DEVELOPMENT OF HOLLOW ELECTRON BEAMS FOR PROTON AND ION COLLIMATION

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Abstract

Magnetically confined hollow electron beams for controlled halo removal in high-energy colliders such as the Tevatron or the LHC may extend traditional collimation systems beyond the intensity limits imposed by tolerable material damage. They may also improve collimation performance by suppressing loss spikes due to beam jitter and by increasing capture efficiency. A hollow electron gun was designed and built. Its performance and stability were measured at the Fermilab test stand. The gun will be installed in one of the existing Tevatron electron lenses for preliminary tests of the hollow-beam collimator concept, addressing critical issues such as alignment and instabilities of the overlapping proton and electron beams.

HOLLOW-BEAM COLLIMATOR

A collimation system must protect equipment from intentional and abnormal beam aborts by intercepting particle losses. Its functions also include controlling and reducing the beam halo, which is continually replenished during normal operations by various processes such as beam-beam collisions, intrabeam scattering, beam-gas scattering, rf noise, ground motion, and betatron resonances. Uncontrolled losses of even a small fraction of the circulating beam can damage sensitive components, quench superconducting magnets, or produce intolerable experimental backgrounds. Conventional collimation schemes are based on collimators and absorbers, possibly incorporating several stages. In the Tevatron, the primary collimators are 5-mm tungsten plates positioned about 5 standard deviations (σ) away from the center of the beam core. The absorbers (or secondary collimators) are 1.5-m steel jaws at 6σ. In the LHC, the primaries are 0.6-m carbon jaws at 6σ, whereas the 1-m carbon/copper secondaries are positioned at 7σ [1]. At present, there is no viable solution for scraping the beam tails in the LHC at full intensity (350 MJ per beam), as no material can be brought closer than about 5σ. This project is devoted to the study of hollow electron beams as a possible candidate for collimation of high-intensity proton or ion beams.

The hollow electron beam collimator (HEBC) is a magnetically confined, optionally pulsed electron beam with a hollow current-density profile overlapping with the proton or ion beam of interest [2]. The core passes through the center of the electron distribution and is unperturbed. The halo experiences nonlinear transverse kicks and it is driven towards the collimators. The electron gun is immersed in a conventional solenoid and provides a few amperes of current at 10 keV. The overlap region is contained within the cryostat of a superconducting solenoid providing an axial field of up to 6 T. The electron beam is then driven towards a water-cooled collector inside a separate conventional solenoid. The electron beam can be placed close to an intense beam core without any material damage.

In cylindrical symmetry, the kicks experienced by protons traversing an electron beam at a radius r encompassing a current I_e in an interaction region of length L are given by the following expression:

\[ \theta = \frac{2I_e L (1 \pm \beta_e \beta_p)}{r \beta_e \beta_p c^2 (B_p) p} \left( \frac{1}{4\pi \epsilon_0} \right), \]

where \( \beta_e c \) is the electron velocity, \( \beta_p c \) the proton velocity, and \( (B_p) p \) is the magnetic rigidity of the proton beam. The + sign applies when the magnetic force is directed like the electrostatic attraction (\( v_x > v_p < 0 \)). For example, in a configuration similar to a Tevatron electron lens [3] (\( I_e = 2.5 \text{ A}, L = 2 \text{ m}, \beta_e = 0.19, r = 3.5 \text{ mm} \)), the corresponding kicks are 2.4 μrad for 150-GeV protons and 0.36 μrad at 980 GeV. The r.m.s. kicks due to multiple Coulomb scattering in a Tevatron collimator are 110 μrad at 150 GeV and 17 μrad at 980 GeV. At 7 TeV, the LHC collimators impart an r.m.s. kick of 4.5 μrad. Large electron currents (~50 A) would be necessary for the HEBC to provide the same kicks as a conventional collimator and clean halo particles in a few revolutions. One important difference between the HEBC and conventional schemes is that the hollow-beam kicks are not random in space or time. The electric field is determined by the electrons’ current distribution, and the electron beam can be continuous or pulsed with rise times below 100 ns. Resonant excitation tuned to a strong lattice resonance is possible. This technique is very effective, as demonstrated by calculations and by abort-gap clearing with electron lenses tuned to the 3rd and 7th order resonances in the Tevatron [4].

Analytical expressions for the current distribution were used to estimate the effectiveness of the HEBC on a proton beam. They were included in tracking codes such as

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† Fermilab is operated by Fermi Research Alliance, LLC under Contract No. DE-AC02-07CH11359 with the United States Department of Energy. This work was partially supported by the United States Department of Energy through the US LHC Accelerator Research Program (LARP).

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A high-perveance gun was built to test hollow-beam collimation in the Tevatron. The present design is based upon the cathodes already employed in the Tevatron electron lenses, which are now commercially available from HeatWave Labs, Inc. (Watsonville, CA, U.S.A.). A convex tungsten dispenser cathode with BaO:CaO:Al2O3 impregnant is used to obtain high perveance [9]. The cathode has an outer diameter of 15.24 mm (0.6 in) and a radius of curvature of 10 mm. In this design, a 9-mm-diameter hole is bored along the cathode’s axis. The expected profile in the space-charge-limited regime was calculated using the UltraSAM code [10]. The calculated current density distribution vanishes between 0 < r < 4.5 mm, then rises sharply and gradually goes back to zero at the outer edges. The gun was designed at Fermilab, manufactured by Hi-Tech Manufacturing, LLC (Schiller Park, IL, U.S.A.), and installed in the Fermilab electron-lens test bench for characterization.

The test bench includes a cathode filament heater and a high-voltage modulator (10 kV maximum, 2.5 mA average current, 6 μs typical pulse width). The 3-m-long straight beamline is equipped with pickup electrodes. Three 0.4-T conventional solenoids instrumented with magnetic correctors provide independently controlled axial fields in the gun, central, and collector regions. The central solenoid was designed for electron cooling and has high field quality and low field-line ripple. The water-cooled collector has a 0.2-mm-diameter pinhole for current-density profile measurements. Typical vacuum is 2 × 10⁻⁸ mbar.

The performance of the gun as a function of cathode voltage and heater power is shown in Figure 1. Points represent the measured peak collector current. Data is taken a few minutes after changing the heater setting, when the resistance of the filament has reached equilibrium. Thermalization of the whole gun takes longer, as shown by the two data sets at 66 W, taken a few hours apart. Data in the space-charge-limited regime yield a perveance of 4 μperv.

Current-density profiles are measured by recording the current through the pinhole while sweeping the electron beam with the magnetic correctors in small steps. An example of profile measurement is shown in Figure 2a. It was taken under the following conditions: heater power 66 W, cathode voltage −0.5 kV, pulse width 6 μs, repetition period 0.6 ms, peak current 44 mA, axial field 0.3 T in all 3 solenoids. At low currents, measured profiles agree with calculated space-charge-limited emission (Figure 2b).

Hollow beams are subject to breakup under the action of space charge in an axial magnetic field, due to the diocotron or slipping-stream instability [11]. For a fixed propagation length, profile evolution increases with current and decreases with magnetic field and voltage. As an example, Figure 3 shows how the current-density profile at the collector changes with increasing current for an axial field of 0.3 T. Emission features are extremely reproducible, even after cooling and reheating the cathode over the course of several months. Breakup is probably triggered by small
gun misalignments or field asymmetries and not by cathode surface defects, as verified by observing the emission uniformity in the temperature-limited regime. Vortices are undesirable, as they result in a nonuniform electric field on axis of about 10% of the peak field in the worst case (see Figure 2c for a sample calculation). One may mitigate the effect with azimuthally segmented extraction electrodes. Although magnetic fields are constrained by the desired beam size in the overlap region, high fields may be used to freeze profile evolution, or it may be possible to take advantage of the $E \times B$ twist itself to smooth the distribution (Figure 3).

We plan to install the 0.6-in hollow gun in one of the existing Tevatron electron lenses (TEL2). Core lifetimes, losses and loss spikes at collimators and detectors will be monitored as a function of HEBC parameters (position, angle, intensity, magnetic field, timing) for individual proton or antiproton bunches. Although kicks will be smaller than at injection, measurements will be done at flattop (980 GeV), where orbits and emittances are stable and the collimation system is well understood. Alignment procedures have been tested with the Gaussian gun currently installed in TEL2. They are based on improved beam-position monitors and on the observation of loss patterns as the electrons are scanned across the circulating beam. Installation is scheduled for the upcoming summer shutdown of the accelerator complex, and experiments can reasonably start in the fall.

We wish to thank G. Annala (FNAL), W. Fischer (BNL), N. Mokhov (FNAL), and J. C. Smith (SLAC) for discussions and insights.

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