

The Ordovician Red River of the Williston Basin: Then & Now & ?

Claus Sitzler, Anadarko Canada Corporation

An initial surge of activity within the Ordovician Red River Formation occurred in the 50's and 60's in Canada and was coupled to Exploration successes in the Dakota's and Montana with the discovery of large Ordovician pools on the Nesson and Cedar Creek Anticlines. Exploration and Pool discoveries continue to present in the American portion of the Williston Basin. The Canadian side of the Williston Basin has remained relatively dormant until the Mark Resources discovery of the Minton Field in 1990. The play fell asleep again with low oil prices in the early 90's. Better and cheaper 3D seismic technology gave the play the kick-start it needed. The discovery of the Midale Ordovician Red River Yeoman Pool in late 1995 re-ignited the play and spurred deep rights reversion in Saskatchewan. A significant amount of new reserves were found in the next five years by exploiting the large regional grid of 2D data coupled with the acquisition of 3D data over 2D leads. Now in 2002, the play is again quiet. What happened? Where will the play go? Who will lead the charge? When will the next surge of activity happen? Why would it be a play worth chasing?