

EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT —GULF COAST MESOZOIC 1982 and 1983

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ABSTRACT

Looking at exploration and development within the Gulf Coast Mesozoic region as a whole, the trend has been toward shallow oil and away from deep gas. The capability of each area to successfully accommodate this shift is dramatically reflected in the comparison of total wells drilled in 1982 as compared to 1981:

	Total '81	Total '82	Difference
Southeast. States	343	233	-110
S. Ark.-N. La.	1679	1523	-156
East Texas	1142	1382	+240

(Note: (1) These are G.C.S. figures and may not correspond to some other source (2) G.C.S. does not keep similar figures for the Mesozoic of South Texas)

The Southeastern States were hard hit because this area was so strongly oriented toward deep Hosston and Cotton Valley gas plays and there were no viable shallow oil plays available as quick alternatives. South Arkansas and North Louisiana suffered some from the downturn in Smackover and Cotton Valley exploration (note total wells much greater than in the Southeastern States), but there were numerous plays to be made in the Upper Cretaceous sands, Wash-Fred, Paluxy, Rodessa, Sligo and Hosston. East Texas actually fared better in '82 than '81, in part because of the many shallow oil plays to be made, but also because, according to G.C.S. statistics, the shift to shallow oil had actually begun between 1980 and 1981, so momentum in this direction was already present. South Texas saw the demise of the Austin Chalk play within the Giddings trend through Lee and Fayette counties. Nevertheless, the Chalk play remains active in Atascosa and Wilson counties.

The most significant trends in the Southeastern States during

1982 were the Rodessa-Cotton Valley play centered in Warren and Hinds counties, Mississippi, and the Miocene play of Baldwin and Mobile counties, Alabama. The most significant discovery was the Movico Smackover Field on the west flank of the Mobile Graben in Mobile County, Alabama. In 1983, an apparent major Smackover discovery has been made by Beau Coupe Oil & Gas in extreme southwestern Escambia County, Alabama. Also, there is an important play developing in the Lower Tuscaloosa on the shelf slope between the low relief anticlines of southwestern Mississippi and the Lower Tuscaloosa growth faults of southern Louisiana.

Although exploration in North Louisiana and South Arkansas was relatively strong, most activity was concentrated in or around existing fields. The west and north flanks of the Pine Island Dome located in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, were the sites of very intense activity. Exploration and development is directed toward the Sligo with secondary pays in the Rodessa and Hosston. In all, 44 wells have been drilled to these pays in and around the shallow Pine Island Pettit Oil Field.

East Texas activity was dominated by discoveries and development of Rodessa and Pettit fields in the basin and on the west and south flanks of the Sabine Uplift. However, the most significant discovery last year was the East Ginger Smackover Field in Rains County. In early 1983, Cities Service made headlines with what appeared to be a major discovery in eastern Cass County. A 40' pre-Smackover sand made a strong flow of oil and gas before going to water.

As 1982 came to a close, it appeared that South Texas would have an important play in the Sligo, seaward of the Stuart City Reef trend. However, at this time, commercial production from the Sligo has not been definitely established.

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