



### NDSC Rig 31 goes 2,000 days with no LTA

**NATIONAL DRILLING and Services** of Oman's Rig 31 recently celebrated reaching 2,000 days without a lost time accident. The milestone in safe operation occurred while drilling for **Petroleum Development Oman** on horizontal well AH-88 in the Al-Huweisa Field in northern Oman. Rig 31 is an SCR **National 80-UE** desert rig capable of moving between in-field locations in 8-12 hours. Rig 31 was commissioned along with sister unit Rig 32 in 1992 for the Lekhwair turnkey project. Since then, Rig 31 has drilled more than 300 wells for PDO.

NDSC General Manager **Pat O'Shaughnessy** credits operator-contractor teamwork as the reason for the outstanding safety performance. "The excellent safety environment created by companies like PDO is a vital factor for drilling contractors to realize good safety performance," he said. "It's not uncommon for contractor rigs in the PDO fleet to exceed 8 years without suffering an injury. This kind of safety performance does not happen without the client's assistance." ■



NDSC of Oman Rig 31 works 2,000 safe days: National Drilling and Services of Oman's Rig 31 achieved an outstanding safety milestone while working for Petroleum Development Oman in the north of the country. NDSC General Manager Pat O'Shaughnessy credits the performance to operator-contractor teamwork.

### Conoco, R&B Falcon drillship goes to work

**THE CONOCO/R&B FALCON** ultra-deepwater drillship Deepwater Pathfinder kicked off a 5-year mission program recently in the Gulf of Mexico. The ship, the first new build capable of drilling in 10,000 ft of water, will fulfill a \$400 million drilling program for Conoco.

The vessel is expected to drill 3-4 wells in its first year, with the first exploratory well being drilled at Garden Banks Block 783. Conoco has interests in 295 deepwater leases in the Gulf, so the unit has plenty of acreage to move onto.

The dynamically positioned vessel is the only drillship in the world with triple-redundant power and operating functions, according to Conoco. It qualifies

for the **American Bureau of Shipping's** DP3 classification. The partners are also proud of the ship's safety, redundancy and reliability features. The unit features computerized rig-floor operation, backed up with conventional manual systems.

Conoco and R&B Falcon are building a second deepwater drillship with the same specifications that is expected to be delivered in early 1999, about two months ahead of schedule.

This second rig will operate on Conoco's deepwater tracts outside the US, including the Atlantic Margin, Norway, New Zealand and Nigeria. Conoco holds more than 35 million acres of deepwater leases throughout the world. ■

### Nabors, Pool merge

**NABORS INDUSTRIES** and **Pool Energy Services Co** announced a definitive merger in January, ending a year-long tug-of-war. The boards of both companies unanimously approved the stock-swap deal. The bottom-line price tag is a cool \$518 million, which includes \$144 million in assumed debt.

The merger is expected to be concluded in the 2nd quarter of 1999.

The combined behemoth will operate about 440 land drilling and 750 workover/well-servicing rigs in North America, 100 international drilling and workover rigs, and 60 offshore units.

### Mallard, Texaco ally

**TEXACO AND PARKER Drilling** subsidiary **Mallard Drilling** have formed an alliance for Mallard to provide all drilling and workover services on the producer's inland-water properties. The 1-year contract includes options to extend, according to Mallard. The alliance will initially use 2 barges. Additional rigs will be added as needed, the drilling contractor said.

Texaco is the largest water-bottom leaseholder in South Louisiana's inland water bays and estuaries.

### Atwood contract extended

**ATWOOD OCEANICS** announced a 4-year extension plus options on its tender **Atwood Seahawk** with **Esso**. The rig will go to work after completing some \$19 million in operator-funded upgrades.

### Schahin orders deepwater semi

**BRAZILIAN DRILLER SCHAHIN Engenharia e Comercio** has ordered a 5,000-ft water depth **Friede Goldman**-designed semi Millennium. Schahin will use the \$143 million semi in a 6-year contract with **Petrobrás**. The unit will be equipped with double redundant dynamic positioning and a 3,500-ton variable deck load. It will be fabricated at Friede Goldman's Pasca-goula, Miss, yard. A 23-month design and construction cycle is anticipated.

### UTI sells IPSCO

**UTI ENERGY Corp** has agreed to sell its 5-rig Pennsylvania-based drilling subsidiary **International Petroleum Service Co** (IPSCO) to **Union Drilling** of West Virginia for \$5.6 million cash. ■