Exclusive central $\pi^+\pi^-$ production in CDF

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Presented at EDS Blois 2013: On behalf of the CDF Collaboration

Using the Collider Detector at Fermilab, CDF, we have measured exclusive $\pi^+\pi^-$ production at $\sqrt{s} = 900$ GeV and 1960 GeV. The $\pi^+\pi^-$-pair is central, $|y| < 1.0$, and there are no other particles detected in $|\eta| < 5.9$. We discuss the mass spectrum, showing $f_0(980)$ and $f_2(1270)$ resonances, $s$-dependence, $p_T$-dependence, and angular distributions.

1 Introduction, CDF detector and data sets

In Regge phenomenology, high mass single diffraction implies a non-zero triple-pomeron coupling, which in turn implies, through the optical theorem, double pomeron exchange, DPE: $p + p \rightarrow p(*) \oplus X \oplus p(*)$. Here $p$ means a proton or antiproton, the final state protons may be quasi-elastic or they may dissociate ($p(*)$), and $\oplus$ represents a large rapidity gap $\Delta y \gtrsim 3$ with no hadrons. See Ref.[1] for a review. By “exclusive” we mean that the central state $X$ is simple and fully measured. At low masses, in the resonance region $M(X) \lesssim 3$ GeV, DPE is non-perturbative and QCD (or QCD-inspired) calculations are challenging; there are new efforts by the Durham [2] and Cracow [3] groups. The quantum numbers of $X$ are restricted to be mostly $I^GJ_{PC}=0^{++}$, so $s$-channel resonances $f_0(600)$, $f_0(980)$, $f_2(1270)$, $\chi_{c0}(3415)$ and $\chi_{c2}(3556)$ are allowed. Resonances with a high gluon content will be favored, especially in comparison with $\gamma\gamma \rightarrow X$. For the $\chi_c$ and $\chi_b$ states perturbative calculations of $g + g \rightarrow \chi_{c,b}$ are applicable, related to the very interesting channels $X = \gamma\gamma$ [4] and $X = Higgs$. So we have several motivations: improving our understanding of the pomeron, meson (especially glueball) spectroscopy, and testing the QCD physics of exclusive production (especially $\gamma\gamma$ and Higgs).

The CDF detector at the Fermilab Tevatron is well-known. For this study we used data not only at the usual $\sqrt{s} = 1960$ GeV, but also at 900 GeV in a special run. We only used bunch crossings with a single interaction, i.e. no pile-up, and we required all the CDF detectors, covering $-5.9 < \eta < +5.9$ to be empty, except for two oppositely-charged tracks and their corresponding calorimeter hits. The trigger for these events was $\geq 2$ calorimeter showers with $E_T \gtrsim 0.5$ GeV, with a veto on beam shower counter hits ($|\eta| = 5.4 - 5.9$), Cherenkov luminosity counters ($|\eta| = 3.7 - 4.7$) and forward calorimeters ($|\eta| = 1.32 - 3.64$). We had 22M (90M) triggers at $\sqrt{s} = 900$ (1960) GeV. Off-line we required the central calorimeters ($|\eta| < 1.3$) to be also empty, apart from the trigger clusters.
2GeV/c $\pi^+ + \pi^-$

$\sigma_{\text{inel}}$ times the fraction $f_{\text{vis}}$ of inelastic events with $|\eta| < 5.9$, estimated to be $0.90 \pm 0.05 (0.85 \pm 0.05)$. At 1960 GeV $\sigma_{\text{vis}}$ agreed with global fits; at 900 GeV we used $\sigma_{\text{vis}}$ to normalize our cross sections, as the luminosity counters were not calibrated. The total delivered luminosity at the two energies was 0.056 (7.12) pb$^{-1}$.

3 Results

Fig. 1 shows the differential cross section integrated over $p_T(\pi\pi)$ as a function of $M(\pi\pi)$, and Fig. 2a shows the low mass region on a linear scale, and at both energies. A small $f_0(980)$ signal is seen, and a dominant $f_2(1270)$ (also dominant in $\gamma\gamma \to \pi^+\pi^-$). A possible shoulder on the high mass side ($f_0(1370)$?) is followed by a distinct change of slope at 1500 MeV, which was also seen at lower energies [6]. While the cross section shapes are similar at the two energies, they differ in detail as seen in the ratio plot Fig. 2b. In addition to any $s$-dependence of the
$p \oplus \pi^+\pi^- \oplus p$ cross section (expected from Regge to be $\sim \ln s^{-1.25}$) there is more rapidity available for proton dissociation at 1960 GeV, the beam rapidities being 6.87 and 7.64 while the detector extends to $\eta = 5.9$ in both cases. We observe that the ratio is lower in the region of the $f_2(1270)$ than it is below 1 GeV, expected to be dominated by S-wave. We also find that the mean $p_T(\pi^+\pi^-)$ has a minimum in the $f_2(1270)$ region, and rises abruptly at 1.5 GeV.

Figure 2: (a) Differential cross section $d\sigma/dM$ for two particles, assumed to be $\pi^+\pi^-$, in the stated kinematic region, between two rapidity gaps $\Delta y > 4.6$, at $\sqrt{s} = 900$ GeV (red) and 1960 GeV (black). (b) Ratio of cross sections $d\sigma/dM$ at $\sqrt{s} = 1960$ GeV and 900 GeV as a function of mass. In both cases rapidity gaps extend to $\eta_{max} = 5.9$, and p-dissociation is included.

We previously observed [5] exclusive $\chi_c^0$ production in the mode $J/\psi(\to \mu^+\mu^-) + \gamma$, but could not distinguish the three $\chi_c$ states. The $\pi^+\pi^-$ and $K^+K^-$ channels have larger branching fractions and enough resolution to separate the $\chi_c$ states. We do not see significant signals in this data, and give upper limits (90% C.L.) on $d\sigma/dy|_{y=0}(\chi_c^0) = 21.4\pm4.2$(syst.)nb (in $\pi^+\pi^-$) and $18.9\pm3.8$(syst.)nb (in $K^+K^-$). This implies that < 25% of the $J/\psi + \gamma$ events were $\chi_c^0(3415)$. Even though the $\chi_{c2}(3556)$ may have a much smaller production cross section its branching fraction is $17\times$ larger.

We studied the $\cos \theta^*$ distributions of the $\pi^+$ in the $X$-frame relative to the incoming $p$-direction. The data are consistent with isotropy up to 1.5 GeV, above which they become progressively more forward-backward peaked. Isotropy is expected if any polarization at production is washed out after integration over the unseen protons or $p\bar{p}$-dissociations.

The “Durham” and “Cracow” groups [2, 3] have predicted the differential cross section with the same cuts as Fig. 1, but with no dissociation. Theoretical uncertainties in the region $\sim 3 < M < 4$ GeV are about $\times^{3}$, but the data are within these uncertainties.

We acknowledge funding from the U.S. Dept. of Energy and many other sources, see Ref. [4].

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