

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

OMB APPROVAL

OMB Number: 3235-0104
Expires: September 30, 1998
Estimated average burden
hours per response 0.5

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

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

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>
<S>

(Print or Type Responses) 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person* Bowers, II Nelson E. ----- (Last) (First) (Middle) Date of (Month/Day/Year) 217 Colmore Circle ----- (Street) Joint/Group Applicable Line) Lookout Mountain, TN 37350 One Reporting ----- (City) (State) (Zip) by More than One Person </TABLE>	<C> 2. Date of Event Re- quiring statement (Month/Day/Year) 11/10/97 ----- 3. IRS or Social Se- curity Number of Reporting Person (Voluntary)	<C> 4. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol Sonic Automotive, Inc.-- SAH ----- 5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) Director 10% Owner X Officer (give ___ Other title below) (specify below) Executive Vice President ----- 7. Individual or Filing (Check X Form filled by ___ Person Form filled Reporting	<C> 6. If Amendment, Original -----
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<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

Table I - Non Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

<S> 1. Title of Security (Instr. 4)	<C> 2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Inst.4)	<C> 3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr.5)	<C> 4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
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None

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Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.
* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 5(b) (v).

(Over)
SEC 1473 (9-96)

FORM 3 (continued)

Table II-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned
(e.g. puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>
<S>

1. Title of Derivative Security of Indirect (Instr. 4) Beneficial Ownership	<C> 2. Date Exer- cisable and	<C> 3. Title and amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security	<C> 4. Conver- sion or	<C> 5. Owner- ship	<C> 6. Nature
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(Instr. 4)	Expiration Date (Month/Day/ Year)	(Instr. 4)	Exercise	Form of
			Price of Deri- vative Security	Deriv- ative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr.5)
	Date	Expira- tion Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares
Options to purchase	10/9/98	10/9/07	Class A Common Stock	26,438 \$12.00 D
Options to purchase	10/9/99	10/9/07	Class A Common Stock	26,437 \$12.00 D
Options to purchase	10/9/00	10/9/07	Class A Common Stock	26,438 \$12.00 D

</TABLE>

Explanation of Responses:

/s/ Nelson E. Bowers, II Nov. 10, 1997

** Signature of Reporting Date
Person

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of acts 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 person 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.