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IMPROVING THE LUMINOSITY FOR BEAM ENERGY SCAN II AT RHIC

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Abstract

The Quantum Chromodynamics (QCD) phase diagram has many uncharted territories, particularly the nature of the transformation from Quark-Gluon plasma (QGP) to the state of Hadronic gas. The Beam Energy Scan I (BES-I) at the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC) was completed but measurements had large statistical errors. To improve the statistical error and expand the search for first-order phase transition and location of the critical point, Beam Energy Scan II commenced in 2019 with a goal of improving the luminosity by a factor of 3-4. The beam lifetime at low energies was and will be limited by some physical effects of which the most significant are intrabeam scattering, space charge, beam-beam, persistent current effects. This article will review these potential limiting factors and introduce the countermeasures which are or will be in place to improve BES-II luminosity.

INTRODUCTION

The Quantum Chromodynamics (QCD) phase diagram [1], arguably one of the most important graphs in nuclear physics, has many uncharted territories. In particular, the nature of the transformation from Quark-Gluon plasma (QGP) to the state of Hadronic gas is totally unknown [2]. A beam energy scan [3,4], scanning the phase diagram with variable collision energy, has been conducted at RHIC to explore the first-order phase transition and determine the location of a possible critical point. The beam energy scan I (BES-I) [5] was completed in 2014 and resulted in improved understanding of many physics phenomena [6]. However, the transition between QGP and hadronic gas has not been understood yet. The BES-I program offered limited statistics because the RHIC luminosity decreases steeply at lower energies. Therefore, the beam energy Scan II (BES-II) was planned with the luminosity improved by a factor of ∼ 4 at the same beam energies as BES-I (3.85, 4.55, 5.75, 7.3 and 9.8 GeV/nucleon).

The beam lifetime at BES-I energies was limited by some physical effects [7–9], of which the most significant are intrabeam scattering, space charge, beam-beam, and persistent current effects. These effects have been understood better through beam operation in BES-I and beam studies over the years [7, 10–12]. Corresponding countermeasures [13–19] for these physical effects have been either conceived or tested before the start of BES-II.

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INTRABEAM SCATTERING AND ELECTRON COOLING

Intrabeam Scattering

At BES-I/II beam energies, which are well below the transition energy (∼24 GeV/nucleon for Au beam), both the longitudinal and transverse beam emittances grow rapidly due to intrabeam scattering (IBS) [18, 20], the small angle scattering process between the particles in a bunched or a coasting beam.

Table 1: IBS Induced Longitudinal Beam Emittance Growth Time ($\tau_{\|}$) and Transverse ($\tau_{\perp}$) Beam Emittance Growth Time at BES-I/II Beam Energies with 28 MHz Cavities and 9 MHz Cavities

Energy (GeV/nucleon)	28 MHz cavities			9 MHz cavities		
	$N_{ppb}(10^9)$	$\tau_{\|}$(mins)	$\tau_{\perp}$(mins)	$N_{ppb}(10^9)$	$\tau_{\|}$(mins)	$\tau_{\perp}$(mins)
3.85	0.5	18	43	0.6	20	117
4.55	0.5	28	63	0.8	19	134
5.75	1.1	14	28	1.3	20	131
7.3	1.8	33	49	2.1	14	142
9.8	2.1	56	77	2.3	15	150

The luminosity lifetime was limited by the IBS effect during BES-I operation [13] in addition to lattice nonlinearity and space charge. The IBS beam emittance growth times at BES-I/II beam energies, calculated using BETACOOL [21], range from ten minutes to tens of minutes as shown in Table 1. The bunch intensities are different when using the 28 or 9 MHz cavities due to the difference in longitudinal acceptance of the two RF systems. The 28 MHz cavities were used for all beam energies during BES-I operation. Three new 9 MHz cavities per accelerator [22] will be used for the three lowest energies during BES-II operation.

Low Energy RHIC Electron Cooling

Low Energy RHIC electron Cooling (LEReC) [23], using a linear electron accelerator, has been constructed and is now being commissioned to combat the IBS effect by cooling RHIC ion beams, and therefore to improve luminosities at the three lowest beam energies. Electron bunches are generated by a 400 kV DC electron photocathode gun [24]; these bunches then go through a chain of cavities, which includes a 704 MHz superconducting booster cavity, a 2.1 GHz normal-conducting copper cavity to linearize the beam energy chirp, a 704 MHz normal-conducting cavity to reduce the energy spread of individual bunches and a 9 MHz normal-conducting cavity to reduce the energy droop along a bunch train due to beam loading. Each electron macro-bunch, consisting of 30 micro-bunches of 40 ps length at 704

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MHz repetition frequency, will overlap a RHIC ion bunch at 9 MHz frequency. The electron beam first co-propagates with the ion beam in one of the RHIC rings (Yellow) at the same velocity, then is turned around and co-propagates with the ion beam in the other RHIC ring (Blue). With its small energy and angular spread, the electron beam reduces the ion beam energy spread when interacting with it via Coulomb friction force (called "electron cooling" [25]).

Both longitudinal and transverse cooling of ion beam have been demonstrated with bunched electron beam from LEReC in 2019 [26].

SPACE CHARGE AND RF CAVITIES

Space Charge

At the BES-I/II beam energies, the ions in the beam experience a strong direct space charge force. The space charge force introduces incoherent and coherent tune shifts. As a result, the high intensity beam can be driven to low-order resonances which deteriorate beam lifetime. The incoherent space charge tune shift [27] of a Gaussian beam from direct space charge in a circular ring can be estimated by

$$\delta Q_{sc} = -\frac{r_0}{4\pi}\frac{Z^2}{A}\frac{N}{\beta\gamma^2\epsilon_n}\frac{F}{B_f} \qquad (1)$$

where r_0 is the classical radius of proton, Z and A are the charge number and atomic number, N is the number of particles per bunch, β and γ are the relative velocity and relativistic factor, ϵ_n is the RMS normalized transverse emittance, F (~ 1) is the form factor due to image current space charge force, $B_f = \frac{2\pi R}{\sqrt{2\pi}\sigma_s}$ is the bunching factor, R is the accelerator radius and σ_s is the RMS bunch length.

RF Cavities

Three new 9 MHz cavities (with 180 kV total voltage, harmonic number is h=120) will be used for the three lowest beam energies during BES-II operation. The 28 MHz cavities (with 400 kV total voltage, harmonic number is h=360) are used for operation at the two higher beam energies. The incoherent space charge tune shifts at BES-I/II beam energies with different RF cavities are shown in Table 2. The space charge effects are significantly reduced by using the new 9 MHz cavities due to reduced peak beam intensity.

Table 2: Calculated Space Charge Incoherent Tune Shifts (δQ_{sc}) at BES-I/II Beam Energies with 28 MHz Cavities and 9 MHz Cavities

Energy (GeV/nucleon)	28 MHz cavities		9 MHz cavities	
	$N_{ppb}(10^9)$	δQ_{sc}	$N_{ppb}(10^9)$	δQ_{sc}
3.85	0.5	0.073	0.6	0.038
4.55	0.5	0.053	0.8	0.037
5.75	1.1	0.072	1.3	0.039
7.3	1.8	0.072	2.1	0.044
9.8	2.1	0.049	2.3	0.032

These 9 MHz cavities can be tuned in the frequency range from 8.7 to 9.6 MHz [22]. With this frequency range, the harmonic number of these cavities for BES-II beam energies can stay constant at 120, thus avoiding a change of the harmonic number which was mandatory with 28 MHz cavities [28]. A minor downside of using these new 9 MHz cavities is that the longitudinal IBS growth rates become stronger due to a smaller energy spread. The 28 MHz cavities will be employed in addition to increase the beam energy spread therefore alleviating the IBS effect at 5.75 GeV/nucleon for which the LEReC cooling may not be available.

The 9 MHz cavities provide a larger bucket area than the 28 MHz cavities as shown in Table 3. Therefore, bunch intensities can be increased for the three lowest beam energies during BES-II. For beam energies at 9.8 and 7.3 GeV/nucleon, the 28 MHz cavities will be used during operation for better luminosity lifetime even though its longitudinal acceptance is smaller than that of the 9 MHz cavities [29].

Table 3: Longitudinal Bucket Area at BES-I/II Beam Energies with 28 MHz Cavities and 9 MHz Cavities

Energy (GeV/nucleon)	28 MHz cavities bucket area (eV·s)	9 MHz cavities bucket area (eV·s)
3.85	0.17	0.60
4.55	0.23	0.80
5.75	0.34	1.18
7.3	0.51	1.77
9.8	0.85	2.96

Injection and Extraction Kickers

Longer bunches (~ 50 ns full length) are expected with 9 MHz cavities. Therefore, the requirement for the extraction kickers in the AGS and the injection kickers in RHIC [30] are more demanding [31] for BES-II operation. In general, a longer flattop of the voltage pulse is desired for both kickers to avoid significant emittance growth; a short rise time is also required as to not affect the preceding bunch. With less strength required from the AGS extraction kicker at low energies, the four kicker pulses can be staggered for a longer and flatter top. The rise time of the AGS extraction kicker is 175 ns which is short enough to extract equidistantly spaced 6 bunches in one cycle. The rise time was shortened and the flattop was extended for the RHIC injection kicker by switching from the previous setup with 40 Ω termination to a setup with 25 Ω termination. The measurements [32] with the new setup demonstrated the specifications of the RHIC injection kicker required for operation with 9 MHz cavities could be met.

BEAM-BEAM AND WORKING POINT

Beam-Beam Effects

With the upgrade of PHENIX to sPHENIX in progress, beams will only collide at IP6 for the STAR experiment during the BES-II program. During beam collisions, particles in one beam experience the electric and magnetic forces from the particles in the other beam. The nonlinear beam-beam force excites nonlinear resonances and creates an amplitude dependence of the betatron tune [33]. The strength of the

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beam-beam force is characterized by the incoherent beam-beam tune shift [33], which can be estimated by

$$\xi = -\frac{Z^2 N r_0}{4\pi A \epsilon_n} \quad (2)$$

where the symbols are the same as used in Eq. 1.

Even though the incoherent beam-beam tune shifts at BES-I/II beam energies, listed in Table 4, are small, a significant impact on beam lifetime with collisions was observed during BES-I operation [15]. The impact was attributed to the interplay of beam-beam and space charge effects, and was reproduced in simulation [34]. To improve the beam lifetime with collisions, a new near-integer working point (0.09/0.085), with more tune space for the space charge and beam-beam tune shift, was proposed. Beam experiments demonstrated that the beam lifetime was much less affected [15] when beam collisions were established.

Table 4: Beam-Beam Incoherent Tune Shifts at BES-I/II Beam Energies with 28 MHz Cavities and 9 MHz Cavities

Energy	28 MHz cavities	9 MHz cavities
(GeV/nucleon)	Tune shift (10^{-3})	Tune shift (10^{-3})
3.85	1.0	1.1
4.55	1.0	1.5
5.75	2.1	2.5
7.3	3.5	4.0
9.8	4.1	4.4

Working Point

The new working point (0.09/0.085), proposed for BES-II beam energies, was tested at 13.5 GeV/nucleon beam energy. We observed substantially reduced beam loss shortly after collisions being established. However, the orbit rms was not successfully suppressed to <mm level by orbit feedback with the new working point. This problem was attributed to the reduced resolution of corrector power supplies [35] at low beam energies and optics errors. All the corrector power supply controllers were fully upgraded from 12 to 16 bit before 2019 operation to better control the orbit; and optics correction is also planned for BES-II operation.

PERSISTENT CURRENT AND NEW MAGNETIC CYCLE

Persistent Current Effects

Persistent currents in superconducting magnets introduce significant field errors [36] especially at low operating currents; in addition, their decay cause variations of beam parameters, like orbit, tune and chromaticity [37]. The sextupole component in RHIC dipoles was so strong that the polarity of some sextupole magnets had to be flipped just to be able to compensate the natural and field errors induced chromaticities [38]. To reduce field errors and quickly establish stable machine conditions, new magnetic cycles [39] were proposed for all BES-II beam energies.

New Magnetic Cycle

In the new magnetic cycle for 9.8 GeV/nucleon, the magnet current oscillates around the operating current with diminishing amplitude a few of times before it settles. This new magnetic cycle has been demonstrated experimentally to reduce field errors and establish stable machine conditions in 10-20 minutes [40]. New magnetic cycles have been used for BES-II operation in 2019.

LATTICE DESIGN

With reduced field errors and improved machine stability, smaller beta star values at interaction point 6 (IP6) for BES-II than those previously used for BES-I were implemented to increase the luminosity.

The beta functions at the cooling section, located in sector-1 and ~ 40-58 m from IP2, are required to be close to uniform in the range of 25 to 50 m for matching the transverse profiles of electron and Au beams.

To match the velocity of electron and Au beam for cooling, special lattices are needed for recombination monitoring [41–43] at beam energies of 3.85, 4.55 and 5.75 GeV/nucleon.

INJECTOR BEAM PARAMETERS

The required injector beam parameters, especially the longitudinal emittance and intensity, are limited/defined by the longitudinal acceptance of RHIC. The longitudinal acceptances of RHIC at various beam energies are listed in Table 3.

Beam studies were carried out in the injectors, mostly the AGS, to finalize beam parameters with the constraint of the RHIC longitudinal acceptance in mind. Injector beam parameters for BES-II operation were suggested [44] and will be further optimized for operations in 2020.

SUMMARY

This report summarized the challenges for BES-II operation planned in the years 2019-2020/21 at RHIC, and introduced the countermeasures to overcome these challenges. The new working point for alleviating the interplay of beam-beam and space charge effects, the new magnetic cycles for combating persistent current effects and smaller beta star values for smaller beam sizes at the collision point, have already improved luminosity at 9.8 and 7.3 GeV/nucleon and are expected to improve the luminosities at all other beam energies. At beam energies 9.8 and 7.3 GeV/nucleon, the luminosity goals will be achieved with these measures alone and without electron cooling being implemented. At the three lowest and most challenging beam energies (5.75, 4.55 and 3.85 GeV/nucleon), the 9 MHz cavities will be used for reducing space charge effects; and more critically, LEReC electron cooling is expected to be operational so that the luminosity goals can be achieved.

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