when it comes to injury insurance claim rates, Saab and Saab drivers perform well together in the real world. For more information, the complete report can be found on the HLDI Internet Web Site at www.carsafety.org.

Insurance company claims for theft losses are also compared in the HLDI report, and once again, the Saab 9-5 sedan is the best in the luxury midsize class. With a "better than average" ranking, the 9-5 sedan suffered 60 percent fewer theft claims than other cars per insured vehicle year. The 9-5 SportWagon includes the same anti-theft protection as the sedan, but was not rated because of insufficient data.

And now the bad news:

From The Associated Press

General Motors announced that sales of its Saab brand fell 29.1 percent in November in the United States as sales of its 9-3 model dropped sharply.

Saab sold 2,452 vehicles in November, down from 3,600 a year ago, as 9-3 sales declined 37.6 percent to 1,549 cars. Sales of the 9-5 also dropped sharply, falling 37 percent to 613 vehicles sold. The recently introduced 9-2X all-wheel drive sold 290 vehicles.

"On The Column" Continued From Page 21.

One more thing, and actually a good tip. I keep getting questions about sealants to use in dressing gasket material. If the item originally had a paper gasket and you don't have the gasket in question, don't cheap out, rush or otherwise and use something out of a tube. Half the time it doesn't hold up for long, and much of the time it's pretty short lived. Argue with me about it later. For dressing water outlet, water pump and the bottoms of 2-stroke engines, I use Blue Hylomar. This is not a brand name, but a compound, which has no set up time and stays tacky long after going together. It also makes a good oil sealer for when you have to reuse that block plug on the back of your V4's balance shaft or camshaft. We would be eating Bratwurst and trinking Bier mit einen groBen Heil if it were not for Blue Hylomar, for Rolls Royce used it on the Merlins in WWII.

Hylomar is also not too hard to overuse, but doesn't blob up and get places it shouldn't, unlike everyone's favorite RTV Silicone. No matter what you use, keep it to a minimum, and make sure you're not using anything on head or valve cover gaskets, carburetor or intake gaskets – roughly anything coming in contact with a solvent (e.g. fuel) or which has a crush built into it.

That's all for 2004. See you in a decidedly better upcoming year. This last one has been beastly on this end but for my Saab family.

William C.W. "Chip" Lamb
West of Sweden SAAB
Richmond, VA

Dances With Saabs: Good Trade

Mikael Hemmingsen and George McElhinney recently swapped unusual Saabs. George gave up his stock 99 SSE (and a few dollars) for Mikael's decidedly not-stock chopped and customized 99. George sent us this information that Mikael provided from the builder's notes jotted in Swedish on a piece of paper along with photos that came with the car:

Original paint is what I call Jubilee Blue (from the Jubilee 96).

Current paint is a dark blue, darker than my LeMans 9000.

The front seats are from a 1990 or 1991 by the pattern on the leather.

The back seats are two front seats from a coupe. They fold forward, with a custom console between and around them.

Currently there is a black aftermarket carpet glued over the original blue carpet.

Whole lot of speakers, but no sound system. It was gone when Mikael got the car.

Started life as a 1972 99.

Nose is a tribute to the EV1, which was released in 1985.

Newspaper article from 1994 shows completed car.

Original picture shows Valvoline sticker on car, now gone but there is one in engine bay.

Car has POWERED BY CLARION AUDIO decal across back window.

Car was used in Clarion print advertising in mid 1990s.

Original picture shows door windows with limousine tint which is no longer there.

Car was created by Ove Larsson. 1995 photo shows he won the Mellbergs Stipendiatet (Mellbergs Prize, named for the designer of the EV1) given once a year for outstanding custom car building. Very prestigious award in Sweden.



Took 9 years to build in his 'spare' time.

Two owners after him unknown, then Mikael Hemmingsen and now George McElhinney.

George adds:

I have bought this car as a project. It was a winning show car, but has not been very well cared for since that life. I plan on rebuilding it into a show car along the same theme as the original builder, showing it as a future Saab, with emphasis on the Saab. As an example, I will probably replace the front seats with more modern ones with the active head rests. The flared fenders are rather early M3



inspired I think, so I may look outside Saab for inspiration, too. If I were going to campaign it only in Saab events I could simply clean it up, but as I expect to campaign it in America at American car shows in general (N.O.P.I., H.I.N., S.E.M.A. etc.), I can't promise to keep it 'bling' free.

232,566 is not a nice round number. It's not like 200,000 or 250,000 or even 225,000, but it's what was showing on Saabrina's odometer when the regeneration began. There was nothing wrong with her, I just wanted to replace some tired parts and make her faster than she already was.

I had kicked around a few ideas with my friend and mechanic, Mike Connelly, who had cared for Saabrina since the 150,000 mile mark. He had gotten to know her well, her little quirks and foibles. Mike suggested better breathing through larger turbo intake piping, a larger turbocharger and intercooler and a freer exhaust. I immediately agreed to all of his suggestions, which would add up to a net gain of at least 60 horsepower. We would have to replace the timing chain, which was original, and the head would need some attention, as it had never been off of the engine. Yes, that's right - the head had never been removed. The original headgasket still resided between the block and the cylinder head. It had begun to ooze at about 172,000, and now had opened up in several places, most notably at the exhaust manifold. Starting Saabrina after a few days rest gave vent to a sweet, sticky smell, sort of like a bag of Skittles left on a parcel shelf at noon on a typical July day in the Deep South. The gasket was leaking coolant directly into the manifold.

So, after fighting off intense separation anxiety and telling Saabrina (and reassuring myself) that this was for her own good, I left her in Mike's care on February 27, 2004. A few days later, Mike called me. "Have you ever thought about putting a 2.3 under the hood of your car?" This touched off a little war in the brainpan. The purist stepped up and argued that Saabrina had left Trollhattan with a 2.0 liter engine - to remain true to her origins, she should still have the same engine with which she arrived. Mike's next words sent the game into extra innings. "I'll bet we can get close to 300 horsepower out of the bigger engine." The lunatic then took over the argument. "300 horsepower!! Are you nuts? Go with the bigger engine!" It didn't take much more

thought to make a decision—a 2.3 liter turbo engine out of a much less fortunate 1994 9000 with only 50,000 miles, or the mildly worked over 2.0 liter with 232,000 miles?

Of course, we went with the 2.3.

Before Mike pulled the engine, he went down to a local speed shop and put Saabrina up on a dyno. The set up guy took one look at her odometer and had Mike sign a release. Once up on the dyno, Saabrina's engine, high mileage, blown headgasket and all, put 158 horsepower to the wheels.

I went down to the shop a few days later to watch the old engine come out from under the hood. We took the timing chain cover off of the engine. The chain was still within specification - no missing teeth, no slop, and no gunk on the chain. Mike promised to pickle and crate the engine and put it in the back shop in case I ever wanted to reinstall it in Saabrina or some future New Gen. Mike prepped the 2.3 and got it ready for installation.

In the interim, I ordered a set of springs from ScanWest and Mike ordered a set of Bilsteins. I had debated lowering her chassis for some time. I didn't want her to look like something out of "The Fast and the Furious," but I did want to lower her center of gravity for better handling. Mike once again counseled me on the choice. He had me look at Saabrina from the right front corner, where the top of her right front spring had broken off. It lowered her about three inches. I had to agree that one really had to look carefully to spot a difference.

The new engine went in without a hitch. Mike replaced the water pump (which, while not original, was creeping up there in miles) the radiator (which wasn't leaking, but was also original) the clutch (which had 80,000 miles on it and was getting noisy) and installed a new Vigggen intercooler. He also installed a bigger blowoff valve, which vented to the atmosphere. I wanted to advertise Saabrina's newfound power, and this was one of the best ways to let those Honda driving poseurs know that they should move out of the way, and quickly.

When we got down to the suspension components, we ran into a

glitch. The Bilsteins fit Saabrina like a glove, but the Eibach springs wouldn't fit her front end. ScanWest had assured me that the Eibachs would fit an early New Gen. Unfortunately, the Eibachs would have fit an early 9-3 better. So, back to ScanWest the springs went, to await arrival of a set of B&G springs that "absolutely, positively" would fit an early New Gen.

While waiting for the springs, Mike and his assistant measured Saabrina for the larger turbo air intake pipes. I was quickly learning that, from the factory, the engine and turbocharger were, for all intents and purposes, strangled. Even the intercooler was puny by performance standards. We ended up installing custom 3-inch aluminum pipes and a large K&N filter for better breathing.

Finally, the springs arrived. The turbocharger was installed. I came down for a look and Mike flipped me her keys. "Take her out for a blast and see what you think."

The first three miles were ecstasy. Saabrina took off like a rocket and the power curve didn't start to drop off until I neared three digits on the speedometer. Then, suddenly, the engine coughed, hitched, and started to run poorly. I took my foot off of the accelerator. The engine smoothed out a little bit, and when I happened to glance into the rearview mirror my heart nearly stopped. The only thing visible in the rearview was a huge cloud of white smoke. My brain went through the usual checklist of possibilities—blown head gasket, cracked head, wrist pin through the block, ad nauseam. I started looking around for a place to stop and exit the highway when Saabrina made my decision. Her warning chimes went off and the oil lamp lit up in the dash. I found the breakdown lane and stopped the engine.

Walking down a grassy verge and crawling over a fence to a local Ford dealer, I called Mike with the bad news. I had broken Saabrina. Mike promised to send a tow truck and told me that he was on his way to rescue me from the roadside. As usual, he had already diagnosed the problem before he had even opened the hood.

"It's the turbocharger. Nothing will dump a sump quite like a bad turbo." Indeed.

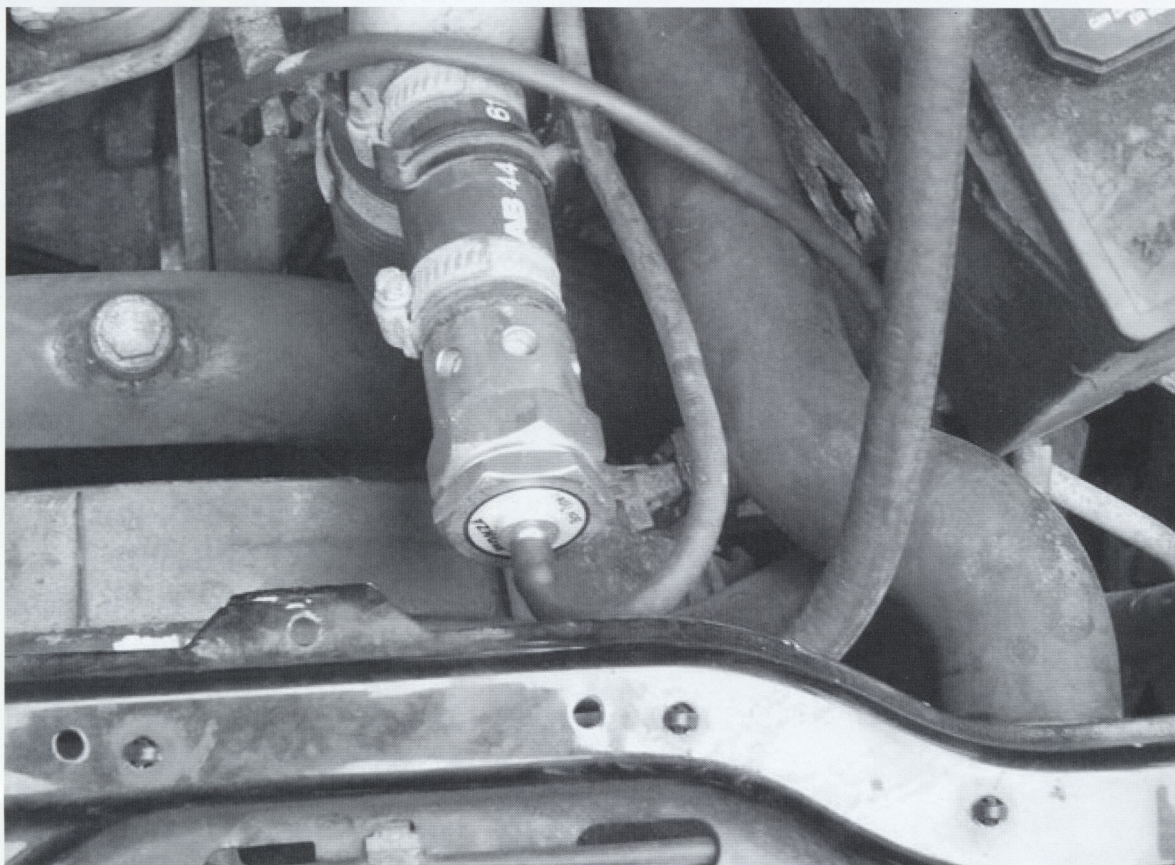
jectors in the fuel rail. I wanted to see how she ran before I ordered a new Trionic box. For that reason, we

striction catalyst and a Flowmaster muffler. Capped off with a new Saab tailpipe extension, the new system gives Saabrina a deep and rumbling voice.

Next spring we'll have the custom Trionic box installed and I'll have Mike pull the gearbox which is starting to show its age and is due for a rebuild. The new hydraulic clutch conversion kit will go in at the same time.

Right now, Saabrina dynos out at 185 horsepower, which is what the old 2.0 liter was rated at the factory. When the new Trionic box is installed, we'll dial the turbo boost up to 17 PSI and install the new injectors. We should get close to 280 horses at the wheels, if the calculations are correct. And drivability?

Unless you have a



Big blow-off valve, for all to hear. Better than a horn! Photo by the author.

The turbocharger was a stock T-25 bored out to a T-28 with modified Nissan Skyline vanes, the best compromise between turbo lag and a strong power curve in the midrange. The turbo had come out of Mike's late 9000 CD and had less than 1,000 miles on it. Mike sent the turbocharger out and a few days later, we got the postmortem report.

The vanes on the compressor side of the turbocharger were too heavy for the spindle supporting them. The spindle broke, pulling out the internal oil seal. From there, it was just a short hike to an empty sump and the side of the road. The turbo housing was still good, and the turbo could be rebuilt. The turbocharger guy installed a thicker spindle and shaved some weight off of the vanes on the compressor side of the turbocharger. All was soon well in turbochargerland.

Mike finished up by putting a set of larger bore, balanced fuel in-

left the turbo boost at 12 PSI.

Finally, on May 17, Saabrina was officially completed. She still took off like a rocket and gave anything Japanese or American a good view of her taillights. The blowoff valve let anything within earshot know that she was around and not to be trifled with.

But we still had to do some tweaking. The injectors had a nasty habit of dumping fuel into the intake faster than was necessary, resulting in some embarrassing backfiring. This also made Saabrina incredibly grouchy when her engine was cold - stumbling, grumbling, misfiring. Mike put some good stock injectors back in the rail and the problem disappeared. A bolt fell out of the turbocharger, causing a raucous rasp. That problem was easily cured. My old friend Dave Holzinger installed a new exhaust from the downpipe back. The new system is a 2-inch job with a low re-

very tender backside, there is no change in the way Saabrina rides. Handling is much improved. She does tend to run out of breath at a relatively low speed (around 95 m.p.h.) but the new Trionic box should cure that.

I used to dream of one day owning a Viggen. Now, I'm just wondering how we can get dual exhausts and another turbocharger into Saabrina...

Linnea lives in the wilds of New Hampshire with her Saabs, a 1977 99 Turbo Test Car (Emma), a 1978 Production 99 Turbo (Emmy), a 1980 Classic 900 Turbo 5-Door (Astrid), a 1992 9000 (the infamous Snigel) and a 1995 900 SE Turbo Coupe with 251,690 miles (the lovely Saabrina).

Club News

Great Lakes Saab Club Color Tour

In mid-October, various members of the Great Lakes Saab Club met in SE Michigan to celebrate the fall colors. A total of

9 cars from various parts of the state enjoyed the winding roads and sightseeing stops from the route created by Suzanne Czurylo and David Hogberg. In spite of the rain, we enjoyed some beautiful colors, a stop at a

farmers market and a great dinner in Brighton at the Stillwater Grille. We also enjoyed a full range of Saabs, from a 9-5 to various NG900s and C900s to Steve Mancuso's 1964 96, which is driven daily! We look forward to our next event in February and invite other Saab enthusiasts in Michigan and surrounding states to join us.

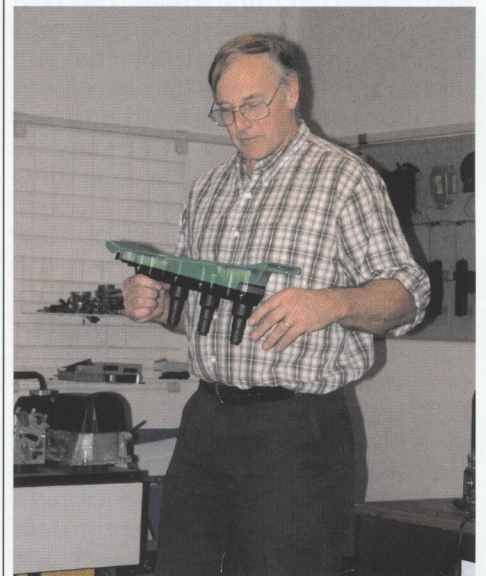
Jim Laman
GLSC



(Top) The group gathers for the event.
(Bottom) David Schneider's 9-5 gliding along the back roads of SE Michigan. *Photos by the author.*

New Jersey Saab Owner's Club Tech Session

Saab's head of technical training, John Moss, recently hosted the latest in a 7-year series of technical training sessions. Larry West of the New Jersey Saab Owners' Club coordinated the session in Wallingford, CT. This was perhaps the last session to be held there, as Saab is consolidating its training facilities.



John Moss speaks of the intricacies of the various direct ignition modules.



Larry West (L) and John Moss (R) take questions from the audience.

The most recent session's theme was, "Bring your questions."

I had the honor of driving George McElhinney's vinyl-roofed 99 SSE to the session. It's slow, but a much kinder, gentler ride than my Sonett! George drove home from the session in a new (for him) Saab, but I'll leave George to explain that story, on page 33.

On the Merritt Parkway during the ride up I got blasted into the weeds by Lewis Eig driving his

two-stroke Sonett. It's one thing to hear a static stroker engine rev, and quite another to have it snark past you at speed, punching a hole of din in a quiet fall morning. During a break at the session I got to drive Larry Feer's two-stroke Sonett 'work in progress,' and as icing on the cake, I hitched a ride home with Lewis.



Gary and John tear down a 99 transmission.



Sonett snouts. Larry Feer's II (L) and Bruce Turk's II V-4 (R).

Using the tech center's tools, Gary Stottler brought and tore down a 99 transmission, James Fox replaced a turbo in his 9000 with another turbo, and the more than 45 attendees got to watch it all as well as hear John tell of Saab's technical past, present and possibly future. It was a great day!

Seth D. Bengelsdorf



You're not losing a 99, you're gaining a 99. George and Mikael Hemmingsen exchange Saabs in the parking lot.



Prior to the tech session, the author's driveway looks like a vintage Saab meet! Photos by the author.

Classified Ads

SAAB CLASSIFIED AD RATES:

Ads offering Saabs or parts for sale, or wanted, are available to members and non-members. Ad rates are for 25 words EXCLUDING your name, telephone number, address, etc. Extra words are charged at \$1.00 per 5 extra words. Classified ads MUST be prepaid. Ad rates are as follows:

TYPE OF SALE	Members	Non-Members
CAR	\$10.00	\$15.00
PARTS	\$5.00	\$7.50
WANTED	\$2.00	\$3.00
COMMERCIAL	\$15.00	\$15.00

DEADLINE: 25th of every odd numbered month for inclusion in the next issue.

Mail ads with full payment to:

SB Productions

Saab Classified Ad
30 Puritan Drive
Port Chester, NY 10573

Autos for Sale

2001 Saab 9-5 Aero.

Color: Metallic Gray - Trans: Auto - Mileage: 45,000 - Price: \$20,900.

Owned by a non-smoker, this vehicle is clean inside and out. The gray metallic exterior paint is in excellent overall condition and the moonroof of this vehicle has a sporty, yet refined appearance. All mechanical components are in superb working condition. The interior is an elegant tan leather with attractive wooden dash accents. Equipped with power, memory, and heated (front and rear) seats, this vehicle has plenty of passenger room, and is quite comfortable. This is your chance to buy a gorgeous Aero that has been kept in great condition. This car was serviced at a Saab dealer at every 3,000 miles and other intervals. This vehicle is smoke/pet free and does not have any prior collision damage. The engine and transmission run smooth. The exterior is bright and still shines new. The interior is in near new condition. No rips, tears, or wear on the interior. The car looks, runs and drives great. Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds:

<http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/9-5.html#041206vadam>

Contact: Vincent Adams, Lansing, MI.
E-mail: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=041206vadam>
Phone: (517) 272-0475.

NINES can also place your ad on The Saab Network (Internet classified ad) for you. Include the TSN ad rate along with your NINES Classified fee: \$25.00 for cars, \$15.00 for parts, \$10 for wanted, for up to 150 words. We can also scan and submit your photograph at no extra cost. Please enclose SASE if you want your photographs returned.

1997 Saab 900 SE Turbo Convertible.

Color: Black - Trans: Manual - Mileage: 121,000 - Price: \$7,600.

Great car!! Black w/cream interior, Clarion 6 speaker AM/FM 6-disc cd changer, cassette, power windows, heated seats w/memory, keyless entry/alarm, fog lights. Beautiful black top.

Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds:

<http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/>
Contact: Stanley Martin, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA.

E-mail: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=041129smart>
Phone: (310) 833-3303.

1993 Saab 900 S Sedan.

Color: Dark Green - Trans: Manual - Mileage: 48,500 - Price: \$6,500.

This 4-door 900 is in very good condition with no rust. One of the safest cars on the road with 4 wheel, anti-lock brakes and airbag, 5 -speed manual transmission, power seats, locks and windows. The interior condition is excellent. The seats are smooth and supple and free of tears and cracking. The paint is in great condition, has deep luster and is free of any significant dents or scratches. I'm the second owner and bought the car with 37,000 miles at which time the center muffler, the fan belts and alternator C-s bushing were replaced. Two new tires in front, new battery, and new AC hoses and evaporator cooling. Car has been in no accidents. Known issues: radio antenna broken, small dent on rear bumper, headlight washers not working, ceiling lining sagging.

Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds:

<http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/900-93.html#041206gcast>

Contact: Guillermo Castilleja, Washington, DC.

E-mail: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=041206gcast>
Phone: (202) 462-1051.

1984 Saab 900 Turbo.

Color: Silver - Trans: Manual - Mileage: 134,000 - Price: \$2,200.

One owner car, non smoker. Rarely driven past five years, have records of parts replacements, have put some work into it but still needs a few things done. Overall good condition. no rust. can answer any questions you have.

This is a much loved car that I prefer go to a saab enthusiast.

Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds:

<http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/900-93.html#041022msmit>

Contact: Michael Smith, Atlanta, GA.

E-mail: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=041022msmit>

Phone: (404) 256-1411.

Wanted

1993 900S Convertible

Automatic Transmission Valve Body.

Looking for automatic transmission valve body for my 1993 Saab 900S convertible.

Thanks!

Contact: Mike Sheppard, Calgary AB CANADA

E-mail: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=040831mshep>

Phone: (403) 680-2868.

Wanted: 1992 900 in Platana Gray.

Looking for a Hatchback for 1992 3 door 900 in Platana Gray (Color Code 228). It does not have to have glass or any trim pieces or lenses although must have all cable and wiring intact and UNCUT. These were common on 1992 and 1993 900s and Turbos. Paint must be in good condition with no former body work or rust. Prefer without spoiler although that is not a deal breaker, but no Whale Tails please. Color and condition most important. Will pick up if within 2-3 hours driving distance of Northern New Jersey.

Contact: George Valentini, Montclair, NJ.

E-mail: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=041109gvale>

Phone: (973) 746-2860.

Classic 900 Parts for Sale.

1985-1993 engines, transmissions, leather seats, hoods, rims, complete cars and rebuildable cars, many parts available. Call for details.

Contact: Christen Szeg, Chelsea, VT.

E-mail: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=040901cszeg>

Phone: (802) 889-9489.

Parts and Miscellaneous

Classic 900 Parts for Sale.

Plastic snap-on convertible top cover hard cover pieces (gray) for 900T convertible. With storage bag - never used.
Also, Nocturne Blue 234H touch-up pencil set #382 937 000 - never used.
Asking for both: \$150.00 OBO.
Contact: Richard A. Genau.
Phone: (716) 688-5046 days, (716) 833-0334 evenings.

1986-93 900 Tune Up Kit.

Oil Filter Mann. Air Filter Mann. Rotor and Cap OEM Bosch. Plugs NGK. Plug wires OEM. Oil drain plug and copper washer. Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds:
<http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/parts.html#041024wsadl>
Contact: William Sadler, Santee, CA.
Email: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=041024wsadl>
Phone: (619) 922-1105.

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Phone: (541) 779-0731.
E-mail: jackashcraft@charter.net.

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Los Angeles, CA 90034
310-666-2406
saabtech@pacbell.net

It was a very hectic season with four hill climbs and three road course events as well as a visit to the Carlisle Import and Kit Car weekend with the Central Pennsylvania Saab Club.

There were numerous anxious moments! A distributor rotor screw came out on the course at Sebring - Rose Valley Hill Climb where the aroma of burning electrical components claimed the charging system and the starter without any actual fire! At the Giant's Despair Hillclimb a perfectly running car started acting as if there was a fuel related problem only to find that the rubbing block for the brand new set of Bosch points had cracked causing a very interesting "variable" point gap while running, testing the experimental 44.5 MM Solex 1BBL carburetor. This is not a carburetor to sit and idle around with! At Elkhart Lake the car shattered the friction surface part of the factory GT pressure plate, which I fixed. In less than 24 hours the car broke a piece off the #1 cylinder's piston. At VIR a very violent spin into turn #1 caused the freewheeling to stick which was later resolved. And in spite of these trials the car still performs wonderfully! You might be saying to yourself, "Wow, that is a lot of stuff to go wrong." Considering that the car is 44 years old and I am not being very gentle with it, I'd say that the things that broke were overdue by probably 30 years!

A number of you have been asking, "What happened to going to the Vintage 24 hours of Lemans? The car was ready, a complete spares package prepared. A change in Saab's leadership as well as GM's intervention in Saab's finances literally stopped the previously arranged shipping of the car to and from Europe. We tried desperately and almost got there! It was not for a lack of desire.

For those of you who may be curious about who races vintage Saabs, please check the vintage Saab racing groups Web Site <www.vintage-saab.com/vsrg> or shortly my site will be up at www.vintage-saab.com/srr. And for you ladies who enjoy your Saabs, please check the VSRG site! Mary Anne Fieux has been co-driving my orange 1960 93F in SCCA solo 1 (hill climbs) events and now has her full competition credentials! She is doing wonderfully and has shown interest in obtaining her own 2-stroke Saab race car! If you are racing a vintage Saab we would like to include you! Let us know who you are, what you are driving and where.

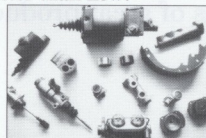
2005 is already in the works here! The 93F is prepared already for Sebring's historic 12 hour week's races in March, and some updates in suspension as well as "more power" are in the works for the next season!

2004 was a very successful year. I thank everyone for the wonderful messages and encouraging words at the events where Saab enthusiasts were able to come out and spectate.

Chuck Christ
1960 93F #251
AKA "that darn orange Saab"

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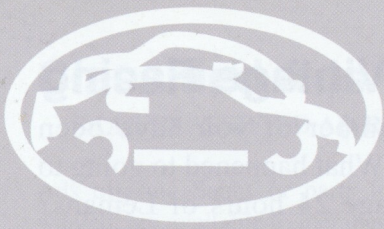
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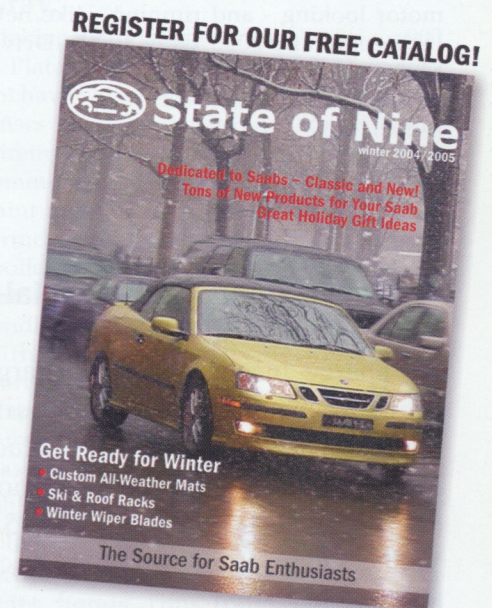
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