

PERSPECTIVES

One memorable summer job and over 3 decades later, Unit Drilling's Scott Gordon still in awe of drilling industry

By Linda Hsieh, associate editor

WHEN SCOTT GORDON went roughnecking for Unit Drilling in the Texas Panhandle in the mid-'70s, he wasn't thinking of much beyond a summer job and money to pay for college. Little did he know how it would change his life.

What he saw on that Unit rig — the camaraderie, the massive equipment, the innovative technologies — was so memorable that he soon left pre-med and took up petroleum engineering at Oklahoma State University.

"The sheer mechanics of being able to cut a hole in the earth several miles deep was fascinating to me. Even today I'm in awe of what this industry can do."

A week after he completed his first year of college in 1976, Mr Gordon got a call from Unit. It was Friday night, and they wanted him to be in Laverne, Okla., by Sunday night and ready to work by Monday morning. Without hesitation, he packed everything he owned into his Mustang and hit the road. "I was up for the adventure."

More than 30 years later, Mr Gordon has moved from drilling engineer to vice president of the Gulf Coast division, overseeing the daily operations of 17 rigs. In that time, Unit Drilling has grown tremendously as well, from just 15 rigs in 1979 to 128 now.

"I came in when there were only three of us running the entire rig operation, and now we're a company diversified into divisional operations because of our growth," he said. "It's been a long and wonderful career with Unit."

SERVICE TO INDUSTRY

Mr Gordon began his service with IADC as a member, and later as chairman, of the Contracts Committee. He was actively involved with an extensive review of the 1998 US Land Contract Form, which resulted in the Model Form 2003 still in use today.

He's also worked on the Program Committee for the IADC Drilling Onshore America Conference and was an active



As IADC land division vice president from 2004-2006, Scott Gordon has been invaluable to the successful Drilling Onshore America conferences: "I enjoyed putting my ideas into play and putting the conference together." He's seen here at the 2007 Drilling Onshore event in Houston on 17 May.

member for several years before taking over as chairman. "Scott has been truly invaluable to the Drilling Onshore conferences," said Leesa Teel, IADC senior director of conferences.

Additionally, Mr Gordon has been on the IADC Board of Directors since 1998. This year he is serving on the Executive Committee for the first time: "I'm starting a new phase with IADC."

PEOPLE PERSON

John Cromling, Unit executive vice president of drilling, is proud of the way Mr Gordon is leading Unit's Gulf Coast division and says one of his most striking strengths is his amiable personality.

"He always has a great attitude. He can go into a room of strangers and people like him," he said. "I've never talked to anybody who didn't like Scott." 💧

'You can't fix a problem until you know it's there'

Q: Who have been your mentors in this business?

A: I've had the pleasure of working with great people over the years. But to start naming names would not be fair to the people you meet casually or know as acquaintances. A mentor can be someone you talk with for 10-15 minutes at an IADC conference, and you pick up something they do, or an attitude, or a thought process that you take back with you.

When someone calls you and says, 'Your rig isn't performing up to standard. You have a problem. How are you going to fix it?' That might be viewed as confrontational, but this person is really alerting you to a problem. You can't fix a problem until you know it's there. That's another kind of mentor.

Q: What advice do you have for some of the industry freshmen out there?

A: My grandfather, whom I learned from very early on, always believed in a square handshake, a look in the eyes and a smile. I think that advice still applies to all of us today. 💧