
Stratigraphic Evolution of the Upper Cretaceous Austin Chalk Group on the San Marcos Arch and its Relation to Deep Basement Structure

John Cooper¹, Alexis Godet¹, Michael C. Pope², and Jeffrey Hardwick³

¹Department of Geological Sciences, University of Texas at San Antonio,
Flawn Science Bldg. 4.02.08, 1 UTSA Circle, San Antonio, Texas 78249

²Department of Geology and Geophysics, Texas A&M University,
3115 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843

³Conoco Phillips School of Geology & Geophysics, University of Oklahoma,
Sarkeys Energy Center, 100 E. Boyd St., Rm. 710, Norman, Oklahoma 73019

GCAGS Explore & Discover Article #00246*

http://www.gcags.org/exploreanddiscover/2017/00246_cooper_et_al.pdf

Posted October 30, 2017.

*Article based on an abstract published in the *GCAGS Transactions* (see footnote reference below), which is available as part of the entire 2017 *GCAGS Transactions* volume via the GCAGS Bookstore at the Bureau of Economic Geology (www.beg.utexas.edu) or as an individual document via AAPG Datapages, Inc. (www.datapages.com), and delivered as an oral presentation at the 67th Annual GCAGS Convention and 64th Annual GCSSEPM Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, November 1–3, 2017.

ABSTRACT

An integrated outcrop and subsurface study of the Upper Cretaceous Austin Chalk Group across the San Marcos Arch was conducted to understand the influence of regional paleotopography on facies and sequence architecture. Select outcrops in Bexar and Comal counties were measured and described; in addition, handheld gamma ray scintillometer profiles were obtained from the measured sections. Geophysical logs of boreholes drilled through the Austin Chalk offered data to better link the subsurface with the surface outcrops. The Austin Chalk in Bexar County is divisible into 6 chalk packages that are bounded by regionally extensive surfaces that are traced into the subsurface. Outcrop and subsurface data from the San Marcos Arch illustrate anomalous thickness variations in individual chalk packages that appear to be related to changes in paleotopography during deposition. The lower 3 chalk packages all thin across the northwest-southeast trending San Marcos Arch, but also thin across a northeast-southwest trending antiformal structure within the interior zone of the buried late Paleozoic Ouachita Orogen known as the Luling Uplift. The up-to-the-coast faults of the Luling system bound this structure to the northwest while down-to-the-coast faults of the Karnes system bound this structure to the southeast. Thickening of the lower chalk packages to the northwest and southeast of this structure indicates that faulting was active during deposition. The upper 3 chalk packages are less affected by the San Marcos Arch and Luling Uplift and show maximum thinning in central Bexar County. A physiographic change transformed the mini depocenters of the lower Austin into shallow water platforms marked by nondeposition and hardground formation. Platform areas of the lower Austin were transformed into slope-basin settings during deposition of the

Originally published as: Cooper, J., A. Godet, M. C. Pope, and J. Hardwick, 2017, Stratigraphic evolution of the Upper Cretaceous Austin Chalk Group on the San Marcos Arch and its relation to deep basement structure: *Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies Transactions*, v. 67, p. 571.

upper Austin. These physiographic changes are concomitant with volcanism of the Balcones Igneous Province during late Austin time.