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FINAL PALYNOLOGY OF BHPP LA BELLA #1, OFFSHORE OTWAY BASIN, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

BY

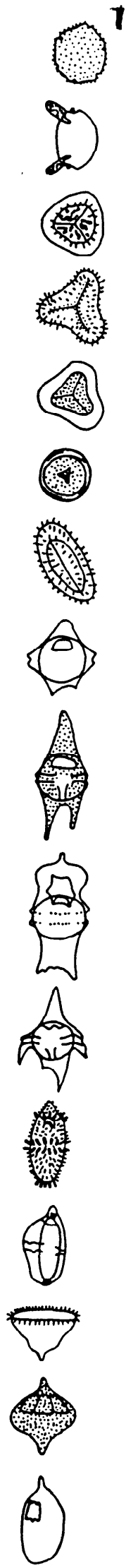
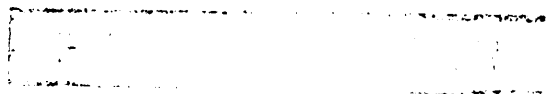
ROGER MORGAN AND NIGEL HOOKER

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BY

ROGER MORGAN AND NIGEL HOOKER

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I SUMMARY

635.0m(swc), 695.0m(swc) : *bellus* Zone or older : Miocene or older : offshore marine : immature

832.0m(swc) : extremely lean and indeterminate

896.5m(swc), 997.0m(swc), 1027.0m(swc), 1040.0m(swc), 1064.0m(swc) : lower to mid *tuberculatus* Zone : Oligocene : offshore marine : immature

1115.0m(swc), 1151.0m(swc), 1200.5(swc) : probably Oligocene : lean with heavy reworked Cretaceous (lower *X. australis* dinoflagellate Zone) at 1151m : offshore marine : immature

1255.0m(swc), 1264.0m(swc) : upper *asperus* Zone (*comatum* dinoflagellate Zone) : Late Eocene : offshore marine : immature

1340.0m(swc), 1364.0m(swc) : lower *asperus* Zone : Middle Eocene : intermediate to nearshore marine : immature

1489.0m(swc), 1491.0m(swc), 1494.0m(swc) : *asperopolus* Zone (1489.0 *edwardsii* dinoflagellate Zone, 1491.0m *thompsonae* dinoflagellate Zone) : Early Eocene : marginally marine at the base, passing to intermediate marine at the top : immature

1517.0m(swc), 1523.0m(swc) : upper *diversus* Zone (1523.0 *ornatum* dinoflagellate Zone) : Early Eocene : nearshore marine : immature

1544.0m(swc) : lower *diversus* Zone : Early Eocene : marginally marine : immature

1563.0m(swc), 1580.0m(swc), 1640.0m(swc), 1663.0m(swc) : upper *senectus* Zone (upper *australis* dinoflagellate Zone 1580-1663m) : early Campanian : nearshore marine : immature

1721.0m(swc), 1765.0m(swc) : upper *senectus* Zone (lower *australis* dinoflagellate Zone) : early Campanian : nearshore marine : immature

1823m(cutts), 1865.0m(swc) : middle *senectus* Zone (upper *acerus* dinoflagellate Zone) : early Campanian : nearshore marine : immature

- 1891.0m (swc), 1949.0m(swc), 1979.0m(swc) : apparently upper *apoxyexinus* Zone (*aceras* dinoflagellate Zone ?middle subzone but unclear in swcs) : early Campanian : nearshore marine : marginally mature
- 2004.0m(swc) : upper *apoxyexinus* Zone (upper *cretacea* dinoflagellate Zone) : Santonian : intermediate marine : marginally mature
- 2020.0m(swc) : middle *apoxyexinus* Zone : Santonian : intermediate marine : marginally mature
- 2028.0m(swc) 2043.0m(swc), 2054.0m(swc), 2059.0m(swc), 2066.0m(swc), 2076.0m(core) : lower *apoxyexinus* Zone : Santonian : intermediate marine to very nearshore marine : marginally mature
- 2086.1m(core), 2096.0m(core), 2111.5m(swc), 2118.0(swc), 2145.0m(swc), 2159.0m(swc), 2164.0m(swc), 2166.0m(swc), 2179.0m(swc), 2199.0m(swc), 2232.0(swc), 2252.0m(swc), 2270.0m(swc) : *mawsoni* Zone (2252.0 - 2270.0m *infusorioides* dinoflagellate Zone) : Coniacian-Turonian : mostly very nearshore with one intermediate marine exception at 2118m and nearshore below 2232m : marginally mature
- 2275.5m(swc), 2284.0m(swc), 2286.0m(swc), 2309.0m(swc), 2330.0m(swc), 2398.0m(swc), 2402.0m(swc), 2454.0m(swc), 2489.0m(cutts), 2497.0m(swc), 2500.0m(swc), 2528.0m(swc), 2540.5m(swc), 2544.5m(swc), 2550m(cutts), 2567.0m(swc), 2573m(cutts), 2593.0m(swc) : *distocarinatus* Zone (2277.5, 2284, 2286, 2309, 2402 *infusorioides* Zone) : Cenomanian : above 2402m mostly nearshore marine with marginal marine (2286m), non-marine (2330m) and intermediate marine (2309m) exceptions. Section below 2454m may all be non-marine with the observed dinoflagellates being caved as they are only seen in the cuttings, not the swcs : marginally mature to 2330, early mature below 2398m.
- 2605.0m(swc), 2624.0m(swc), 2640m(cutts), 2671.0m(swc), 2683.0m(swc), 2690m(cutts), 2705.0m(swc), 2715(cutts), 2730.0m(swc), 2735m(cutts) : Indeterminate (all except 2646.5m are extremely lean with percentage counts invalid. At 2646.5m(swc), an abundant and diverse assemblage lacks zonal markers of Sherbrook or Otway Group sequences with rare Permian and Aptian reworking) : non-marine.

II INTRODUCTION

During drilling seven cuttings samples were studied on an urgent basis at BHPP's Portland Base and were reported in 2 faxed reports. After well completion, a further seventy four samples (70 swcs, 3 from core, 1 cutts) were submitted for detailed study. All results are summarised herein.

Palynomorph occurrence data are shown as Appendix I and include the urgent and followup samples and form the basis for the assignment of the samples to sixteen spore-pollen and dinoflagellate units of Miocene to Cenomanian age. The Cretaceous spore-pollen zonation is essentially that of Dettmann and Playford (1969), but has been significantly modified and improved by various authors since, and most recently discussed in Helby et al (1987), as shown on Figure 1. The Late Cretaceous zonation has been modified by Morgan (1992) in project work for BHPP (Figure 2). Tertiary zones are essentially those of Partridge (1976).

Maturity data was generated in the form of Spore Colour Index, and is plotted on Figure 3 Maturity Profile of La Bella #1. The oil and gas windows on Figure 3 follow the general consensus of geochemical literature. The oil window corresponds to spore colours of light-mid brown (Staplin Spore Colour Index of 2.7) to dark brown (3.6). These correspond to vitrinite reflectance values of 0.6% to 1.3%. Geochemists argue variations on kerogen type, basin type and basin history. The maturity interpretation is thus open to reinterpretation using the basic colour observations as raw data. However, the range of interpretation philosophies is not great, and probably would not move the oil window by more than 200 metres.

III PALYNOSTRATIGRAPHY

A 635.0m(swc), 695.0m(swc) : *bellus* Zone or older

Assignment of these lean samples to the *Triporopollenites bellus* Zone of Miocene age or older is indicated by youngest *Nothofagidites asperus* and *Myrtaceidites verrucosus* and confirmed by the dinoflagellates. Of the spore-pollen, *Cyathidites*, *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites* and *Haloragacidites harrisii* are frequent to common.

Of the dinoflagellates, *Spiniferites ramosus* and *Achomosphaera alicornu* are common in low diversity assemblages. The presence of *Impletosphaeridium* sp1 Manum suggests a late Oligocene to late Miocene age from its European range. Australian records in this part of the section are inconclusive, as this section has rarely been studied.

Offshore marine environments are suggested by high dinoflagellate content despite low diversity, and low organic yields, apparently starved.

Colourless palynomorphs indicate immaturity for hydrocarbon generation.

B 832.0(swc) : extremely lean and indeterminate

This sample yielded very few palynomorphs (about 30) with *Cyathidites*, *Dilwynites*, *Spiniferites* and *Operculodinium* frequent. Age diagnostic taxa were absent.

Offshore marine environments were indicated by the equal proportions of dinoflagellates and spore-pollen in an organically lean assemblage.

Immaturity for hydrocarbons is indicated by colourless palynomorphs.

C 896.5m(swc), 997.0m(swc), 1027.0m(swc), 1040.0m(swc), 1064.0(swc) : lower to mid *tuberculatus* Zone

Assignment to the lower to middle *Proteacidites tuberculatus* Zone of Oligocene age is indicated by the dinoflagellates at the top, supported by youngest *Nothofagidites flemingii* at 1027.0m. The base is indicated by oldest *Cyatheacidites annulatus*. Amongst the spore-pollen, *Cyathidites*, *Dilwynites*, *Falcisporites*, *H. harrisii* and *Nothofagidites* are frequent to common, with *Nothofagidites flemingii*, *N. falcata* and *C. annulatus* rare and intermittent. Minor

Permian reworking was noted.

Dinoflagellates are frequent to abundant with *Spiniferites* and *Operculodinium* frequent to common in all samples. The *Chiropterygium* group occur 896.5-1027.0m (abundant at 896.5m) and are Oligocene restricted worldwide with their common occurrence in the Late Oligocene. *Impletosphaeridium* sp1 Manum also occurs 896.5-1040.0m and is late Oligocene to Late Miocene worldwide. A Late rather than Early Oligocene age is therefore favoured, but ranges of these taxa have not yet been well established in Australia.

Offshore marine environments appear likely with generally moderate to high dinoflagellate content despite low moderate diversity, combined with low organic yields.

Immaturity for hydrocarbon generation is indicated by the colourless palynomorphs.

D 1115.0m(swc), 1151.0m(swc), 1200.5m(swc) : probably Oligocene

These three samples are all very lean and 1200.5m is almost barren. They can thus not be assigned to any spore-pollen zone. Of the pollen considered in place, *Nothofagidites* spp and *Haloragacidites harrisii* dominate and indicate an early Miocene or older age. Given the Late Eocene ages seen beneath, these samples probably belong to the Oligocene, and this is supported by the dinoflagellates. Significant Cretaceous reworking is present, especially at 1151m.

Dinoflagellates are very common in these samples but are mostly long ranging. Common to abundant are *Operculodinium* spp, *Hemicystodinium zoharyi* and *Spiniferites ramosus*. *Operculodinium* is usually abundant in the lower to middle *P. tuberculatus* spore-pollen zone. At 1151m, reworked Cretaceous dinoflagellates are frequent including *Odontochitina porifera*, *Nelsoniella aceras*, *N. semireticulata* and frequent *Xenikoon australis*, suggesting the lower *australis* dinoflagellate zone of early Campanian age.

Environments are offshore marine, with dinoflagellates dominant (72%, 71% and barren downhole), but of low diversity. The limited diversity spore-pollen are consistent with an offshore location.

Colourless spores and pollen indicate immaturity for hydrocarbon generation.

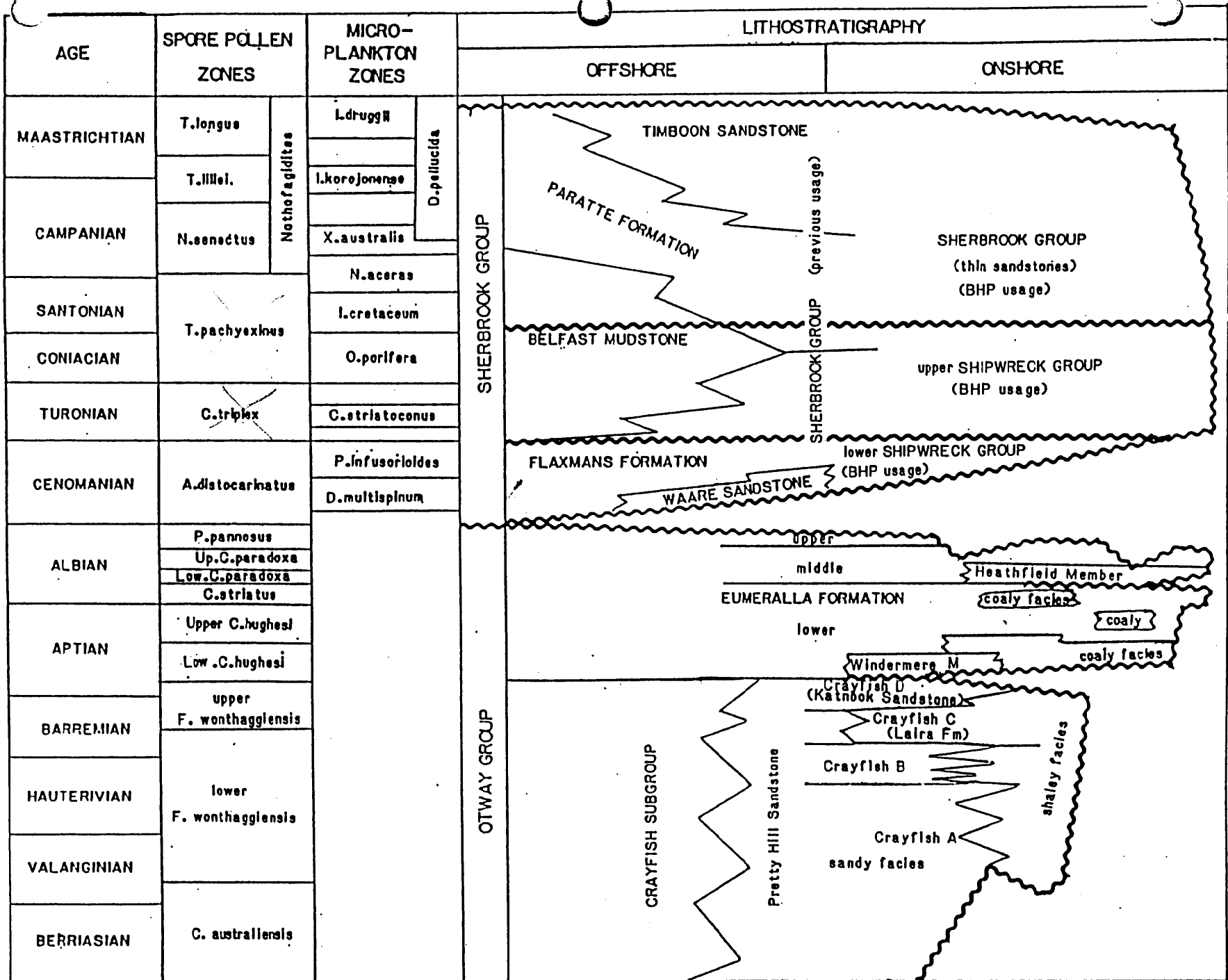


FIGURE 1. CRETACEOUS REGIONAL FRAMEWORK, OTWAY BASIN

SPORE-POLLEN ZONES	SPORE-POLLEN HORIZONS	DINOFLAGELLATE ZONES	DINOFLAGELLATE HORIZONS
LONGUS	upper T. confessus 1 T. sectilis G. rudata • 1b N. senectus • 1d	DRUGGII	M. conorata 1a M. conorata 1c M. druggii 1e I. pellucida 2
	lower T. sabulosus 2a T. longus 2b		
LILLEI	upper T. sectilis 3a lower T. lillei 3b	KOROJONENSE	I. korojonense 3 I. cretacea I. korojonense 3c I. pellucida
SENECTUS	upper G. rudata 7a	AUSTRALIS	upper X. australis 4 X. ceratoides A. wisemaniae A. suggestium 4a lower N. aceras 5 N. semireticulata X. australis • 6
	middle T. sabulosus 7e	ACERAS	upper N. tuberculata 7 X. australis 7b N. tuberculata 7c N. semireticulata O. obesa 7d middle T. suspectum Heterosphaeridium 10%+ 8 Heterosphaeridium 20%+ 9 lower N. aceras 9b
	lower N. senectus 9a		
APOXYEXINUS	upper A. cruciformis 1% A. cruciformis 1-4% 11	CRETACEA	upper I. belfastense 10 A. denticulata Heterosphaeridium 20%+ 10a I. belfastense A. denticulata 11a lower I. cretacea 11b
	middle A. cruciformis 10%+ 12	PORIFERA	O. porifera 12b
	lower A. cruciformis 12a A. cruciformis 10%+		
MAWSONII	A. distocarinatus 12c consistent 13 A. distocarinatus P. mawsonii 15a	STRIATOCONUS	C. edwardsii 14
DISTOCARINATUS	common saccates A. cruciformis	INFUSORIOIDES	C. edwardsii • 15 C. edwardsii • 15b
			dinoflagellates

FIGURE 2 ZONATION USED HEREIN SHOWING THE NUMBERED HORIZONS AGAINST THE EXISTING FORMAL ZONATION.

• = frequent (4-10%) ● = common (11-30%)

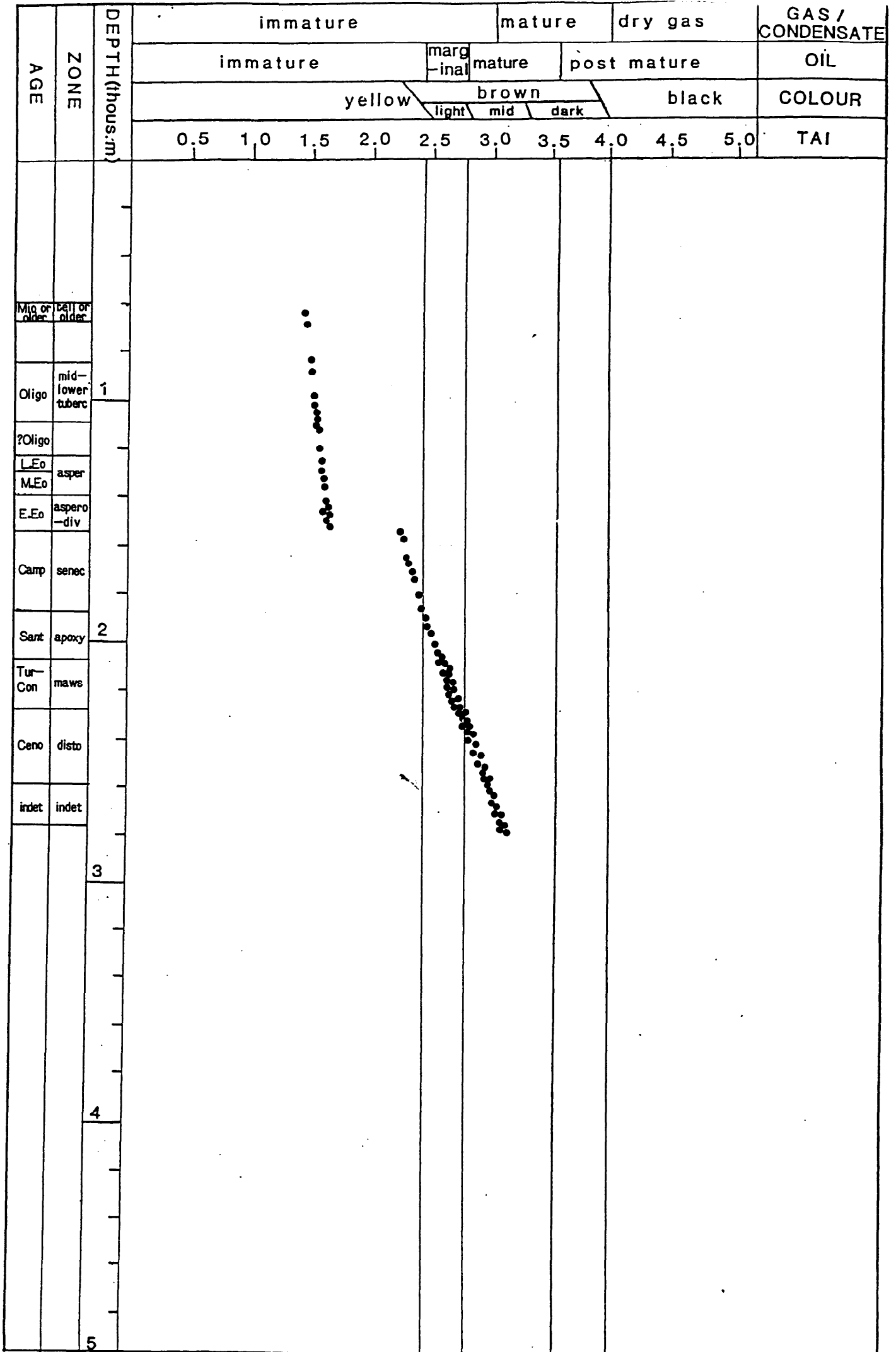


FIGURE 3 MATURITY PROFILE - LA BELLA # 1

E 1255.0m(swc), 1264.0m(swc) : upper *asperus* zone

Assignment to the upper *Nothofagidites asperus* Zone of Late Eocene age is based on the dinoflagellates, as the pollen are scarce and non-diagnostic in these very lean assemblages. Amongst the pollen, *Nothofagidites* (including *N. falcata*), *Haloragacidites* and *Proteacidites* are the most frequent. Inertinite dominates the lean yield.

Dinoflagellates are relatively common in these very lean assemblages and include frequent *Phthanoperidinium comatum* and *Systematophora placacantha*, indicating the *P. comatum* dinoflagellate zone, correlative with the upper *N. asperus* spore-pollen zone.

Offshore marine environments are indicated by the dinoflagellate content (~60% and ~30% downhole) and their relatively high diversity in such a lean assemblage.

Colourless pollen indicate immaturity for hydrocarbon generation.

F 1340.0m(swc), 1364.0m(swc) : lower *asperus* Zone

These assemblages are extremely lean but assignment to the lower *Nothofagidites asperus* Zone of Middle Eocene age is indicated at the top by youngest *Drytopollenites semilunatus* and *Intratropollenites notabilis*, supported by youngest *Proteacidites pachypolus* and *P. leightonii* and the dinoflagellate data. At the base, dinoflagellate data indicate assignment. Amongst the very rare pollen, *H. harrisii*, *Nothofagidites* and *Proteacidites* are the most common.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, youngest *Homotriblium tasmaniense*, consistent *Impagidinium maculatum* and oldest *S. placacantha* and *Deflandrea phosphoritica* indicates the *heterophlycta* dinoflagellate zone, correlative with the lower *asperus* spore-pollen zone. *Microdinium* spp and *Operculodinium* spp are frequent.

Intermediate marine to nearshore marine environments are indicated by the dinoflagellate content (~35% and ~30%) and moderate diversity. Spores and pollen are clearly dominant in very lean assemblages.

Colourless palynomorphs indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

G 1489.0m(swc), 1491.0m(swc), 1494.0m(swc) : *asperopolus* Zone

Assignment to the *Proteacidites asperopolus* Zone of latest Early Eocene to earliest Middle Eocene is indicated at the top by youngest *Proteacidites ornatus*, *P. grandis*, *Malvacipollis diversus* (at 1489.0m) and *Myrtaceidites tenuis* (at 1491.0m). At the base, oldest *P. asperopolus* is definitive. *H. harrisii* and *Proteacidites* spp are common with *Nothofagidites* very rare. Other distinctive species include *Beaupreadites verrucosus*, *Cupanieidites orthoteichus*, *Proteacidites pachyopolus* and *Santalumidites cainozoicus*.

Dinoflagellates include *Kisselovia edwardsii* and common *H. tasmaniense* at 1489.0m indicating the *edwardsii* dinoflagellate zone and *Kisselovia thompsonae* without *K. edwardsii* at 1491.0m, indicating the *thompsonae* dinoflagellate zone. Both zones are correlative with the lower half (Early Eocene part) of the *asperopolus* spore-pollen zone.

Environments are marginally marine at the base (2% low diversity dinoflagellates with 16% freshwater algae at 1494.0m) passing to nearshore (18% moderate diversity dinoflagellates and 5% freshwater algae at 1491.0m) passing to intermediate marine (55% diverse dinoflagellates with 7% freshwater algae at 1489.0m).

Colourless palynomorphs indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

H 1517.0m(swc), 1523.0m(swc) : upper *diversus* Zone

Assignment to the upper *Malvacipollis diversus* Zone of Early Eocene age is indicated at the top by the absence of younger markers and at the base by oldest *Santalumidites cainozoicus* (1517.0m) *Proteacidites pachyopolus* (1523.0m) and *Myrtaceidites tenuis* (1517.0m). *H. harrisii*, *Malvacipollis* spp and *Proteacidites* are the most common taxa in diverse assemblages that include *C. orthoteichus*, *Periporopollenites demarcatus*, *Proteacidites tuberculiformis*, *Polycolpites esobalteus*, *I. notabilis* and *Tripoporopollenites ambiguus*.

Dinoflagellates are also age diagnostic and include oldest *H. tasmaniense* and *Wetzelialla ornatum* without younger markers and indicate the *ornatum* dinoflagellate zone, correlative with the upper half of the upper *diversus* spore-pollen zone. The deeper sample contains common *Operculodinium* and *H. tasmaniense* while the shallower one contains few dinoflagellates with frequent

Operculodinium.

Environments are nearshore marine with dinoflagellate contents of 11% and 35% downhole. The freshwater alga *Botryococcus* is also common (14% and 21% downhole), indicating a strong lacustrine influence. Tidal lakes or estuaries seem likely environments. Pollen and spores dominate and are of high diversity.

Colourless palynomorphs indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

I 1544.0m(swc) : lower *diversus* Zone

Assignment to the lower *Malvacipollis diversus* spore-pollen zone is indicated at the top by the absence of younger indicators and at the base by oldest *Malvacipollis diversus* and *Periporopollenites demarcatus*. Common taxa are *Cyathidites minor*, *Dilwynites granulatus* and *Falcisporites similis*, and *Proteacidites* are frequent.

Dinoflagellates are rare but include *Deflandrea pachyceros*, usually restricted to the Early Eocene.

Marginally marine environments are indicated by the very low dinoflagellate content (<1%) and low diversity. Significant lacustrine influence is suggested by frequent freshwater *Botryococcus* (6%). Common cuticle and common and diverse spores and pollen indicate major terrestrial influence.

Colourless palynomorphs indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

J 1563.0m(swc), 1580.0m(swc), 1640.0m(swc), 1663.0m(swc) : upper *senectus* Zone (upper *australis* dino Zone)

Assignment to the upper *Nothofagidites senectus* Zone of early Campanian age is indicated at the top by the absence of younger markers and confirmed by dinoflagellate data and indicated at the base by oldest *Gambierina rudata*. This shows the total absences of the *lillei* to *halmei* Zones (mid Campanian to Paleocene) representing a major unconformity. Other significant top ranges related to this truncation include *Tricolpites confessus*, *G. rudata* and *Tricolpites sabulosus*. Within the interval, *Proteacidites* spp, *Cyathidites* spp and *Falcisporites* spp are all common with *Cicatricosisporites australiensis*, *Gleicheniidites* and *Nothofagidites senectus* all frequent. Minor Permian and Triassic reworking was seen in all samples.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, youngest *Xenascus ceratoides* (1580.0m) and *Xenikoon australis* (1640.0m) at the top and the absence of older markers at the base indicates the upper *X. australis* dinoflagellate zone. Youngest *Odontochitina porifera* (1580.0m), *Areosphaeridium suggestium* (1640.0m) and *Anthosphaeridium wisemaniae* (1663.0m) confirm the assignment. A single specimen of *Nelsoniella aceras* at 1640.0m is considered reworked. Amongst the rare dinoflagellates, *X. australis* and *X. ceratoides* are the most frequent.

Nearshore marine environments are indicated by the low dinoflagellate content (6%, 5%, 11% and 13% downhole) and their low diversity. The abundant and diverse pollen and spores indicate very strong terrestrial influence.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

K 1721.0m(swc), 1765.0m(swc), upper *senectus* Zone (lower *australis* dino zone)

Assignment to the upper *N. senectus* Zone of early Campanian age is indicated at the top by the absence of younger markers and at the base by oldest *G. rudata*, *T. confessus* and *T. sabulosus* occur consistently. *Proteacidites* spp, *Cyathidites* spp and *Falcisporites* spp are common. Minor Permian reworking was also seen.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, youngest *Nelsoniella aceras* and the major downhole influx of *X. australis* at the top indicate the lower *australis* dinoflagellate zone. *X. australis* is common in both samples with few or no other taxa.

Environments are nearshore marine with 24% and 25% dinoflagellates downhole, but very low diversity (3 and 1 species downhole). Pollen and spores are dominant and diverse.

Yellow palynomorphs indicate immaturity for hydrocarbon generation.

L 1823.0m(cutts), 1865.0m(swc) : middle *senectus* Zone (upper *aceras* dino zone)

Assignment to the middle *N. senectus* Zone of early Campanian age is indicated at the top by the absence of younger markers confirmed by dinoflagellate data and at the base by oldest *Tricolpites sabulosus*. *Falcisporites* are common, with *Cyathidites* and *Microcachrydites antarcticus* very frequent and *Proteacidites* frequent.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, *Nelsoniella tuberculata* to the top and base indicates the upper *aceras* dinoflagellate zone. Youngest *Odontochitina obesa* at 1865m indicates a point close to the base of the upper *aceras* Zone. Common is *X. australis* in both samples, as above. *Spiniferites* and *Heterosphaeridium* are frequent.

Nearshore marine environments are indicated by the low dinoflagellate content (28% and 33%) and low to moderate diversity.

Yellow spore colours indicate immaturity for hydrocarbons.

M 1891.0m(swc), 1949.0m(swc), 1979.0m(swc) : apparently upper *apoxyexinus* Zone

Assignment to the upper *Tricolporites apoxyexinus* Zone is suggested at the top by the absence of *N. senectus* and at the base by very rare *Amosopollis cruciformis*. However, *N. senectus* can be very rare near its oldest occurrence and study of a few extra swcs in this vicinity would be useful. The dinoflagellate data suggest that these samples might be lower *N. senectus* Zone. *Falcisporites* and *Cyathidites* are common while *Dilwynites granulatus* is very frequent (8-10%) in contrast with very rare (0-3%) above. *Proteacidites* are very frequent at 1891.0m (9%), but very rare (1%) below.

Amongst the dinoflagellates, consistent *N. aceris* and frequent to common *Heterosphaeridium* (8-16%) without *X. australis* indicates the *aceris* dinoflagellate zone and suggests the middle subzone. *Heterosphaeridium* spp are the common forms in all samples, with *N. aceris* frequent at 1891.0m and 1979.0m. *Heterosphaeridium* 20%+ is the marker for lower *aceris* zone but may be present between the swcs, missed by the absence of cuttings samples.

Nearshore marine environments are indicated by the low dinoflagellate content (22%, 12%, 25% downhole) and low to moderate diversity. *Botryococcus* is prominent at 1949.0m (3%) indicating significant lacustrine influence. Abundant mixed plant debris plus the abundant and diverse spores and pollen indicate the major terrestrial influence.

Light brown spore colours indicate early marginal maturity for hydrocarbons.

N 2004.0m(swc) : upper *apoxyexinus* Zone (upper *cretacea* dino zone)

Assignment to the upper *Tricolporites apoxyexinus* Zone of Santonian age is indicated at the top and base by the absence of younger and older markers respectively and confirmed by the dinoflagellates. Within the interval, spores and pollen are rare but *Falcisporites* and *Proteacidites* are the most frequent. *Amosopollis cruciformis* was not seen.

Of the dinoflagellates, youngest *Chatangiella victoriensis* and *Isabelidinium belfastense* and oldest *Isabelidinium cretacea* and *I. belfastense* indicate the upper *I. cretacea* dinoflagellate zone. Common taxa are *Heterosphaeridium* spp, *Cassidium* sp and *Trithyrodinium* spp. *Chatangiella tripartita* and *Odontochitina porifera* are prominent.

Intermediate marine environments are indicated by the high dinoflagellate content (84%) tempered by only moderate diversity.

Light brown spore colours indicate marginal maturity for oil but immaturity for gas/condensate.

O 2020.0m(swc) : middle *apoxyexinus* Zone

Assignment to the middle *T. apoxyexinus* Zone of Santonian age is indicated at the top by the downhole influx of *A. cruciformis* (2% in contrast to absent in the sample above) and at the base by the absence of older markers. Common taxa are *Cyathidites minor*, *Dilwynites granulatus* and *Falcisporites similis*. A single *Appendicisporites distocarinatus* is considered reworked. Dinoflagellates are mostly nondescript and longranging and assignment to any zone is not possible.

Environments are intermediate marine with moderate dinoflagellate content (32%) but moderate diversity. Abundant cuticle and common and diverse spores and pollen reflect the strong terrestrial influence.

Light brown spore colours indicate marginal maturity for oil but immaturity for gas/condensate.

P 2028.0m(swc), 2043.0m(swc), 2054.0m(swc), 2059.0m(swc), 2066.0m(swc), 2076.0m(core) : lower *apoxyexinus* Zone

Assignment to the lower *T. apoxyexinus* Zone of Santonian age is indicated at the top by the major downhole influx of *A. cruciformis* (18%, 14%, 14%, 3%, absent, 19% downhole compared with 2% above) and at the base by the base of this acme

and absence of older indicators. Within the interval, *A. cruciformis* is the most common taxon, with *D. granulatus*, *Falcisporites* and *Cyathidites* also common. A single specimen of *A. distocarinatus* at 2059.0m(swc) may be reworked but single specimens of *A. distocarinatus* and *A. tricornitatus* at 2076.0m may represent the true top range. Dinoflagellates are not age diagnostic.

Environments are mostly nearshore marine (35%, 17%, 18%, 32%, 18% dinoflagellates downhole with moderate diversity) with a single very nearshore marine sample at the base (7% dinoflagellates with very low diversity). Common cuticle and dominant and diverse spores and pollen indicate strong terrestrial influence.

Light brown spore colours indicate marginal maturity for oil but immaturity for gas/condensate.

- Q 2086.1m(core), 2096.0m(core), 2111.5m(swc), 2118.0m(swc), 2145.0m(swc), 2159.0m(swc), 2164.0m(swc), 2166.0m(swc), 2179.0m(swc), 2199.0m(swc), 2232.0m(swc), 2252.0m(swc), 2270.0m(swc) : *mawsonii* Zone

Assignment to the *Phyllocladidites mawsonii* Zone of Coniacian-Turonian age is indicated at the top by youngest consistent *A. distocarinatus* and at the base by oldest *P. mawsonii* supported by oldest *C. triplex*. Within the interval, common taxa are *Cyathidites* spp, *D. granulatus*, *Falcisporites* and *Microcachrydites*. *A. cruciformis* is frequent at the top (6% at 2086.1m, 5% at 2096.0m) but rare or absent beneath. *A. distocarinatus* is consistently present and is frequent at the base (5% at 2270.0m).

Dinoflagellates are mostly scarce but include youngest *Cribooperidinium edwardsii* consistent at 2252.0m and frequent at 2270.0m, indicating the *Palaeohystrichophora infusorioides* dinoflagellate zone. At 2118m a high diversity assemblage occurs and towards the base of the interval, (2230m and deeper), *Heterosphaeridium* are frequent to common.

Environments are mostly very nearshore at the top (7%, 3%, 6%, 56%, 9%, 1%, 6%, 4%, 8%, 6% low diversity dinoflagellates downhole with a single intermediate marine exception at 2118m) and nearshore at the base (49%, 19% and 29% moderate diversity dinoflagellates). Abundant cuticle and inertinite and dominant and diverse spores and pollen indicate dominant terrestrial influence.

Light brown spore colours indicate marginal maturity for oil and immaturity for

gas/condensate.

- R 2277.5(swc), 2284.0m(swc), 2286.0m(swc), 2309.0(swc), 2330.0m(swc), 2398.0m(swc), 2402.0m(swc), 2454.0m(swc), 2489.0m(swc), 2497.0m(swc), 2500.0m(swc), 2528.0m(swc), 2540.5m(swc), 2544.5m(swc), 2550m(cutts), 2567.0(swc), 2573m(cutts), 2593.0m(swc) : *distocarinatus* Zone

Assignment to the *Appendicisporites distocarinatus* Zone of Cenomanian age is indicated at the top and base by the presence of *A. distocarinatus* in the absence of younger or older markers respectively. Within the interval, yields are variable with most samples rich and diverse but with lean and indeterminate assemblages at 2497.0m and 2540.5m. Saccate pollen dominate (*Falcisporites* spp and *Microcachryidites* common) with subordinate spores (*Cyathidites* and *Osmundacidites* frequent). *A. cruciformis* is extremely rare and inconsistent, being seen only at 2398.0m. *D. granulatus* is rare to frequent (1-6%) and *Cicatricosisporites australiensis* rare to absent (0-2%) in the upper half of the section (2277.5m-2528.0m), but *D. granulatus* is extremely rare to absent and *C. australiensis* consistent to frequent (1-7%) in the lower half of the section (2544.5m-2593.0m).

Dinoflagellates are rare and inconsistent but include *C. edwardsii* at 2277.5m, 2284.0m, 2286.0m, 2309.0m and 2402.0m indicating the *P. infusorioides* dinoflagellate zone. *C. edwardsii* and *C. deflandrei* are the most consistent taxa.

The upper part of the section (2277.5-2402m) is mostly nearshore marine with a marginal marine sample at 2286m (1% dinoflagellates), a non-marine one at 2330m and an intermediate marine one (57%) at 2309m. Dinoflagellate percentage contents from the top are 11%, 20%, 1%, 57%, absent, 22%, 22%. The lower part of the section (2454m-2593m) may all be non-marine, as almost all the dinoflagellates seen are in cuttings and are absent from the swcs. Dinoflagellate percentage contents from the top are absent, ?5% (cutts), extremely lean, ?1% (single specimen in swc), absent, barren, absent, ?3% (cutts), absent, ?3% (cutts), absent. *Botryococcus* is a minor component of most assemblages indicating minor lacustrine influence.

Light brown to mid brown spore colours at 2277.5-2330m indicate marginal maturity for oil but immaturity for gas/condensate. Mid brown to light brown spore colours at 2398-2593m indicate early maturity for oil and early marginal maturity for gas/condensate.

- S 2605.0m(swc), 2624.0m(swc), 2640m(cutts), 2671.0m(swc), 2683.0m(swc), 2690m(cutts), 2705.0m(swc), 2715m(cutts), 2730.0m(swc), 2735m(cutts) : extremely lean and indeterminate : 2646.5m(swc) rich but zonally indeterminate.

These assemblages (except 2646.5m) all come from sandy lithologies and are extremely lean of palynomorphs, although several contain frequent inertinite. Of the swcs, only 2683.0m contained sufficient specimens for a valid count of 100 specimens with saccate pollen (*Falcisporites*, *Microcachyidites*) being dominant. The cuttings contain richer assemblages including very rare dinoflagellates but are almost certainly caved. *A. distocarinatus* occurs only at 2624.0m in swc. The only suggestion of an older assemblage is that at 2715m (cutts) where a richer spore flora occurs including *C. australiensis* (5%), *Concavissimisporites penolaensis*, *Crybelosporites striatus*, *Foraminisporis asymmetricus*, *Triporoletes radiatus*, *T. reticulatus* and *T. simplex*. Key age diagnostic taxa such as *Pilosisporites grandis* and *Coptospora paradoxa* were not seen and so assignment to older zones is not possible. At 2646.5m(swc), a rich assemblage lacks markers for the basal Sherbrook or upper Otway groups, but includes the Aptian *Pilosisporites notensis* (considered reworked) and rare Permian taxa (reworked).

Environments are probably non-marine although very rare dinoflagellates were seen at 2605.0m(swc), 2715m(cutts) and 2735m(cutts) but these may be caved.

Spore colours are variable possibly due to caving and are considered unreliable for maturity determination.

IV CONCLUSIONS

At the top, the sampled section is Tertiary (Eocene to Oligocene and possibly Miocene), nearshore at the base and offshore at the top. Beneath a Maastrichtian to Paleocene unconformity a Cenomanian to Campanian mostly nearshore and partly non-marine sequence occurs. At the base, an undated sequence of argillaceous sandstones may belong to the Otway Group, but this cannot be confirmed by the palynology.

For generation of hydrocarbons, the section is early mature for oil at the base (below 3400m), marginally mature in the middle (below 1900m) and immature above.

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LA BELLA # 1

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Box 161, Maitland, South Australia, 5573.
Phone (088) 32 2795 . Fax (088) 32 2798

CLIENT: BHP PETROLEUM

WELL: LA BELLA #1

FIELD / AREA: OFF SHORE OTWAY BASIN

ANALYST: ROGER MORGAN

DATE: AUGUST '93

NOTES: ALL DEPTHS IN METRES

FIGURES ARE PERCENTAGES FROM 100 SPECIMEN COUNT

"X" = SEEN OUTSIDE COUNT

"XX" = COMMON OCCURENCE OUTSIDE COUNT "*" = REWORKED

RANGE CHART OF OCCURENCES BY LOWEST APPEARANCE - by group -

BHP PETROLEUM PTY. LTD.
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CENTRE

Value	Unit	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	
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SPECIES LOCATION INDEX

Index numbers are the columns in which species appear.

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209	CORONATISPOA PERFORATA	280	NUMMUS MONOCULATUS		
41	CORONIFERA OCEANICA	281	NUMMUS SP		
124	CORRUDINIUM INCOMPOSITUM	20	NUMMUS MONOCULATUS		
130	CRASSOSPHAERA CONCINNIA	28	ODONTOCHITINA COSTATA		
4	CRIBROPERIDINIUM EDWARDSII	60	ODONTOCHITINA CRIBROPODA		
5	CRIBROPERIDINIUM SP	66	ODONTOCHITINA OBESA		
161	CRYBELOSPORITES STRIATUS	17	ODONTOCHITINA OPERCULATA		
251	CUPANEIDITES ORTHOTEICHUS	50	ODONTOCHITINA PORIFERA		
273	CYATHEACIDITES ANNULATUS	9	OLIGOSPHAERIDIUM COMPLEX		
147	CYATHEIDITES AUSTRALIS	18	OLIGOSPHAERIDIUM PULCHERRIMUM		
148	CYATHEIDITES MINOR	81	OPERCULODINIUM		
149	CYCADOPITES FOLLICULARIS	129	OPERCULODINIUM CENTROCARPUM		
13	CYCLONEPHELIUM COMPACTUM	154	OSMUNDACIDITES WELLMANII		
7	CYCLONEPHELIUM MEMBRANIPHORUM	127	PALAEOCYSTIDIUM AUSTRALINIUM		
89	CYCLOPSIELLA	30	PALAEOHYSTRICHOSPHORA INFUSORIOIDES		
175	CYCLOSPORITES HUGHESI	10	PALAEOPERIDINIUM CRETACEUM		
112	DAPSILIDINIUM PASTIELSI	35	PARALECANIELLA INDENTATA		
105	DAPSILIDINIUM PSEUDOCOLLIGERUM	241	PERIPOROPOLLENITES DEMARCATUS		
79	DEFLANDREA PACHYCEROS	233	PERIPOROPOLLENITES POLYORATUS		
90	DEFLANDREA PHOSPHORITICA	155	PEROTRILETES JUBATUS/MORGANII		
72	DEFLANDREA SP.	214	PEROTRILETES MAJUS		
91	DEFLANDREA TRUNCATA	228	PEROTRILETES SP		
40	DICONODINIUM PUSILLUM	123	PHTANOPENIDINIUM COMATUM		
181	DICTYOPHYLLIDITES	193	PHYLLACLADIDITES EUMUCHUS		
197	DICTYOTOSPORITES COMPLEX	187	PHYLLACLADIDITES MAWSONII		
176	DICTYOTOSPORITES SPECIOSUS	179	PILIOSPORITES NOTENSIS		
192	DILWYNITES GRANULATUS	172	PODOSPORITES MICROSACCATUS		
198	DILWYNITES TUBERCULATUS	262	POLYCOLPITES ESOBALTEUS		
80	DIPHYES COLLIFERUM	266	PROTEACIDITES ANNULARIS		
113	DRACODINIUM SPONGY	253	PROTEACIDITES ASPEROPOLUS		
270	DRYPTOPOLLENITES SEMILUNATUS	242	PROTEACIDITES BUN GRANDIS		
235	ERICIPITES SCABRATUS	243	PROTEACIDITES GRANDIS		
57	EUCLADINIUM MADURENSIS	244	PROTEACIDITES INCURVATUS		
2	EXOCHOSPHAERIDIUM PHRAGNITES	268	PROTEACIDITES LEIGHTONI		
150	FALCISPORITES GRANDIS	254	PROTEACIDITES ORNATUM		
151	FALCISPORITES SIMILIS	255	PROTEACIDITES PACHYPOLUS		
23	FLORENTINIA LACINIATA	272	PROTEACIDITES RECTOMARGINUS		
162	FORAMINISPORIS ASYMMETRICUS				