

Rotary Drilling builds rig for Syria

DESPITE THE GLOBAL drilling slow-down, Hungarian contractor **Rotary Drilling Co** recently ordered a 2,000-hp land rig built from new and refurbished parts for operations in Syria. The new unit, Rig 66, can drill to 20,000 ft. It will join Rotary Drilling Rig 65, which is already under a 2-year contract in Syria's Deir Ez Zor region. Rig 66 will initially begin work on a 2-well contract, the company says.

Rotary Drilling, a subsidiary of **MOL**, won this contract in 1997 from **Al Furat Petroleum Co (AFPC)**, a **Shell** partner company. "The company's greatest task in 1997 was launching the Syrian project," explained Rotary Drilling Chairman/General Manager **Miklós Illés**. "Our principal task in the future will be to expand our share of the domestic market while increasing our foreign presence." Mr Illés added that Rotary drilling will continue to improve its organizational structure and efficiency, with the goal of becoming a modern drilling company competitive in the international market.

Rig 66 was built and refurbished at **IDM Equipment's** yard in Houston. Work on the unit went smoothly, explained IDM Equipment President **David Huntington**. Mr Huntington explained that Rig 66 was ready for ship out in fewer than 70 days. Rig 66 will bring Rotary Drilling's total fleet to 21 drilling and workover rigs.

RIG SPECIFICATIONS

The new rig, a **Continental Emsco C-2** diesel SCR, is equipped with a 1-MM lb hookload capacity, 800,000-lb casing load and 600,000-lb set back. It features a v-door ramp and a **Pyramid** 142-ft mast. The mud system comprises 2 Continental Emsco FB-1600-hp triplex mud pumps mounted on a master skid. The system comprises 3 active and 3 reserve mud tanks, with 3,000-bbl capacity.

The IDM SCR system compresses 4 SCR cubicles operating the DC motors and 4 generator cubicles, one 750-Kva main transformer and one 75-Kva lighting transformer. Power will be supplied by 3 **Caterpillar D-399** diesel engines and 1,030-kW generators. Like the mud pumps, the Cat engines are mounted on master skids.

In addition to conventional drilling services, Rotary Drilling also offers a variety of well services, including coiled tubing, directional drilling and wireline. "Rotary is not merely a drilling contractor," Mr Illés said, "but a company offering a wide range of oilfield services. We have the capability of undertaking turnkey projects anywhere in the world."

COMPANY HISTORY

The company was founded in 1936, when **Standard Oil of New Jersey** acquired concession rights in Hungary and drilled the first few wells there.



Syria-bound: Rotary Drilling's 2,000-hp Rig 66, built by Houston's IDM Equipment, is headed for Syria to operate in the Deir Ez Zor region.

"Hungarians were quick to learn drilling techniques from the Americans, observed Mr Illés, "and since then have independently completed more than 3,000 wells totaling 5.5 MM m in depth."

Hungary's difficult geological conditions have provided Rotary Drilling with experience in numerous drilling problems, including high temperatures and pressures, lost circulation and heaving formations, he added.

The company, once a subsidiary of Hungary's national oil company, is now an independent firm. Rotary has operated under numerous names over the years, and

in 1990 took the name Rotary drilling and separated from **KFV OIL and Gas Co**. Rotary was at that time capitalized with US \$40 million, with a staff of 1,300 and 27 drilling and workover rigs. Today, staff has been reduced to 728, Rotary says. Its 21 rigs include thirteen 485-hp **Idecos**, three 1,000-hp **Idecos**, two 1,350-hp **Ganz DHR-200s**, one 1,700-hp **Ganz DHR-320**, one 1,500-hp **Mid-Continent U-914 EC**, in addition to the new addition.

INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Besides working in Hungary and Syria, Rotary Drilling also conducted drilling and workover operations in Tunisia and Moldova in the last few years. In Tunisia, Rotary most recently drilled and worked over oil wells in southern and central Tunisia 1995-98, working for operators including **MOL**, **SOCO**, **COHO**, **Agip**, **Command Petroleum**, **Pluspetrol**, **MARETRAP** and **CFTP**, the company says. The recent work in Tunisia was spawned by Rotary Drilling's performance drilling a dozen turnkey geothermal wells in 1992-94, Mr Illés explained.

In Moldova, Rotary conducted drilling and workover operations for **Costilla-Redeco** during 1996-97.

However, the firm has operated internationally since 1970 when it drilled the first state-owned oil wells in Iraq. Rotary continued to operate in Iraq for the next 13 years, drilling oil and water-injection wells to depths of 2,800 m-3,800 m. In all, Rotary has drilled 49 wells in Iraq totaling 16,000 m.

Rotary has drilled in Austria since 1981. There, the Hungarian contractor drilled 3 exploration wells with depths of 3,100 m-4,600 m near Salzburg. Rotary also drilled some geothermal wells in Austria, reaching depths of 2,000 m-3,200 m.

In Libya, Rotary undertook the turnkey drilling of 5 large-diameter water wells, and in Abu Dhabi, the company provided coring services, primarily offshore, during 1984-85.

Rotary Drilling has also handled blowout control and used that knowledge to help combat the massive blowouts in Kuwait during 1991 that followed the Gulf War. The company capped 9 wells in Kuwait.

"Although Rotary still works primarily in Hungary, its definite aim is to become more widely involved in international operations and to become a truly international enterprise," remarked Mr Illés. ■