

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

U.S. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

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)

c/o Ogilvy & Mather
Suite 1115 West
Three Parklane Blvd.

(Street)

Dearborn Michigan 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

8/98

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

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

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

7. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)

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

| 7. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | | | 5. | 6. | |
|---|--|--|-------------------------------|---|----------|----------------|---|--|--------|
| Indirect Title of Beneficial Security Ownership (Instr. 3) (Instr. 4) | Trans- action Date (Month/ Day/ Year) | Trans- action Code (Instr. 8) | Trans- action Code V | Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) Amount (A) or Price (D) | | | Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Month (Instr. 3 and 4) | Owner- ship Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | Nature |
| <S> Class A Common Stock; Par Value \$.01 per share | <C> 8/31/98 | <C> P | <C> V | <C> 500 | <C> A | <C> \$20.00 | <C> 500 | <C> D | <C> |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly. (Print or Type Responses)

FORM 4 (continued)

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

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

| 10. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. | |
|--|---|--|---|-------------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|------------------|
| Ownership Form of Deriv- ative Security: Direct or Nature of Title of Indirect Derivative Beneficial Security (Instr. 3) (Instr. 4) | 11. Conver- sion or Exercise Price of Indirect Deriv- ative Ownership Security | Trans- action Date (Month/ Day/ Year) | Trans- action Code (Instr. 8) | Trans- action Code V | Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | Date Exer- cisable and Expiration Date (Month/ Day/Year) Exer- cise- able Date | Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) Title Shares | Price of Deriv- ative Secur- ity (Instr. 5) | Number of Derivative Securities Benefi- cially Owned at End of Month (Instr. 4) | (D) (I) 4) |
| <S> <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> | <C> |

</TABLE>

Explanation of Responses:

/s/ William P. Benton

9-10-98

** 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.