

[] 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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UNITED STATES 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*

BELK, WILLIAM I.

 (Last) (First) (Middle)

 6100 Fairview Road, #640

 (Street)

 Charlotte, North Carolina 28210

 (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

1/99

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

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

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

7. Individual or Joint/Group Filing

(check applicable line)

- 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>

1. Title of Security 7. Nature of Security Dir- Indirect (Instr. 3) Benefic- (I) ial Own- 4) ership	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at end Month (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: ect (D) or Indirect (Instr.
		Code V	Amount (A) or (D) Price		
Class A Common Stock	1/7/99	M	10,000 A \$14.500	5,000*	D

Class A Common Stock	1/7/99	S	7,500	D	\$34.6442	5,000*	D
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 Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

(Over)
 SEC 1474 (7.96)

Form 4 (continued)

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

1. Title of and Amount of Derivative Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)	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
Options to purchase 10,000	\$14.50	1/7/99	M	10,000	12/3/98 3/31/08	Class A Common Stock

<CAPTION>
 8. Price of 9. Number of 10. Ownership of 11. Nature of

Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Year (Instr. 4)	Derivative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
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\$14.50	None		
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Explanation of Responses:

* Immediately following the transactions reported on this Form 4, Mr. Belk beneficially owned 2,500 shares of Class A Common Stock. On January 25, 1999, in connection with the Company's 2-for-1 split of its Class A Common Stock, Mr. Belk received a dividend of one share of Class A Common Stock for each share of Class A Common Stock that he owned at that time (i.e. a total dividend of 2,500 shares of Class A Common Stock.

/s/ William I. Belk	3/23/99
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**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 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.