

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

FORM 5

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

CHECK BOX IF NO LONGER
SUBJECT TO SECTION 16. FORM 4 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP
OR FORM 5 OBLIGATIONS MAY
CONTINUE. SEE INSTRUCTION 1(B).

[X] FORM 3 HOLDINGS REPORTED Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act
FORM 4 TRANSACTIONS REPORTED 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

<S> 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person*
Person(s) to Issuer

_____ 10% Owner

_____ Other
(specify below)
Operations
Higginbotham, Dennis D.

<C> 2. Issuer Name and Ticker or
Trading Symbol
Sonic Automotive, Inc. ("SAH")

<C> 6. Relationship of Reporting
(Check all applicable)
___X___ Director

___X___ Officer
(give title below)
President of Retail

(Last) (First) (Middle) 3. IRS
or Social
Security
Number of
Reporting
Person, if an
entity
(Voluntary)
4. Statement
for
Month/Year
12/98

P.O. Box 770

(Street)
Applicable
Reporting Person
New Smyrna Beach, FL 32170

(City) (State) (Zip)
5. If
Amendment,
Date of
Original
(Month/Year)
7. Individual or Joint/Group Reporting (Check
Line)
___X___ Form filed by One Reporting Person
___ Form filed by More than One

TABLE I-- NON-DERIVATIVE SECURITIES ACQUIRED, DISPOSED OF, OR BENEFICIALLY OWNED

7.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	
of	Trans- action Date (Month/ Day/ Year)	Trans- action Code (Instr. 8)	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 Issuer's Fiscal Year (Instr. 3 and 4)	Owner- ship Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I)	Nature
Indirect Title of Beneficial Security Ownership (Instr. 3) (Instr. 4)							

Class A Common Stock (1) 9/16/98 J3(2) 485,294 A 17.00 485,294 (3) I As
trustee (4)

(1) A Form 3 was filed on September 28, 1998 erroneously reporting Mr. Higginbotham's acquisition of 8,250 shares of Class A Common Stock. This Form is filed to correctly reflect his acquisition of 485,294 shares of Class A Common Stock.

(2) Mr. Higginbotham received a combination of cash and stock in exchange for certain automobile dealerships sold to Sonic.

(3) Immediately following the transaction reported on Table I of this Form 5, Mr. Higginbotham beneficially owned 485,294 shares of Class A Common Stock. On January 25, 1999, in connection with Sonic's 2-for-1 split of its Class A Common Stock (the "Stock Split"), Mr. Higginbotham received a dividend of one share of Class A Common Stock for each share of (cont.) (Over) SEC 2270 (9-96) *If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).

</TABLE>

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

FORM 5 (CONTINUED)

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.			
	11.											
Ownership							Title and					
					Number of	Date Exer-	Amount of		Number of	of		
Deriv-					Derivative	cisable and	Underlying		Derivative			
ative					Securities	Expiration	Securities	Price	Securities			
Security:	Conver-		Trans-	Acquired (A)	Date (Month/	(Instr. 3	of	Deriv-	Benefi-			
Direct	sion or	Trans-	action	or Disposed	Day/Year)	and 4)	Deriv-	cially	(D)			
or	Exercise	action	Code	of (D)	-----	-----	ative					
Title of	Nature of		(Instr.	(Instr. 3,	Date	Amount	Secur-	Owned at				
Indirect	Price of	Date	8)	4 and 5)	Exer-	or Num-	ity	End of	(I)			
Derivative	Deriv-	(Month/	-----	-----	cis-	ber of	(Instr.	Year				
Beneficial	Ownership	Day/			ation	Title	5)	(Instr. 4)	4)			
Security	Security	Year)		(A) (D)	able	Shares						
(Instr. 3)	Ownership				Date							
(Instr. 4)	Security											
<S>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>		
<C>												
Options to	\$9.19	(5)	10/6/98	A	150,000	(5)	10/6/08	Class A	150,000	\$9.19	150,000	D
purchase						(6)		Common	(5)	(5)		
								Stock				

Explanation of Responses:

Class A Common Stock that he owned at that time (i.e. a total dividend of 485,294 shares of Class A Common Stock).

(4) The shares are owned of record by The Dennis D. Higginbotham Revocable Trust, over which Mr. Higginbotham exercises control and for which he serves as trustee.

(5) On October 6, 1998, Sonic granted Mr. Higginbotham options to purchase 75,000 shares of Class A Common Stock at an exercise

price of \$18.38 per share pursuant to the Sonic 1997 Stock Option Plan (the "Plan"). In connection with the Stock Split effected

January 25, 1999, and pursuant to the terms of the Plan, Mr. Higginbotham's options were adjusted to options to purchase 150,000

shares of Class A Common Stock at an exercise price of \$9.19 per share.

(6) The options reported above are exercisable in three equal annual installments beginning on October 6, 1999.

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

/s/ Dennis D. Higginbotham

4/12/99

** Signature of Reporting Person

Date

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.