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Abstract

The performance of the LHC depends critically on the low- β triplets, located on either side of the four interaction points. Each triplet consists of four superconducting quadrupole magnets, which must operate reliably at up to 215 T/m, sustain high heat loads and have an excellent field quality. A collaboration between CERN, Fermilab and KEK was set up in 1996 to design and build the triplet systems, and after nine years of joint effort the production will be completed in 2005. We retrace the main events of the project and present the performance of the low- β quadrupoles built by KEK and Fermilab and of other elements of the triplet. The assembly of the first triplet at CERN and plans for tunnel installation and commissioning in the LHC are also reported.

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Presented at the Particle Accelerator Conference (PAC05)
16-20 May 2005, Knoxville, Tennessee, USA

CERN
CH - 1211 Geneva 23
Switzerland

Geneva, 11 July 2005

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LOW- β TRIPLETS FOR THE LHC

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INTRODUCTION

In preparing the approval of the LHC project in 1994, the CERN Council invited all interested countries to contribute to the LHC construction. The discussions between CERN, the US and Japanese accelerator communities, management and government authorities were concluded in 1996 with the agreement that both countries would provide 16 low- β quadrupoles each, half of the number required for the LHC experimental insertions. In addition, the US agreed to provide the cryostat elements and assemble all triplet quadrupoles, and furnish the cryo-feedboxes, which link the triplet to the LHC cryogenic and power distribution systems. In early 1996, a collaboration was set-up between teams from CERN, Fermilab and KEK, who were respectively charged to lead the effort from the US and Japan. The collaboration supervised all phases of triplet construction, starting from the initial magnet R&D, and up to the fabrication, testing and delivery to CERN of the 32 low- β quadrupoles. After nine years, the joint effort will be completed in 2005. In the following, we retrace the main phases of the project, present the performance of the low- β quadrupoles and report on the test assembly of the first triplet at CERN.

Apart from excellent technical results, the construction of the LHC low- β triplets has been a highly enriching experience combining harmoniously the different competences and approaches to engineering in a style reminiscent of physics experiment collaborations, and rarely before achieved in accelerator building.

TRIPLET DESIGN

The LHC low- β triplet layout is shown in Fig. 1. It is composed of four quadrupoles with a coil aperture of 70 mm [1]. The magnets are cooled with superfluid helium at 1.9 K using an external heat exchanger system capable of extracting up to 10 W/m. Two types of quadrupoles are used in the triplet, 6.6 m long MQXA magnets designed and developed by KEK, and 5.7 m long MQXB magnets designed and built by Fermilab. The MQXA magnets are placed as Q1 and Q3 quadrupoles, while the two MQXB are located as the Q2 quadrupole. The Q1 magnet is placed at 23 m from the interaction point. Together with the orbit correctors MCBX, skew quadrupole MQSX and multipole correctors supplied by CERN, the low- β quadrupole cold masses are completed and cryostated by Fermilab.

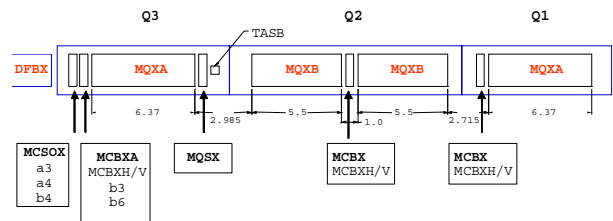


Figure 1. Schematic layout of the LHC low- β triplet.

Together with the LHC main dipoles, the high-gradient wide-aperture low- β quadrupoles are the most demanding magnets in the LHC. They must operate reliably at 215 T/m, have a very good field quality, and sustain high heat loads generated by secondaries emanating from beam collisions. Initially, each triplet consisted of one type of quadrupole so that Fermilab and KEK could choose a magnet design best suited to their own experience and engineering style. In order to validate their design choices, Fermilab and KEK launched comprehensive R&D programmes comprising a number of short model magnets. Both programmes were successful in fulfilling the design goals and demonstrating the LHC operational requirements.

As a result of better understanding of the magnets, the initial layout of the triplet was modified on several occasions. The most important decision was to "mix" the triplet, i.e. incorporate KEK and Fermilab magnets in a single string. This decision was taken in order to improve the performance of the triplets and to reduce the costs of building magnets of different length by each laboratory.

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Another important modification was the reduction of the number and strength of the multipole correctors, which was the result of a better field quality of the quadrupoles than initially anticipated. The last modifications date from 2004 when the layout of Q3 was optimised.

LOW- β QUADRUPOLES

The design of the MQXA quadrupole is based on a four-layer coil using two 11 mm wide Rutherford-type graded NbTi cables [2]. The coils are wound and cured in two separate double layers and are assembled using spacer-type collars. The pre-stress in the coils and their rigidity is provided by the yoke structure, which consists of horizontally split laminations keyed at the mid-plane.

Five 1 m long model magnets were built and tested at KEK from 1998 to 2000. The measurements of the first two model magnets revealed that the value of the b_{10} harmonic term in the initial design had to be reduced, as indicated by beam dynamics studies made in the meantime. The b_{10} term was successfully corrected by making a minor adjustment to the coil and to the shims and collars. This strategy also allowed the simultaneous reduction of the b_6 term. The modifications were tested in the remaining model magnets and two full-length prototypes and applied in all series magnets.

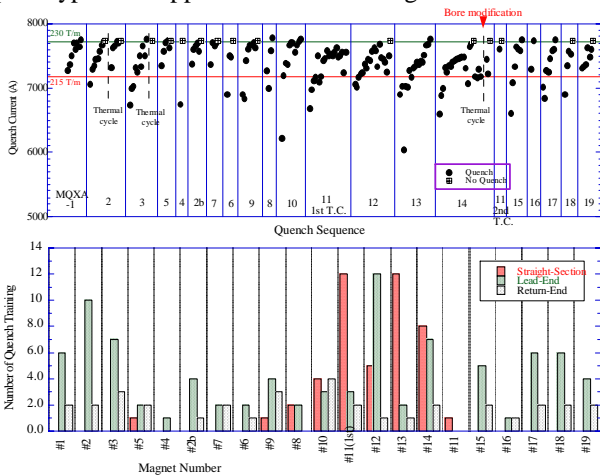


Figure 2. Training history of the MQXA quadrupoles.

The production of 20 MQXA magnets, including four spares, was completed in 2004. The magnets were tested in the vertical testing facility in KEK. They were systematically trained to 230 T/m to guarantee safe operation in presence of high heat load. The acceptance criterion for both MQXA and MQXB quadrupoles was that following training and a full-energy dump, the magnets should be powered to 220 T/m without quench. As shown in Fig. 2, the training increased for magnets in the middle of the series, which was traced to the movement of the warm bore, installed to provide a suitable environment for field measurements. After improving the radial support of the tube, the number of training quenches returned to normal. All MQXA quadrupoles were systematically measured

for static and dynamic field effects. The field quality of the production is compared to target values in Fig. 3.

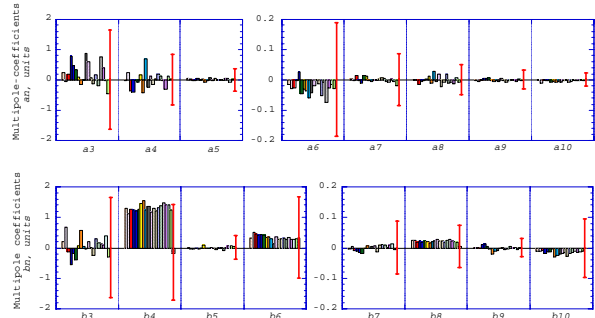


Figure 3. Measured multipole components of MQXA quadrupoles at 217 T/m in units of 10^{-4} at R_{ref} of 17 mm.

Nineteen MQXA magnets were shipped from KEK to Fermilab for further assembly and cryostating. The remaining one will be delivered directly to CERN as an additional spare. As agreed by the collaboration, the first Q1 and Q3 quadrupoles were retested in Fermilab as completed cryo-magnets. As expected, the magnets reached nominal field gradient without quench and confirmed the assembly operations performed by Fermilab.

The MQXB design features a two-layer coil, with each layer individually wound using a 15.4 mm wide Rutherford-type NbTi cable [3]. The coils are assembled using free-standing collars, which provide the pre-stress and balance the magnetic forces. The collared assembly is aligned in the yoke structure with precision keys and the magnet is enclosed in a stainless steel helium vessel consisting of half-shells welded at the pole plane.

Fermilab built and tested nine 2 m long model magnets from 1997 to 2001. The first magnets showed poor quench training and several modifications in the coil design, the most important of which was the change of material for end parts, were introduced before satisfactory performance was obtained. All magnets showed very good field quality. One full-length prototype was also built and fully satisfied the operating requirements.

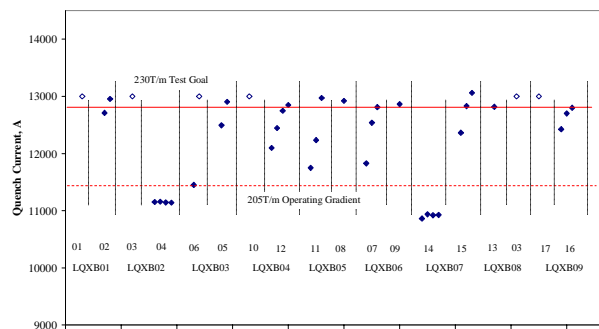


Figure 4. Training history of the MQXB quadrupoles.

Fermilab built 18 MQXB magnets, and nine Q2 quadrupoles, including one spare, were tested as completed cryo-magnets. As shown in Fig. 4, most magnets reached 230 T/m after a few training quenches.

Two magnets, however, trained to a plateau of 200 T/m, while another one developed an open protection circuit. These magnets will be repaired before shipping to CERN.

CORRECTORS

Each triplet is equipped with horizontal and vertical orbit correctors, a skew quadrupole and multipole correctors. The dipoles have nested coils with an inner bore of 90 mm, providing space for the multipole inserts, and are made by winding superconducting wires pre-assembled as a flat ribbon [1]. The coils are epoxy impregnated. The other correctors are made using a similar technique but with different wires.

All correctors were tested at CERN before delivery to Fermilab. These tests were necessary to guarantee the nominal current of impregnated coils in various field configurations that occur in nested layers. Indeed, the training of the pre-series orbit correctors proved lengthy, and the series magnets required on average about 10 quenches to reach nominal current.

CRYOSTATS AND COOLING SYSTEM

The quadrupoles were completed in Fermilab with the correctors and other cryostat elements, Fig. 5. The cooling system of the triplet consists of a linear heat exchanger located above the magnets and connected to them at their extremities. This choice was motivated by the high heat load expected in the high-luminosity insertions and the need for manageable magnet interconnects. The performance of the cooling system was confirmed at CERN in 2001 on a full-length test cell built by Fermilab.



Figure 5. MQXA (KEK) quadrupole magnet completed as a Q1 cryo-magnet at Fermilab.

The alignment and stability of the quadrupoles is assured by a system of “spider” supports, locked to the reinforcements of the vacuum vessel. The “spiders” also serve to guide the cryogenic pipes and thermal shields, and as an adapting element for slightly different outer dimensions of the MQXA and MQXB magnets.

INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING

The first completed low- β quadrupole arrived at CERN mid 2004, and to date a third of the quadrupoles have

been delivered. Inspection at CERN revealed that the spider support in one quadrupole suffered damage in shipment and will need to be repaired. All remaining magnets will be shipped to CERN by the end of 2005.

The installation of the first low- β triplet is foreseen in September 2005. As the magnets were already available, the collaboration decided to proceed with the assembly of the triplet in an experimental hall in CERN. The triplet assembly, shown in Fig. 6, was completed in April 2005 and the insulation vacuum pumped down for the first time. The assembly was an extremely valuable exercise, in particular for checking the components, tooling and procedures for completing the interconnections between magnets, which were all supplied by Fermilab. Due to lack of cryogenic infrastructure it was not possible to cool down the string. This phase of hardware commissioning is foreseen in the LHC tunnel in early 2006 with participation of the members of the collaboration, whose experience in testing the magnets will be a further valuable contribution to the LHC.



Figure 6. LHC Low- β triplet assembled at CERN before installation in the LHC tunnel.

CONCLUSIONS

The construction of the low- β triplets for the LHC was carried out in the framework of a collaboration between CERN, Fermilab and KEK started in 1996. The successful production, testing and assembly of the quadrupole magnets and other elements of the triplet, in time and in budget, are a demonstration of the ability of accelerator laboratories to collaborate internationally in the supply of state-of-the-art equipment for large projects.

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