Noble takes delivery of new jackup from Chinese shipyard

NOBLE CORP HAS taken delivery of a new high-specification jackup drilling rig, constructed by Dalian Shipbuilding Industry in Dalian, China. The Noble Roger Lewis, the first of three such rigs being built for the company, is in transit to its inaugural drilling assignment in Qatar, where it will work under contract to Shell.

The Noble Roger Lewis was constructed based on the F&G JU-2000E design, which includes enhanced environmental protection, safety and drilling efficiency features. It is designed to operate in water depths up to 400 ft and is equipped to drill wells in high-pressure, high-temperature environments up to 30,000 ft deep.

Atwood Hunter to be moved to Libya

ATWOOD OCEANICS HAS announced that the Atwood Hunter’s contract with Woodside Energy offshore Libya was to be suspended upon completion of its current drilling program. The rig will be moved to Egypt to work for Burullus Gas. The Burullus contract is expected to take 140 days to complete, including mobilization and demobilization to the point of origin in the Mediterranean Sea.

Immediately upon completion of its work in Egypt, the Woodside contract will be reinstated, and the rig is expected to be moved to Mauritania.

Additionally, Atwood announced that, upon completion of the current well, the Richmond semi will be moved to a shipyard to undergo a life-enhancement upgrade estimated at between $14 million to $15 million. It is expected to take 60 days to complete. The rig was working for Helis Oil & Gas in the Gulf of Mexico.

Parker Drilling among ‘America’s Safest Companies’

PARKER DRILLING HAS been selected as one of America’s Safest Companies for 2007 by Occupational Hazards magazine. The award program recognizes companies that have demonstrated outstanding multi-level safety efforts throughout their organizations. Ten organizations were recognized for 2007.

“(Honorees) understand that work-related injuries and fatalities are a cost — in human and financial terms — that no company should expect to incur,” said Stephen G Minter, editorial director and publisher of Occupational Hazards.

“Our performance is a result of contributions from every one of our 3,000 worldwide employees, and they are proud to share in this honor,” said Parker chairman and CEO Robert L Parker.

Apache to explore deep formations in Central, East Texas

APACHE CORP HAS signed a multi-year agreement with EV Energy Partners and institutional partnerships managed by EnerVest to explore for oil and gas in deeper formations across 400,000 acres in Central and East Texas. Apache agreed to explore for new reserves below the base of the Austin Chalk formation and will be the operator. EVEP and EnerVest will contribute the acreage. “This is an excellent opportunity for Apache to explore substantial onshore US acreage,” said G Steven Farris, Apache president and CEO. “We have demonstrated that access to acreage can become opportunities to increase production and reserves.”

ENSCO ultra-deepwater semi enters drilling deal

A SUBSIDIARY OF ENSCO has entered into a definitive drilling contract for ENSCO 8502, an ultra-deepwater semisubmersible rig, with Nexen Petroleum USA. The contract calls for a minimum two-year primary term in the Gulf of Mexico, which can be converted to a three- or four-year term prior to commencement of operations. The aggregate daily rate revenue for the two-year term is expected to be approximately $340 million.

ENSCO 8502 is the company’s third of four ultra-deepwater semisubmersible rigs in the ENSCO 8500 Series. All four are under construction at Keppel FELS.

They remain on schedule and within budget, with expected deliveries in the second quarter of 2008 for ENSCO 8500, the first quarter of 2009 for ENSCO 8501, late in the fourth quarter of 2009 for ENSCO 8502, and in the third quarter of 2010 for ENSCO 8503. ENSCO 8500 and ENSCO 8501 are already committed under long-term drilling contracts.

New gas finds in Indonesia

TOTAL HAS ANNOUNCED two new gas discoveries in the southern part of the offshore Mahakam block, 45 km from Balikpapan in Indonesia. The discoveries lie a few km from the Stupa field and strengthen the potential of this field.

Both drilled in about 60 m water depth, the two wells East Mandu-1 and West Stupa-1 respectively encountered 164 m and 72 m of good-quality gas-bearing reservoirs. These two discoveries are planned to be developed in connection with the development of the Stupa field.

The drilling of East Mandu-1 was particularly sensitive regarding the control of pressures and fluids. Operations were carried out with the Indonesian company PT Apexindo Pratama Duta Tbk, with which TOTAL has five drilling rigs in operation in Indonesia.
ONGC subsidiary wins 3 blocks offshore Colombia

ONGC VIDESH, THE wholly owned subsidiary of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), has been declared the winner in three offshore exploration blocks in Colombia — two blocks in collaboration with Ecopetrol, the national oil company of Colombia, and one block in collaboration with Ecopetrol and Petrobras, in a bidding round christened the “Caribbean Round 2007” in Colombia. Colombia’s National Hydrocarbons Agency had offered a total of 13 exploratory blocks, including two in shallow offshore, four in deepwater and seven in transition areas.

“Participation in these three new blocks in partnership with Ecopetrol and Petrobras is part of our strategy to expand our investment in prospective E&P assets in Latin America,” said ONGC chairman R.S. Sharma.

Keppel FELS delivers 3rd jackup to Seadrill early, within budget

KEPPEL FELS IN Singapore has delivered West Atlas, the third KFELS B Class design jackup rig for Seadrill, within budget and ahead of schedule.

Tong Chong Heong, managing director and chief operating officer of Keppel Offshore & Marine, said, “It was slightly more than two months ago when we delivered the second rig West Prospero, to Seadrill on budget and ahead of schedule. I am pleased that we have replicated that achievement. More importantly, West Atlas achieved a sterling safety record, with more than 2.5 million manhours of work without any lost-time incidents.”

According to Ian Shearer, Seadrill senior vice president jackup division, the company has invested more than US$1 billion in projects with Keppel FELS.

Keppel FELS is building one more KFELS B Class jackup rig and a semisubmersible drilling tender rig for Seadrill. They are reportedly progressing according to schedule and are expected to be delivered between mid-2008 and end-2009 respectively.

GlobalSantaFe orders ultra-deepwater drillship; delivery expected in 2010

GLOBALSantaFe announced it has executed an agreement with Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) to build a new ultra-deepwater exploration and development drillship for delivery in September 2010. Shipyard construction costs are expected to total approximately $740 million. The drillship will be constructed in Ulsan, Korea, under a turnkey agreement.

The new vessel is an enhanced version of GlobalSantaFe’s GSF C.R. Luigs and GSF Jack Ryan. It will be capable of drilling in water depths up to 10,000 ft.

“Participation in these three new blocks in partnership with Ecopetrol and Petrobras is part of our strategy to expand our investment in prospective E&P assets in Latin America,” said ONGC chairman R.S. Sharma.

BG Group announces new discovery in Santos Basin offshore Brazil

BG GROUP HAS confirmed the success of the Tupi Sul appraisal well in the BM-S11 concession in the Santos Basin, offshore Brazil. The appraisal well flowed at a rate of 2,000 bbl of oil and 65,000 cu m of gas per day. The well, located approximately 9.5 km southwest of the Tupi discovery, has proved the southern extension of that discovery. The Tupi Sul appraisal well is the fourth consecutive success for BG Group in the deepwater Santos Basin since the company began drilling there in 2005.

“These are excellent results from the Tupi Sul appraisal well, which maintain our 100% success rate in the deepwater Santos Basin,” said BG CEO Frank Chapman. “This outstanding sequence enhances our confidence in this emerging hydrocarbon province and supports our strategy in the region.”