

Search for a spin-zero particle in Higgs boson decays or top-associated production using the ATLAS detector

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Overview

- Introduction
- Theoretical framework
- Experimental setup
- Physics simulation
- $H \rightarrow aa \rightarrow 4b$ search
- $tta, a \rightarrow bb$ search
- Summary

Introduction

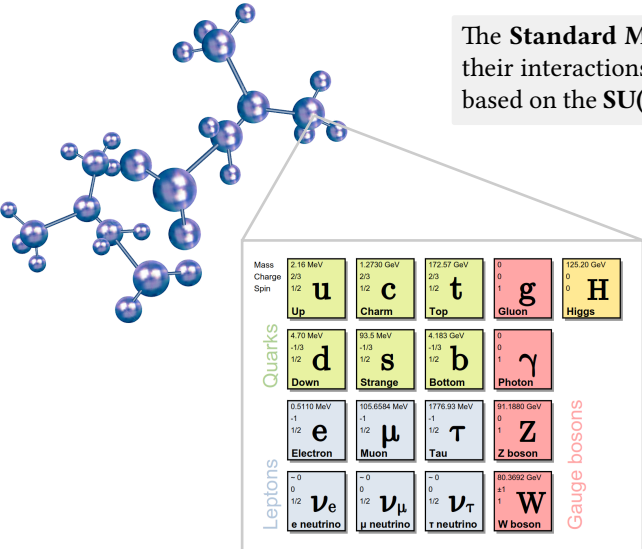
- The **Standard Model** is the **most successful** theory for describing Physics at the **fundamental level**.
- However, on its own, it **can not explain** everything that we observe in the universe.
- This thesis explores the existence of **new light pseudoscalar particles**.
 - If they couple to the SM Higgs boson \Rightarrow *exotic Higgs decays*? **$BR(H \rightarrow \text{undetected}) \lesssim 12\%$**
 - If they couple strongly to heavy fermions \Rightarrow *top-associated production*?



Theoretical framework

The Standard Model of Particle Physics

The **Standard Model** describes all fundamental particles and their interactions (*except gravity*). It is a quantum field theory based on the $SU(3)_C \times SU(2)_L \times U(1)_Y$ gauge symmetry group.



Mass Charge Spin	2.16 MeV 2/3 1/2 u Up	1.2730 GeV 2/3 1/2 c Charm	172.57 GeV 2/3 1/2 t Top	0 0 0 1 g Gluon	125.20 GeV 0 0 0 H Higgs
Quarks	4.70 MeV -1/3 1/2 d Down	93.5 MeV -1/3 1/2 s Strange	4.183 GeV -1/3 1/2 b Bottom	0 0 0 1 γ Photon	
Leptons	0.5110 MeV -1 1/2 e Electron	105.6584 MeV -1 1/2 μ Muon	1776.93 MeV -1 1/2 τ Tau	91.1880 GeV 0 1 1 Z Z boson	
	-0 0 1/2 ν_e e neutrino	-0 0 1/2 ν_μ μ neutrino	-0 0 1/2 ν_τ τ neutrino	80.3692 GeV ± 1 1 W W boson	Gauge bosons

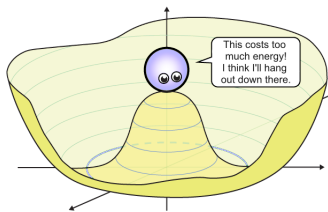
- **Quarks** and **leptons** (spin-1/2) are the constituents of matter.
- **Gauge bosons** (spin-1) are the force carriers.
 - **g** \leftrightarrow strong force.
 - **γ** \leftrightarrow electromagnetic force.
 - **Z, W^\pm** \leftrightarrow weak force.
- The **Higgs boson** (spin-0) gives mass to particles via the **Higgs mechanism**.

The Brout-Englert-Higgs mechanism

- Conventional mass terms in the SM lagrangian do not respect the $\mathbf{SU}(2)_L \times \mathbf{U}(1)_Y$ symmetry.
- The Higgs field causes the spontaneous symmetry breaking $\mathbf{SU}(2)_L \times \mathbf{U}(1)_Y \rightarrow \mathbf{U}(1)_{EM}$.
- In this process, the **Z and W^\pm bosons** acquire their masses, consistent with experimental observations.

Fermions acquire mass terms through their interaction with the Higgs boson:

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{Yukawa}} \ni - \underbrace{\frac{\lambda_f v}{\sqrt{2}} \bar{f} f}_{m_f} - \underbrace{\frac{\lambda_f}{\sqrt{2}} \bar{f} f H}_{m_f/v}$$



$$V(\Phi) = -\mu^2(\Phi^\dagger\Phi) - \lambda(\Phi^\dagger\Phi)^2$$

$$\langle\Phi\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ v \end{pmatrix} \xrightarrow[\text{around the vacuum}]{\text{Oscillations}} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ v + H \end{pmatrix}$$

Beyond the Standard Model

The SM has successfully predicted with high precision decades of discoveries in the field of Particle Physics.

However, it can not explain...

- The Higgs hierarchy problem.
- The values of particle masses.
- The strong CP problem.

And also...

- Dark matter and dark energy.
- The matter-antimatter asymmetry.
- Neutrino masses.
- The muon ($g - 2$) anomaly.

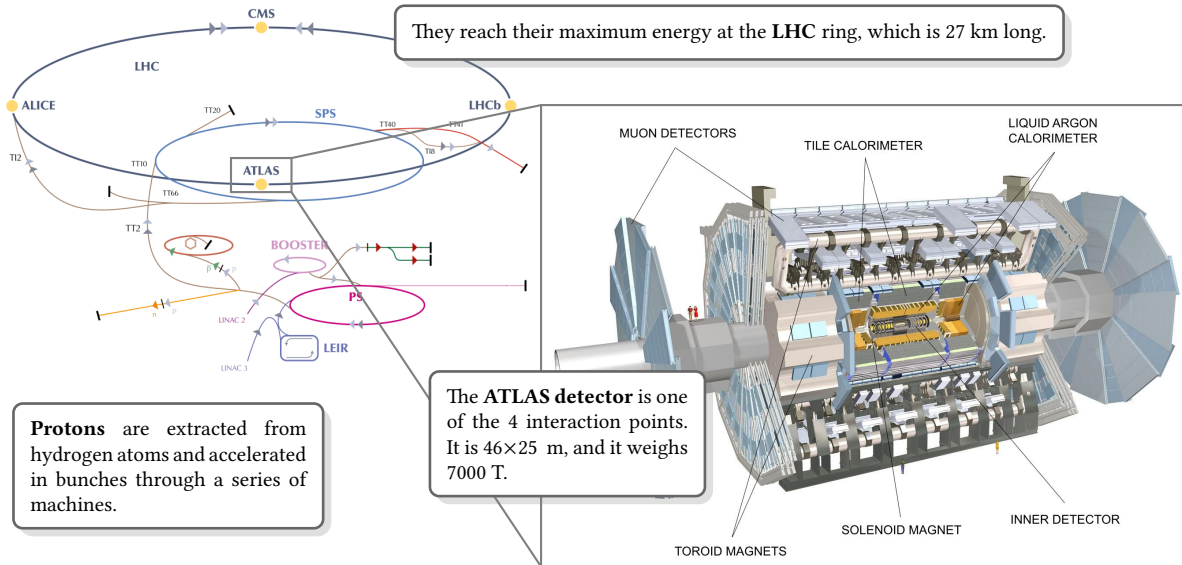
Is there Physics beyond the Standard Model?

This thesis explores extensions of the SM featuring axion-like particles (ALPs).

- Pseudoscalar particles.
- Can be light w.r.t. the EW energy scale.
- Can inherit Yukawa-like couplings from the SM Higgs boson.

Experimental setup

The ATLAS experiment at the LHC

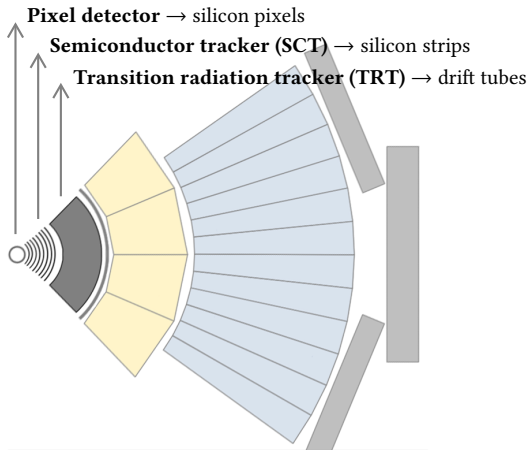


Protons are extracted from hydrogen atoms and accelerated in bunches through a series of machines.

The **ATLAS detector** is one of the 4 interaction points. It is 46×25 m, and it weighs 7000 T.

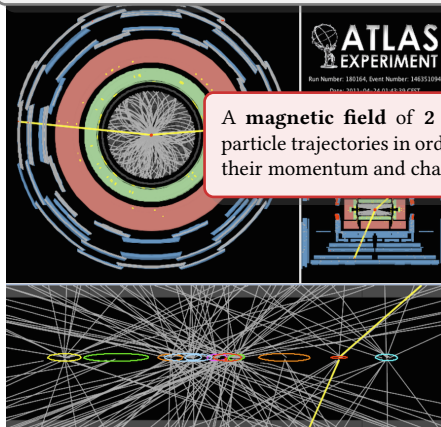
Inner detector (ID)

Slide 58.



The **ID** is the first point of detection, located just a **few cm** away from the collision point.

Charged particles leave **tracks** in the ID. Using pattern recognition algorithms, they are matched to their corresponding interaction **vertices**.

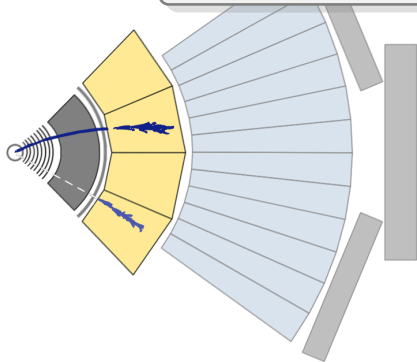


A **magnetic field** of 2 T bends the particle trajectories in order to identify their momentum and charge.

Liquid argon (LAr) calorimeter

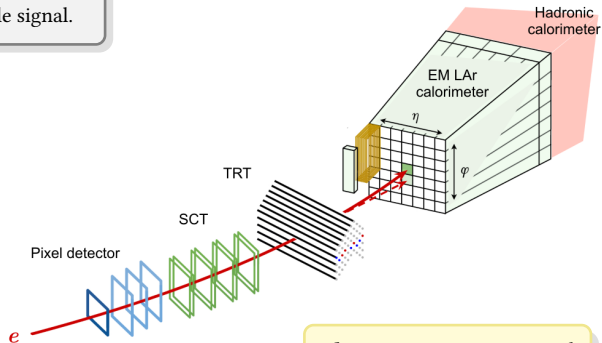
Slide 59.

The **LAr calorimeter** uses plates of **absorber material** to trigger particle cascades that ionise the **active material**, producing a measurable signal.



Absorber material: lead or copper.

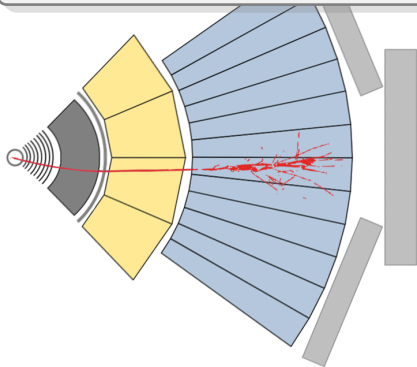
Active material: liquid argon.



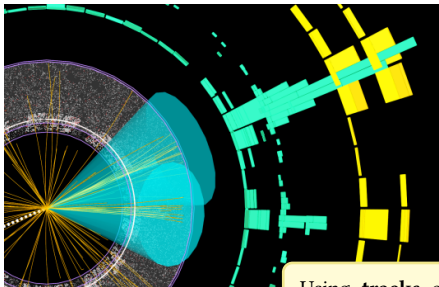
Electrons are reconstructed from **energy deposits** in the LAr calorimeter associated to **ID tracks**.

Tile calorimeter (TileCal)

The **TileCal** uses steel plates as the **absorber material** and tiles of plastic scintillators as the **active material**.



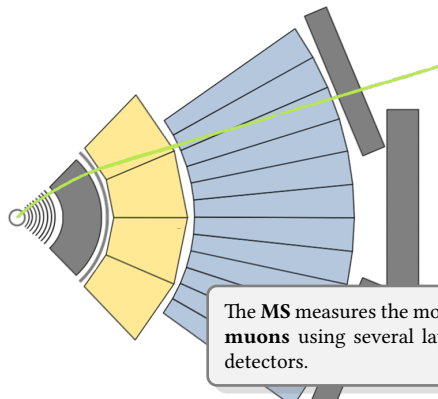
Hadrons interact with the material producing particle cascades (**jets**) and leaving **energy deposits** in the tile calorimeter.



Using **tracks** and **calorimeter** information, jets are **clustered** into **cones** of fixed radius.

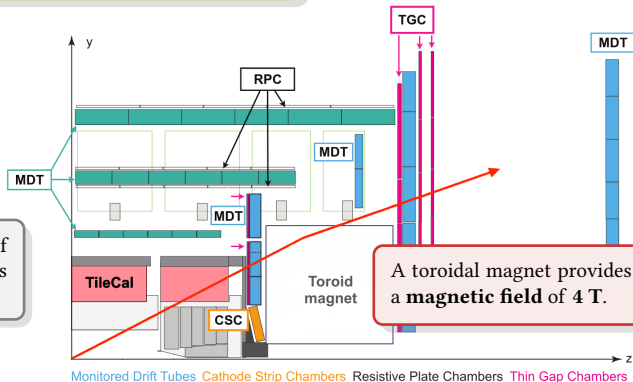
Muon spectrometer (MS)

Slide 61.

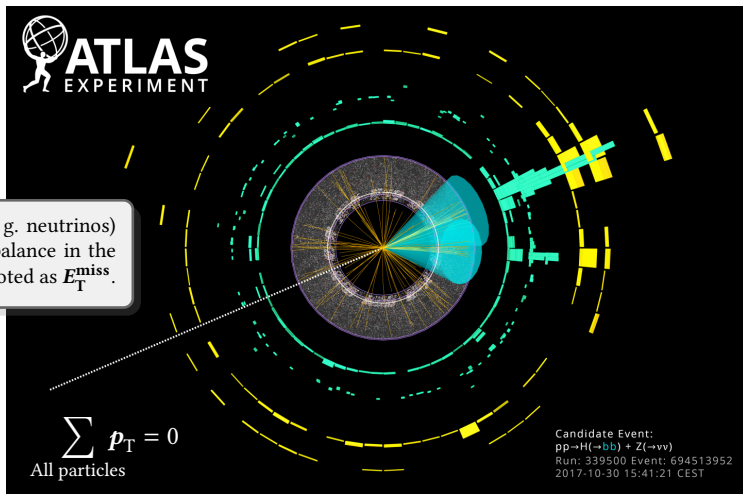


When a muon passes through the detector, it **ionises** the gas, triggering an **electric signal** that can be recorded by the different sensors.

Muons are reconstructed from **tracks**, **TileCal** and **MS** information.



Invisible particles?



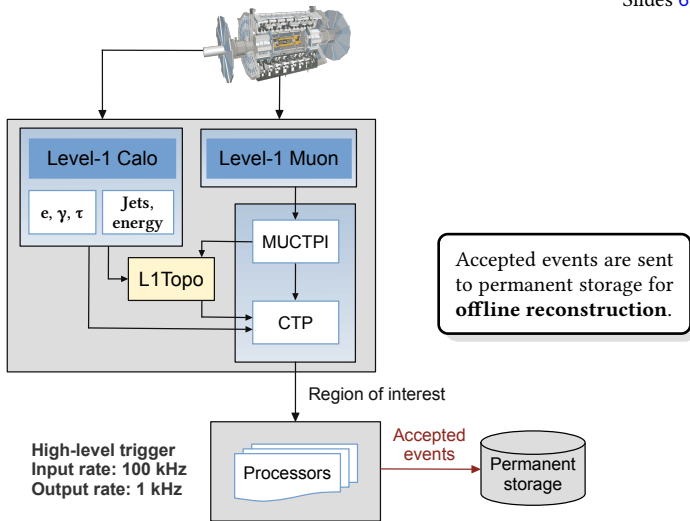
Trigger and data acquisition

Slides 62, 63.

The **Level-1 trigger** is a hardware-based system that works with **partial** detector granularity. It has a latency of $\sim 2.5 \mu\text{s}$.

Level-1 trigger
Input rate: 40 Mhz
Output rate: 100 kHz

The **HLT** is a software-based trigger that reconstructs the event with **full** detector granularity. It has a latency of $\sim 200 \text{ ms}$.



Physics simulation

Anatomy of an ATLAS event

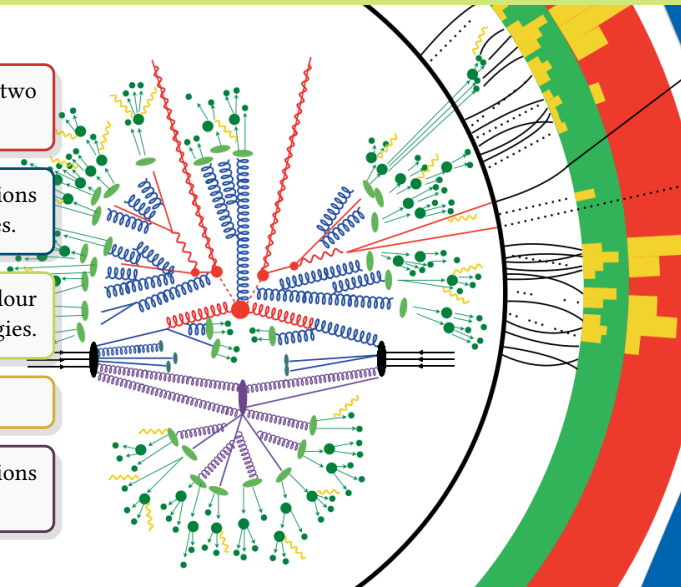
Hard scattering: the main interaction between two partons from the proton bunches.

Parton shower: soft and collinear QCD emissions originating from the initial- and final-state particles.

Hadronisation and decay: it occurs due to the colour confinement of non-perturbative QCD at low energies.

EM radiation.

Underlying event: additional particle interactions that do not originate from the hard scattering.

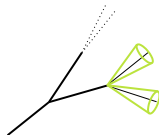
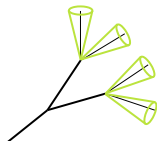
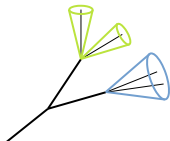
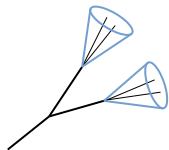
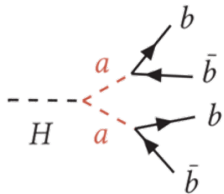


Search for decays of the Higgs boson into pseudoscalar particles
decaying to four bottom quarks using proton-proton collisions at
 $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV with the ATLAS detector

Motivation

Search for a **new light pseudoscalar (a)** produced in **Higgs boson** decays in the **$4b$** final state using a **simplified model** approach:

$$\mathcal{L} \ni \underbrace{\frac{1}{2}(\partial_\mu a)(\partial^\mu a)}_{\text{Kinetic term}} - \underbrace{\frac{1}{2}m_a^2 a^2}_{\text{Mass term}} - \underbrace{\frac{1}{2}\lambda_a a^2 H}_{\text{Coupling to } H} - \underbrace{y_b a \bar{b}(i\gamma^5)b}_{\text{Coupling to } b}$$



Boosted decays
(Low m_a)

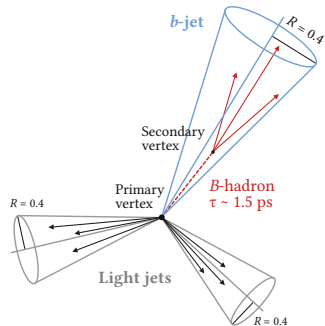
Resolved decays
(High m_a)

$m_a \in [12, 60]$ GeV.

Different a -boson masses
 \Rightarrow **different topologies.**

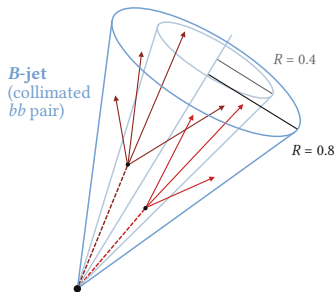
A more detailed view of b -quark identification

Jets originating from b -quarks can be identified by their **substructure**.



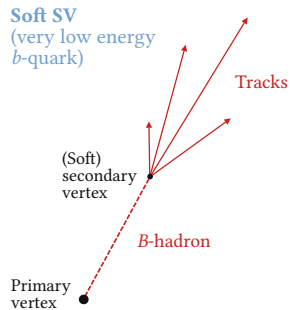
A **b -jet** has a radius $R = 0.4$ and it contains a **secondary vertex** from B -hadron decay.

When two b -quarks are **very close**, they can not be reconstructed individually.



A **B -jet** has a radius $R = 0.8$ and contains a **collimated $b\bar{b}$ pair**.

If the b -quark has **very low p_T** , it can not be reconstructed as a jet.



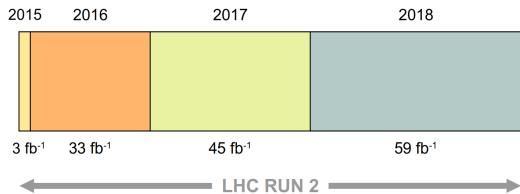
Soft SVs (v) are reconstructed from **tracks only**.

Data samples

Data samples

Full Run 2 dataset (2015-2018).

- $\int \mathcal{L} dt = 140 \text{ fb}^{-1}$
- $\sqrt{s} = 13 \text{ TeV}$



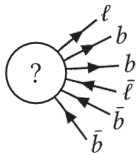
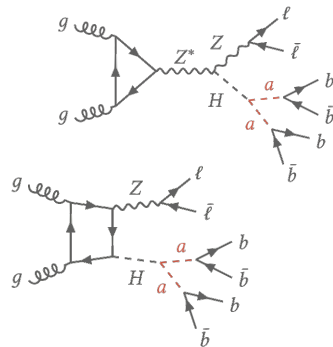
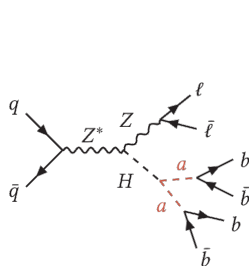
There are 2 previous ATLAS searches using **partial** Run 2 data:

[Phys. Rev. D 102 \(2020\) 112006](#) (15-30 GeV)
[JHEP 10 \(2018\) 031](#) (20-60 GeV)

Monte Carlo samples

Signal samples

- ZH production at tree-level and 1-loop.
- $Z \rightarrow \ell\bar{\ell}$ final state.
- $m_H = 125$ GeV.
- $\text{BR}(H \rightarrow aa \rightarrow 4b) = 1$.
- 8 mass hypotheses:
 $m_a \in [12, 16, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, 60]$ GeV.



Background samples

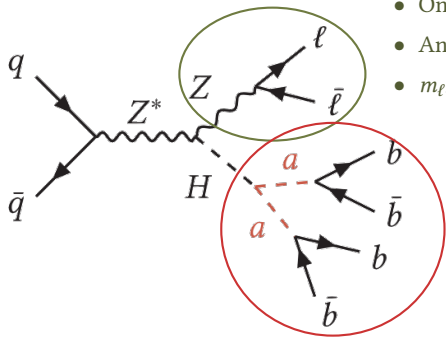
Top backgrounds: $t\bar{t}$ +jets, single-top, $t\bar{t}H$, $t\bar{t}Z$, $t\bar{t}W$, tZ , tWZ .

Vector-boson backgrounds: Z +jets, W +jets, ZZ , ZW , WW .

Event selection (preselection)

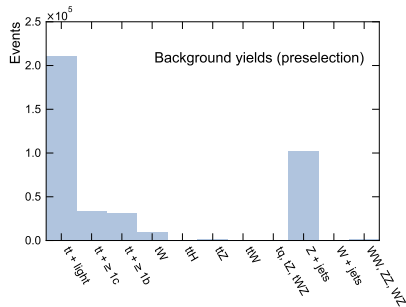
$Z \rightarrow \ell\ell$ selection

- 2 leptons (ee , $\mu\mu$ or $e\mu$).
- One **trigger** lepton with $p_T > 27$ GeV.
- Another lepton with $p_T > 10$ GeV.
- $m_{\ell\ell} > 50$ GeV.



b selection

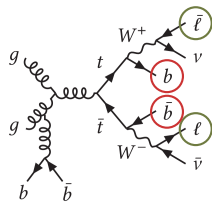
- $(2N_B + N_b + N_v) \geq 3$



Background modelling

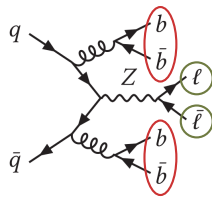
- The **two main backgrounds** are $t\bar{t}$ +jets and Z +jets.
- Mismodelling observed in both **normalisation** and **shape**.
- **Data-driven** corrections (reweighting) calculated in **signal-depleted** regions.

$t\bar{t}$ +jets reweighting region



- Preselection
- $e\mu$ with $|m_{e\mu} - m_Z| < 20$ GeV
- $N_b \geq 2$

Z +jets reweighting region

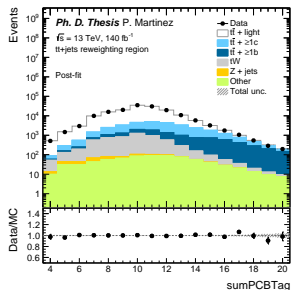
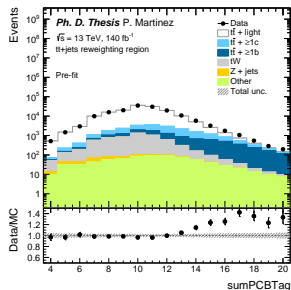


- Preselection
- ee or $\mu\mu$ with $|m_{\ell\ell} - m_Z| < 20$ GeV
- $(2N_B + N_b + N_\nu) = 3$
- $E_T^{\text{miss}} < 60$ GeV

Normalisation correction

The **normalisation** of $t\bar{t}+\text{light}$, $t\bar{t}+\geq 1c$ and $t\bar{t}+\geq 1b$ is corrected using a fit to the sumPCBTag distribution:

$$\text{sumPCBTag} = \sum \text{PC } b\text{-tagging score}^* \text{ of all jets}$$



This is not necessary for the Z+jets Monte Carlo sample.

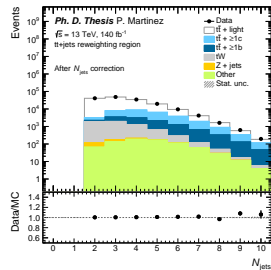
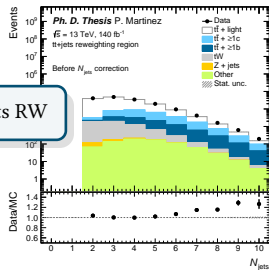
* The **b -tagging score** is a value between 1 and 5 assigned to each jet, representing the **likelihood** that it originates from a b -quark:

- 1 – Not likely.
- 5 – Very likely.

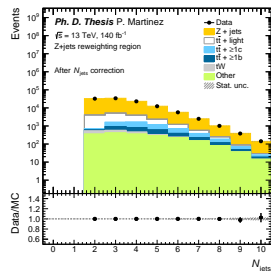
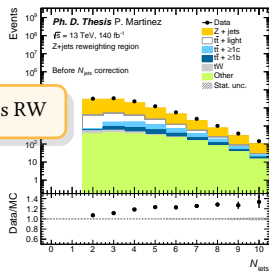
N_{jets} shape correction

Shape mismodelling in the N_{jets} distribution corrected by adjusting **each bin** to data.

$t\bar{t}$ +jets RW

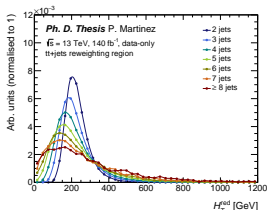
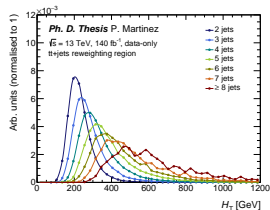


Z +jets RW

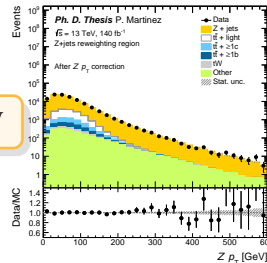
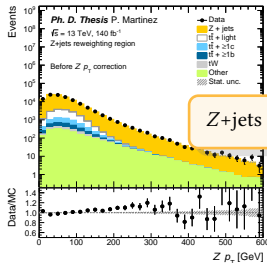
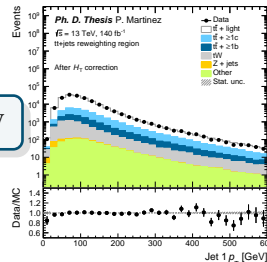
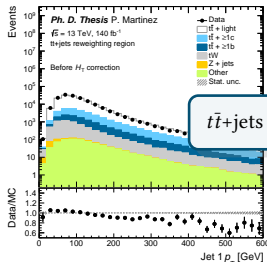


p_T shape correction

- Residual **shape** mismodelling in jet and lepton p_T .
- For $t\bar{t}$ +jets, corrected using $H_T = \sum(p_T^{\text{jets}} + p_T^{\text{lep}})$.
- Strong correlation** between H_T and N_{jets}
 \Rightarrow using $H_T^{\text{red}} = H_T - (N_{\text{jets}} - 2)\Delta H_T$.

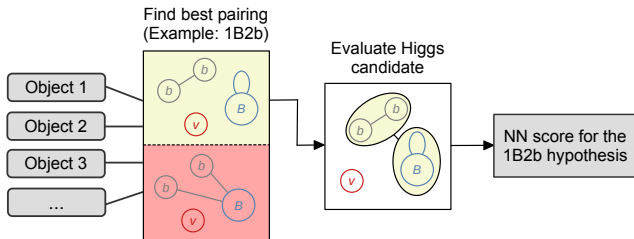


- For Z +jets, the Z boson's p_T is used instead.

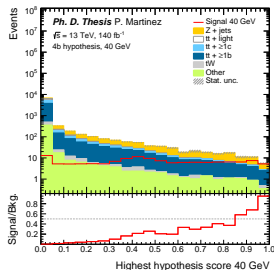
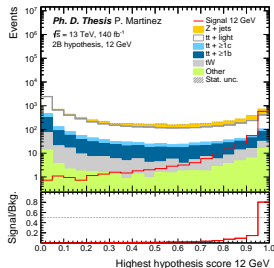


NN for event reconstruction

- **Mass-parametrised** neural network.
- Used to find the **best object pairing** in the **4b final state**.
- **5 hypotheses** are considered: **2B**, **1B2b**, **1B1b1v**, **4b**, **3b1v**.

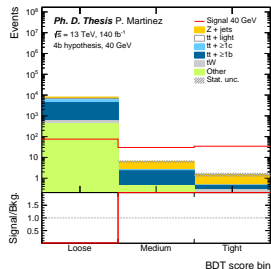
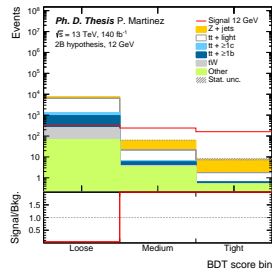


- The **preferred hypothesis** is the one with the **highest score**.
- This hypothesis is used to **reconstruct** the ***a*** and **Higgs** boson.



BDT for signal vs. background discrimination

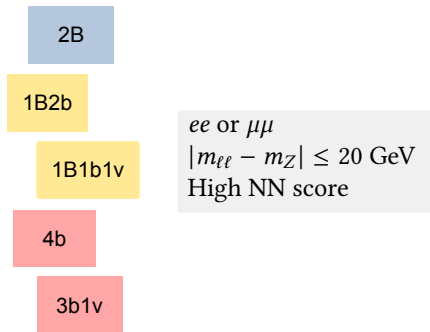
- One boosted decision tree **for each NN hypothesis** and **a -boson mass**.
- Inputs include:
 - Reconstructed **a -** and **H -boson** variables from the NN.
 - **Z -boson** ($\ell\ell$ pair) kinematics.
- The **BDT score** is classified in **3 bins** according to their signal content: **Loose, Medium and Tight**.



Signal and control regions

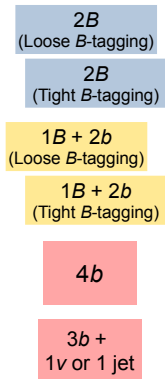
Signal regions

NN hypothesis + additional cuts



Control regions

b -object count + additional cuts



Z +jets selection

ee or $\mu\mu$
 $|m_{\ell\ell} - m_Z| \leq 10$ GeV
Low NN score
 $E_T^{\text{miss}} < 60$ GeV

$t\bar{t}$ +jets selection

$e\mu$

Systematic uncertainties

Experimental uncertainties

Detector response, efficiency and calibration.
Applied to all signal and background processes.

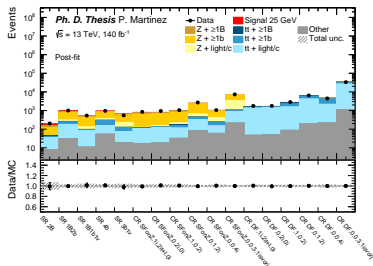
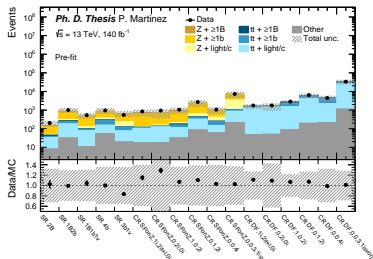
- Luminosity.
- Pileup modelling.
- Trigger efficiency.
- Object reconstruction and identification (electrons, muons, jets and tracks).
- Flavour tagging.
- E_T^{miss} .

Modelling uncertainties

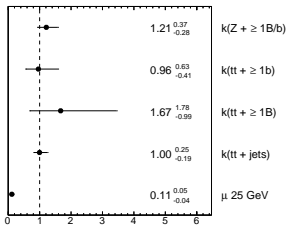
Theoretical assumptions and limitations in the MC simulation. Applied to signal and the main backgrounds ($t\bar{t}$ +jets and Z +jets).

- Renormalisation and factorisation scales (μ_R, μ_F).
- Parton distribution functions (PDFs).
- Initial and final state radiation (ISR and FSR).
- Alternative hard scattering simulation.
- Alternative parton shower simulation.
- Reweighting uncertainties.

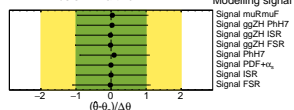
Results from the fit to data ($m_a = 25$ GeV)



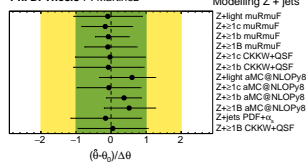
Ph. D. Thesis P. Martinez



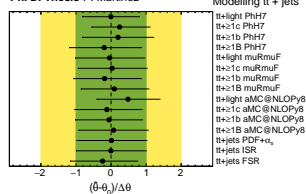
Ph. D. Thesis P. Martinez



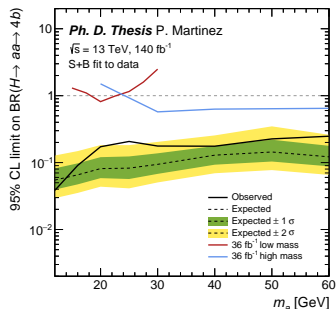
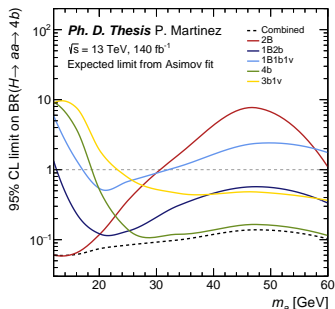
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Exclusion limits



- **No significant excess** above the SM is observed.
- 95% CL limits to the $\text{BR}(H \rightarrow aa \rightarrow 4b)$ between **5% and 25%** for $m_a \in [12, 60] \text{ GeV}$.
- The dominant source of uncertainty is **statistics**.
- **Great improvement** w.r.t. previous analyses.

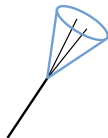
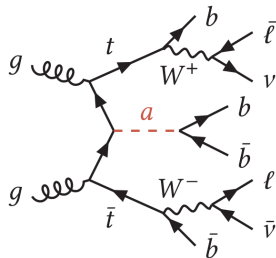
Category	Impact on $\hat{\mu}$
Total stat.	33.1%
Total syst.	22.5%
General	2.4%
Lepton reconstruction	0.3%
Jet reconstruction	7.8%
Track reconstruction	1.5%
E_T^{miss}	0.8%
Flavour tagging	11.6%
Signal modelling	8.2%
Z+jets modelling	5.4%
$t\bar{t}$ +jets modelling	4.8%
Rewighting	0.7%
MC stats.	13.0%
Signal MC stats.	1.7%
Norm. factors	3.5%

Search for a new pseudoscalar decaying into a pair of bottom and anti-bottom quarks in top-associated production using proton-proton collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV with the ATLAS detector

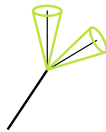
Motivation

Search for a **new light pseudoscalar (a)** produced in association with **top quarks** in the $a \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ final state using a **simplified model** approach:

$$\mathcal{L} \ni \underbrace{\frac{g_t y_t}{\sqrt{2}} \bar{t} (i\gamma^5) a t}_{\text{Coupling to } t} + \underbrace{\frac{g_b y_b}{\sqrt{2}} \bar{b} (i\gamma^5) a b}_{\text{Coupling to } b}$$



Boosted decays
(Low m_a)



Resolved decays
(High m_a)

$$m_a \in [12, 100] \text{ GeV}$$

Low $m_a \Rightarrow$ boosted a -decay (B -jet).

High $m_a \Rightarrow$ resolved a -decay (b -jets).

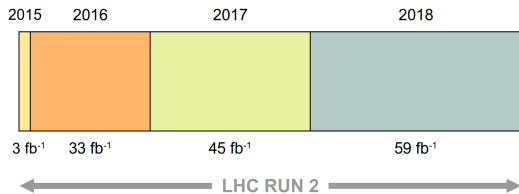
Data samples

Data samples

Full Run 2 dataset (2015-2018)

- $\int \mathcal{L} dt = 140 \text{ fb}^{-1}$
- $\sqrt{s} = 13 \text{ TeV}$

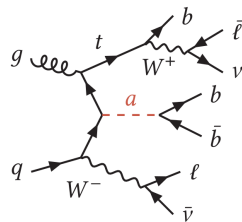
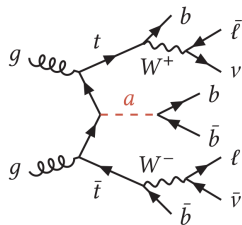
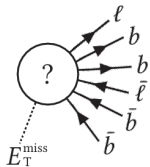
First search of its kind in ATLAS and CMS.



Monte Carlo samples

Signal samples

- $t\bar{t}a$ and tW production.
- $t\bar{t} \rightarrow \ell\bar{\ell}$ final state.
- $g_t = 0.5$.
- $\text{BR}(a \rightarrow b\bar{b}) = 1$.
- 10 mass hypotheses:
 $m_a \in [12, 16, 20, 50, 30, 40, 50, 60, 80, 100]$ GeV.

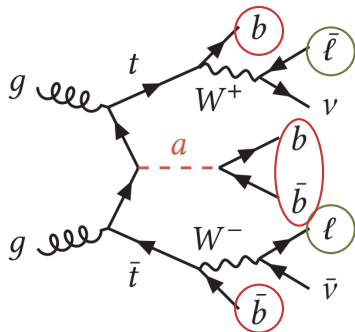


Background samples

Top backgrounds: $t\bar{t}$ +jets, single-top, $t\bar{t}H$, $t\bar{t}Z$, $t\bar{t}W$, tZ , tWZ .

Vector-boson backgrounds: Z +jets, W +jets, ZZ , ZW , WW .

Event selection (preselection)

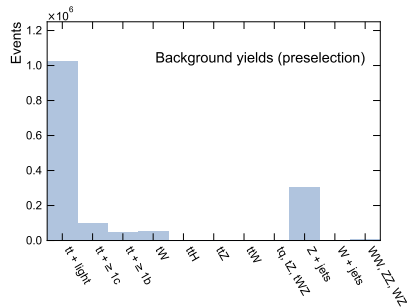


$tt \rightarrow \ell\ell$ selection

- 2 leptons (ee , $\mu\mu$ or $e\mu$).
- One **trigger** lepton with $p_T > 27$ GeV.
- Another lepton with $p_T > 10$ GeV.
- $|m_{\ell\ell} - m_Z| > 8$ GeV.

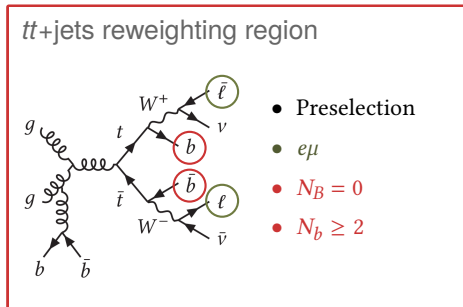
Multi-jet selection

- $N_{\text{jets}} \geq 3$
- $N_{b\text{Loose}} \geq 1$



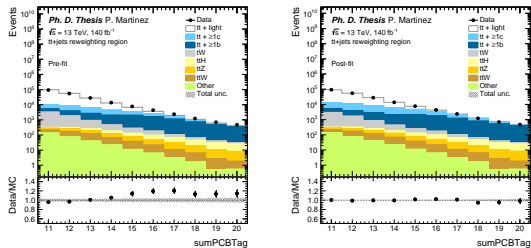
Background modelling

- The main background is $t\bar{t}$ +jets .
- Mismodelling observed in both **normalisation** and **shape**.
- **Data-driven** reweighting calculated in a **signal-depleted region**.



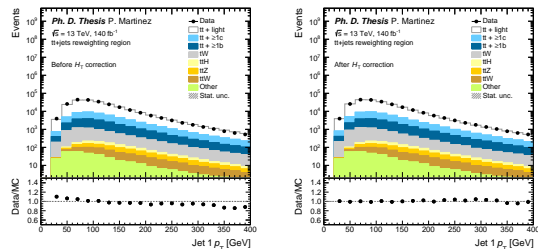
Background modelling

Normalisation of the $t\bar{t}$ +light, $t\bar{t}+\geq 1c$ and $t\bar{t}+\geq 1b$ categories is corrected using a fit to data over the sumPCBTag distribution:



This corrects the N_{jets} distribution as well.

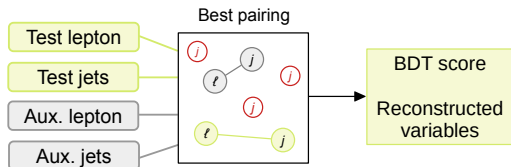
Residual shape mismodelling in the p_T of jets and leptons is corrected using a fit over H_T^{red} :



BDTs for event reconstruction

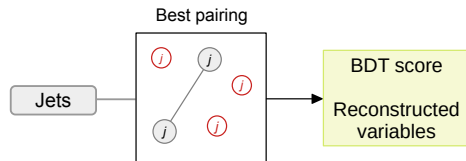
BDTs for $t \rightarrow j\ell$ reconstruction

- 2 BDTs: **top** and **anti-top** decay.
- Trained with $t\bar{t}$ +jets and $t\bar{t}a$ samples.
- Evaluates all permutations between the lepton and the 5 leading jets.



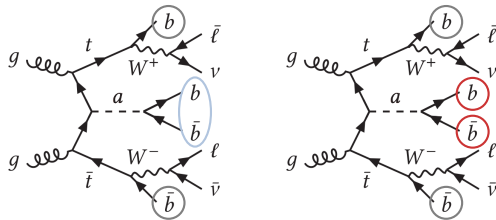
BDT for $a \rightarrow jj$ reconstruction

- Trained with $t\bar{t}$ +jets and $t\bar{t}a$ samples.
- Evaluates all permutations between the 5 leading jets.

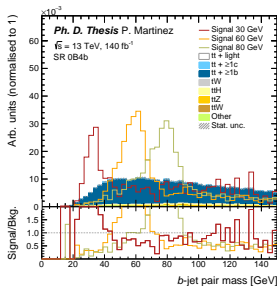


NN for signal vs. background discrimination

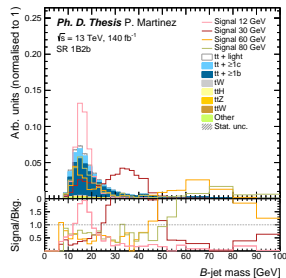
- 4 training regions:
 - **Boosted:** 1B2b and 1B1b .
 - **Resolved:** 0B4b and 0B3b .
- One training per region (mass-parametrised).



Resonance from
 $a \rightarrow b\bar{b}$



Resonance from
 $a \rightarrow B$



Systematic uncertainties

Experimental uncertainties

Detector response, efficiency and calibration.

Applied to all signal and background processes.

- Luminosity.
- Pileup modelling.
- Trigger efficiency.
- Object reconstruction and identification (electrons, muons, jets and tracks).
- Flavour tagging.
- E_T^{miss} .

Modelling uncertainties

Theoretical assumptions and limitations in the MC simulation. Applied to signal and the main backgrounds ($t\bar{t}$ +jets, tW , $t\bar{t}H$ and $t\bar{t}Z$).

- Renormalisation and factorisation scales (μ_R, μ_F).
- Parton distribution functions (PDFs).
- Initial and final state radiation (ISR and FSR).
- Alternative hard scattering simulation.
- Alternative parton shower simulation.
- Alternative Monte Carlo parameters.
- Reweighting uncertainties.

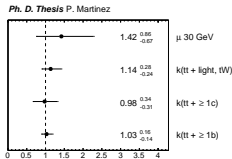
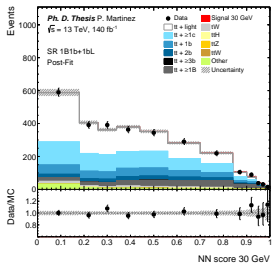
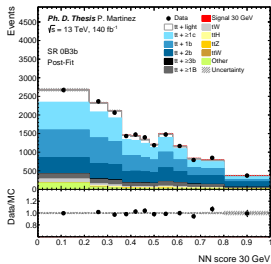
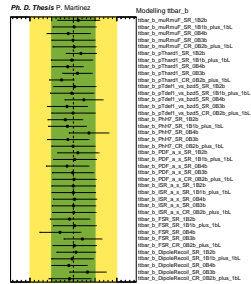
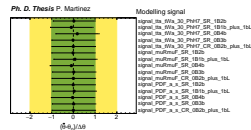
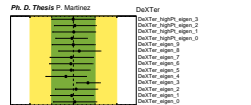
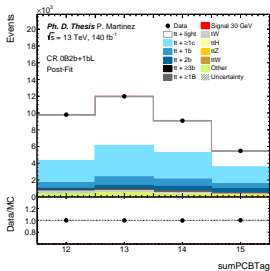
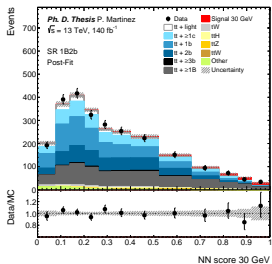
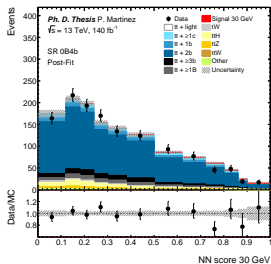
Statistical treatment

- One fit per mass hypothesis (10 in total):
 $m_a \in [12, 16, 20, 25, 30, \dots$
 $\dots 40, 50, 60, 80, 100] \text{ GeV}$
- Binned maximum-likelihood fit to the data.
Free parameters:
 - Signal strength (μ)
 - 3 $t\bar{t}$ +jets normalisation factors.
- Systematic uncertainties enter the fit as **nuisance parameters**.
 - Pruning at 1%.

Signal and control regions

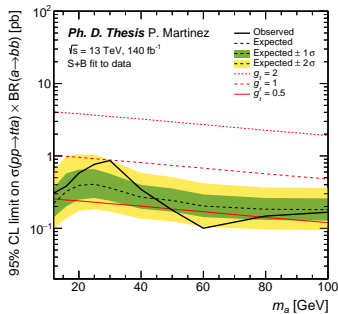
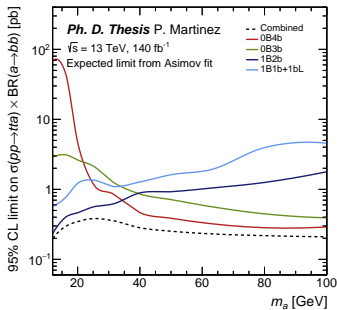
- 4 SRs \Rightarrow Fit to the NN score.
 - **Boosted:** 1B2b and 1B1b+1bL
 - **Resolved:** 0B4b and 0B3b.
- 1 CR (0B2b+1bL) for the $t\bar{t}$ +light and $t\bar{t}+\geq 1c$ categories.
 \Rightarrow Fit to the central bins of the sumPCBTag distribution.

Results from the fit to data ($m_a = 30$ GeV)



Slides 92, 93.

Exclusion limits



- **No significant excess** above the SM is observed.
- 95% CL limits to $\sigma(t\bar{t}a) \times \text{BR}(a \rightarrow b\bar{b})$ between **0.1 and 0.9 pb** for $m_a \in [12, 100]$ GeV.
- The dominant sources of uncertainty are ***B*-tagging** and **$t\bar{t} + \geq 1b$ modelling**.

Category	Impact on $\hat{\mu}$
Total stat.	30.0%
Total syst.	49.0%
General	0.8%
Lepton reconstruction	0.1%
Jet reconstruction	10.7%
Track reconstruction	3.2%
E_T^{miss}	0.6%
<i>B</i>-tagging	39.2%
<i>b</i> -tagging	7.8%
Signal modelling	16.4%
$t\bar{t}$ +light modelling	4.3%
$t\bar{t} + \geq 1c$ modelling	4.0%
$t\bar{t} + \geq 1b$ modelling	27.7%
<i>tW</i> modelling	1.6%
$t\bar{t}H$ modelling	0.6%
$t\bar{t}Z$ modelling	0.5%
Rewighting	<0.1%
MC stats.	6.6%
Signal MC stats.	6.5%
Norm. factors	14.8%

Summary

- Two searches for **light spin-0 particles** (*a*-bosons) are presented.
 - They are performed using the full Run 2 dataset (140 fb^{-1} of *pp* collisions) recorded by the ATLAS experiment.
- **No significant excesses** over the SM expectation are found.
 - Upper limits to $\text{BR}(H \rightarrow aa \rightarrow 4b)$ range between 5% and 25% for $m_a \in [12, 60] \text{ GeV}$.
 - Upper limits to $\sigma(t\bar{t}a) \times \text{BR}(a \rightarrow b\bar{b})$ range between 0.1 and 0.9 pb for $m_a \in [12, 100] \text{ GeV}$.
- Both searches provide **unprecedented sensitivity**.
 - The $H \rightarrow aa \rightarrow 4b$ search uses novel techniques to exploit the characteristics of low- p_T , boosted topologies.
 - The $t\bar{t}a, a \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ search is the first of its kind in both ATLAS and CMS.
- In addition to Physics data analysis, work has been carried out in the **ATLAS L1Topo trigger simulation** in preparation for Run 3.

Published:

- P. Martínez Suárez, *The ATLAS Level-1 Topological Processor: experience and upgrade plans*, [PoS LHCP2021 \(2021\) 242](#) .
- P. Martínez Suárez, *Searches for axion-like-particles (ALPs) in Higgs boson decays in ATLAS*, [PoS ICHEP2024 \(2024\) 071](#) .
- ATLAS Collaboration, *The ATLAS trigger system for LHC Run 3 and trigger performance in 2022*, [JINST 19 P06029 \(2024\)](#) .

Currently under ATLAS review (to be submitted soon):

- $H \rightarrow aa \rightarrow 4b/6b$ in the 0ℓ and 2ℓ channels (\rightarrow Physical Review D).
- $t\bar{t}a$, $a \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ (\rightarrow European Physical Journal C).

Thank you for your attention

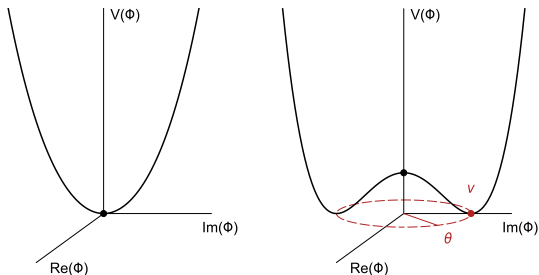
BACKUP

Theoretical framework

The Brout-Englert-Higgs mechanism

$$\Phi = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} \phi^+ \\ \phi^0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L}_{\text{SSB}} &= (D_\mu \Phi)^\dagger (D^\mu \Phi) - V(\Phi) \\ &= (D_\mu \Phi)^\dagger (D^\mu \Phi) - [\mu^2 (\Phi^\dagger \Phi) + \lambda (\Phi^\dagger \Phi)^2] \end{aligned}$$



$$\Phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} e^{iT \cdot \xi(x)/v} \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ v + H(x) \end{pmatrix} \approx \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{2}(\xi_2 + i\xi_2) \\ v + H - \frac{1}{2}i\xi_3 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$W_\mu^\pm = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (W_\mu^1 \mp iW_\mu^2),$$

$$A_\mu = B_\mu \cos \theta_W + W_\mu^3 \sin \theta_W,$$

$$Z_\mu = -B_\mu \sin \theta_W + W_\mu^3 \cos \theta_W$$

$$g \sin \theta_W = g' \cos \theta_W = e$$

2 Higgs doublet model (2HDM)

$$\begin{aligned}
 V_{2\text{HDM}}(\Phi_1, \Phi_2) = & \mu_1^2 \Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_1 + \mu_2^2 \Phi_2^\dagger \Phi_2 - \mu_3^2 (\Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_2 + \text{h.c.}) \\
 & + \frac{1}{2} \lambda_1 (\Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_1)^2 + \frac{1}{2} \lambda_2 (\Phi_2^\dagger \Phi_2)^2 + \lambda_3 (\Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_1) (\Phi_2^\dagger \Phi_2) \\
 & + \lambda_4 (\Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_2) (\Phi_2^\dagger \Phi_1) + \frac{1}{2} \lambda_5 \left[(\Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_2)^2 + \text{h.c.} \right],
 \end{aligned}$$

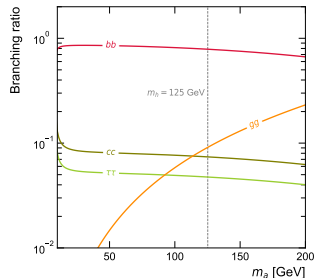
$$V_P = \frac{1}{2} m_P^2 P^2 + P(ib_P \Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_2 + \text{h.c.}) + P^2 (\lambda_{P,1} \Phi_1^\dagger \Phi_1 + \lambda_{P,2} \Phi_2^\dagger \Phi_2)$$

Coupling	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV
$\xi_{h,\ell}$	1	1	1	1
$\xi_{h,u}$	1	1	1	1
$\xi_{h,d}$	1	1	1	1
$\xi_{H,\ell}$	$-\cot \beta$	$\tan \beta$	$\tan \beta$	$-\cot \beta$
$\xi_{H,u}$	$-\cot \beta$	$-\cot \beta$	$-\cot \beta$	$-\cot \beta$
$\xi_{H,d}$	$-\cot \beta$	$\tan \beta$	$-\cot \beta$	$\tan \beta$
$\xi_{A,\ell}$	$-\cot \beta$	$\tan \beta$	$\tan \beta$	$-\cot \beta$
$\xi_{A,u}$	$\cot \beta$	$\cot \beta$	$\cot \beta$	$\cot \beta$
$\xi_{A,d}$	$-\cot \beta$	$\tan \beta$	$-\cot \beta$	$\tan \beta$

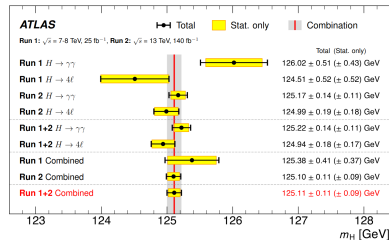
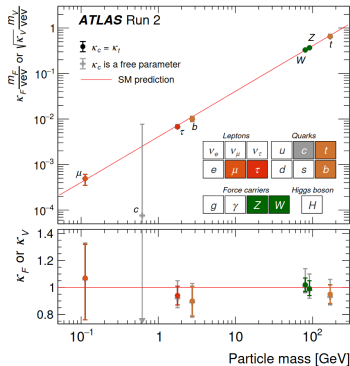
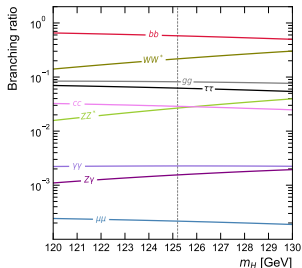
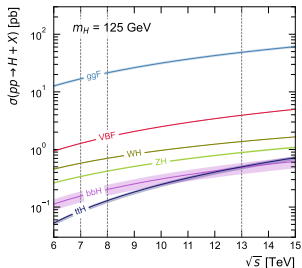
Table 3.3: Yukawa coupling strength for the neutral h , H and A in the four 2HDM models at the decoupling limit $\alpha \rightarrow \beta - \pi/2$. The notation $\ell = e, \mu, \tau$, $u = u, c, t$ and $d = d, s, b$ is used.

Parameter	Value
$\tan \beta$	1
$\sin \theta$	0.7
λ_3	3
$\lambda_{P,1}$	3
$\lambda_{P,2}$	3
y_χ	1

Table 3.4: 2HDM+ a parameters used in the $t\bar{t}a$, $a \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ analysis.



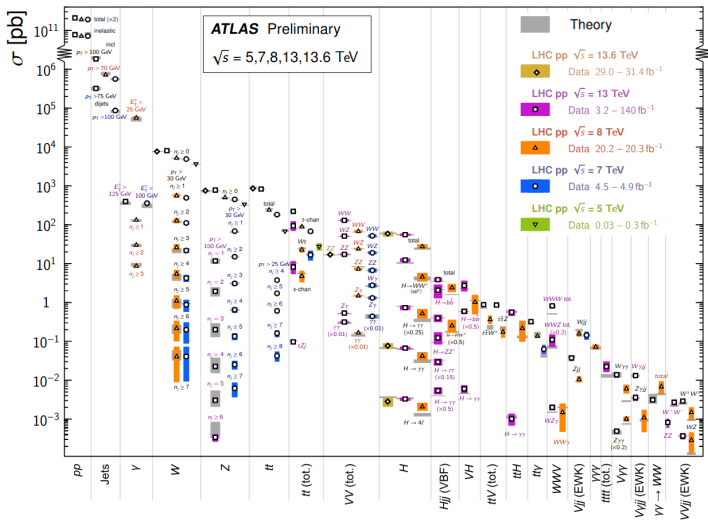
Higgs boson properties



Standard Model cross section measurements

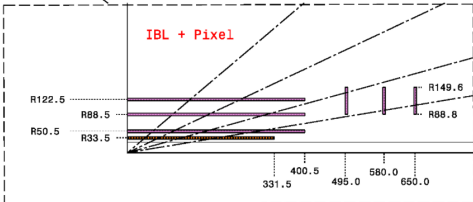
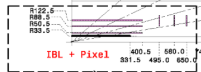
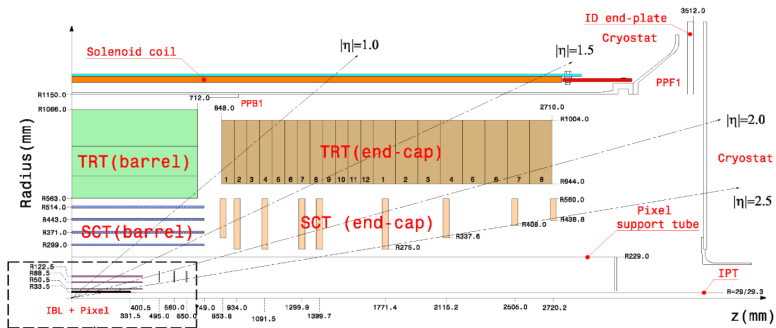
Standard Model Production Cross Section Measurements

Status: June 2024



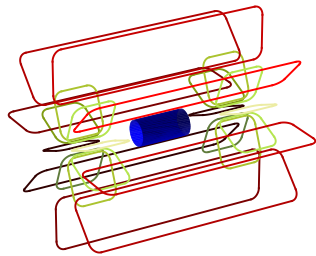
Experimental setup

ATLAS ID schematics

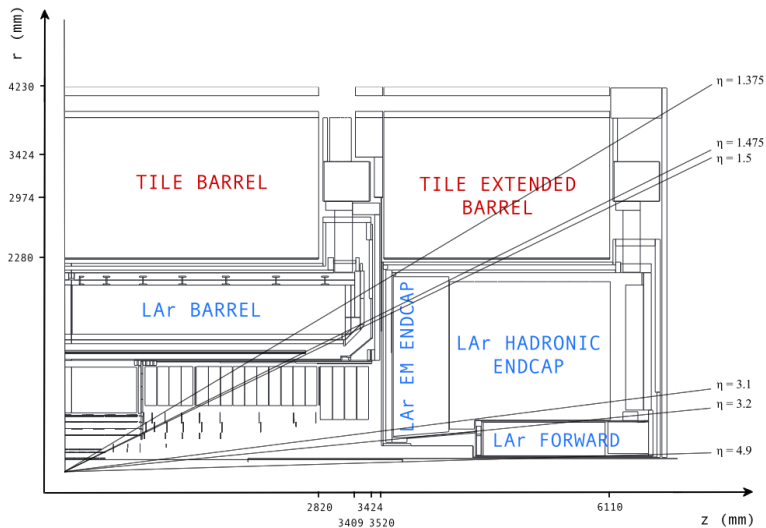


Detector envelopes (mm)

IBL	31<R<40
Pixel	42.5<R<242
SCT barrel	255<R<549
SCT end-cap	251<R<610
TRT barrel	554<R<1082
TRT end-cap	617<R<1106



ATLAS calorimeter schematics



Jet reconstruction

$$d_{ij} = \min \left(p_{T,i}^{2p}, p_{T,j}^{2p} \right) \frac{\Delta_{ij}^2}{R}$$

$$d_{iB} = p_{T,i}^{2p}$$

If $d_{ij} < d_{iB} \rightarrow$ cluster.

Else $\rightarrow i =$ final jet.

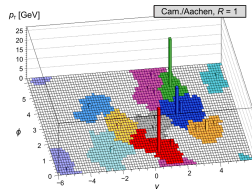
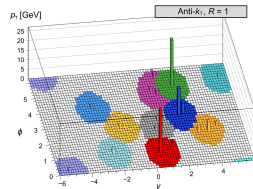
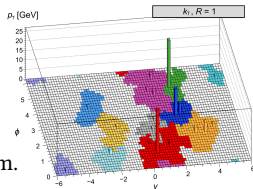
Inclusive clustering: end when all particles are part of a jet with $R_{ij} > R \forall i, j$.

Exclusive clustering: end when the desired amount of jets is found.

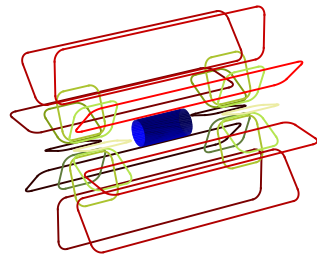
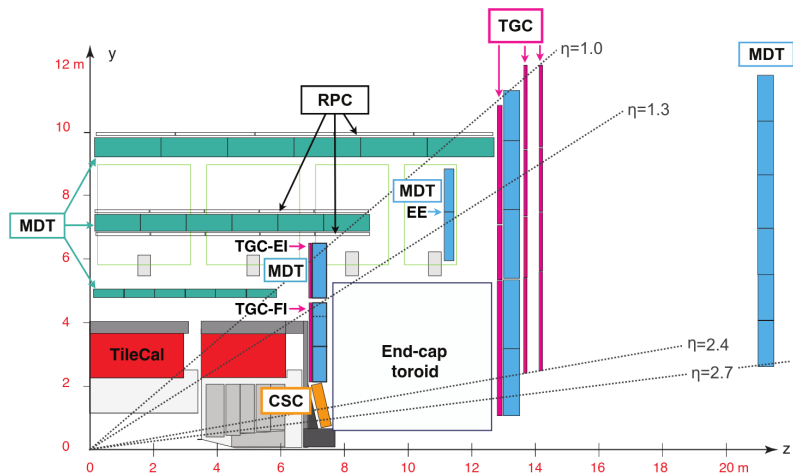
$p = 1$: k_T algorithm.

$p = -1$: anti- k_T algorithm.

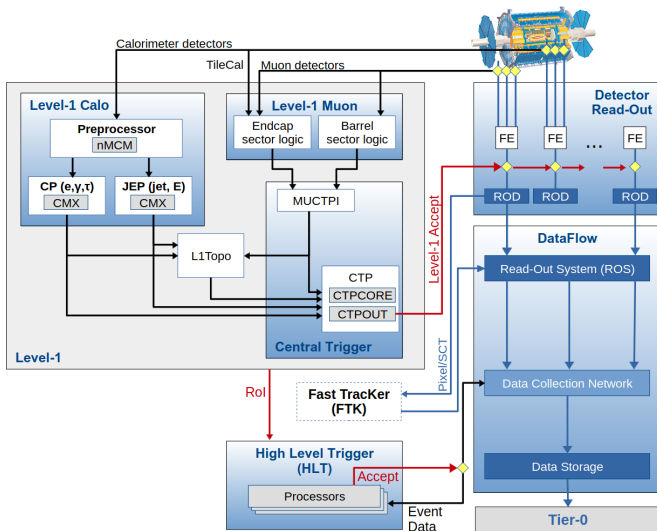
$p = 0$: Cambridge/Aachen algorithm.



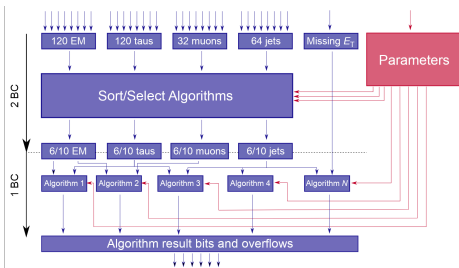
ATLAS MS schematics



ATLAS TDAQ – Run 2 layout



L1Topo Run 2



L1Topo algorithm	Definition
Pseudorapidity distance	$\Delta\eta_{\min} \leq \Delta\eta = \eta_1 - \eta_2 \leq \Delta\eta_{\max}$
Azimuthal distance	$\Delta\phi_{\min} \leq \Delta\phi = \phi_1 - \phi_2 \leq \Delta\phi_{\max}$
Box cut	$\Delta\eta_{\min} \leq \Delta\eta \leq \Delta\eta_{\max}$ and $\Delta\phi_{\min} \leq \Delta\phi \leq \Delta\phi_{\max}$
Window cut	$\eta_{\min} < \eta < \eta_{\max}$ and $\phi_{\min} < \phi < \phi_{\max}$
Angular distance	$\Delta R_{\min}^2 \geq \Delta R^2 = \Delta\eta^2 + \Delta\phi^2 \leq \Delta R_{\max}^2$
Disambiguation	$\eta_1 \neq \eta_2$ or $\phi_1 \neq \phi_2$ or $\Delta R > \Delta R_{\min}$
Ratio	$f(\text{TOB}_1) \geq \alpha f(\text{TOB}_2)$ with $\eta_1 = \eta_2$, $\phi_1 = \phi_2$ and $\alpha = \text{constant}$
Invariant mass	$m_{\text{inv},\min}^2 \leq m_{\text{inv}}^2 = 2E_T^1 E_T^2 (\cosh\Delta\eta - \cos\Delta\phi) \leq m_{\text{inv},\max}^2$
Transverse mass	$m_{T,\min}^2 \leq m_T^2 = 2E_T^1 E_T^{\text{miss}} (1 - \cos\Delta\phi) \leq m_{T,\max}^2$
Event hardness	$H_{T,\min} < H_T = \sum p_T^{\text{jets}}$
Simple cone	$E_{T,\min} < E_T^{\text{cone}} = \sum_{\Delta R < 1.0} E_T^{\text{jets}}$
Late muon	Finds the highest- p_T μ in the next BC and combines it with the input lists associated with the current BC.

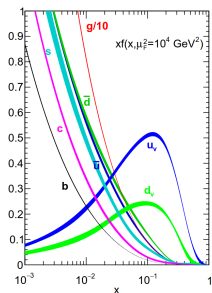
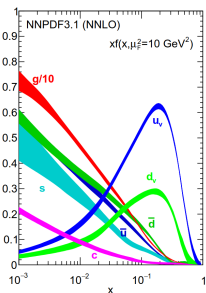
Physics simulation

Physics simulation

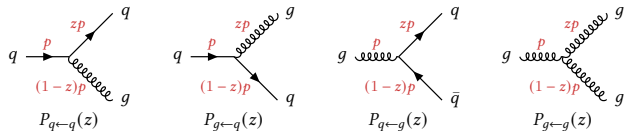
Hard scattering

$$\sigma_{pp \rightarrow X} = \sum_{i,j} \int_0^1 dx_1 dx_2 f_i(x_1, \mu_F^2) f_j(x_2, \mu_F^2) \hat{\sigma}_{ij \rightarrow X} \left(x_1 P_1, x_2 P_2, \frac{Q^2}{\mu_F^2}, \frac{Q^2}{\mu_R^2} \right)$$

PDFs



DGLAP and Parton Shower

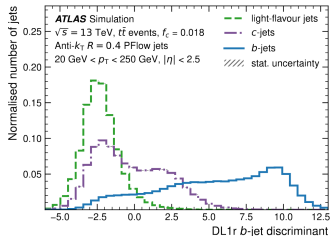


$$d\sigma \approx \sigma_{ME} \sum_i \frac{\alpha_s}{2\pi} \frac{d\theta^2}{\theta^2} dz P_{j \leftarrow i}(z)$$

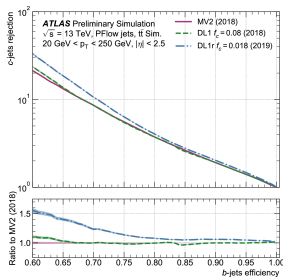
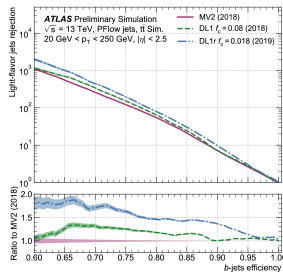
$$\Lambda_i(t_{\max}^2, t^2) = \exp \left[\int_{t^2}^{t_{\max}^2} \frac{\alpha_s}{2\pi} \frac{d\tilde{t}^2}{\tilde{t}^2} \int_{t_0^2/\tilde{t}^2}^{1-t_0^2/\tilde{t}^2} dz P_{j \leftarrow i}(z) \right]$$

Search for decays of the Higgs boson into pseudoscalar particles
decaying to four bottom quarks using proton-proton collisions at
 $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV with the ATLAS detector

DL1r b -tagging

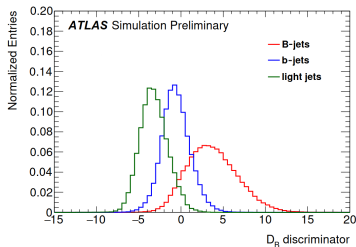


$$D_{DL1r} = \ln \left(\frac{p_b}{f_c p_c + (1 - f_c) p_l} \right)$$

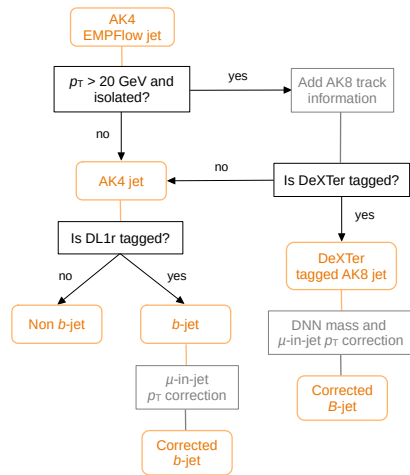
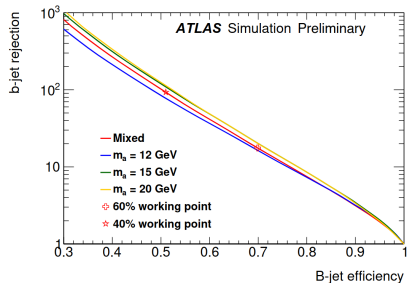


DL1r ϵ_b	DL1r WP	b -tagging score
100-85%	None	1
85-77%	85	2
77-70%	77	3
70-60%	70	4
60-0%	60	5

DeXTer B -tagging



$$D_{\text{DeXTer}} = \ln \left(\frac{p_B}{(1 - f_b)p_l + f_b p_b} \right)$$

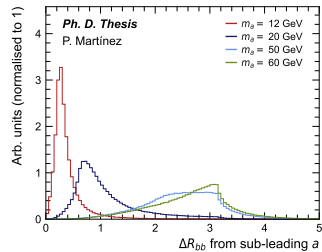
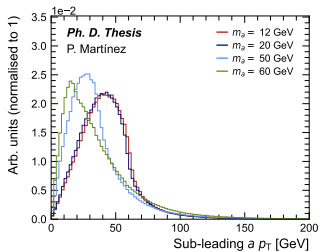
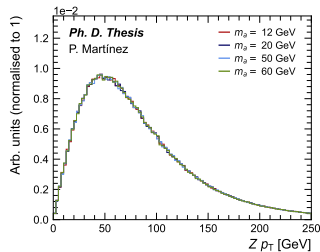
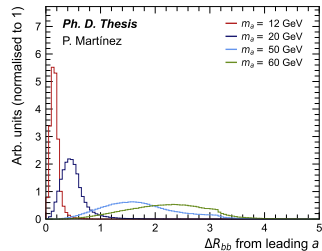
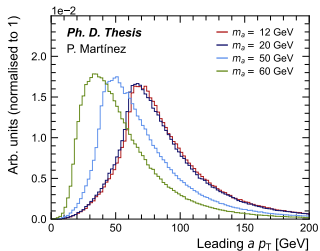
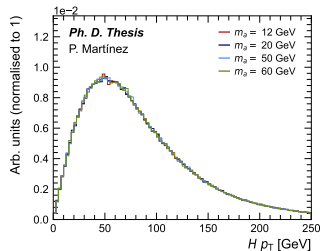


TC-LVT SV-tagging

$$p_T > 3 \text{ GeV}$$

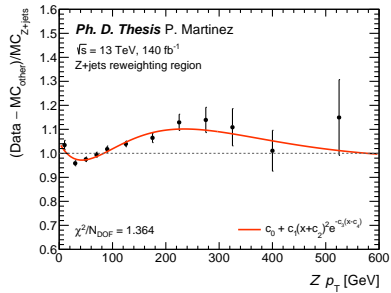
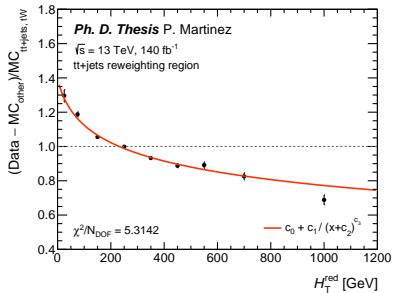
$$m_{\nu} > 600 \text{ MeV}$$

$H \rightarrow aa \rightarrow 4b$ truth plots



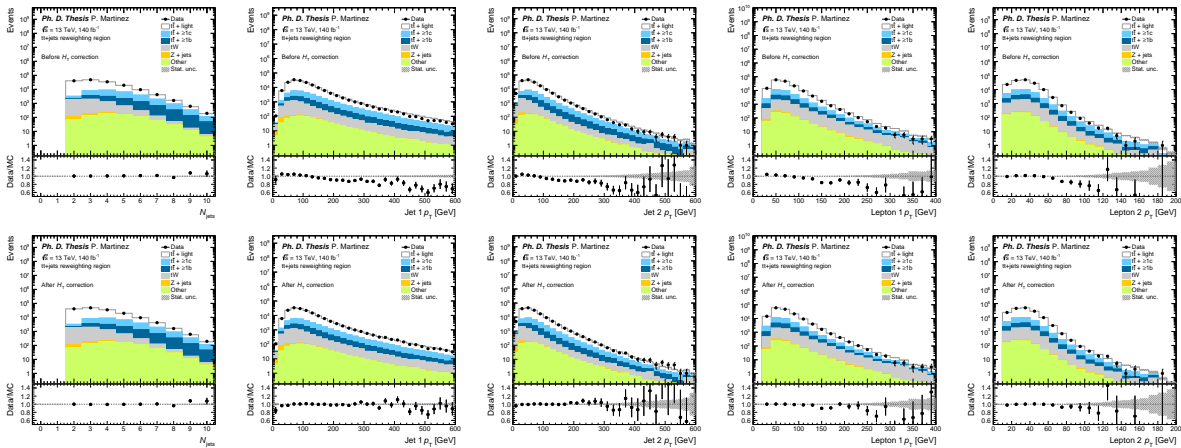
Background modelling

$t\bar{t}$ +jets (left) and Z+jets (right) fit to H_T^{red}



Background modelling

$t\bar{t}$ +jets H_T correction – before and after



NN for event reconstruction

2B



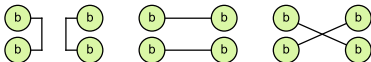
1B2b



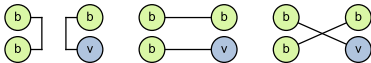
1B1b1v



4b

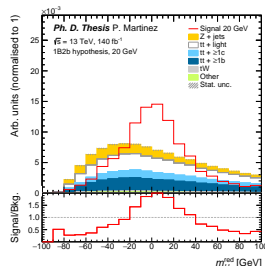
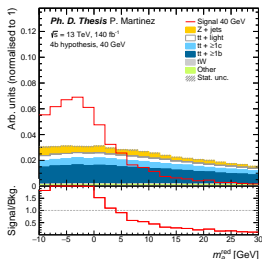
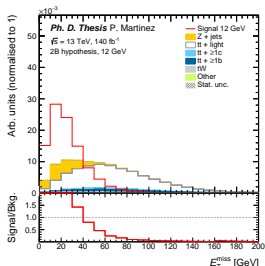
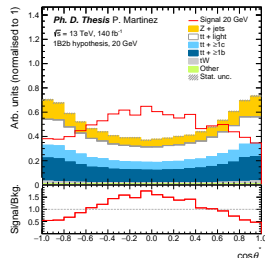
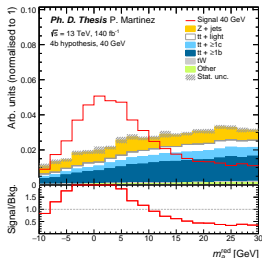
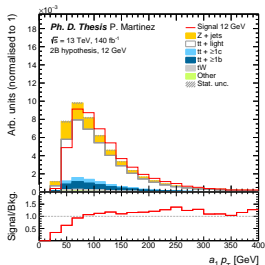


3b1v



Object	Feature	Description
Ak8 jets	$\log m$	DNN-corrected track jet mass
	$\log p_T$	Transverse momentum
	η	Pseudorapidity
	ϕ	Azimuthal angle
	isDeXTer60WP	True if the jet is DeXTer tagged with 60% WP
isDeXTer40WP	True if the jet is DeXTer tagged with 40% WP	
Ak4 jets	$\log m$	Invariant mass
	$\log p_T$	Transverse momentum
	η	Pseudorapidity
	ϕ	Azimuthal angle
	DL1r <i>b</i> -tagging score	PC DL1r tagging score
Soft <i>v</i>	$\log m$	Track mass
	$\log p_T$	Transverse momentum
	η	Pseudorapidity
	ϕ	Azimuthal angle
	L_{3D}	Decay length relative to the primary vertex
	$S_{L_{3D}}$	Decay length significance
Z boson candidate (<i>ee</i> or $\mu\mu$)	p_T	Transverse momentum
	η	Pseudorapidity
	ϕ	Azimuthal angle
	m	Invariant mass

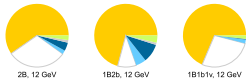
BDT for signal vs. background discrimination – Example inputs



SR and CR composition

Ph. D. Thesis
P. Martínez

Signal regions



Ph. D. Thesis
P. Martínez

Control regions
SFonZ



Ph. D. Thesis
P. Martínez

Control regions
DF



Results from the fit to data ($m_a = 25$ GeV)

Correlation matrix and ranked systematics

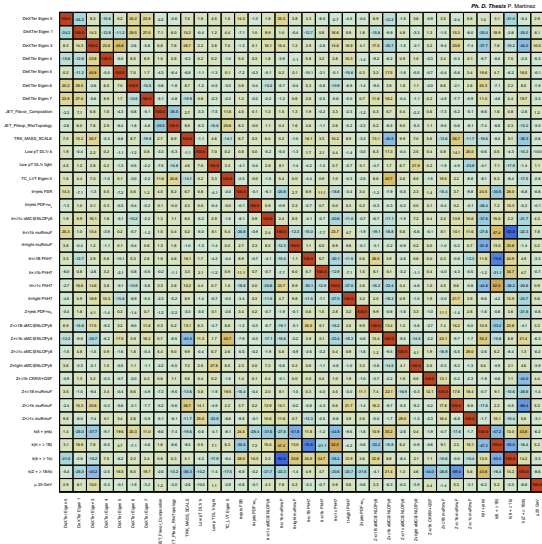
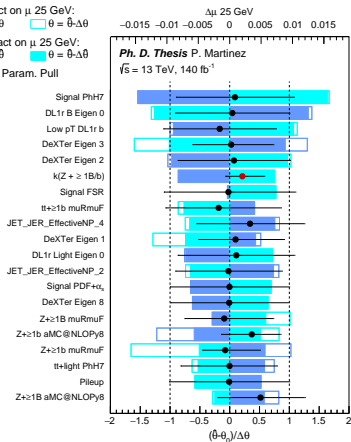
Pre-fit impact on μ 25 GeV:

$\theta = \theta + \Delta\theta$ $\theta = \theta - \Delta\theta$

Post-fit impact on μ 25 GeV:

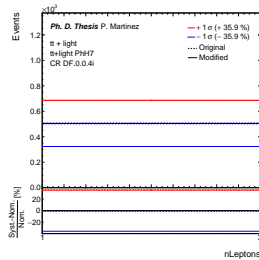
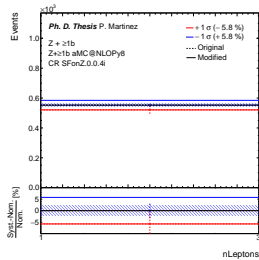
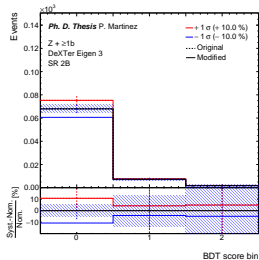
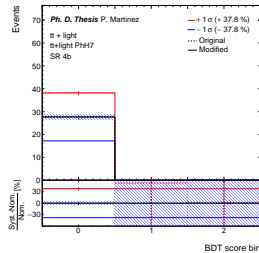
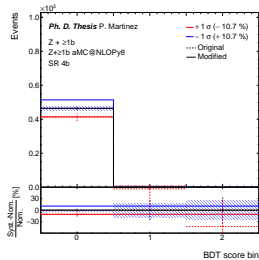
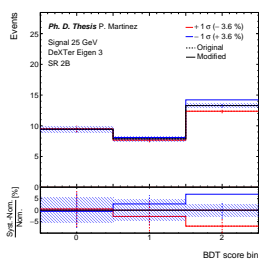
$\theta = \theta + \Delta\theta$ $\theta = \theta - \Delta\theta$

— Nuis. Param. Pull



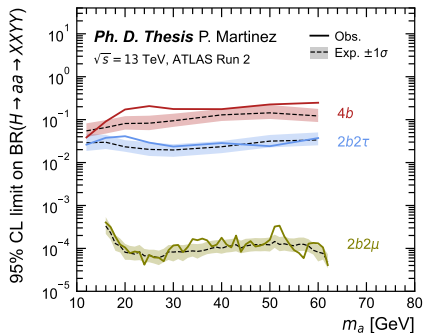
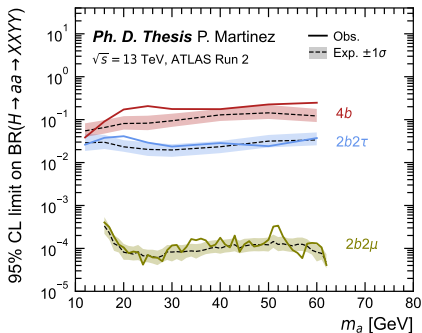
Results from the fit to data ($m_a = 25$ GeV)

Relevant systematic variations in the signal and control regions



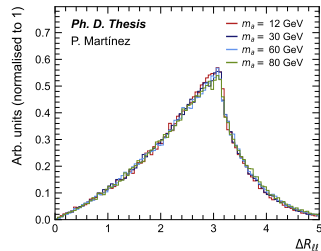
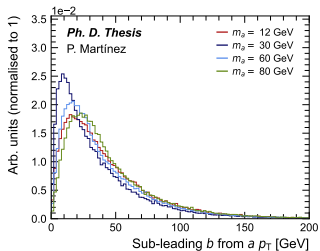
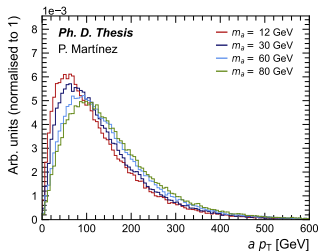
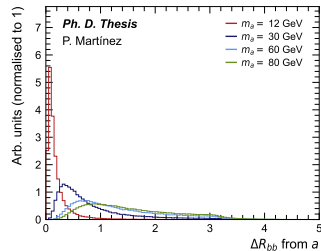
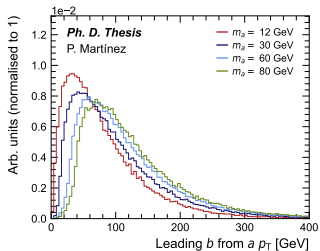
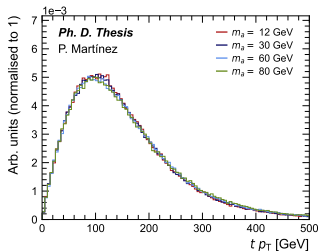
Result comparison

Comparison with other $H \rightarrow aa$ final states (left) and equivalent CMS analyses (right)

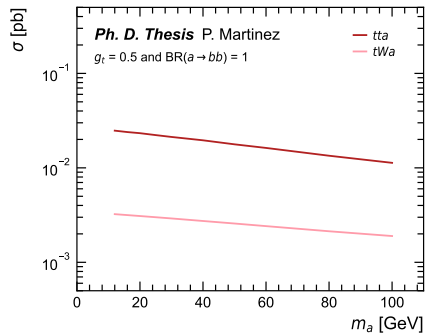


Search for a new pseudoscalar decaying into a pair of bottom and anti-bottom quarks in top-associated production using proton-proton collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV with the ATLAS detector

$t\bar{t}a, a \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ truth plots

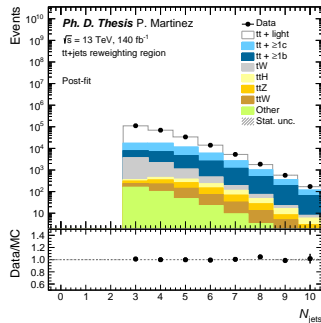
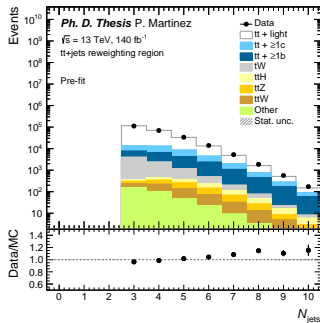


$t\bar{t}a$ vs. $tW a$ cross section



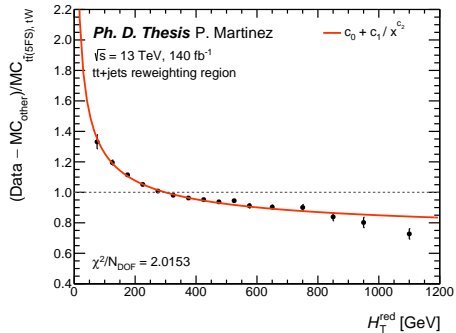
Background modelling

$t\bar{t}$ +jets norm. correction – effect on the N_{jets} distribution



Background modelling

$t\bar{t}$ +jets fit to H_T^{red}



BDTs for event reconstruction

Sample	Events
$t\bar{t}a$ 12 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}a$ 16 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}a$ 20 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}a$ 30 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}a$ 40 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}a$ 60 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}a$ 80 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}a$ 100 GeV	30000
$t\bar{t}$ +jets	30000
$t\bar{t}$ +jets BBFilt	30000
$t\bar{t}$ +jets BFiltBBVeto	30000
$t\bar{t}$ +jets CFiltBVeto	30000

Table 11.8: Number of $t\bar{t}a$ and $t\bar{t}$ +jets MC events used in the training of the $t \rightarrow j\ell$ reconstruction BDTs.

Object	Variables
Full event	$N_{\text{jets}}, N_{b\text{-jets}}$ (85% WP)
Test/aux. $j\ell$ pair	$m, p_T, \eta, \Delta R$
Test/aux. jet	$p_T, \eta, b\text{-tagging score, jet ID}$
Test/aux. lepton	p_T, η
$t\bar{t}$ pair	$m, p_T, \eta, \Delta R, \Delta\phi$
jj pair	ΔR

Table 11.9: Input variables to the $t \rightarrow j\ell$ reconstruction BDTs. Kinematic variables of the $t\bar{t}$ pair are computed using $j\ell$ and $j\bar{\ell}$.

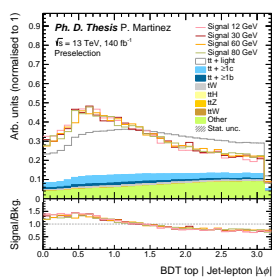
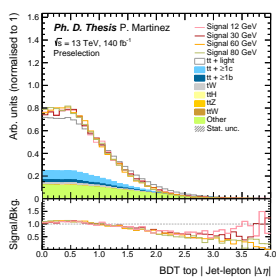
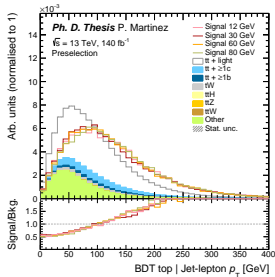
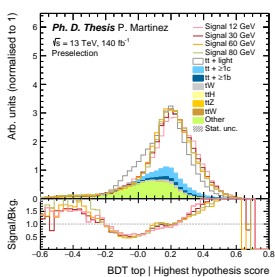
Sample	Events
$t\bar{t}a$ 12 GeV	106067
$t\bar{t}a$ 16 GeV	103016
$t\bar{t}a$ 20 GeV	107246
$t\bar{t}a$ 30 GeV	110104
$t\bar{t}a$ 40 GeV	112470
$t\bar{t}a$ 60 GeV	114470
$t\bar{t}a$ 80 GeV	115680
$t\bar{t}a$ 100 GeV	116434
$t\bar{t}$ +jets	120000
$t\bar{t}$ +jets BBFilt	120000
$t\bar{t}$ +jets BFiltBBVeto	120000
$t\bar{t}$ +jets CFiltBVeto	120000

Table 11.10: Number of $t\bar{t}a$ and $t\bar{t}$ +jets MC events used in the training of the $a \rightarrow jj$ reconstruction BDT.

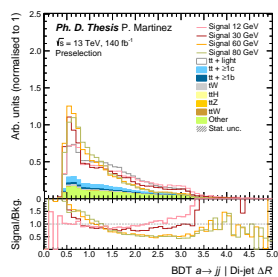
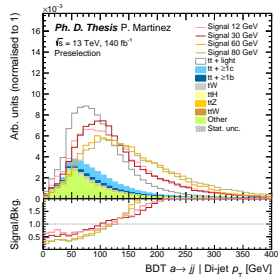
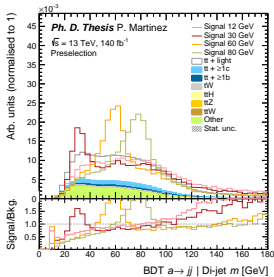
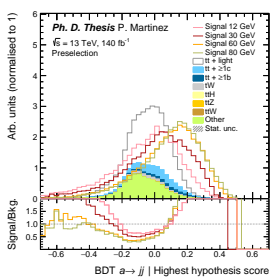
Object	Variables
Full event	$N_{\text{jets}}, N_{b\text{-jets}}$ (85% WP), sumPCBTag
jj pair	$m, p_T, \eta, E, \phi, \Delta R$
Test jet 1	$p_T, \eta, b\text{-tagging score, jet ID}$
Test jet 2	$p_T, \eta, b\text{-tagging score, jet ID}$

Table 11.11: Input variables to the $a \rightarrow jj$ reconstruction BDT.

Outputs from the $t \rightarrow j\ell$ BDT – Examples



Outputs from the $a \rightarrow jj$ BDT – Examples



NN for signal vs. background discrimination

Sample	0B4b	0B3b	1B2b	1B1b
$t\bar{t}a$ 12 GeV	–	15353	11096	16269
$t\bar{t}a$ 16 GeV	–	13669	11028	15878
$t\bar{t}a$ 20 GeV	1045	15440	10148	14896
$t\bar{t}a$ 30 GeV	3447	20801	7239	9964
$t\bar{t}a$ 40 GeV	5721	25618	5157	6891
$t\bar{t}a$ 60 GeV	8624	30650	3604	3803
$t\bar{t}a$ 80 GeV	10087	33083	3261	2925
$t\bar{t}a$ 100 GeV	10973	33916	3310	2685
$t\bar{t}$ +light	96	34149	2438	352628
$t\bar{t}+\geq 1c$	1412	122056	6643	48749
$t\bar{t}+\geq 1b$	49703	446433	61772	78655
tW	175	2857	280	3867
Other	195973	715973	71470	141348

Table 11.13: Number of signal and background MC events used in the training of the signal versus background discriminator for each training region. In this table, "Other" includes the $t\bar{t}H$, $t\bar{t}Z$, $t\bar{t}W$, tq , tZ , tWZ , Z/W +jets and diboson background processes. The 12 and 16 GeV $t\bar{t}a$ samples are excluded from the 0B4b training due to low statistics.

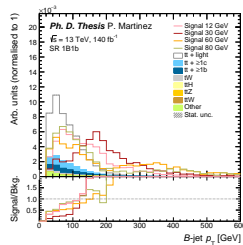
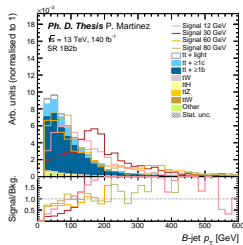
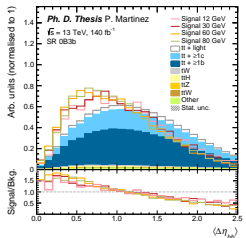
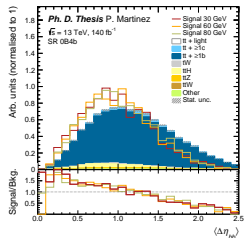
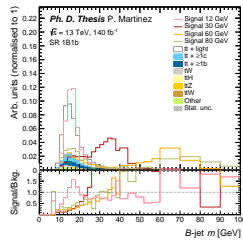
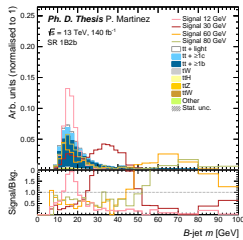
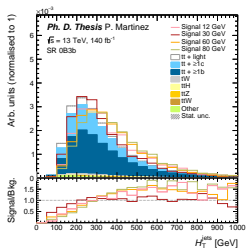
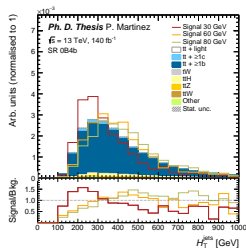
Hyperparameter	Value
Hidden layers	2
Hidden size	$2 \times N_{\text{features}}$
Activation function	ReLU
Learning rate	10^{-4}
Epochs	500
Patience	4
Dropout	0.3

Table 11.14: List of hyperparameters used in the NN training. The number of epochs corresponds to the maximum number allowed. The training is stopped if the loss does not improve after 4 epochs (patience). The choice of the values is based on the NN performance and the total training time.

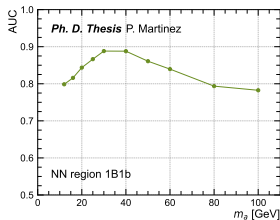
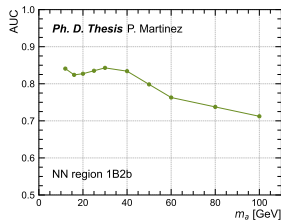
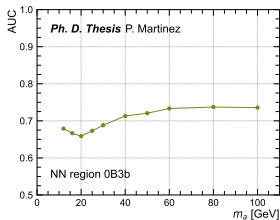
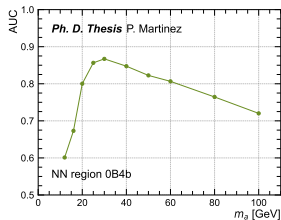
Object	Variables
BDT $t \rightarrow j\ell$	Score, $p_T^{j\ell}$, $\Delta R_{j\ell}$, $\Delta\eta_{j\ell}$, $\Delta\phi_{j\ell}$, jet ID
BDT $a \rightarrow jj$	Score, p_T^{jj} , η_{jj} , m_{jj} , ΔR_{jj} , $\Delta\eta_{jj}$, $\Delta\phi_{jj}$, jet ID
Small- R jets	p_T , η , b -tagging score p_T^{bb} , m_{bb} , m_{bbb} , m_{bbbb} , ΔR_{bb} , $\Delta\eta_{bb}$, $\Delta\phi_{bb}$, $\Delta\phi_{E_T^{\text{miss}},b}$
Large- R jets	p_T , η , m ΔR_{Bb} , $\Delta\phi_{E_T^{\text{miss}},B}$
Leptons	$\Delta R_{\ell\ell}$, $\Delta\eta_{\ell\ell}$, $\Delta\phi_{\ell\ell}$, $\Delta\phi_{E_T^{\text{miss}},\ell}$ $\Delta R_{\ell\ell,bb}$, $\Delta R_{\ell\ell,B}$, $\Delta R_{\ell\ell,b}$
Event	N_{jets} , H_T^{jets} , E_T^{miss}

Table 11.15: NN input variables. For bb variables, both the pair with maximum p_T and minimum ΔR are included. Angular variables with one b and/or one B use the minimum ΔR pair. m_{bbbb} and m_{bbb} correspond to the combination with maximum p_T .

NN for signal vs. background discrimination – Example inputs

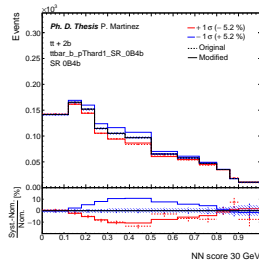
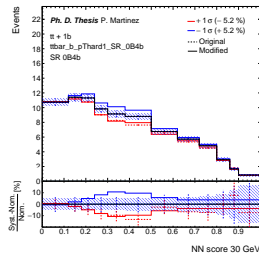
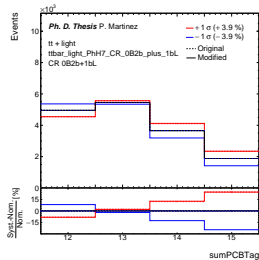
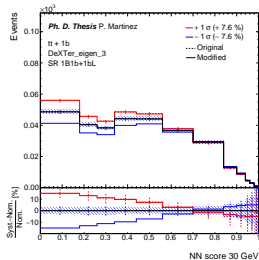
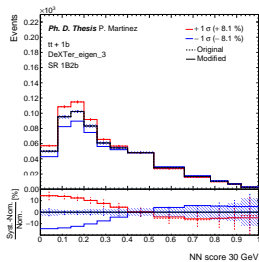


NN for signal vs. background discrimination – AUC per region



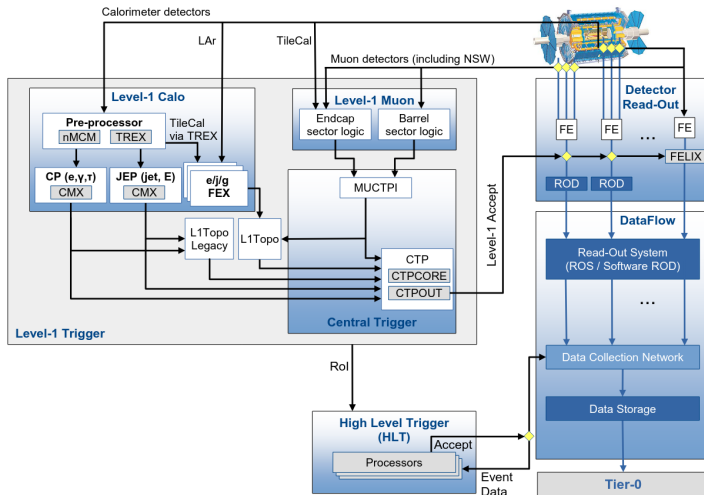
Results from the fit to data ($m_a = 30$ GeV)

Relevant systematic variations in the signal and control regions

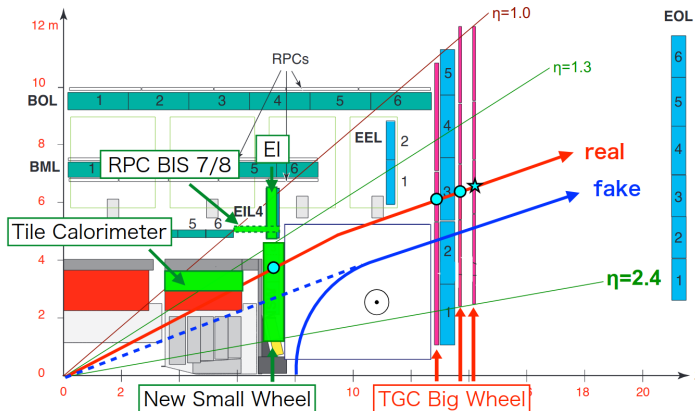


Qualification task

ATLAS TDAQ – Run 3 layout



ATLAS MS – Run 3 layout



L1Topo TOBs – Run 2 vs. Run 3 (I)

Run 2 TOBs				
Name	Description	ΔE_T [GeV]	$\Delta\eta$	$\Delta\phi$
EM	e/γ from CP	0.5	0.1	0.1
Tau	τ from CP			
Jet	Jet from JEP	1	0.2	0.2
MET	Missing transverse energy from JEP	1	-	0.1
Muon	Muon from MUCTPI	RPC p_T thresholds {4, 6, 10, 11, 20, 21}	0.2-0.4	0.1
		TGC p_T thresholds {4, 6, 10, 15, 20}		

Run 3 TOBs				
Name	Description	ΔE_T [GeV]	$\Delta\eta$	$\Delta\phi$
eEM	e/γ from eFEX	0.1	0.025	0.1
eTau	τ from eFEX			
jEM	e/γ from jFEX	0.2	0.1	0.1
jTau	τ from jFEX			
jJet	Jet from jFEX			
jLJet	Large- R jet from jFEX	0.2	-	0.05
jXE	Missing transverse energy from jFEX			
jTE	Total transverse energy from jFEX	0.2	0.2	0.2
gJet	Jet from gFEX			
gLJet	Large- R jet from gFEX	0.2	-	0.2
gXE	Missing transverse energy from gFEX			
gTE	Total transverse energy from gFEX	0.025	0.05	0.05
Muon	Muon from MUCTPI			

L1Topo TOBs – Run 2 vs. Run 3 (II)

Run 2 max. TOBs per event	
EM	120
Tau	120
Jet	64
MET	1
Muon	32

Run 3 max. TOBs per event	
eEM	144
eTau	144
jEM	5
jTau	6
jJet	168
jLJet	24
jXE	7
jTE	7
gJet	6
gLJet	3
gXE	3
gTE	1
Muon	32