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Neutron Fragmentation and Inclusive Charge Exchange in pd and π^+d Interactions at 195 GeV/c*

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An excess of negative particles and depletion of positive particles in the backward hemisphere (c.m. system) is observed in π^+ and p interactions on neutron target. $d\sigma^-/dy$ is compared with pp interactions and the difference is related to the slow-proton spectrum produced in the pn interactions. A neutron fragmentation component is observed and the inclusive charge-exchange probability at the nucleon vertex is found to be about 0.4.

A number of interesting results have been reported on the inclusive negative-particle distributions in pp^1 and πp^2 interactions at 100–400 GeV and on the diffractive component measured in such interactions.³ There are relatively few deuterium experimental results on the above subjects and most of them are preliminary or unpublished.⁴ We would like to report here results on negative-particle distributions and neutron fragmentation obtained from an exposure of the FNAL 30-in. deuterium bubble chamber and proportional wire hybrid system to a positive π^+/p beam of 195 GeV/c, and on comparison to the relevant hydrogen data.

The experimental setup and other details are given in our previous publication,⁵ where we presented also the pn and π^+n multiplicity distribu-

tions measured at 195 GeV/c. In particular we find⁵ that there is a negative excess in the average number of secondaries (see Table I) in interactions on a neutron target: $\langle n_- \rangle_{pn} - \langle n_- \rangle_{pp} = 0.46 \pm 0.14$ and $\langle n_- \rangle_{\pi^+n} - \langle n_- \rangle_{\pi^+p} = 0.41 \pm 0.18$. [The fractional rate of charge exchange at the nucleon vertex, $\alpha = \sigma(n \rightarrow p + (x\pi)^-)/\sigma(n \rightarrow \text{all})$, is given by the negative excess: $\alpha = \langle n_- \rangle_n - \langle n_- \rangle_p$. See also Meyer⁷ and Eisenberg *et al.*⁸].

Intuitively one expects the extra negative charge in interaction on neutrons to be related to the neutron target fragmentation $n \rightarrow p\pi^-X^0$. Therefore, we have made a careful and complete measurement of the backward (c.m. system) tracks in all topologies. Protons below $P_{1ab} = 1.4$ GeV/c could be identified by ionization. All negative

TABLE I. Average charged-particle multiplicities for backward- and forward-hemisphere (c.m. system) emissions at 200 GeV/c.

| Experiment | $\langle n_- \rangle$ | | | $\langle n_+ \rangle^c$ | | | $\langle n_d \rangle^c$ | | |
|------------|-----------------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------|------|-------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| | Backward | Forward | All | Backward | Forward | All | Backward | Forward | All |
| pp^a | 1.42 ± 0.02 | 1.42 | 2.84 ± 0.04 | 2.42 ± 0.02 | 2.42 | 4.84 | 3.84 | 3.84 | 7.68 ± 0.07 |
| π^+p^b | ... | ... | 2.95 ± 0.12 | ... | ... | 4.95 | ... | ... | 7.90 ± 0.23 |
| pn | 1.74 ± 0.06 | 1.56 | 3.30 ± 0.13 | 1.86 ± 0.07 | 2.44 | 4.30 | 3.60 | 4.00 | 7.60 ± 0.25 |
| π^+n | 1.62 ± 0.09 | 1.74 | 3.36 ± 0.15 | 1.76 ± 0.10 | 2.59 | 4.35 | 3.38 | 4.33 | 7.71 ± 0.30 |

^aFrom Ref. 1, assuming forward-backward symmetry in c.m. system.

^bFrom Ref. 6; only overall multiplicity is available.

^cBecause of unidentified protons (Ref. 7), the backward positive multiplicities have to be increased by ~ 0.07 in this experiment and the corresponding forward multiplicities decrease by the same amount. Note slightly revised multiplicities as compared with Ref. 5.

secondaries and positives above 1.4 GeV/c were assumed to be pions. The misidentified protons have only a small effect on any of our conclusions (see below). Altogether about 8000 events were measured, about a quarter of which were π^+d and the rest pd interactions. In order to obtain a pure sample of neutron interaction we used exclusively the sample of odd-prong events and even-prongs with a visible backward proton spectator in the laboratory system. Absolute cross sections were obtained by normalizing the number of events in each topology to our published topological cross sections.⁵

The overall manifestation of the negative excess in $d\sigma^-/dy$ can be seen best in Fig. 1, from which several very interesting features of the neutron interactions emerge:

(a) Even though the π^+n total inelastic cross section is only about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the pn cross section, the two experiments yield $d\sigma(\pi^-)/dy$ which is *essentially identical* in shape for $y_{c.m.} < 0$ [see Fig. 1(c)]. This indicates that n fragmentation dominates the backward region of the c.m. system in both experiments.⁹

(b) The cross sections for the reactions $pn \rightarrow \pi^-$ and $pp \rightarrow \pi^-$ are very different in the regions of large negative $y_{c.m.}$ and most of the negative excess is located between $y_{c.m.} = -4.0$ and $y_{c.m.} = -1.0$. As we approach $y_{c.m.} \approx 0$ (Fig. 1), the cross sections become equal within error ($\pm 7\%$). This justifies our search for differences between n and p targets mainly in the backward hemisphere of the c.m. system.

By integrating the data of Fig. 1(a) we obtain the average negative multiplicity in the c.m. system backward hemisphere, $\langle n_- \rangle_B$, which is compared with the pp results in Table I. The negative excess which corresponds to the backward

hemisphere is $\alpha_B = 0.32 \pm 0.10$ (the error includes systematic uncertainties). This value contains most of the 0.46 negative excess, and the excess in the forward hemisphere (0.14 ± 0.10) may be largely due to charge transfer between hemispheres. The difference between the pn and pp inclusive negative cross sections in the backward hemisphere is $\alpha_B \sigma_{inel} = 10.4 \pm 3.3$ mb and is made up from topologies up to 17 prongs [Fig. 2(b)].

Next we examine the fraction of backward (c.m. system) cross section in the various topologies. The results are summarized in Fig. 2. We see that for pn interactions the fraction R of backward *negative* and *positive* secondaries⁷ ($R = N_B/N$) is *quite different* from the respective fraction in proton-proton interaction (trivially 0.50). In the low multiplicities R^- is above 0.50 and R^+ well below 0.50. (Coherent inelastic d interactions may increase R in the three-prongs by a few percent.) For π^+n interactions [Fig. 2(a)] R^+ is always below 0.5 while R^- begins at 0.65, crosses 0.5 at nine prongs, and together with R^+ approaches a value of 0.40–0.45. This indicates that the average multiplicity of the π^+ vertex is about 10% *higher* than that of the nucleon vertex, an effect which is clearly seen in Table I and was noticed in π^-p interactions.¹⁰

Finally we report on slow-proton ($p_{lab} < 1.4$ GeV/c) production and discuss its possible relation to the negative excess. In *both* pn and π^+n interactions about 21% of the events have an associated slow proton identified by ionization which is emitted backward in the c.m. system; and for pn this corresponds to about 6.6 ± 0.5 mb. The yield of slow p 's is the same for π^+ and p beams and changes little with topology—about 23% for three- to nine-prong events and 18% for

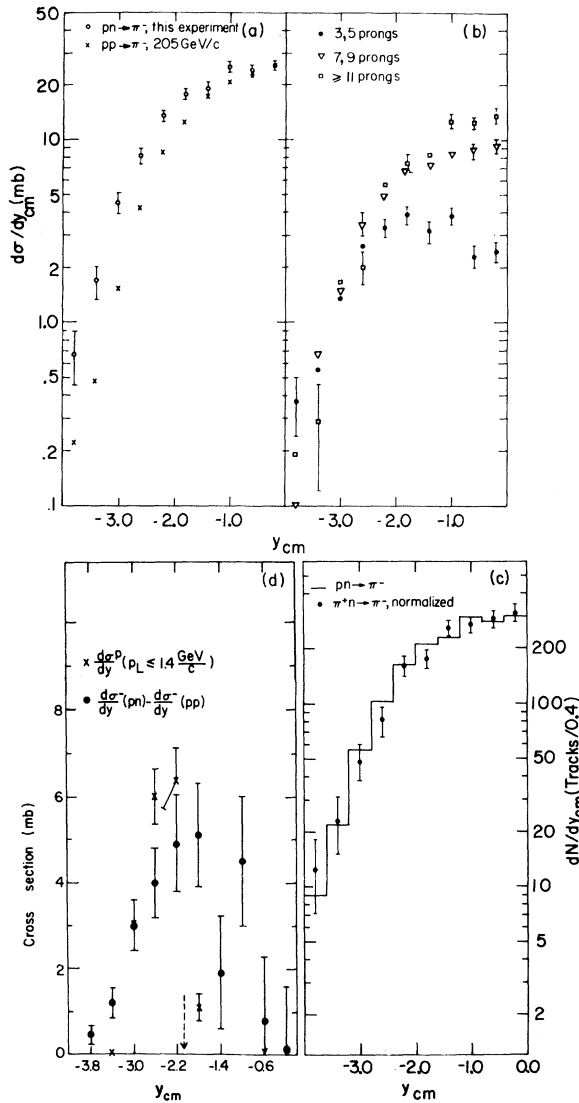


FIG. 1. Cross sections $d\sigma/dy$ of negative particles emitted backward in the c.m. system. (a) All topologies, pn interactions, compared with pp data. (b) pn interactions in this experiment, in the various topologies. (c) π^+n data in this experiment, normalized to pn (normalization factor is 1.68). (d) $(pn) - (pp)$ difference and $d\sigma/dy$ of slow protons. Dashed arrow indicates center of the difference.

eleven prongs or more. The average number of charged particles, $\langle n_c \rangle$, for the events associated with a slow p is 7.5 ± 0.3 , like the overall $\langle n_c \rangle$. (Note that the charge-symmetric reaction $p \rightarrow n + \dots$ is unmeasurable in bubble chambers.) The negative excess and slow- p emission cannot be fully accounted for by a diffractive component $pn \rightarrow p_{fast}x$ ($x \rightarrow p\pi^- + \dots$). From pp interactions we know³ that (a) single diffraction occurs mainly in

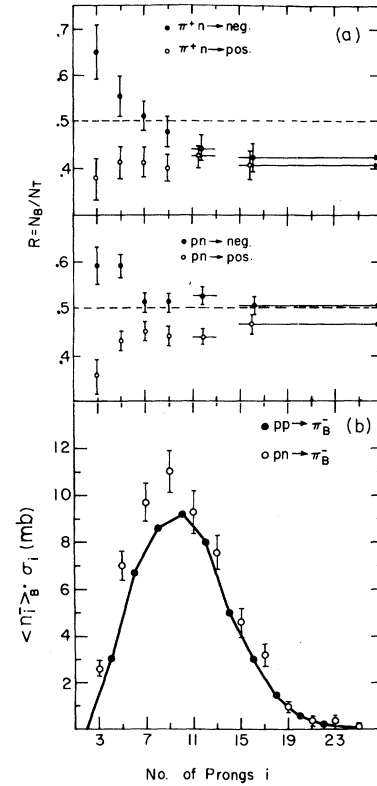


FIG. 2. (a) Fractions of negative and positive charges in the backward hemisphere of the c.m. system as a function of topology in π^+n and pn interactions. (b) The inclusive backward (c.m. system) negative-particle cross section in pn and pp interactions. The pp data are joined by lines to guide the eye.

the two- to four-prong topologies; (b) the reaction $pp \rightarrow p_{slow}x$, at 205 GeV/c, has a cross section³ of only 3.1 ± 0.35 mb (for one vertex) while our slow- p yield from the neutron vertex is 6.6 ± 0.5 mb; and (c) the inclusive negative cross section from diffraction in pp is $\langle n^- \rangle_D \cdot \frac{1}{2} \sigma_D = 2.05 \pm 0.50$ mb, while our observed negative excess is 10.4 ± 3.3 mb.

The high yield of p_{slow} and the large negative excess in the backward hemisphere suggest a neutron fragmentation mechanism $n \rightarrow (p\pi^-) + \dots$ occurring near the neutron end of the rapidity axis. At least in part (we do not identify all p 's) this fragmentation yields low-mass $M(p\pi^-)$ enhancements (< 3 GeV) in all topologies¹¹ (see Fig. 3). In Fig. 1(d) we compare $d\sigma^p/dy$ of the slow protons with the difference $\delta\sigma^-/dy = d\sigma^-(pn)/dy - d\sigma^-(pp)/dy$. The difference $\delta\sigma^-/dy$ is centered at about $y_{c.m.} \approx -2.0$ and seems to be symmetric about this value. The negative excess cross section for $y \leq -2.0$ is 5.2 ± 1.6 mb and is

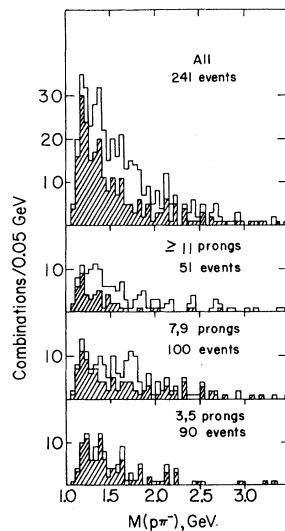


FIG. 3. Distribution of $M(p\pi^-)$ for slow protons ($P_{\text{lab}} < 1.4$ GeV/c) and backward-emitted (c.m. system) π^- mesons in the various topologies. Shaded area: Distribution of $M(p\pi_1^-)$ as above, where π_1^- is the pion with smallest rapidity.

close to the slow-proton cross section of 6.0 ± 0.5 mb in the same y region ($y = -2.0$ corresponds roughly to our cut $p_{\text{lab}} \leq 1.4$ GeV). It is interesting to note that such a behavior would be expected if the protons and negative excess π^- 's are emitted from a symmetric cluster centered about $\bar{y} \approx -2.0$ in the c.m. system. In this case the $y \leq \bar{y}$ proton yield should be the same as that of the π^- 's, and thus the total inclusive $n \rightarrow p$ cross section becomes $2(6.0 \pm 0.5) = 12.0 \pm 1.0$ mb, which yields $\alpha = (12 \pm 1)/32.1 = 0.38 \pm 0.04$. This agrees with the above measure of α based upon the negative multiplicity and with the value of $1 - \alpha$ (0.62 ± 0.02) measured in pp interactions at 12 and 24 GeV/c.¹²

We thus conclude that within 10%, $\alpha \approx 0.40$ and is roughly energy-independent. We also conclude that we have evidence for neutron fragmentation components in multihadron production, $n \rightarrow (p\pi^- \dots)^0$, in all topologies, which explains the observed negative excess, high yield of slow protons, and low-mass enhancements.

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