

# Saab 96 V4: The Unsung Rally Giant, Unraveled by Graham Robson

In the annals of automotive history, the Saab 96 V4 stands as an enigmatic figure, a car that defied expectations and forged its own unique path in the world of motorsport. Its unassuming appearance belied a potent combination of engineering excellence, rugged durability, and sheer determination, making it a formidable force on rally tracks across the globe. In his captivating book, "Saab 96 V4 Rally Giants," renowned automotive historian Graham Robson delves deep into the extraordinary story of this iconic Swedish machine.

## A Revolution in Rallying

The Saab 96 was initially conceived as a practical and economical family car. However, its innovative design, featuring a front-mounted engine and a unique two-stroke engine, hinted at its hidden potential. In the hands of skilled rally drivers, the 96 V4 proved to be a revelation. Its lightweight construction, excellent handling, and surprising power-to-weight ratio made it a formidable competitor in the burgeoning world of rallying.



### Saab 96 & V4 (Rally Giants) by Graham Robson

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 62139 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 193 pages



## **The Birth of a Rally Giant**

The transformation of the Saab 96 into a rally giant can be traced to the early 1960s, when Swedish rally driver Erik Carlsson, known as "Mr. Saab," began experimenting with the car's rally capabilities. Under Carlsson's guidance, Saab developed a series of performance-enhancing modifications, including a tuned engine, stiffer suspension, and improved aerodynamics, giving birth to the legendary Saab 96 Sport.

## **Conquering Rally Tracks**

The Saab 96 V4 Rally Giants quickly made their mark on the international rally scene. In 1960, Erik Carlsson piloted his Saab 96 to victory in the prestigious RAC Rally, becoming the first non-British driver to win the event. This triumph was followed by a string of successes in other major rallies, including the Monte Carlo Rally, the Swedish Rally, and the East African Safari Rally.

## **The Drivers Behind the Myth**

At the heart of the Saab 96 V4's success were the talented drivers who pushed the car to its limits. Erik Carlsson was joined by a formidable team of drivers, including Pat Moss-Carlsson, Ove Andersson, Stig Blomqvist, and Per Eklund, each of whom contributed to the car's legendary status.

## **Engineering Brilliance**

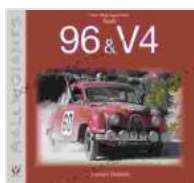
The Saab 96 V4's rally prowess was not merely a result of driver skill. The car's engineering brilliance played an equally vital role. Its two-stroke

engine, initially considered a drawback, proved to be surprisingly robust and reliable in the demanding conditions of rallying. The car's innovative front-wheel drive system provided excellent traction and handling, while its lightweight construction allowed it to accelerate and brake with astonishing agility.

## The Legacy Continues

The Saab 96 V4 Rally Giants left an enduring legacy in the world of motorsport. Their success inspired Saab to continue developing high-performance rally cars, including the Saab 99 Turbo and the Saab 9-3 Viggen. Today, the Saab 96 remains a cherished classic, its rally heritage serving as a testament to the ingenuity and determination of its creators and drivers.

Graham Robson's "Saab 96 V4 Rally Giants" is an essential read for any enthusiast of rally history or classic cars. With meticulous research and vivid storytelling, Robson transports readers to the golden age of rallying, where the unassuming Saab 96 V4 defied expectations and became an automotive legend. Whether you are a seasoned rally aficionado or simply curious about the hidden stories behind iconic cars, this book is a must-have for your collection.



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