

HRI, Parker form alliance

HRI Oilfield LP has entered into an alliance agreement with **Parker Drilling Co** that grants HRI an exclusive license to market and manufacture the intellectual property of Parker Drilling's research and development and fabrication subsidiary, **Parker Technology LLC** (Partech).

The intellectual property includes the Partech, OIME and **PARCO Mast and Substructures Inc** product lines. In addition, HRI will assume operation of the Partech fabrication facility in New Iberia, La.

The facility will continue to provide ongoing components and rig servicing to Parker Drilling's growing international fleet.

Sioux Sinnott, president of HRI, said, "We are extremely excited about this agreement with such a diverse and internationally-known company as Parker Drilling. The Partech alliance agreement provides HRI a product line that will offer the oil and gas industry a competitive alternative for quality rigs and equipment." ■

Contractor changes name

Effective 1 April, **New Horizon Drilling Co LLC** became **Catfish Drilling LLC**.

Though the company's name is changed, all other information—ownership, address, phone numbers—remains the same. Catfish is located in Littleton, Colo. ■

Noble gets SAFE award

The **US Department of Interior's** Minerals Management Service Houma, La District has awarded **Noble Drilling (US) Inc** and its rig, Noble Eddie Paul, the District's 2000 Safety Award for Excellence (SAFE) for drilling contractors.

The award is based on several factors, including safety, environmental awareness, pollution prevention, regulatory compliance and rig maintenance.

James C Day, Noble Chairman and CEO, said, "We are proud to receive this award. Noble has worked closely with the Minerals Management Service and our clients to continue to improve safety and the environment in the Gulf of Mexico." ■

TSF sets world water depth record in GOM

Transocean Sedco Forex said it set a new world record for ultra deepwater drilling when its Discoverer Spirit drillship spudded an exploration well in 9,687 ft of water in the Gulf of Mexico for **Unocal Corp.**

Blowout prevention equipment was installed and tested after the 2 May spudding and drilling operations began.

The well, on Unocal's Trident prospect in Alaminos Canyon Block 903, surpasses the previous claimed industry record of drilling in 9,157 ft of water set offshore Gabon in early 2001. The Discoverer Spirit uses TSF's proprietary dual-activity drilling process.

Along with Unocal's approach to low cost drilling, dual activity is designed to reduce by 15% the time required to drill exploration wells and by up to 40% the time to drill production wells.

The rig has drilled 3 deepwater exploration wells in the GOM for Unocal, resulting in significant time savings.

Unocal and Transocean Sedco Forex use internal benchmarking to develop a detailed plan for each well to achieve optimal drilling results.

Transocean also said recently that its new ultra deepwater semisubmersible Cajun Express completed acceptance



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testing and began an 18-month contract with **Marathon Oil Co** in Mississippi Canyon block 348 in the US Gulf of Mexico. The dynamically positioned Cajun Express is designed to drill in water depths of up to 8,500 ft and to reduce total well construction time by up to 25% ■

KCA gets a BP design contract in Azerbaijan

KCA Drilling Ltd has been awarded a contract by **BP Exploration (Shah Deniz) Ltd** for the front end engineering design of a platform drilling facility for its Shah Deniz development in the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan. The Shah Deniz development is a major gas condensate field in water depths of 5-500 m. Drilling operations are expected to begin in the second quarter of 2004.

KCA's contract covers the initial Phase 1 front end engineering work, with the

provision and stated preference of BP to extend the contract to cover Phases 2 and 3, the detailed design, construction, commissioning of the drilling facilities, and offshore drilling operations.

KCA also has been contracted by the **Azerbaijan International Operating Co** on its ACG Phase 1 Project offshore Baku to perform preliminary design, coordination of detailed design and construction and offshore platform drilling operations. ■