

[] Check box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instructions 1(b).

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[] Form 3 Holdings Reported
[X] Form 4 Transactions Reported

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(f) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person*
Benton, William P.

(Last) (First) (Middle)

Parklane Towers West, Suite 1610
3 Parklane Boulevard

(Street)

Dearborn MI 48126

(City) (State) (Zip)

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol

Sonic Automotive, Inc. ("SAH")

3. IRS or Social Security Number of Reporting Person (Voluntary)

4. Statement for Month/Year

12/99

5. If Amendment, Date of Original (Month/Year)

6. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)

- [X] Director [] 10% Owner
[] Officer (give title below)
[] Other (specify below)

7. Individual or Joint/Group Reporting

(check applicable line)

- [X] Form Filed by One Reporting Person
[] Form Filed by More than One Reporting Person

Table 1 -- Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

Table with 6 columns: 1. Title of Security, 2. Transaction Date, 3. Transaction Code, 4. Securities Acquired or Disposed of, 5. Amount of Securities, 6. Ownership Form. Includes sub-headers for Direct/Indirect, Beneficial, and Ownership details.

<S>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>
Class A Common Stock	1/27/99	P	1,000	A	\$10.00		D
Class A Common Stock	6/11/99	P	300	A	\$13.875		D
Class A Common Stock	6/11/99	P	500	A	\$13.6875		D
Class A Common Stock	6/11/99	P	700	A	\$13.9375	2,500	D

</TABLE>

If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see instruction 4(b) (v).

(Over)
SEC 2270 (9-96)

Form 5 (continued)

Table 11 -- Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

<TABLE>						
<CAPTION>						
1. Title of and Amount	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title of
Underlying Security (Instr. 3) (Instr. 3 and 4)	Derivative Security	Day/Year)	(Instr. 8)	Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	Date (Month/Day/Year)	of
Amount or Number of	Shares			(A) (D)	Exercisable Date	Expiration Date
Options to purchase A 10,000	\$14.50	3/31/99	A	10,000	9/30/99 3/31/09	Class

Common Stock

<CAPTION>

8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	9. Number of Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Year (Instr. 4)	10. Ownership of Derivative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
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30,000

D

</TABLE>

Explanation of Responses:

/s/ W.P. Benton

2/9/00

**Signature of Reporting Person

Date

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space provided is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.