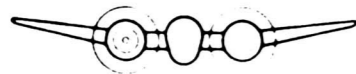


# SAAB



## SC1 ROAD TEST:

**C**HANCES ARE, if you own a Saab 93B, you're the kind of person who goes places and does things. It's that kind of car. The B model is very much like former models, most of the changes being by way of appointments; but each new feature is a valuable addition to an already very functional machine.

Let's suppose you go to a place where accommodations are unavailable, making it necessary to sleep in the car. A kit is available that allows you to shift the seats and set up a bed, suitable for two (or three, crowded). The cost: \$7.50. If, at the same time, you need large stowage space, the seats can be either shifted or removed, providing storage area extending from the trunk lid to the rear of the front seats.

This is the part we appreciated most. When we decided to road test the Saab 93B, we realized that performance figures tell half the story; the other half is possibly more important — how well does the car do the job for which it is intended, and can you have fun doing it? With this in mind, we took our Saab on a ski trip. Since only two were to be aboard, we removed the rear seat completely and left it at home. There was room for seven foot skis to rattle inside the trunk, and plenty more for boots, sweaters, parkas, and the remaining poundage and bulkage that invariably accompanies such an expedition.

Once on the Thruway, we got to love the Saab. Designed by aircraft engineers for transporting passengers comfortably in very cold Sweden, the cockpit is so air-tight that the heater doesn't function properly unless a window is opened to allow some of the pressure to bleed off. In addition, the engine is thermostated at 180°; however, in really cold weather, a chain inside the cockpit pulls a screen over the air intake, cutting off the cold air to the engine compartment and helping to raise the temperature to 200°. The air that comes from this heater smacks of a blast furnace.

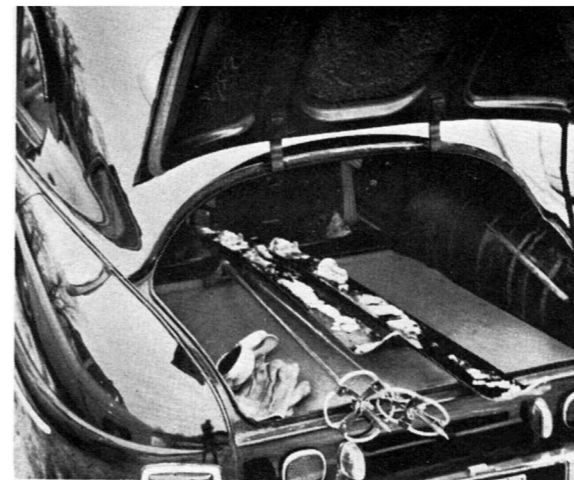
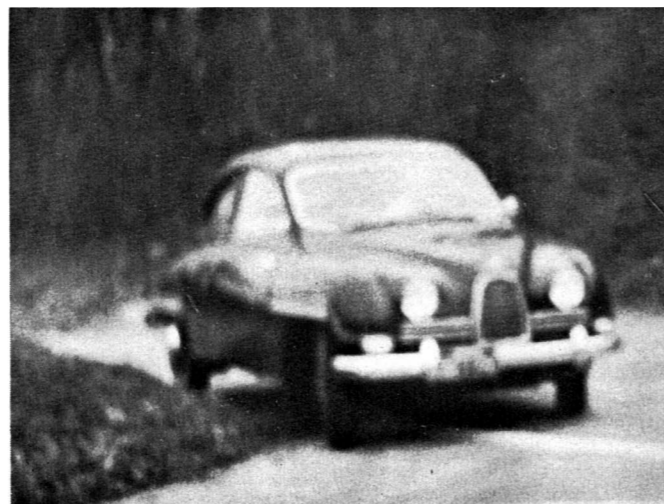
No matter how fast we went, there was no wind noise. Before the body design was finalized for production, a prototype was wind tunnel tested. This consideration for aerodynamics is appreciated in direct proportion to the speed; at the top end, there is no noticeable wind resistance or drag. Tracking, even in severe cross wind, is excellent.

The engine is a remarkably responsive and quiet powerplant, possibly because it's balanced both statically and dynamically, and dampened for torsional vibration. Over-revving is impossible; the manual states: "Under favorable conditions, such as slight down-gradients or following winds, the endurance of the engine can be utilized to drive at speeds considerably in excess of the car's maximum level-ground, still-air speed without danger of damage to the engine." In other words, just stand on it, boys — you can't hurt it.

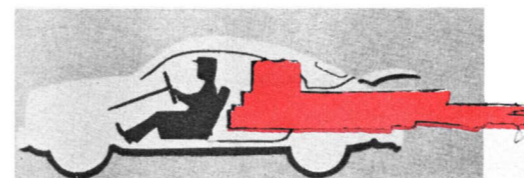
Though the two-stroke engine could well be noisy, exhaust flows through two silencers that maintain a far from offensive noise level. The gear box is a three-speed unit controlled from a conventional-pattern steering-post shift. A free-wheeling pawl allows shifting without clutching, as long as the car is in motion. Foot pedals are conventional, placed slightly to the right of the driver's feet. The emergency brake is placed between the bucket seats, where it can be reached when turning in a close arc. Cutting the wheels, applying power, and engaging the hand brake, locks up the rear wheels and allows the front end to pivot around them, cutting the Saab's turning radius to something like seventeen feet. We had no difficulty U-turning on double-lane concrete roads.

The foot brake pedal requires considerable pressure to stop from any speed, probably because the linings are hard; but the necessity for this added pressure is more than compensated for by the efficiency of the brakes. On our brake-fade test — ten successive crash stops from 50 mph — we registered approximately 2/3 g on each stop, and neither pedal pressure nor pedal travel were noticeably increased. The brakes did not deteriorate. (Continued on page 52)

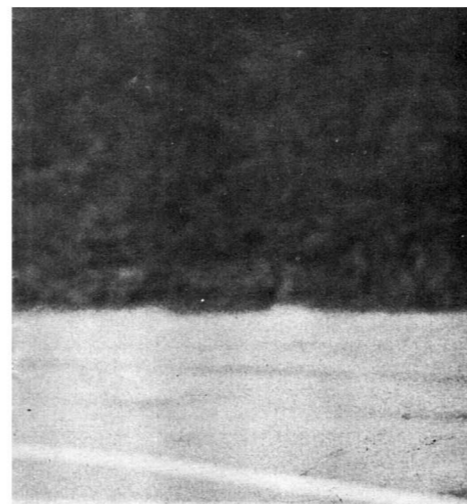
*Aerodynamics are excellent; prototype body was wind tunnel tested. Fast turns come flat and easy, as power applied to the front wheels pull the rear around.*



*Rear seats can be pivoted up or removed, providing cavernous trunk space. Seven-foot skis slide in easily. Optional bed kit transforms the Saab to a sleeper car.*



*Front bucket seats give lateral support; rear seats have three-way adjustment, are "full-time" seats. Safety belts come over shoulder; released, never contact floor.*



### SAAB 93b

Price ..... \$1895  
 Distributor ..... SAAB Motors, Inc.  
 405 Park Ave.  
 New York 22, N. Y.

### PERFORMANCE

**TOP SPEED:**  
 Two-way average ..... 70 mph

**ACCELERATION:**

From zero to	Seconds
30 mph	6.2
40 mph	11.5
50 mph	18.7
60 mph	28.5
Standing 1/4 mile	23.7
Speed at end of quarter	55 mph

**SPEEDOMETER CORRECTION:**

Indicated	Actual
30	26
40	36
50	45
60	55
70	64

**FUEL CONSUMPTION:**  
 High-speed driving (over 60 mph) . 27.5 mpg  
 Oil consumption ..... 1 qt per 300 mi

**BRAKING EFFICIENCY:**  
 10 successive emergency stops from 50 mph, just short of locking wheels. Registered approximately 2/3 g on all stops. No additional pedal travel or pressure was noticeable.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**POWER UNIT:**

Type	3 cylinder, water-cooled
Valve Arrangement	None; two-stroke ports
Bore & Stroke	2.59 x 2.87 in (66 x 72.9mm)
Bore/Stroke Ratio	0.91/1
Displacement	46 cu in (748cc)
Compression Ratio	7.3/1
Carburetion by	One down draft Solex 40A1
Max. Power	38 bhp @ 5000 rpm
Max. Torque	52 lb-ft @ 2000 rpm

**DRIVE TRAIN:**

Transmission ratios	
I	3.31
II	1.54
III	1.00
Final drive ratio	5.2
Axle torque taken by	Transverse links

**CHASSIS:**

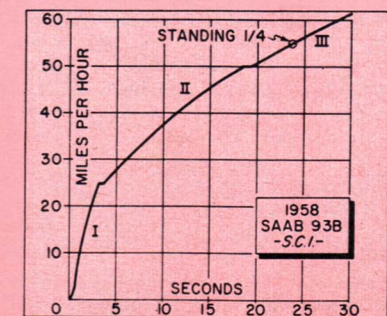
Wheelbase	98 in
Tread, front and rear	48 in
Suspension, front	Coil springs, transverse links, Stabilizer bar
Suspension, rear	Coil springs, U-shaped center-pivot axle
Shock absorbers	Telescopic
Steering type	Rack and pinion
Steering wheel turns	2 1/4 L to L; 14/1 ratio
Turning diameter	18 ft (or less)
Brake type	Hydraulic
Brake lining area	90 sq ins
Tire size	5.50 x 15
Rim width (outside)	4 ins

**GENERAL:**

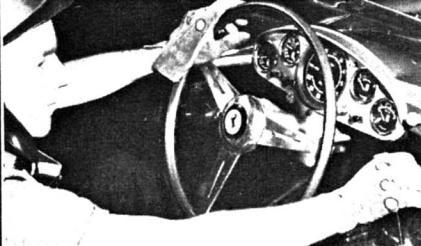
Length	157 ins
Width	61 ins
Height	57 ins
Weight, test car	1760 lb
Weight distribution, F/R, with driver	59/41
Fuel capacity	9 1/2 U. S. gallons

**RATING FACTORS:**

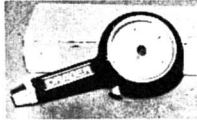
Bhp per cu. in	0.83
Bhp per sq. in piston area	1.55
Torque (lb-ft per cu in)	1.3
Pounds per bhp—test car	46.3
Piston speed @ max bhp	2400 fpm
Brake lining area per ton (test car)	132 sq in



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## Competition ACCESSORIES

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Studio City 5, California

## KILO RECORD

(Continued from page 48)

on its aluminum channel frame. For these runs it burned a mixture of 15 ounces of benzole to the gallon of nitromethane (fuels and lubricants were supplied by Mobil), leaving in its wake a stench of burnt gunpowder. It had a more fiercely staccato, more physically painful exhaust rap than that of the blown Chrysler. While the Rice car could only get a tire bite with 6.75-in. wide slicks on its rear wheels, the less potent *Slipper* was shod with Firestone Monzas all around. Auburn-haired Cortopassi tooled his car to a new standing kilo average of 116.43 mph, a 10.4 per cent improvement over the existing record. His highest speed through Riley's auxiliary trap at the end of the course was 168.85 mph.

During the final runs of the day both cars ran into and against whipping winds up to 12 mph in velocity. Because of the stability of the chassis and much to the credit of the consummate skill of the drivers, neither car ever approached an even remotely precarious attitude. Under gathering storm clouds hopes of attacking the standing mile records were abandoned and within a half hour of the measurement of the engines' cylinders a rainstorm broke which flooded the course and all of Southern California for days.

Neither of the record cars' engines has been on a dynamometer. The Rice-Hartelt engine hasn't been because the dyno owner hasn't been found who will let it on his machine. On straight methanol it must be producing between 550 and 600 bhp. Beyond that it's just a question of how steeply you tilt the nitro can, and the engine has been run successfully on an 85% nitro blend. The Cortopassi engine, built by the car's sponsor, the Chev-specialist Capitol Speed Shop of Sacramento, pulls a

safely estimated 340 bhp on methanol. On 90 per cent nitro, you figure it. It, too, is too much for the local dynos.

Rice's car is poorly streamlined and its open axles and wheels create tremendous drag, a penalty the more streamlined Stuck Auto Union did not have to pay. With enclosed wheels and running gear the Rice car's potential is of course great. The *Slipper's* body shell with enclosed cockpit is much smoother and gives less handicap to Hans Stuck's hillclimb car with open wheels, with which the fallen Class C record was set. But each of these American cars, built with notable skill from production car parts, is capable of much more speed. They are far from being unique. Rather, they are representative of the whole populous class of first-rate American dragsters. They have been given their first opportunity to prove their mettle and there is every reason to believe that, given the opportunity, these and other cars of the type can capture a great many lines in the FIA record book.

In addition to the Rice and Cortopassi teams, USAC, FIA, NHRA, Mobil, Firestone Champion and many others have labored to bring these new records into being. What is their excuse? Trite as it may sound, improving the breed is the answer. In the realms of timing, fuel, tires, engine components, fuel injection, supercharging—in just about any really functional area of the automobile that you can name—valuable new knowledge has been acquired through these record runs.

Remaining next in line for conquest by U.S. sprint specialists is Auto Union's World Record for the standing mile. It is hoped that the setting of the new kilo records will influence the FIA in recognizing a new distance over which world and international records can be set: the quarter mile. If this comes to pass the American sport of drag racing will be lifted to a new level of legitimacy and recognition both at home and abroad.

Griff Borgeson

## SAAB

(Continued from page 31)

Handling an automobile with front wheel drive, however, is a lot different from handling one with "conventional" rear wheel drive. The steering works off a very responsive low-ratio wheel, with understeer built into the handling. On twisty roads, the best procedure is to apply throttle. In this way, the front wheels literally pull the remainder of the car around behind them. Of course, there is the tendency, on a road abundant with bends, to build up velocity.

On the Thruway, we had one of those little adventures that every small displacement engine owner will appreciate. Cruising in the 60-65 mph range, we were passed by a new Saratoga that was roaring up the road. Stopping into the next service area for breakfast, we not only noticed the Chrysler parked there, but once inside discovered that his tactics were the talk of the breakfast crowd. We ate quickly and left slightly ahead of him; but after about ten miles, the snout of the Saratoga again loomed up in our rear view mirror.

This time we held about seventy—not enough to keep him from passing, but enough to make him work at it. He passed. For the next forty miles, our Saab was flat out, up and down the hills. Several times, at the bottom of downgrades, our speedo needle hung on the peg indicating at least an honest-to-goodness 87 mph. At the bottom of every hill we gained on him, but amid a puff of black smoke from his tail pipe, he out-torqued us up the next hill. On one of our passes, he let us go by, signalling with a wave of his hand, "Go ahead, I've had enough!" As we went by, our co-driver held up a large cardboard, hastily inscribed with lipstick: "33 horsepower!" (We cheated a bit. This is the DIN rating). Demoralized, he dropped further and further back, disappearing in the distance. We're willing to bet the next service area buzzed about that little black 'furrin' car, probably called a Sa-a-ab (as in cab). We smiled as we realized that by bugging him, we'd forced him into the ten mpg fuel range, while by pushing our car, we averaged something like 25 mpg. It could be that the only reason he backed off was that he was running low on fuel!

(Continued on page 60)

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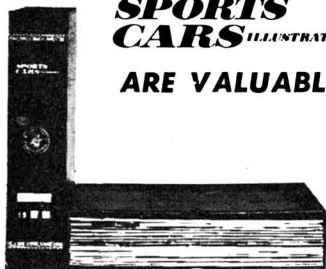
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## SAAB

(Continued from page 52)

Leaving the Thruway, we had forty miles of twisty, treacherous road to go. We made excellent time, held up only by the few who feel the purchase price of their car entitles them to the middle half of the road. We hesitated to pass one new sedan, of a make held in considerable esteem by those who own them, because it was wallowing and sliding so badly that we were afraid he would break loose and slide into us as we passed. This fellow, with about 300 inches of displacement and almost 200 horses per passenger, was holding up our Saab!

Arriving at the approach to the ski slopes—a mile-long upgrade with a base of ice covered by several inches of snow—we were confronted by a myriad of cars in different states of immobility. We picked our way between them, frequently stopping and restarting on the slick surface. At one point, where two cars were stuck on the two-lane road, we took to the edges. The two right wheels dropped off in the deep snow, sliding us on the belly pan, but we pulled back on the road and drove up the rest of the way.

The Saab is obviously a remarkably well-built car. The gauge of the body metal is heavy, with many of the stress areas, such as at edges of the windows, welded. There is a tubular steel roll bar across the roof and each car is undercoated in sections during assembly. The dash panel is metal, stressed in such a way that it will collapse upon impact from inside the cockpit. I was told that the fiancée of a Saab engineer in Sweden slammed into the panel, leaving the imprint of her nose in the metal, but her nose didn't break! She should have taken the time to fasten the excellent and very comfortable safety belt.

Saab's safety belts fasten to the body frame; they're sturdy, not the kind that you snap on to the upholstery. The belt passes over the left shoulder of the driver (the right shoulder of the passenger), joining the buckle section that comes up from between the bucket seats. This belt secures the shoulders as well as the waist, and is installed so that it never touches the floor. It's an extra, but Saab extras come easy.

For example: How about a nice quick hop-up, for five more horses? Various size carburetor venturi inserts and high-speed jets are available, and can be changed in

ten minutes by anyone who owns a wrench and a screwdriver. By installing bigger passages, the richness of the mixture is unchanged, however more of it can be introduced. Cost: two dollars for the venturi, fifty cents for the jet!

When we discussed this with Chris Custer, Saab service representative, we explored the possibilities of a man installing a high-economy setup for his wife to take shopping during the week, and on Friday night, before he packed off on a 400 mile ski trip, changing back to a larger venturi and bigger jet for more go. We asked him if this was feasible.

Chris drove into the garage and took off his tie, but he left his white shirt on, merely rolling up his sleeves. He timed the car, adjusted the points, changed the plugs, and installed and removed two or three different venturi-jet combinations. (We kept the "regular" combination for performance testing). When finished, he washed his hands and rolled down his sleeves. His shirt wasn't soiled.

However, the Saab is not designed as a do-it-yourself-service car. Timing is critical on a two-stroke engine, and unless it is hitting "on the head", fuel consumption will suffer tremendously. The Saab is timed by measuring the hundredths of a millimeter the piston is below top-dead-center. The #2 spark plug is replaced by a metal insert with a hole drilled through the center. A gauge with a rod, the same diameter as the drilled hole, seats on the insert, and the rod, hitting the top of the piston, records the distance. Since this method overcomes errors due to wear, it is extremely accurate.

The Saab merchandising program is built on solid service. Once a dealer is franchised, he must send a mechanic to Saab service school at Hingham, Mass. If he doesn't, he doesn't receive any more cars. This depot also stocks spares for several hundred cars, available quickly and at moderate cost. A rebuilt block, including crank, pistons and head, costs \$149.50; a factory-warranted block, complete as before but also with carburetor, distributor and manifolds, costs \$299.50 exchange.

All in all, the 93B incorporates an awful lot of things that most small car owners like to have in their cars. The \$1895 purchase price gives you room for four full-size people, massive stowage space, heater, comfortable seats, durability, and plenty of outright economy. And if you want to race in the 750 cc class you can probably win, unless another Saab beats you.

—Len Griffing

## PORSCHE

(Continued from page 59)

at the right.

The offending interior light has been removed from top dead center on the dash board, leaving it with a somewhat blank look. Now there are two of them, individually controlled and/or automatic, one above each door post. Sealed beams do not seem really at home in their containers either here or in the VW. The pattern ahead seems fuzzier while light to the

side is much reduced. Full positive marks for the headlight flasher button in the horn ring, an idea others should copy.

The fully reclining seats always win praise—and perhaps a few cries of surprise from the unwary. This year they are much firmer than before—less opulent, but with better lateral support. This pleased most yet annoyed others. Leg room can still be a bit of a problem for the driver. Here's how. Though the long seat travel assures plenty of fore and aft room (is there any other car where a six footer can't even reach the toe board?), the driver's left foot has only a small space for resting and even this is too far to the right.