

# Observation of New Charmless Decays of Bottom Hadrons

T. Aaltonen,<sup>24</sup> J. Adelman,<sup>14</sup> T. Akimoto,<sup>56</sup> B. Álvarez González<sup>q</sup>,<sup>12</sup> S. Amerio<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> D. Amidei,<sup>35</sup> A. Anastassov,<sup>39</sup> A. Annovi,<sup>20</sup> J. Antos,<sup>15</sup> G. Apollinari,<sup>18</sup> A. Apresyan,<sup>49</sup> T. Arisawa,<sup>58</sup> A. Artikov,<sup>16</sup> W. Ashmanskas,<sup>18</sup> A. Attal,<sup>4</sup> A. Aurisano,<sup>54</sup> F. Azfar,<sup>43</sup> P. Azzurri<sup>z</sup>,<sup>47</sup> W. Badgett,<sup>18</sup> A. Barbaro-Galtieri,<sup>29</sup> V.E. Barnes,<sup>49</sup> B.A. Barnett,<sup>26</sup> V. Bartsch,<sup>31</sup> G. Bauer,<sup>33</sup> P.-H. Beauchemin,<sup>34</sup> F. Bedeschi,<sup>47</sup> D. Beecher,<sup>31</sup> S. Behari,<sup>26</sup> G. Bellettini<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> J. Bellinger,<sup>60</sup> D. Benjamin,<sup>17</sup> A. Beretvas,<sup>18</sup> J. Beringer,<sup>29</sup> A. Bhatti,<sup>51</sup> M. Binkley,<sup>18</sup> D. Bisello<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> I. Bizjak<sup>cc</sup>,<sup>31</sup> R.E. Blair,<sup>2</sup> C. Blocker,<sup>7</sup> B. Blumenfeld,<sup>26</sup> A. Bocci,<sup>17</sup> A. Bodek,<sup>50</sup> V. Boisvert,<sup>50</sup> G. Bolla,<sup>49</sup> D. Bortoletto,<sup>49</sup> J. Boudreau,<sup>48</sup> A. Boveia,<sup>11</sup> B. Brau<sup>a</sup>,<sup>11</sup> A. Bridgeman,<sup>25</sup> L. Brigliadori,<sup>44</sup> C. Bromberg,<sup>36</sup> E. Brubaker,<sup>14</sup> J. Budagov,<sup>16</sup> H.S. Budd,<sup>50</sup> S. Budd,<sup>25</sup> S. Burke,<sup>18</sup> K. Burkett,<sup>18</sup> G. Busetto<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> P. Bussey,<sup>22</sup> A. Buzatu,<sup>34</sup> K. L. Byrum,<sup>2</sup> S. Cabrera<sup>s</sup>,<sup>17</sup> C. Calancha,<sup>32</sup> M. Campanelli,<sup>36</sup> M. Campbell,<sup>35</sup> F. Canelli<sup>14</sup>,<sup>18</sup> A. Canepa,<sup>46</sup> B. Carls,<sup>25</sup> D. Carlsmith,<sup>60</sup> R. Carosi,<sup>47</sup> S. Carrillo<sup>l</sup>,<sup>19</sup> S. Carron,<sup>34</sup> B. Casal,<sup>12</sup> M. Casarsa,<sup>18</sup> A. Castro<sup>v</sup>,<sup>6</sup> P. Catastini<sup>y</sup>,<sup>47</sup> D. Cauz<sup>bb</sup>,<sup>55</sup> V. Cavaliere<sup>y</sup>,<sup>47</sup> M. Cavalli-Sforza,<sup>4</sup> A. Cerri,<sup>29</sup> L. Cerrito<sup>m</sup>,<sup>31</sup> S.H. Chang,<sup>28</sup> Y.C. Chen,<sup>1</sup> M. Chertok,<sup>8</sup> G. Chiarelli,<sup>47</sup> G. Chlachidze,<sup>18</sup> F. Chlebana,<sup>18</sup> K. Cho,<sup>28</sup> D. Chokheli,<sup>16</sup> J.P. Chou,<sup>23</sup> G. Choudalakis,<sup>33</sup> S.H. Chuang,<sup>53</sup> K. Chung,<sup>13</sup> W.H. Chung,<sup>60</sup> Y.S. Chung,<sup>50</sup> T. Chwalek,<sup>27</sup> C.I. Ciobanu,<sup>45</sup> M.A. Ciocci<sup>y</sup>,<sup>47</sup> A. Clark,<sup>21</sup> D. Clark,<sup>7</sup> G. Compostella,<sup>44</sup> M.E. Convery,<sup>18</sup> J. Conway,<sup>8</sup> M. Cordelli,<sup>20</sup> G. Cortiana<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> C.A. Cox,<sup>8</sup> D.J. Cox,<sup>8</sup> F. Crescioli<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> C. Cuenca Almenar<sup>s</sup>,<sup>8</sup> J. Cuevas<sup>q</sup>,<sup>12</sup> R. Culbertson,<sup>18</sup> J.C. Cully,<sup>35</sup> D. Dagenhart,<sup>18</sup> M. Datta,<sup>18</sup> T. Davies,<sup>22</sup> P. de Barbaro,<sup>50</sup> S. De Cecco,<sup>52</sup> A. Deisher,<sup>29</sup> G. De Lorenzo,<sup>4</sup> M. Dell'Orso<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> C. Deluca,<sup>4</sup> L. Demortier,<sup>51</sup> J. Deng,<sup>17</sup> M. Deninno,<sup>6</sup> P.F. Derwent,<sup>18</sup> G.P. di Giovanni,<sup>45</sup> C. Dionisi<sup>aa</sup>,<sup>52</sup> B. Di Ruzza<sup>bb</sup>,<sup>55</sup> J.R. Dittmann,<sup>5</sup> M. D'Onofrio,<sup>4</sup> S. Donati<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> P. Dong,<sup>9</sup> J. Donini,<sup>44</sup> T. Dorigo,<sup>44</sup> S. Dube,<sup>53</sup> J. Efron,<sup>40</sup> A. Elagin,<sup>54</sup> R. Erbacher,<sup>8</sup> D. Errede,<sup>25</sup> S. Errede,<sup>25</sup> R. Eusebi,<sup>18</sup> H.C. Fang,<sup>29</sup> S. Farrington,<sup>43</sup> W.T. Fedorko,<sup>14</sup> R.G. Feild,<sup>61</sup> M. Feindt,<sup>27</sup> J.P. Fernandez,<sup>32</sup> C. Ferrazza<sup>z</sup>,<sup>47</sup> R. Field,<sup>19</sup> G. Flanagan,<sup>49</sup> R. Forrest,<sup>8</sup> M.J. Frank,<sup>5</sup> M. Franklin,<sup>23</sup> J.C. Freeman,<sup>18</sup> I. Furic,<sup>19</sup> M. Gallinaro,<sup>52</sup> J. Galyardt,<sup>13</sup> F. Garberson,<sup>11</sup> J.E. Garcia,<sup>21</sup> A.F. Garfinkel,<sup>49</sup> K. Genser,<sup>18</sup> H. Gerberich,<sup>25</sup> D. Gerdes,<sup>35</sup> A. Gessler,<sup>27</sup> S. Giagu<sup>aa</sup>,<sup>52</sup> V. Giakoumopoulou,<sup>3</sup> P. Giannetti,<sup>47</sup> K. Gibson,<sup>48</sup> J.L. Gimmell,<sup>50</sup> C.M. Ginsburg,<sup>18</sup> N. Giokaris,<sup>3</sup> M. Giordani<sup>bb</sup>,<sup>55</sup> P. Giromini,<sup>20</sup> M. Giunta<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> G. Giurciu,<sup>26</sup> V. Glagolev,<sup>16</sup> D. Glenzinski,<sup>18</sup> M. Gold,<sup>38</sup> N. Goldschmidt,<sup>19</sup> A. Golossanov,<sup>18</sup> G. Gomez,<sup>12</sup> G. Gomez-Ceballos,<sup>33</sup> M. Goncharov,<sup>33</sup> O. González,<sup>32</sup> I. Gorelov,<sup>38</sup> A.T. Goshaw,<sup>17</sup> K. Goulianos,<sup>51</sup> A. Gresele<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> S. Grinstein,<sup>23</sup> C. Grosso-Pilcher,<sup>14</sup> R.C. Group,<sup>18</sup> U. Grundler,<sup>25</sup> J. Guimaraes da Costa,<sup>23</sup> Z. Gunay-Unalan,<sup>36</sup> C. Haber,<sup>29</sup> K. Hahn,<sup>33</sup> S.R. Hahn,<sup>18</sup> E. Halkiadakis,<sup>53</sup> B.-Y. Han,<sup>50</sup> J.Y. Han,<sup>50</sup> F. Happacher,<sup>20</sup> K. Hara,<sup>56</sup> D. Hare,<sup>53</sup> M. Hare,<sup>57</sup> S. Harper,<sup>43</sup> R.F. Harr,<sup>59</sup> R.M. Harris,<sup>18</sup> M. Hartz,<sup>48</sup> K. Hatakeyama,<sup>51</sup> C. Hays,<sup>43</sup> M. Heck,<sup>27</sup> A. Heijboer,<sup>46</sup> J. Heinrich,<sup>46</sup> C. Henderson,<sup>33</sup> M. Herndon,<sup>60</sup> J. Heuser,<sup>27</sup> S. Hewamanage,<sup>5</sup> D. Hidas,<sup>17</sup> C.S. Hill<sup>c</sup>,<sup>11</sup> D. Hirschbuehl,<sup>27</sup> A. Hocker,<sup>18</sup> S. Hou,<sup>1</sup> M. Houlden,<sup>30</sup> S.-C. Hsu,<sup>29</sup> B.T. Huffman,<sup>43</sup> R.E. Hughes,<sup>40</sup> U. Husemann,<sup>61</sup> M. Hussein,<sup>36</sup> J. Huston,<sup>36</sup> J. Incandela,<sup>11</sup> G. Introzzi,<sup>47</sup> M. Iori<sup>aa</sup>,<sup>52</sup> A. Ivanov,<sup>8</sup> E. James,<sup>18</sup> D. Jang,<sup>13</sup> B. Jayatilaka,<sup>17</sup> E.J. Jeon,<sup>28</sup> M.K. Jha,<sup>6</sup> S. Jindariani,<sup>18</sup> W. Johnson,<sup>8</sup> M. Jones,<sup>49</sup> K.K. Joo,<sup>28</sup> S.Y. Jun,<sup>13</sup> J.E. Jung,<sup>28</sup> T.R. Junk,<sup>18</sup> T. Kamon,<sup>54</sup> D. Kar,<sup>19</sup> P.E. Karchin,<sup>59</sup> Y. Kato,<sup>42</sup> R. Kephart,<sup>18</sup> J. Keung,<sup>46</sup> V. Khotilovich,<sup>54</sup> B. Kilminster,<sup>18</sup> D.H. Kim,<sup>28</sup> H.S. Kim,<sup>28</sup> H.W. Kim,<sup>28</sup> J.E. Kim,<sup>28</sup> M.J. Kim,<sup>20</sup> S.B. Kim,<sup>28</sup> S.H. Kim,<sup>56</sup> Y.K. Kim,<sup>14</sup> N. Kimura,<sup>56</sup> L. Kirsch,<sup>7</sup> S. Klimenko,<sup>19</sup> B. Knuteson,<sup>33</sup> B.R. Ko,<sup>17</sup> K. Kondo,<sup>58</sup> D.J. Kong,<sup>28</sup> J. Konigsberg,<sup>19</sup> A. Korytov,<sup>19</sup> A.V. Kotwal,<sup>17</sup> M. Kreps,<sup>27</sup> J. Kroll,<sup>46</sup> D. Krop,<sup>14</sup> N. Krumnack,<sup>5</sup> M. Kruse,<sup>17</sup> V. Krutelyov,<sup>11</sup> T. Kubo,<sup>56</sup> T. Kuhr,<sup>27</sup> N.P. Kulkarni,<sup>59</sup> M. Kurata,<sup>56</sup> S. Kwang,<sup>14</sup> A.T. Laasanen,<sup>49</sup> S. Lami,<sup>47</sup> S. Lammel,<sup>18</sup> M. Lancaster,<sup>31</sup> R.L. Lander,<sup>8</sup> K. Lannon<sup>p</sup>,<sup>40</sup> A. Lath,<sup>53</sup> G. Latino<sup>y</sup>,<sup>47</sup> I. Lazzizzera<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> T. LeCompte,<sup>2</sup> E. Lee,<sup>54</sup> H.S. Lee,<sup>14</sup> S.W. Lee<sup>r</sup>,<sup>54</sup> S. Leone,<sup>47</sup> J.D. Lewis,<sup>18</sup> C.-S. Lin,<sup>29</sup> J. Linacre,<sup>43</sup> M. Lindgren,<sup>18</sup> E. Lipeles,<sup>46</sup> A. Lister,<sup>8</sup> D.O. Litvintsev,<sup>18</sup> C. Liu,<sup>48</sup> T. Liu,<sup>18</sup> N.S. Lockyer,<sup>46</sup> A. Loginov,<sup>61</sup> M. Loreti<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> L. Lovas,<sup>15</sup> D. Lucchesi<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> C. Luci<sup>aa</sup>,<sup>52</sup> J. Lueck,<sup>27</sup> P. Lujan,<sup>29</sup> P. Lukens,<sup>18</sup> G. Lungu,<sup>51</sup> L. Lyons,<sup>43</sup> J. Lys,<sup>29</sup> R. Lysak,<sup>15</sup> D. MacQueen,<sup>34</sup> R. Madrak,<sup>18</sup> K. Maeshima,<sup>18</sup> K. Makhoul,<sup>33</sup> T. Maki,<sup>24</sup> P. Maksimovic,<sup>26</sup> S. Malde,<sup>43</sup> S. Malik,<sup>31</sup> G. Manca<sup>e</sup>,<sup>30</sup> A. Manousakis-Katsikakis,<sup>3</sup> F. Margaroli,<sup>49</sup> C. Marino,<sup>27</sup> C.P. Marino,<sup>25</sup> A. Martin,<sup>61</sup> V. Martin<sup>k</sup>,<sup>22</sup> M. Martínez,<sup>4</sup> R. Martínez-Ballarín,<sup>32</sup> T. Maruyama,<sup>56</sup> P. Mastrandrea,<sup>52</sup> T. Masubuchi,<sup>56</sup> M. Mathis,<sup>26</sup> M.E. Mattson,<sup>59</sup> P. Mazzanti,<sup>6</sup> K.S. McFarland,<sup>50</sup> P. McIntyre,<sup>54</sup> R. McNulty<sup>j</sup>,<sup>30</sup> A. Mehta,<sup>30</sup> P. Mehtala,<sup>24</sup> A. Menzione,<sup>47</sup> P. Merkel,<sup>49</sup> C. Mesropian,<sup>51</sup> T. Miao,<sup>18</sup> N. Miladinovic,<sup>7</sup> R. Miller,<sup>36</sup> C. Mills,<sup>23</sup> M. Milnik,<sup>27</sup> A. Mitra,<sup>1</sup> G. Mitselmakher,<sup>19</sup> H. Miyake,<sup>56</sup> N. Moggi,<sup>6</sup> C.S. Moon,<sup>28</sup> R. Moore,<sup>18</sup> M.J. Morello<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> J. Morlock,<sup>27</sup> P. Movilla Fernandez,<sup>18</sup> J. Mülmenstädt,<sup>29</sup> A. Mukherjee,<sup>18</sup> Th. Muller,<sup>27</sup> R. Mumford,<sup>26</sup> P. Murat,<sup>18</sup> M. Mussini<sup>v</sup>,<sup>6</sup> J. Nachtman,<sup>18</sup> Y. Nagai,<sup>56</sup> A. Nagano,<sup>56</sup> J. Naganoma,<sup>56</sup> K. Nakamura,<sup>56</sup> I. Nakano,<sup>41</sup> A. Napier,<sup>57</sup> V. Necula,<sup>17</sup>

J. Nett,<sup>60</sup> C. Neu<sup>t</sup>,<sup>46</sup> M.S. Neubauer,<sup>25</sup> S. Neubauer,<sup>27</sup> J. Nielsen<sup>g</sup>,<sup>29</sup> L. Nodulman,<sup>2</sup> M. Norman,<sup>10</sup> O. Norniella,<sup>25</sup> E. Nurse,<sup>31</sup> L. Oakes,<sup>43</sup> S.H. Oh,<sup>17</sup> Y.D. Oh,<sup>28</sup> I. Oksuzian,<sup>19</sup> T. Okusawa,<sup>42</sup> R. Orava,<sup>24</sup> K. Osterberg,<sup>24</sup> S. Pagan Griso<sup>w</sup>,<sup>44</sup> E. Palencia,<sup>18</sup> V. Papadimitriou,<sup>18</sup> A. Papaikonomou,<sup>27</sup> A.A. Paramonov,<sup>14</sup> B. Parks,<sup>40</sup> S. Pashapour,<sup>34</sup> J. Patrick,<sup>18</sup> G. Pauletta<sup>bb</sup>,<sup>55</sup> M. Paulini,<sup>13</sup> C. Paus,<sup>33</sup> T. Peiffer,<sup>27</sup> D.E. Pellett,<sup>8</sup> A. Penzo,<sup>55</sup> T.J. Phillips,<sup>17</sup> G. Piacentino,<sup>47</sup> E. Pianori,<sup>46</sup> L. Pinera,<sup>19</sup> K. Pitts,<sup>25</sup> C. Plager,<sup>9</sup> L. Pondrom,<sup>60</sup> O. Poukhov<sup>\*</sup>,<sup>16</sup> N. Pounder,<sup>43</sup> F. Prakoshyn,<sup>16</sup> A. Pronko,<sup>18</sup> J. Proudfoot,<sup>2</sup> F. Ptohos<sup>i</sup>,<sup>18</sup> E. Pueschel,<sup>13</sup> G. Punzi<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> J. Pursley,<sup>60</sup> J. Rademacker<sup>c</sup>,<sup>43</sup> A. Rahaman,<sup>48</sup> V. Ramakrishnan,<sup>60</sup> N. Ranjan,<sup>49</sup> I. Redondo,<sup>32</sup> P. Renton,<sup>43</sup> M. Renz,<sup>27</sup> M. Rescigno,<sup>52</sup> S. Richter,<sup>27</sup> F. Rimondi<sup>v</sup>,<sup>6</sup> L. Ristori,<sup>47</sup> A. Robson,<sup>22</sup> T. Rodrigo,<sup>12</sup> T. Rodriguez,<sup>46</sup> E. Rogers,<sup>25</sup> S. Rolli,<sup>57</sup> R. Roser,<sup>18</sup> M. Rossi,<sup>55</sup> R. Rossin,<sup>11</sup> P. Roy,<sup>34</sup> A. Ruiz,<sup>12</sup> J. Russ,<sup>13</sup> V. Rusu,<sup>18</sup> H. Saarikko,<sup>24</sup> A. Safonov,<sup>54</sup> W.K. Sakumoto,<sup>50</sup> O. Saltó,<sup>4</sup> L. Santi<sup>bb</sup>,<sup>55</sup> S. Sarkar<sup>aa</sup>,<sup>52</sup> L. Sartori,<sup>47</sup> K. Sato,<sup>18</sup> A. Savoy-Navarro,<sup>45</sup> P. Schlabach,<sup>18</sup> A. Schmidt,<sup>27</sup> E.E. Schmidt,<sup>18</sup> M.A. Schmidt,<sup>14</sup> M.P. Schmidt<sup>\*</sup>,<sup>61</sup> M. Schmitt,<sup>39</sup> T. Schwarz,<sup>8</sup> L. Scodellaro,<sup>12</sup> A. Scribano<sup>y</sup>,<sup>47</sup> F. Scuri,<sup>47</sup> A. Sedov,<sup>49</sup> S. Seidel,<sup>38</sup> Y. Seiya,<sup>42</sup> A. Semenov,<sup>16</sup> L. Sexton-Kennedy,<sup>18</sup> F. Sforza,<sup>47</sup> A. Sfyrila,<sup>25</sup> S.Z. Shalhout,<sup>59</sup> T. Shears,<sup>30</sup> P.F. Shepard,<sup>48</sup> M. Shimojima<sup>o</sup>,<sup>56</sup> S. Shiraishi,<sup>14</sup> M. Shochet,<sup>14</sup> Y. Shon,<sup>60</sup> I. Shreyber,<sup>37</sup> A. Sidoti,<sup>47</sup> P. Sinervo,<sup>34</sup> A. Sisakyan,<sup>16</sup> A.J. Slaughter,<sup>18</sup> J. Slaunwhite,<sup>40</sup> K. Sliwa,<sup>57</sup> J.R. Smith,<sup>8</sup> F.D. Snider,<sup>18</sup> R. Snihur,<sup>34</sup> A. Soha,<sup>8</sup> S. Somalwar,<sup>53</sup> V. Sorin,<sup>36</sup> J. Spalding,<sup>18</sup> T. Spreitzer,<sup>34</sup> P. Squillacioti<sup>y</sup>,<sup>47</sup> M. Stanitzki,<sup>61</sup> R. St. Denis,<sup>22</sup> B. Stelzer,<sup>34</sup> O. Stelzer-Chilton,<sup>34</sup> D. Stentz,<sup>39</sup> J. Strologas,<sup>38</sup> G.L. Strycker,<sup>35</sup> D. Stuart,<sup>11</sup> J.S. Suh,<sup>28</sup> A. Sukhanov,<sup>19</sup> I. Suslov,<sup>16</sup> T. Suzuki,<sup>56</sup> A. Taffard<sup>f</sup>,<sup>25</sup> R. Takashima,<sup>41</sup> Y. Takeuchi,<sup>56</sup> R. Tanaka,<sup>41</sup> M. Tecchio,<sup>35</sup> P.K. Teng,<sup>1</sup> K. Terashi,<sup>51</sup> R. Tesarek,<sup>18</sup> J. Thom<sup>h</sup>,<sup>18</sup> A.S. Thompson,<sup>22</sup> G.A. Thompson,<sup>25</sup> E. Thomson,<sup>46</sup> P. Tipton,<sup>61</sup> P. Ttito-Guzmán,<sup>32</sup> S. Tkaczyk,<sup>18</sup> D. Toback,<sup>54</sup> S. Tokar,<sup>15</sup> K. Tollefson,<sup>36</sup> T. Tomura,<sup>56</sup> D. Tonelli,<sup>18</sup> S. Torre,<sup>20</sup> D. Torretta,<sup>18</sup> P. Totaro<sup>bb</sup>,<sup>55</sup> S. Tourneur,<sup>45</sup> M. Trovato,<sup>47</sup> S.-Y. Tsai,<sup>1</sup> Y. Tu,<sup>46</sup> N. Turini<sup>y</sup>,<sup>47</sup> F. Ukegawa,<sup>56</sup> S. Vallecorsa,<sup>21</sup> N. van Remortel<sup>b</sup>,<sup>24</sup> A. Varganov,<sup>35</sup> E. Vataga<sup>z</sup>,<sup>47</sup> F. Vázquez<sup>l</sup>,<sup>19</sup> G. Velev,<sup>18</sup> C. Vellidis,<sup>3</sup> M. Vidal,<sup>32</sup> R. Vidal,<sup>18</sup> I. Vila,<sup>12</sup> R. Vilar,<sup>12</sup> T. Vine,<sup>31</sup> M. Vogel,<sup>38</sup> I. Volobouev<sup>r</sup>,<sup>29</sup> G. Volpi<sup>x</sup>,<sup>47</sup> P. Wagner,<sup>46</sup> R.G. Wagner,<sup>2</sup> R.L. Wagner,<sup>18</sup> W. Wagner<sup>u</sup>,<sup>27</sup> J. Wagner-Kuhr,<sup>27</sup> T. Wakisaka,<sup>42</sup> R. Wallny,<sup>9</sup> S.M. Wang,<sup>1</sup> A. Warburton,<sup>34</sup> D. Waters,<sup>31</sup> M. Weinberger,<sup>54</sup> J. Weinelt,<sup>27</sup> W.C. Wester III,<sup>18</sup> B. Whitehouse,<sup>57</sup> D. Whiteson<sup>f</sup>,<sup>46</sup> A.B. Wicklund,<sup>2</sup> E. Wicklund,<sup>18</sup> S. Wilbur,<sup>14</sup> G. Williams,<sup>34</sup> H.H. Williams,<sup>46</sup> P. Wilson,<sup>18</sup> B.L. Winer,<sup>40</sup> P. Wittich<sup>h</sup>,<sup>18</sup> S. Wolbers,<sup>18</sup> C. Wolfe,<sup>14</sup> T. Wright,<sup>35</sup> X. Wu,<sup>21</sup> F. Würthwein,<sup>10</sup> S. Xie,<sup>33</sup> A. Yagil,<sup>10</sup> K. Yamamoto,<sup>42</sup> J. Yamaoka,<sup>17</sup> U.K. Yang<sup>n</sup>,<sup>14</sup> Y.C. Yang,<sup>28</sup> W.M. Yao,<sup>29</sup> G.P. Yeh,<sup>18</sup> J. Yoh,<sup>18</sup> K. Yorita,<sup>58</sup> T. Yoshida,<sup>42</sup> G.B. Yu,<sup>50</sup> I. Yu,<sup>28</sup> S.S. Yu,<sup>18</sup> J.C. Yun,<sup>18</sup> L. Zanello<sup>aa</sup>,<sup>52</sup> A. Zanetti,<sup>55</sup> X. Zhang,<sup>25</sup> Y. Zheng<sup>d</sup>,<sup>9</sup> and S. Zucchelli<sup>v</sup>,<sup>6</sup>

(CDF Collaboration<sup>†</sup>)

<sup>1</sup>*Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan 11529, Republic of China*

<sup>2</sup>*Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, Illinois 60439*

<sup>3</sup>*University of Athens, 157 71 Athens, Greece*

<sup>4</sup>*Institut de Fisica d'Altes Energies, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, E-08193, Bellaterra (Barcelona), Spain*

<sup>5</sup>*Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798*

<sup>6</sup>*Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare Bologna, <sup>v</sup>University of Bologna, I-40127 Bologna, Italy*

<sup>7</sup>*Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts 02254*

<sup>8</sup>*University of California, Davis, Davis, California 95616*

<sup>9</sup>*University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California 90024*

<sup>10</sup>*University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, California 92093*

<sup>11</sup>*University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California 93106*

<sup>12</sup>*Instituto de Fisica de Cantabria, CSIC-University of Cantabria, 39005 Santander, Spain*

<sup>13</sup>*Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA 15213*

<sup>14</sup>*Enrico Fermi Institute, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois 60637*

<sup>15</sup>*Comenius University, 842 48 Bratislava, Slovakia; Institute of Experimental Physics, 040 01 Kosice, Slovakia*

<sup>16</sup>*Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, RU-141980 Dubna, Russia*

<sup>17</sup>*Duke University, Durham, North Carolina 27708*

<sup>18</sup>*Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, Illinois 60510*

<sup>19</sup>*University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611*

<sup>20</sup>*Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, I-00044 Frascati, Italy*

<sup>21</sup>*University of Geneva, CH-1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland*

<sup>22</sup>*Glasgow University, Glasgow G12 8QQ, United Kingdom*

<sup>23</sup>*Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138*

<sup>24</sup>*Division of High Energy Physics, Department of Physics,*

*University of Helsinki and Helsinki Institute of Physics, FIN-00014, Helsinki, Finland*

<sup>25</sup>*University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois 61801*

- <sup>26</sup>The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland 21218
- <sup>27</sup>Institut für Experimentelle Kernphysik, Universität Karlsruhe, 76128 Karlsruhe, Germany
- <sup>28</sup>Center for High Energy Physics: Kyungpook National University, Daegu 702-701, Korea; Seoul National University, Seoul 151-742, Korea; Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon 440-746, Korea; Korea Institute of Science and Technology Information, Daejeon, 305-806, Korea; Chonnam National University, Gwangju, 500-757, Korea
- <sup>29</sup>Ernest Orlando Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley, California 94720
- <sup>30</sup>University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 7ZE, United Kingdom
- <sup>31</sup>University College London, London WC1E 6BT, United Kingdom
- <sup>32</sup>Centro de Investigaciones Energeticas Medioambientales y Tecnologicas, E-28040 Madrid, Spain
- <sup>33</sup>Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
- <sup>34</sup>Institute of Particle Physics: McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3A 2T8; Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada V5A 1S6; University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A7; and TRIUMF, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6T 2A3
- <sup>35</sup>University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109
- <sup>36</sup>Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824
- <sup>37</sup>Institution for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, ITEP, Moscow 117259, Russia
- <sup>38</sup>University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131
- <sup>39</sup>Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois 60208
- <sup>40</sup>The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210
- <sup>41</sup>Okayama University, Okayama 700-8530, Japan
- <sup>42</sup>Osaka City University, Osaka 588, Japan
- <sup>43</sup>University of Oxford, Oxford OX1 3RH, United Kingdom
- <sup>44</sup>Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Sezione di Padova-Trento, <sup>w</sup>University of Padova, I-35131 Padova, Italy
- <sup>45</sup>LPNHE, Universite Pierre et Marie Curie/IN2P3-CNRS, UMR7585, Paris, F-75252 France
- <sup>46</sup>University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104
- <sup>47</sup>Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare Pisa, <sup>x</sup>University of Pisa, <sup>y</sup>University of Siena and <sup>z</sup>Scuola Normale Superiore, I-56127 Pisa, Italy
- <sup>48</sup>University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260
- <sup>49</sup>Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907
- <sup>50</sup>University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627
- <sup>51</sup>The Rockefeller University, New York, New York 10021
- <sup>52</sup>Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Sezione di Roma 1, <sup>aa</sup>Sapienza Università di Roma, I-00185 Roma, Italy
- <sup>53</sup>Rutgers University, Piscataway, New Jersey 08855
- <sup>54</sup>Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843
- <sup>55</sup>Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare Trieste/Udine, I-34100 Trieste, <sup>bb</sup>University of Trieste/Udine, I-33100 Udine, Italy
- <sup>56</sup>University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305, Japan
- <sup>57</sup>Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts 02155
- <sup>58</sup>Waseda University, Tokyo 169, Japan
- <sup>59</sup>Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan 48201
- <sup>60</sup>University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706
- <sup>61</sup>Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut 06520
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We search for new charmless decays of neutral  $b$ -hadrons to pairs of charged hadrons with the upgraded Collider Detector at the Fermilab Tevatron. Using a data sample corresponding to  $1 \text{ fb}^{-1}$  of integrated luminosity, we report the first observation of the  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$  decay, with a significance of  $8.2\sigma$ , and measure  $\mathcal{B}(B_s^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+) = (5.0 \pm 0.7 \text{ (stat)} \pm 0.8 \text{ (syst)}) \times 10^{-6}$ . We also report the first observation of charmless  $b$ -baryon decays in the channels  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-$  and  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-$  with significances of  $6.0\sigma$  and  $11.5\sigma$  respectively, and we measure  $\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-) = (3.5 \pm 0.6 \text{ (stat)} \pm 0.9 \text{ (syst)}) \times 10^{-6}$  and  $\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-) = (5.6 \pm 0.8 \text{ (stat)} \pm 1.5 \text{ (syst)}) \times 10^{-6}$ . No evidence is found for the decays  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+ K^-$  and  $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-$ , and we set an improved upper limit  $\mathcal{B}(B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-) < 1.2 \times 10^{-6}$  at the 90% confidence level. All quoted branching fractions are measured using  $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+ \pi^-)$  as a reference.

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†With visitors from <sup>a</sup>University of Massachusetts Amherst,

Two-body non-leptonic charmless decays of  $b$ -hadrons are among the most widely studied processes in flavor physics. The variety of open channels involving similar final states provides crucial experimental information to improve the accuracy of effective models of strong interaction dynamics. The quark-level transition  $b \rightarrow u$  makes decay amplitudes sensitive to  $\gamma$ , the least known angle of the quark-mixing (Cabibbo-Kobayashi-Maskawa, CKM) matrix. Significant contributions from higher-order ('penguin') transitions provide sensitivity to the possible presence of new physics in internal loops, if the observed decay rates are inconsistent with expectations.

Rich experimental data are currently available for  $B^+$  and  $B^0$  mesons, produced in large quantities in  $\Upsilon(4S)$  decays [1], while much less is experimentally known about the charmless decay modes of the  $B_s^0$ , which are expected to exhibit an equally rich phenomenology. Information from  $B_s^0$  decays is needed to better constrain the phenomenological models of hadronic amplitudes in heavy flavor decays. This would lead to increased precision in comparing data to predictions, allowing extraction of CKM parameters from non-tree-level amplitudes [2] and greater sensitivity to new physics contributions.

Of the possible  $B_s^0$  decay modes into pairs of charmless pseudoscalar mesons, only the  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^+K^-$  has been observed to date [3]. The  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$  is of particular interest, because its branching fraction is sensitive to the CKM angle  $\gamma$  [4] and the current experimental bound [3] is lower than most predictions [5, 6, 7].

A measurement of the branching fraction of the  $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-$  mode, along with the  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+K^-$  mode, would allow a determination of the strength of penguin-annihilation amplitudes [8], which is currently poorly known and a source of significant uncertainty in many calculations [6]. The present search is sensitive to both modes. Two-body charmless decays are also expected

from bottom baryons. The modes  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-$  and  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-$  are predicted to have measurable branching fractions, of order  $10^{-6}$  [9], and, in addition to the interest in their observation, must be considered as a possible background to the rare  $B_s^0$  and  $B^0$  modes being investigated.

In this Letter we report the results of a search for rare decays of neutral bottom hadrons into a pair of charged charmless hadrons ( $p$ ,  $K$  or  $\pi$ ), performed in  $1 \text{ fb}^{-1}$  of  $\bar{p}p$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s} = 1.96 \text{ TeV}$ , collected by the upgraded Collider Detector (CDF II) at the Fermilab Tevatron. We report the first observation of modes  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$ ,  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-$ , and  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-$ , and measure their relative branching fractions [10].

CDF II is a multipurpose magnetic spectrometer surrounded by calorimeters and muon detectors. The detector components relevant for this analysis are briefly outlined below; a more detailed description can be found in Ref. [11]. A silicon microstrip vertex detector (SVX) and a cylindrical drift chamber (COT) immersed in a 1.4 T axial magnetic field allow reconstruction of charged-particle trajectories (tracks) in the pseudorapidity range  $|\eta| < 1.0$  [12]. The SVX consists of six concentric layers of double-sided silicon sensors with radii between 2.5 and 22 cm, each providing a measurement with up to 15 (70)  $\mu\text{m}$  resolution in the  $\phi$  ( $z$ ) direction. The COT has 96 measurement layers, between 40 and 137 cm in radius, organized into alternating axial and  $\pm 2^\circ$  stereo superlayers. The transverse momentum resolution is  $\sigma_{p_T}/p_T^2 \sim 0.15\% / (\text{GeV}/c)$ , corresponding to a typical mass resolution of  $22 \text{ MeV}/c^2$  for our signals. The specific ionization energy loss ( $dE/dx$ ) of charged particles in the COT can be measured from the collected charge, which is logarithmically encoded in the output pulse width of each wire, and provides  $1.5\sigma$  separation between kaons and pions with momenta greater than  $2 \text{ GeV}/c$ .

The data were collected by a three-level trigger system, using a set of requirements specifically aimed at selecting two-pronged  $B$  decays. At level 1, COT tracks are reconstructed in the transverse plane by a hardware processor (XFT) [13]. Two opposite-charge particles are required, with reconstructed transverse momenta  $p_{T1}, p_{T2} > 2 \text{ GeV}/c$ , the scalar sum  $p_{T1} + p_{T2} > 5.5 \text{ GeV}/c$ , and an azimuthal opening-angle  $\Delta\phi < 135^\circ$ . At level 2, the silicon vertex trigger (SVT) [14] combines XFT tracks with SVX hits to measure the impact parameter  $d$  (distance of closest approach to the beam line) of each track with  $45 \mu\text{m}$  resolution. The requirement of two tracks with  $0.1 < d < 1.0 \text{ mm}$  reduces the light quark background by two orders of magnitude while preserving about half of the signal. A tighter opening-angle requirement,  $20^\circ < \Delta\phi < 135^\circ$ , preferentially selects two-body  $B$  decays over multi-body decays with 97% efficiency and further reduces background. Each track pair is then used to form a  $B$  candidate, which is required to have an impact parameter  $d_B < 140 \mu\text{m}$  and to have travelled a dis-

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Amherst, Massachusetts 01003, <sup>b</sup>Universiteit Antwerpen, B-2610 Antwerp, Belgium, <sup>c</sup>University of Bristol, Bristol BS8 1TL, United Kingdom, <sup>d</sup>Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100864, China, <sup>e</sup>Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Sezione di Cagliari, 09042 Monserrato (Cagliari), Italy, <sup>f</sup>University of California Irvine, Irvine, CA 92697, <sup>g</sup>University of California Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, <sup>h</sup>Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, <sup>i</sup>University of Cyprus, Nicosia CY-1678, Cyprus, <sup>j</sup>University College Dublin, Dublin 4, Ireland, <sup>k</sup>University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH9 3JZ, United Kingdom, <sup>l</sup>Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico D.F., Mexico, <sup>m</sup>Queen Mary, University of London, London, E1 4NS, England, <sup>n</sup>University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, England, <sup>o</sup>Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science, Nagasaki, Japan, <sup>p</sup>University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556, <sup>q</sup>University de Oviedo, E-33007 Oviedo, Spain, <sup>r</sup>Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409, <sup>s</sup>IFIC(CSIC-Universitat de Valencia), 46071 Valencia, Spain, <sup>t</sup>University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22904, <sup>u</sup>Bergische Universität Wuppertal, 42097 Wuppertal, Germany, <sup>cc</sup>On leave from J. Stefan Institute, Ljubljana, Slovenia,

tance  $L_T > 200 \mu\text{m}$  in the transverse plane. At level 3, an array of computers confirms the selection with a full event reconstruction. The overall acceptance of the trigger selection is  $\approx 2\%$  for  $b$ -hadrons with  $p_T > 4 \text{ GeV}/c$  and  $|\eta| < 1$ .

The offline selection is based on a more accurate determination of the same quantities used in the trigger, with the addition of two further observables: the isolation ( $I_B$ ) of the  $B$  candidate [15], and the quality of the three-dimensional fit ( $\chi^2$  with 1 d.o.f.) of the decay vertex of the  $B$  candidate. Requiring a large value of  $I_B$  reduces the background from light-quark jets, and a low  $\chi^2$  reduces the background from decays of different long-lived particles within the event, owing to the good resolution of the SVX detector in the  $z$  direction. The selection is optimized for detection of the  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$  mode. Maximal sensitivity for both discovery and limit setting is achieved with a single choice of selection requirements [16] by minimizing the variance of the estimate of the branching fraction in the absence of signal [17]. The variance is evaluated by performing the full measurement procedure on simulated samples containing background and all signals from the known modes, but no  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$  signal. The background fraction for each selection is determined from data by extrapolating the mass sidebands of the signal, and the signal yield is predicted by a detailed detector simulation. This procedure yields the final selection:  $I_B > 0.525$ ,  $\chi^2 < 5$ ,  $d > 120 \mu\text{m}$ ,  $d_B < 60 \mu\text{m}$ , and  $L_T > 350 \mu\text{m}$ .

No more than one  $B$  candidate per event is found after this selection, and a mass ( $m_{\pi\pi}$ ) is assigned to each, using a charged pion mass assignment for both decay products. The resulting mass distribution is shown in Fig. 1. A large peak is visible, dominated by the overlapping contributions of the  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+ \pi^-$ ,  $B^0 \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-$ , and  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^+ K^-$  modes [3]. A  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+ K^-$  signal would appear as an enhancement around  $5.18 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ , while signals for the other modes of this search are expected at masses higher than the main peak ( $5.33$ – $5.55 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ ). Backgrounds include mis-reconstructed multi-body  $b$ -hadron decays (physics background) and random pairs of charged particles (combinatorial background).

We used an unbinned likelihood fit, incorporating kinematic (kin) and particle identification (PID) information, to determine the fraction of each individual mode in our sample. The likelihood for the  $i$ th event is

$$\mathcal{L}_i = (1-b) \sum_j f_j \mathcal{L}_j^{\text{kin}} \mathcal{L}_j^{\text{PID}} + b (f_p \mathcal{L}_p^{\text{kin}} \mathcal{L}_p^{\text{PID}} + (1-f_p) \mathcal{L}_c^{\text{kin}} \mathcal{L}_c^{\text{PID}}), \quad (1)$$

where the index  $j$  runs over all signal modes, and the index ‘p’ (‘c’) labels the physics (combinatorial) background terms. The  $f_j$  are the signal fractions to be determined by the fit, together with the background fraction parameters  $b$  and  $f_p$ .

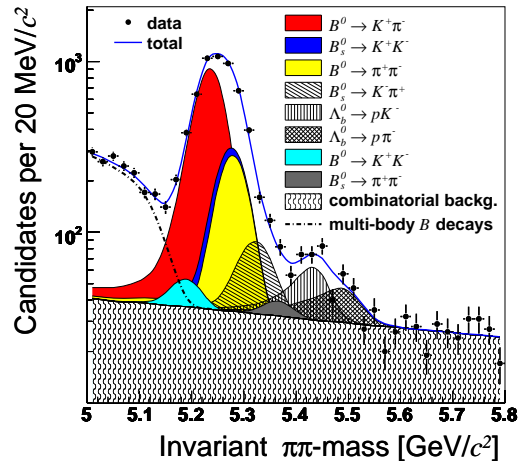


FIG. 1: Mass distribution of reconstructed candidates. The charged pion mass is assigned to both tracks. The total projection and projections of each signal and background component of the likelihood fit are overlaid on the data distribution. Signals and multi-body  $B$  background components are shown stacked on the combinatorial background component.

The kinematic information is summarized by three loosely correlated observables: (a) the mass  $m_{\pi\pi}$ ; (b) the signed momentum imbalance  $\alpha = (1 - p_1/p_2)q_1$ , where  $p_1$  ( $p_2$ ) is the lower (higher) of the particle momenta, and  $q_1$  is the sign of the charge of the particle of momentum  $p_1$ ; (c) the scalar sum of particle momenta  $p_{tot} = p_1 + p_2$ . The above variables allow evaluation of the invariant mass  $m_{12}$  of a candidate for any mass assignment of the decay products ( $m_1, m_2$ ), using the equation

$$-2\sqrt{p_1^2 + m_\pi^2} \sqrt{p_2^2 + m_\pi^2} + 2\sqrt{p_1^2 + m_1^2} \sqrt{p_2^2 + m_2^2}, \quad (2)$$

where  $p_1 = \frac{1-|\alpha|}{2-|\alpha|} p_{tot}$ ,  $p_2 = \frac{1+|\alpha|}{2-|\alpha|} p_{tot}$ .

We used the mass sidebands in data ( $m_{\pi\pi} \in [5.00, 5.12] \cup [5.6, 6.2] \text{ GeV}/c^2$ ) to obtain the kinematic distributions of backgrounds [17]. The mass distribution of the combinatorial background is parameterized by an exponential function, while the physics background is modeled by an ARGUS function [18] convoluted with a Gaussian resolution function. In order to ensure the reliability of the search for small signals in the vicinity of larger peaks, the shapes of the mass distributions assigned to each signal have been modeled in detail. We have included the momentum dependence and non-Gaussian tails of resolution from a full simulation of the detector, and the effects of soft photon radiation in the final state, based on recent QED calculations [19]. This resolution model was checked against the observed shape of the  $D^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$  signal in a sample of  $1.5 \times 10^6$   $D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0 \pi^+$  decays, collected with a similar trigger selection. The observed discrepancies are below the  $10^{-3}$

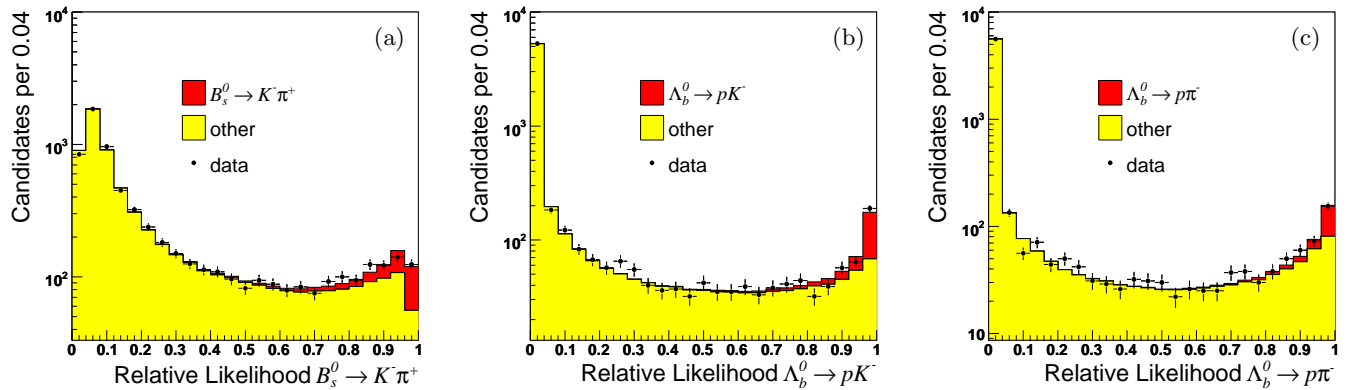


FIG. 2: Distribution of the relative signal likelihood,  $\mathcal{L}_S/(\mathcal{L}_S + \mathcal{L}_{\text{other}})$ , in the region  $5.1 < m_{\pi\pi} < 5.6 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ . For each event,  $\mathcal{L}_S$  is the likelihood for the  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$  (a),  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p K^-$  (b), or  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p \pi^-$  (c) signal hypotheses, and  $\mathcal{L}_{\text{other}}$  is the likelihood for everything but the chosen signal, i.e. the weighted combination of all other components according to their measured fractions. Points with error bars show the distributions of data and histograms show the distributions predicted from the measured fractions.

level, and their effect on the present measurement is negligible in comparison with other systematic uncertainties. The  $D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0 \pi^+$  sample was also used to calibrate the  $dE/dx$  response of the drift chamber to kaons and pions, using the charge of the  $D^{*+}$  pion to identify the  $D^0$  decay products. The  $dE/dx$  response of protons was determined from a sample of about 124,000  $\Lambda^0 \rightarrow p \pi^-$  decays. The model of the background allows for pion, kaon, proton, and electron components, whose fractions are determined by the fit. Muons are indistinguishable from pions with the available 10% fractional  $dE/dx$  resolution and are therefore incorporated into the pion component.

From the signal fractions returned by the likelihood fit we calculate the signal yields shown in Table I. The significance of each signal is evaluated as the ratio of the yield observed in data, and its total uncertainty (statistical and systematic) as determined from a simulation where the size of that signal is set to zero. This evaluation assumes a Gaussian distribution of yield estimates, supported by the results obtained from repeated fits to simulated samples. This procedure yields a more accurate measure of significance with respect to the purely statistical estimate obtained from  $\sqrt{-2\Delta\ln(\mathcal{L})}$ . We obtain significant signals for the  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$  mode ( $8.2\sigma$ ), and for the  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p \pi^-$  ( $6.0\sigma$ ) and  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p K^-$  ( $11.5\sigma$ ) modes. Figure 2 shows relative likelihood distributions for these modes. No evidence is found for the modes  $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-$  or  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+ K^-$ , in agreement with expectations of significantly smaller branching fractions.

To avoid large uncertainties associated with production cross sections and absolute reconstruction efficiency, we measure all branching fractions relative to the  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+ \pi^-$  mode. Frequentist upper limits [22] at the 90% C.L. are quoted for the unseen modes. For the measurement of  $\Lambda_b^0$  branching fractions, the additional re-

TABLE I: Yields and significances of rare mode signals. The first quoted uncertainty is statistical, the second is systematic.

| Mode                              | $N_s$               | Significance |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$     | $230 \pm 34 \pm 16$ | $8.2\sigma$  |
| $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-$   | $26 \pm 16 \pm 14$  | $< 3\sigma$  |
| $B^0 \rightarrow K^+ K^-$         | $61 \pm 25 \pm 35$  | $< 3\sigma$  |
| $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p K^-$   | $156 \pm 20 \pm 11$ | $11.5\sigma$ |
| $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p \pi^-$ | $110 \pm 18 \pm 16$ | $6.0\sigma$  |

quirement  $p_T(\Lambda_b^0) > 6 \text{ GeV}/c$  was applied to allow easy comparison with other  $\Lambda_b^0$  measurements at the Tevatron, which are only available above this threshold [20, 23]. This additional requirement lowers the  $\Lambda_b^0$  yields by about 20%. The raw fractions returned by the fit were corrected for the differences in selection efficiencies between different modes, which range from 8% to 40% for the measurements of  $b$ -mesons and  $\Lambda_b^0$  branching fractions, respectively. These corrections were determined from detailed detector simulation, with the following exceptions that were measured from data: the momentum-averaged relative isolation efficiency between  $B_s^0$  and  $B^0$ ,  $1.00 \pm 0.03$ , has been determined from fully-reconstructed samples of  $B_s^0 \rightarrow J/\psi \phi$ , and  $B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^{*0}$  decays [17]; the difference in efficiency for triggering on kaons and pions due to the different specific ionization in the COT (a  $\approx 5\%$  effect) was measured from a sample of  $D^+ \rightarrow K^- \pi^+ \pi^+$  decays triggered on two tracks, using the unbiased third track [24]. Possible differences in efficiency of the isolation requirement between  $B^0$  and  $\Lambda_b^0$ , and in the trigger efficiency between kaons and protons, were taken into account in the systematic uncertainties.

The dominant contributions to the systematic uncertainty are the uncertainty on the combinatorial background model and the uncertainty on the  $dE/dx$  cali-

TABLE II: Measured relative branching fractions of rare modes. The ratio  $f_\Lambda/f_d$  is  $p_T$ -dependent [20], and is defined here as:  $f_\Lambda/f_d = \sigma(p\bar{p} \rightarrow \Lambda_b^0 X; p_T > 6 \text{ GeV}/c, |\eta| < 1) / \sigma(p\bar{p} \rightarrow B^0 X; p_T > 6 \text{ GeV}/c, |\eta| < 1)$ . Absolute branching fractions were derived by normalizing to the current world-average value  $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+\pi^-) = (19.4 \pm 0.6) \times 10^{-6}$ , and assuming the average values at high energy for the production fractions:  $f_s/f_d = 0.276 \pm 0.034$ , and  $f_\Lambda/f_d = 0.230 \pm 0.052$  [21]. The first quoted uncertainty is statistical, the second is systematic.

| Mode                             | Relative $\mathcal{B}$  | Absolute $\mathcal{B}(10^{-6})$                                |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$     | $\frac{f_s}{f_d} \frac{\mathcal{B}(B_s^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+)}{\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+\pi^-)} = 0.071 \pm 0.010 \pm 0.007$           | $5.0 \pm 0.7 \pm 0.8$  |
| $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-$   | $\frac{f_s}{f_d} \frac{\mathcal{B}(B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-)}{\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+\pi^-)} = 0.007 \pm 0.004 \pm 0.005$         | $0.49 \pm 0.28 \pm 0.36 (< 1.2 \text{ at } 90\% \text{ C.L.})$ |
| $B^0 \rightarrow K^+K^-$         | $\frac{\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+K^-)}{\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+\pi^-)} = 0.020 \pm 0.008 \pm 0.006$                               | $0.39 \pm 0.16 \pm 0.12 (< 0.7 \text{ at } 90\% \text{ C.L.})$ |
| $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-$   | $\frac{f_\Lambda}{f_d} \frac{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-)}{\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+\pi^-)} = 0.066 \pm 0.009 \pm 0.008$   | $5.6 \pm 0.8 \pm 1.5$  |
| $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-$ | $\frac{f_\Lambda}{f_d} \frac{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-)}{\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+\pi^-)} = 0.042 \pm 0.007 \pm 0.006$ | $3.5 \pm 0.6 \pm 0.9$  |

bration and parameterization. Other contributions come from trigger efficiencies, physics background shape and kinematics,  $b$ -hadron masses and lifetimes, and the possible polarization of  $\Lambda_b^0$  decays.

The final results are listed in Table II. Absolute branching fractions are also quoted, by normalizing to world-average values of production fractions and  $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+\pi^-)$  [1, 21]. The branching fraction measured for the  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$  mode is consistent with the previous upper limit ( $< 5.6 \times 10^{-6}$  at 90% C.L.), based on a subsample of the current data [3]. This agrees with the prediction in Ref. [25], but it is lower than most other predictions [5, 6, 26]. The  $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-$  upper limit improves and supersedes the previous best limit [3]. The present measurement of  $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow K^+K^-)$  is in agreement with other existing measurements and has a similar resolution [21], but the resulting upper limit is weaker due to the observed central value. The sensitivity to both  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+K^-$  and  $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-$  is now close to the upper end of the theoretically expected range [5, 6, 7, 27]. We also report the first branching fraction measurements of charmless  $\Lambda_b$  decays. They are significantly lower than the previous upper limit of  $2.3 \times 10^{-5}$  [28], and in reasonable agreement with predictions [9], thus excluding the possibility of large ( $O(10^2)$ ) enhancements from R-parity violating supersymmetric scenarios [29]. Their ratio can be determined directly from our data with greater accuracy than the individual values. For this purpose, the additional  $p_T > 6 \text{ GeV}/c$  requirement is not necessary, and we can exploit the full sample size, obtaining  $\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-)/\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-) = 0.66 \pm 0.14 \pm 0.08$ , in good agreement with the predicted range 0.60–0.62 [9].

In summary, we have searched for rare charmless decay modes of neutral  $b$ -hadrons into pairs of charged hadrons in CDF data. We report the first observation of the modes  $B_s^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$ ,  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow p\pi^-$ , and  $\Lambda_b^0 \rightarrow pK^-$ , and measure their relative branching fractions. We set upper limits on the unobserved modes  $B^0 \rightarrow K^+K^-$  and  $B_s^0 \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-$ .

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