



Looking Back to the 1970's: Blue-H28 - A Historical and World Record Breaking Well Drilled in 1979 in the Orphan Basin, Newfoundland – Why It Was Drilled & Why It is Important Today

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Abstract

A rank wildcat well, Texaco Shell et al Blue H-28, was drilled offshore Newfoundland in 1979 in a water depth of 1,486 meters and significantly extended the world water depth drilling record. This well was drilled to a drill depth of 6,103 meters so it also set a record for being the deepest well drilled in Canada.

Looking back to the 1970's, the challenge for those involved in this well was especially daunting since the well was going to be drilled in one of the world's most hostile areas characterized by high seas in "ice berg alley".

The closest control well for Blue H-28 was the BP Bonavista C-99 well located 150 km southeastwards. Consequently, Blue H-28 represented a true pioneering effort to drill in an almost unexplored basin and to significantly extend drilling technology beyond its proven capability.

The incentive to drill this well was a profound seismically-defined structural closure covering approximately 1100 square kilometers. Only minor gas shows were encountered in the drilling of the well. However, the well provided a wealth of geological and geophysical data which advanced the industry's assessment of the hydrocarbon potential of the Orphan Basin. Blue H-28 is again the focus of industry's attention since it is the key control well for acreage for which oil companies in 2003 paid a record breaking \$672 million.