

Properties of $L = 1 B_1$ and B_2^* Mesons

V. M. Abazov,³⁵ B. Abbott,⁷⁵ M. Abolins,⁶⁵ B. S. Acharya,²⁸ M. Adams,⁵¹ T. Adams,⁴⁹ E. Aguilo,⁵ S. H. Ahn,³⁰ M. Ahsan,⁵⁹ G. D. Alexeev,³⁵ G. Alkhalaf,³⁹ A. Alton,^{64,*} G. Alverson,⁶³ G. A. Alves,² M. Anastasoiaie,³⁴ L. S. Ancu,³⁴ T. Andeen,⁵³ S. Anderson,⁴⁵ B. Andrieu,¹⁶ M. S. Anzels,⁵³ Y. Arnoud,¹³ M. Arov,⁶⁰ M. Arthaud,¹⁷ A. Askew,⁴⁹ B. Åsman,⁴⁰ A. C. S. Assis Jesus,³ O. Atramentov,⁴⁹ C. Autermann,²⁰ C. Avila,⁷ C. Ay,²³ F. Badaud,¹² A. Baden,⁶¹ L. Bagby,⁵² B. Baldin,⁵⁰ D. V. Bandurin,⁵⁹ S. Banerjee,²⁸ P. Banerjee,²⁸ E. Barberis,⁶³ A.-F. Barfuss,¹⁴ P. Bargassa,⁸⁰ P. Baringer,⁵⁸ J. Barreto,² J. F. Bartlett,⁵⁰ U. Bassler,¹⁶ D. Bauer,⁴³ S. Beale,⁵ A. Bean,⁵⁸ M. Begalli,³ M. Begel,⁷¹ C. Belanger-Champagne,⁴⁰ L. Bellantoni,⁵⁰ A. Bellavance,⁵⁰ J. A. Benitez,⁶⁵ S. B. Beri,²⁶ G. Bernardi,¹⁶ R. Bernhard,²² L. Berntzon,¹⁴ I. Bertram,⁴² M. Besançon,¹⁷ R. Beuselinck,⁴³ V. A. Bezzubov,³⁸ P. C. Bhat,⁵⁰ V. Bhatnagar,²⁶ C. Biscarat,¹⁹ G. Blazey,⁵² F. Blekman,⁴³ S. Blessing,⁴⁹ D. Bloch,¹⁸ K. Bloom,⁶⁷ A. Boehnlein,⁵⁰ D. Boline,⁶² T. A. Bolton,⁵⁹ G. Borissov,⁴² K. Bos,³³ T. Bose,⁷⁷ A. Brandt,⁷⁸ R. Brock,⁶⁵ G. Brooijmans,⁷⁰ A. Bross,⁵⁰ D. Brown,⁷⁸ N. J. Buchanan,⁴⁹ D. Buchholz,⁵³ M. Buehler,⁸¹ V. Buescher,²¹ S. Burdin,^{42,†} S. Burke,⁴⁵ T. H. Burnett,⁸² C. P. Buszello,⁴³ J. M. Butler,⁶² P. Calfayan,²⁴ S. Calvet,¹⁴ J. Cammin,⁷¹ S. Caron,³³ W. Carvalho,³ B. C. K. Casey,⁷⁷ N. M. Cason,⁵⁵ H. Castilla-Valdez,³² S. Chakrabarti,¹⁷ D. Chakraborty,⁵² K. M. Chan,⁵⁵ K. Chan,⁵ A. Chandra,⁴⁸ F. Charles,¹⁸ E. Cheu,⁴⁵ F. Chevallier,¹³ D. K. Cho,⁶² S. Choi,³¹ B. Choudhary,²⁷ L. Christofek,⁷⁷ T. Christoudias,⁴³ S. Cihangir,⁵⁰ D. Claes,⁶⁷ C. Clément,⁴⁰ B. Clément,¹⁸ Y. Coadou,⁵ M. Cooke,⁸⁰ W. E. Cooper,⁵⁰ M. Corcoran,⁸⁰ F. Couderc,¹⁷ M.-C. Cousinou,¹⁴ S. Crépe-Renaudin,¹³ D. Cutts,⁷⁷ M. Ćwiok,²⁹ H. da Motta,² A. Das,⁶² G. Davies,⁴³ K. De,⁷⁸ S. J. de Jong,³⁴ P. de Jong,³³ E. De La Cruz-Burelo,⁶⁴ C. De Oliveira Martins,³ J. D. Degenhardt,⁶⁴ F. Déliot,¹⁷ M. Demarteau,⁵⁰ R. Demina,⁷¹ D. Denisov,⁵⁰ S. P. Denisov,³⁸ S. Desai,⁵⁰ H. T. Diehl,⁵⁰ M. Diesburg,⁵⁰ A. Dominguez,⁶⁷ H. Dong,⁷² L. V. Dudko,³⁷ L. Duflot,¹⁵ S. R. Dugad,²⁸ D. Duggan,⁴⁹ A. Duperrin,¹⁴ J. Dyer,⁶⁵ A. Dyshkant,⁵² M. Eads,⁶⁷ D. Edmunds,⁶⁵ J. Ellison,⁴⁸ V. D. Elvira,⁵⁰ Y. Enari,⁷⁷ S. Eno,⁶¹ P. Ermolov,³⁷ H. Evans,⁵⁴ A. Evdokimov,⁷³ V. N. Evdokimov,³⁸ A. V. Ferapontov,⁵⁹ T. Ferbel,⁷¹ F. Fiedler,²⁴ F. Filthaut,³⁴ W. Fisher,⁵⁰ H. E. Fisk,⁵⁰ M. Ford,⁴⁴ M. Fortner,⁵² H. Fox,²² S. Fu,⁵⁰ S. Fuess,⁵⁰ T. Gadfort,⁸² C. F. Galea,³⁴ E. Gallas,⁵⁰ E. Galyaev,⁵⁵ C. Garcia,⁷¹ A. Garcia-Bellido,⁸² V. Gavrilov,³⁶ P. Gay,¹² W. Geist,¹⁸ D. Gelé,¹⁸ C. E. Gerber,⁵¹ Y. Gershtein,⁴⁹ D. Gillberg,⁵ G. Ginter,⁷¹ N. Gollub,⁴⁰ B. Gómez,⁷ A. Goussiou,⁵⁵ P. D. Grannis,⁷² H. Greenlee,⁵⁰ Z. D. Greenwood,⁶⁰ E. M. Gregores,⁴ G. Grenier,¹⁹ Ph. Gris,¹² J.-F. Grivaz,¹⁵ A. Grohsjean,²⁴ S. Grünendahl,⁵⁰ M. W. Grünwald,²⁹ J. Guo,⁷² F. Guo,⁷² P. Gutierrez,⁷⁵ G. Gutierrez,⁵⁰ A. Haas,⁷⁰ N. J. Hadley,⁶¹ P. Haefner,²⁴ S. Hagopian,⁴⁹ J. Haley,⁶⁸ I. Hall,⁷⁵ R. E. Hall,⁴⁷ L. Han,⁶ K. Hanagaki,⁵⁰ P. Hansson,⁴⁰ K. Harder,⁴⁴ A. Harel,⁷¹ R. Harrington,⁶³ J. M. Hauptman,⁵⁷ R. Hauser,⁶⁵ J. Hays,⁴³ T. Hebbeker,²⁰ D. Hedin,⁵² J. G. Hegeman,³³ J. M. Heinmiller,⁵¹ A. P. Heinson,⁴⁸ U. Heintz,⁶² C. Hensel,⁵⁸ K. Herner,⁷² G. Hesketh,⁶³ M. D. Hildreth,⁵⁵ R. Hirosky,⁸¹ J. D. Hobbs,⁷² B. Hoeneisen,¹¹ H. Hoeth,²⁵ M. Hohlfield,²¹ S. J. Hong,³⁰ R. Hooper,⁷⁷ S. Hossain,⁷⁵ P. Houben,³³ Y. Hu,⁷² Z. Hubacek,⁹ V. Hynek,⁸ I. Iashvili,⁶⁹ R. Illingworth,⁵⁰ A. S. Ito,⁵⁰ S. Jabeen,⁶² M. Jaffré,¹⁵ S. Jain,⁷⁵ K. Jakobs,²² C. Jarvis,⁶¹ R. Jesik,⁴³ K. Johns,⁴⁵ C. Johnson,⁷⁰ M. Johnson,⁵⁰ A. Jonckheere,⁵⁰ P. Jonsson,⁴³ A. Juste,⁵⁰ D. Käfer,²⁰ S. Kahn,⁷³ E. Kajfasz,¹⁴ A. M. Kalinin,³⁵ J. R. Kalk,⁶⁵ J. M. Kalk,⁶⁰ S. Kappler,²⁰ D. Karmanov,³⁷ J. Kasper,⁶² P. Kasper,⁵⁰ I. Katsanos,⁷⁰ D. Kau,⁴⁹ R. Kaur,²⁶ V. Kaushik,⁷⁸ R. Kehoe,⁷⁹ S. Kermiche,¹⁴ N. Khalatyan,³⁸ A. Khanov,⁷⁶ A. Kharchilava,⁶⁹ Y. M. Kharzhev,³⁵ D. Khatidze,⁷⁰ H. Kim,³¹ T. J. Kim,³⁰ M. H. Kirby,³⁴ M. Kirsch,²⁰ B. Klima,⁵⁰ J. M. Kohli,²⁶ J.-P. Konrath,²² M. Kopal,⁷⁵ V. M. Korablev,³⁸ B. Kothari,⁷⁰ A. V. Kozelov,³⁸ D. Krop,⁵⁴ A. Kryemadhi,⁸¹ T. Kuhl,²³ A. Kumar,⁶⁹ S. Kunori,⁶¹ A. Kupco,¹⁰ T. Kurča,¹⁹ J. Kvita,⁸ F. Lacroix,¹² D. Lam,⁵⁵ S. Lammers,⁷⁰ G. Landsberg,⁷⁷ J. Lazoflores,⁴⁹ P. Lebrun,¹⁹ W. M. Lee,⁵⁰ A. Leflat,³⁷ F. Lehner,⁴¹ J. Lellouch,¹⁶ V. Lesne,¹² J. Leveque,⁴⁵ P. Lewis,⁴³ J. Li,⁷⁸ Q. Z. Li,⁵⁰ L. Li,⁴⁸ S. M. Lietti,⁴ J. G. R. Lima,⁵² D. Lincoln,⁵⁰ J. Linnemann,⁶⁵ V. V. Lipaev,³⁸ R. Lipton,⁵⁰ Y. Liu,⁶ Z. Liu,⁵ L. Lobo,⁴³ A. Lobodenko,³⁹ M. Lokajicek,¹⁰ A. Lounis,¹⁸ P. Love,⁴² H. J. Lubatti,⁸² A. L. Lyon,⁵⁰ A. K. A. Maciel,² D. Mackin,⁸⁰ R. J. Madaras,⁴⁶ P. Mättig,²⁵ C. Magass,²⁰ A. Magerkurth,⁶⁴ N. Makovec,¹⁵ P. K. Mal,⁵⁵ H. B. Malbouisson,³ S. Malik,⁶⁷ V. L. Malyshev,³⁵ H. S. Mao,⁵⁰ Y. Maravin,⁵⁹ B. Martin,¹³ R. McCarthy,⁷² A. Melnitchouk,⁶⁶ A. Mendes,¹⁴ L. Mendoza,⁷ P. G. Mercadante,⁴ M. Merkin,³⁷ K. W. Merritt,⁵⁰ J. Meyer,²¹ A. Meyer,²⁰ M. Michaut,¹⁷ T. Millet,¹⁹ J. Mitrevski,⁷⁰ J. Molina,³ R. K. Mommsen,⁴⁴ N. K. Mondal,²⁸ R. W. Moore,⁵ T. Moulík,⁵⁸ G. S. Muanza,¹⁹ M. Mulders,⁵⁰ M. Mulhearn,⁷⁰ O. Mundal,²¹ L. Mundim,³ E. Nagy,¹⁴ M. Naimuddin,⁵⁰ M. Narain,⁷⁷ N. A. Naumann,³⁴ H. A. Neal,⁶⁴ J. P. Negret,⁷ P. Neustroev,³⁹ H. Nilsen,²² A. Nomerotski,⁵⁰ S. F. Novaes,⁴ T. Nunnemann,²⁴ V. O'Dell,⁵⁰ D. C. O'Neil,⁵ G. Obrant,³⁹ C. Ochando,¹⁵ D. Onoprienko,⁵⁹ N. Oshima,⁵⁰ J. Osta,⁵⁵ R. Otec,⁹ G. J. Otero y Garzón,⁵¹ M. Owen,⁴⁴ P. Padley,⁸⁰ M. Pangilinan,⁷⁷ N. Parashar,⁵⁶ S.-J. Park,⁷¹ S. K. Park,³⁰ J. Parsons,⁷⁰ R. Partridge,⁷⁷ N. Parua,⁵⁴ A. Patwa,⁷³ G. Pawloski,⁸⁰ B. Penning,²² P. M. Perea,⁴⁸ K. Peters,⁴⁴

Y. Peters,²⁵ P. Pétroff,¹⁵ M. Petteni,⁴³ R. Piegaia,¹ J. Piper,⁶⁵ M.-A. Pleier,²¹ P. L. M. Podesta-Lerma,^{32,‡}
V. M. Podstavkov,⁵⁰ Y. Pogorelov,⁵⁵ M.-E. Pol,² P. Polozov,³⁶ A. Pompoš,⁷⁵ B. G. Pope,⁶⁵ A. V. Popov,³⁸ C. Potter,⁵
W. L. Prado da Silva,³ H. B. Prosper,⁴⁹ S. Protopopescu,⁷³ J. Qian,⁶⁴ A. Quadt,²¹ B. Quinn,⁶⁶ A. Rakitine,⁴² M. S. Rangel,²
K. J. Rani,²⁸ K. Ranjan,²⁷ P. N. Ratoff,⁴² P. Renkel,⁷⁹ S. Reucroft,⁶³ P. Rich,⁴⁴ M. Rijssenbeek,⁷² I. Ripp-Baudot,¹⁸
F. Rizatdinova,⁷⁶ S. Robinson,⁴³ R. F. Rodrigues,³ C. Royon,¹⁷ P. Rubinov,⁵⁰ R. Ruchti,⁵⁵ G. Safronov,³⁶ G. Sajot,¹³
A. Sánchez-Hernández,³² M. P. Sanders,¹⁶ A. Santoro,³ G. Savage,⁵⁰ L. Sawyer,⁶⁰ T. Scanlon,⁴³ D. Schaile,²⁴
R. D. Schamberger,⁷² Y. Scheglov,³⁹ H. Schellman,⁵³ P. Schieferdecker,²⁴ T. Schliephake,²⁵ C. Schmitt,²⁵
C. Schwanenberger,⁴⁴ A. Schwartzman,⁶⁸ R. Schwienhorst,⁶⁵ J. Sekaric,⁴⁹ S. Sengupta,⁴⁹ H. Severini,⁷⁵ E. Shabalina,⁵¹
M. Shamim,⁵⁹ V. Shary,¹⁷ A. A. Shchukin,³⁸ R. K. Shivpuri,²⁷ D. Shpakov,⁵⁰ V. Siccardi,¹⁸ V. Simak,⁹ V. Sirotenko,⁵⁰
P. Skubic,⁷⁵ P. Slattery,⁷¹ D. Smirnov,⁵⁵ R. P. Smith,⁵⁰ J. Snow,⁷⁴ G. R. Snow,⁶⁷ S. Snyder,⁷³ S. Söldner-Rembold,⁴⁴
L. Sonnenschein,¹⁶ A. Sopczak,⁴² M. Sosebee,⁷⁸ K. Soustruznik,⁸ M. Souza,² B. Spurlock,⁷⁸ J. Stark,¹³ J. Steele,⁶⁰
V. Stolin,³⁶ A. Stone,⁵¹ D. A. Stoyanova,³⁸ J. Strandberg,⁶⁴ S. Strandberg,⁴⁰ M. A. Strang,⁶⁹ M. Strauss,⁷⁵ E. Strauss,⁷²
R. Ströhmer,²⁴ D. Strom,⁵³ M. Strovink,⁴⁶ L. Stutte,⁵⁰ S. Sumowidagdo,⁴⁹ P. Svoisky,⁵⁵ A. Sznajder,³ M. Talby,¹⁴
P. Tamburello,⁴⁵ A. Tanasijczuk,¹ W. Taylor,⁵ P. Telford,⁴⁴ J. Temple,⁴⁵ B. Tiller,²⁴ F. Tissandier,¹² M. Titov,¹⁷
V. V. Tokmenin,³⁵ M. Tomoto,⁵⁰ T. Toole,⁶¹ I. Torchiani,²² T. Trefzger,²³ D. Tsybychev,⁷² B. Tuchming,¹⁷ C. Tully,⁶⁸
P. M. Tuts,⁷⁰ R. Unalan,⁶⁵ S. Uvarov,³⁹ L. Uvarov,³⁹ S. Uzunyan,⁵² B. Vachon,⁵ P. J. van den Berg,³³ B. van Eijk,³³
R. Van Kooten,⁵⁴ W. M. van Leeuwen,³³ N. Varelas,⁵¹ E. W. Varnes,⁴⁵ A. Vartapetian,⁷⁸ I. A. Vasilyev,³⁸ M. Vaupel,²⁵
P. Verdier,¹⁹ L. S. Vertogradov,³⁵ M. Verzocchi,⁵⁰ F. Villeneuve-Seguié,⁴³ P. Vint,⁴³ P. Vokac,⁹ E. Von Toerne,⁵⁹
M. Voutilainen,^{67,§} M. Vreeswijk,³³ R. Wagner,⁶⁸ H. D. Wahl,⁴⁹ L. Wang,⁶¹ M. H. L. S Wang,⁵⁰ J. Warchol,⁵⁵ G. Watts,⁸²
M. Wayne,⁵⁵ M. Weber,⁵⁰ G. Weber,²³ H. Weerts,⁶⁵ A. Wenger,^{22,||} N. Wermes,²¹ M. Wetstein,⁶¹ A. White,⁷⁸ D. Wicke,²⁵
G. W. Wilson,⁵⁸ M. R. J. Williams,⁴² S. J. Wimpenny,⁴⁸ M. Wobisch,⁶⁰ D. R. Wood,⁶³ T. R. Wyatt,⁴⁴ Y. Xie,⁷⁷ S. Yacoub,⁵³
R. Yamada,⁵⁰ M. Yan,⁶¹ T. Yasuda,⁵⁰ Y. A. Yatsunenko,³⁵ K. Yip,⁷³ H. D. Yoo,⁷⁷ S. W. Youn,⁵³ J. Yu,⁷⁸ C. Yu,¹³
A. Yurkewicz,⁷² A. Zatsklyaniy,⁵² C. Zeitnitz,²⁵ D. Zhang,⁵⁰ T. Zhao,⁸² B. Zhou,⁶⁴ J. Zhu,⁷² M. Zielinski,⁷¹
D. Zieminska,⁵⁴ A. Zieminski,⁵⁴ L. Zivkovic,⁷⁰ V. Zutshi,⁵² and E. G. Zverev³⁷

(The D0 Collaboration)

¹Universidad de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina

²LAFEX, Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Físicas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

³Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

⁴Instituto de Física Teórica, Universidade Estadual Paulista, São Paulo, Brazil

⁵University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada,

Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada,

York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada,

and McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

⁶University of Science and Technology of China, Hefei, People's Republic of China

⁷Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia

⁸Center for Particle Physics, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

⁹Czech Technical University, Prague, Czech Republic

¹⁰Center for Particle Physics, Institute of Physics, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague, Czech Republic

¹¹Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Quito, Ecuador

¹²Laboratoire de Physique Corpusculaire, IN2P3-CNRS, Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand, France

¹³Laboratoire de Physique Subatomique et de Cosmologie, IN2P3-CNRS, Université de Grenoble 1, Grenoble, France

¹⁴CPPM, IN2P3-CNRS, Université de la Méditerranée, Marseille, France

¹⁵Laboratoire de l'Accélérateur Linéaire, IN2P3-CNRS et Université Paris-Sud, Orsay, France

¹⁶LPNHE, IN2P3-CNRS, Universités Paris VI and VII, Paris, France

¹⁷DAPNIA/Service de Physique des Particules, CEA, Saclay, France

¹⁸IPHC, Université Louis Pasteur et Université de Haute Alsace, CNRS, IN2P3, Strasbourg, France

¹⁹IPNL, Université Lyon 1, CNRS/IN2P3, Villeurbanne, France and Université de Lyon, Lyon, France

²⁰III. Physikalisches Institut A, RWTH Aachen, Aachen, Germany

²¹Physikalisches Institut, Universität Bonn, Bonn, Germany

²²Physikalisches Institut, Universität Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany

²³Institut für Physik, Universität Mainz, Mainz, Germany

²⁴Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, München, Germany

²⁵Fachbereich Physik, University of Wuppertal, Wuppertal, Germany

²⁶Panjab University, Chandigarh, India

- ²⁷Delhi University, Delhi, India
²⁸Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, India
²⁹University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland
³⁰Korea Detector Laboratory, Korea University, Seoul, Korea
³¹SungKyunKwan University, Suwon, Korea
³²CINVESTAV, Mexico City, Mexico
³³FOM-Institute NIKHEF, Amsterdam, The Netherlands,
and University of Amsterdam/NIKHEF, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
³⁴Radboud University Nijmegen/NIKHEF, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
³⁵Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia
³⁶Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow, Russia
³⁷Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia
³⁸Institute for High Energy Physics, Protvino, Russia
³⁹Petersburg Nuclear Physics Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia
⁴⁰Lund University, Lund, Sweden, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden,
Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden,
and Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden
⁴¹Physik Institut der Universität Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland
⁴²Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom
⁴³Imperial College, London, United Kingdom
⁴⁴University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom
⁴⁵University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721, USA
⁴⁶Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and University of California, Berkeley, California 94720, USA
⁴⁷California State University, Fresno, California 93740, USA
⁴⁸University of California, Riverside, California 92521, USA
⁴⁹Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306, USA
⁵⁰Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, Illinois 60510, USA
⁵¹University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois 60607, USA
⁵²Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois 60115, USA
⁵³Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois 60208, USA
⁵⁴Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47405, USA
⁵⁵University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556, USA
⁵⁶Purdue University Calumet, Hammond, Indiana 46323, USA
⁵⁷Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011, USA
⁵⁸University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045, USA
⁵⁹Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, USA
⁶⁰Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, Louisiana 71272, USA
⁶¹University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742, USA
⁶²Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts 02215, USA
⁶³Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts 02115, USA
⁶⁴University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109, USA
⁶⁵Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824, USA
⁶⁶University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi 38677, USA
⁶⁷University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588, USA
⁶⁸Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 08544, USA
⁶⁹State University of New York, Buffalo, New York 14260, USA
⁷⁰Columbia University, New York, New York 10027, USA
⁷¹University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627, USA
⁷²State University of New York, Stony Brook, New York 11794, USA
⁷³Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, New York 11973, USA
⁷⁴Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma 73050, USA
⁷⁵University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma 73019, USA
⁷⁶Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078, USA
⁷⁷Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island 02912, USA
⁷⁸University of Texas, Arlington, Texas 76019, USA
⁷⁹Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas 75275, USA
⁸⁰Rice University, Houston, Texas 77005, USA
⁸¹University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia 22901, USA
⁸²University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195, USA

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This Letter presents the first strong evidence for the resolution of the excited B mesons B_1 and B_2^* as two separate states in fully reconstructed decays to $B^{+(*)}\pi^-$. The mass of B_1 is measured to be $5720.6 \pm 2.4 \pm 1.4$ MeV/ c^2 and the mass difference ΔM between B_2^* and B_1 is $26.2 \pm 3.1 \pm 0.9$ MeV/ c^2 , giving the mass of the B_2^* as $5746.8 \pm 2.4 \pm 1.7$ MeV/ c^2 . The production rate for B_1 and B_2^* mesons is determined to be a fraction $(13.9 \pm 1.9 \pm 3.2)\%$ of the production rate of the B^+ meson.

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To date, the detailed spectroscopy of mesons containing a b quark has not been fully established. Only the ground 0^- states B^+ , B^0 , B_s^0 , B_c^+ and the excited 1^- state B^* are considered to be established by the Particle Data Group [1]. Quark models predict the existence of two broad (B_0^* [$J^P = 0^+$] and B_1^* [1^+]) and two narrow (B_1 [1^+] and B_2^* [2^+]) bound P states [2–7]. The broad states decay through an S wave and therefore have widths of a few hundred MeV/ c^2 . Such states are difficult to distinguish, in effective mass spectra, from the combinatorial background. The narrow states contain the light quark with total angular momentum $j = 3/2$ and consequently decay through a D wave, resulting in widths of around 10 MeV/ c^2 [3,6,7]. Almost all observations of B_1 and B_2^* have been made indirectly in inclusive or semi-inclusive decays [8–11], which prevents their separation and a precise measurement of their properties. The measurement by the ALEPH collaboration [12], although partially done with exclusive B decays, was statistically limited and model dependent. The masses, widths, and decay branching fractions of these states, in contrast, are predicted with good precision by various theoretical models [2–7]. These predictions can be verified experimentally, and such a comparison provides important information on the quark interaction inside bound states, aiding further development of nonperturbative QCD. This Letter presents a study of narrow $L = 1$ states decaying to $B^{+(*)}\pi^-$ with exclusively reconstructed B^+ mesons using data collected by the D0 experiment [13,14] during 2002–2006 and corresponding to an integrated luminosity of about 1.3 fb^{-1} . Throughout this Letter, charge conjugated processes are implied.

The B_1 and B_2^* mesons are studied by examining $B^{+(*)}\pi^-$ candidates. This sample includes the following decays:

$$B_1 \rightarrow B^{*+}\pi^-; \quad B^{*+} \rightarrow B^+\gamma; \quad (1)$$

$$B_2^* \rightarrow B^{*+}\pi^-; \quad B^{*+} \rightarrow B^+\gamma; \quad (2)$$

$$B_2^* \rightarrow B^+\pi^-. \quad (3)$$

The direct decay $B_1 \rightarrow B^+\pi^-$ is forbidden by conservation of parity and angular momentum. The B^+ meson is reconstructed in the exclusive decay $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi K^+$ with J/ψ decaying to $\mu^+\mu^-$. Each muon is required to be identified by the muon system, have an associated track in the central tracking system with at least two measurements in the silicon microstrip tracker (SMT), and have a transverse

momentum $p_T^\mu > 1.5$ GeV/ c . At least one of the two muons is required to have matching track segments both inside and outside the toroidal magnet. The two muons must form a common vertex and have an invariant mass between 2.80 and 3.35 GeV/ c^2 , to form a J/ψ candidate. An additional charged track with $p_T > 0.5$ GeV/ c , with total momentum above 0.7 GeV/ c and with at least two measurements in the SMT, is selected. This particle is assigned the kaon mass and required to have a common vertex, with $\chi^2 < 16$ for 3 degrees of freedom, with the two muons. The displacement of this vertex from the primary interaction point is required to exceed 3 standard deviations in the plane perpendicular to the beam direction. The primary vertex of the $p\bar{p}$ interaction was determined for each event using the method described in Ref. [15]. The average position of the beam-collision point was included as a constraint.

From each set of three particles fulfilling these requirements, a B^+ candidate is constructed using the standard D0 procedures. The momenta of the muons are corrected using the J/ψ mass [1] as a constraint. To improve the B^+ selection, a likelihood ratio method [16] is utilized. This method provides a way of combining several discriminating variables into a single variable with increased power to separate signal and background. The variables chosen for this analysis include the smaller of the transverse momenta of the two muons, the χ^2 of the B^+ decay vertex, the B^+ decay length divided by its error, the significance (defined below) S_B of the B^+ track impact parameter, the transverse momentum of the kaon, and the significance S_K of the kaon track impact parameter.

For any track i , the significance S_i is defined as $S_i = \sqrt{[\epsilon_T/\sigma(\epsilon_T)]^2 + [\epsilon_L/\sigma(\epsilon_L)]^2}$, where ϵ_T (ϵ_L) is the projection of the track impact parameter on the plane perpendicular to the beam direction (along the beam direction), and $\sigma(\epsilon_T)$ [$\sigma(\epsilon_L)$] is its uncertainty. The track of each B^+ is formed assuming that it passes through the reconstructed vertex and is directed along the reconstructed B^+ momentum.

The resulting invariant mass distribution of the $J/\psi K^+$ system is shown in Fig. 1. The curve represents the result of an unbinned likelihood fit to the sum of contributions from $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi K^+$, $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi \pi^+$, and $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi K^{*+}$ decays, as well as combinatorial background. The mass distribution of the $J/\psi K^+$ system from the $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi K^+$ hypothesis is parametrized by a Gaussian with the width depending on the momentum of the K^+ . For

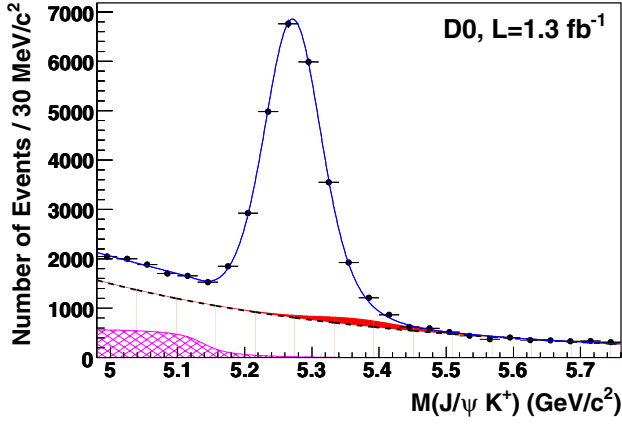


FIG. 1 (color online). Invariant mass distribution of $J/\psi K^+$ events. The solid line shows the sum of signal and background contributions, as described in the text. Shown separately are contributions from $J/\psi \pi^+$ events (solid filled area), $J/\psi K^{*+}$ events (hatched area) and combinatorial background (dashed line).

the contribution from $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi \pi^+$ decays, the width of the $J/\psi \pi^+$ mass distribution is parametrized with the same momentum-dependent width as the $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi K^+$ decays, and then transformed to the $J/\psi K^+$ system by assigning the kaon mass to the charged pion. The decay $B \rightarrow J/\psi K^{*+}$ with $K^{*+} \rightarrow K \pi$ produces a broad $J/\psi K^+$ mass distribution with the threshold near $M(B) - M(\pi)$. It is parametrized using Monte Carlo simulation (described later). The combinatorial background is described by an exponential function. The $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi K^+$ and $B^+ \rightarrow J/\psi \pi^+$ mass peaks contain $23\,287 \pm 344$ (stat.) events.

For each reconstructed B meson candidate with mass $5.19 < M(B^+) < 5.36 \text{ GeV}/c^2$, an additional charged track with transverse momentum above $0.75 \text{ GeV}/c$ and charge opposite to that of the B meson is selected. The selection $5.19 < M(B^+) < 5.36 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ reduces the number of B^+ candidates to $20\,915 \pm 293$ (stat.). Since the B_J mesons (where B_J denotes both B_1 and B_2^*) decay at the production point, the additional track is required to originate from the primary vertex by applying the condition on its significance $S_\pi < \sqrt{6}$. No angular variables are used to further select the signal.

For each combination satisfying the above criteria, the mass difference $\Delta M = M(B^+ \pi^-) - M(B^+)$ is computed, giving the distribution shown in Fig. 2. The signal exhibits a structure that is interpreted in terms of the decays (1)–(3). Since the photon from the decay $B^* \rightarrow B \gamma$ is not reconstructed, the three decays should produce three peaks with central positions $\Delta_1 = M(B_1) - M(B^*)$, corresponding to the decay $B_1 \rightarrow B^* \pi$, $\Delta_2 = M(B_2^*) - M(B^*)$, corresponding to $B_2^* \rightarrow B^* \pi$, and $\Delta_3 = M(B_2^*) - M(B)$, corresponding to $B_2^* \rightarrow B \pi$. Note that here $\Delta_2 = \Delta_3 - [M(B^{*+}) - M(B)] = \Delta_3 - 45.78 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ [1]. Following this expected pattern, the experimental distribution is fitted to the following function:

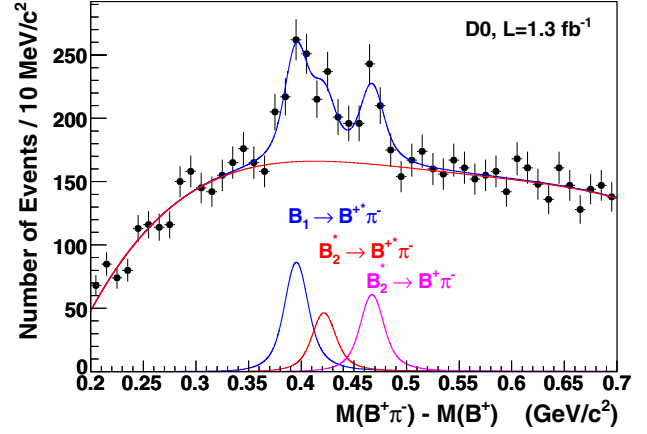


FIG. 2 (color online). Invariant mass difference $\Delta M = M(B^+ \pi^-) - M(B^+)$ for exclusive B decays. The line shows the fit described in the text. The contribution of background and the three signal peaks are shown separately.

$$F(\Delta M) = F_{\text{sig}}(\Delta M) + F_{\text{bckg}}(\Delta M),$$

$$F_{\text{sig}}(\Delta M) = N \{ f_1 D(\Delta M, \Delta_1, \Gamma_1) + (1 - f_1) [f_2 D(\Delta M, \Delta_2, \Gamma_2) + (1 - f_2) D(\Delta M, \Delta_3, \Gamma_2)] \}. \quad (4)$$

In these equations, Γ_1 and Γ_2 are the widths of B_1 and B_2^* , f_1 is the fraction of B_1 contained in the B_J signal, and f_2 is the fraction of $B_2^* \rightarrow B^* \pi$ decays in the B_2^* signal. The parameter N gives the total number of observed $B_J \rightarrow B^{(*)} \pi$ decays. The background $F_{\text{bckg}}(\Delta M)$ is parametrized by a fourth-order polynomial.

The function $D(x, x_0, \Gamma)$ in Eq. (4) is the convolution of a relativistic Breit-Wigner function with the experimental Gaussian resolution in ΔM . The width of resonances in the Breit-Wigner function takes into account threshold effects using the standard expression [1,17] for $L = 2$ decay.

The resolution in ΔM is determined from simulation. All processes involving B mesons are simulated using the EVTGEN generator [18] interfaced with PYTHIA [19], followed by full modeling of the detector response with GEANT [20] and event reconstruction as in data. The difference between the reconstructed and generated values of ΔM is parametrized by a double Gaussian function with the σ of the narrow Gaussian set to $7.5 \text{ MeV}/c^2$, the σ of the wide Gaussian set to $17.6 \text{ MeV}/c^2$, and the normalization of the narrow Gaussian set to 3.8 times that of the wide Gaussian. Studies of various decay modes of D and B mesons show that simulation underestimates the mass resolution in data by $\approx 10\%$. As such, the widths of the Gaussians which parametrize the B_J resolution are increased by 10% to match the data, and a 100% systematic uncertainty is assigned to this correction. The widths of the observed structures are compatible with the experimental mass resolution, and the fit is found to be insensitive to

values of Γ_1 and Γ_2 below the mass resolution with the current statistics. Therefore, both these widths are fixed at $10 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ in the fit, as suggested by theoretical models [3,7]. They are varied together over a wide range to estimate the associated systematic uncertainty.

With these assumptions, the following parameters of B_1 and B_2^* are obtained:

$$\begin{aligned} M(B_1) - M(B^+) &= 441.5 \pm 2.4 \pm 1.3 \text{ MeV}/c^2, \\ M(B_2^*) - M(B_1) &= 26.2 \pm 3.1 \pm 0.9 \text{ MeV}/c^2, \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

where the first uncertainty is statistical, and the second is systematic. The correlation coefficient of these mass measurements is -0.659 . With these relations, and using the mass of the B^+ [1], the absolute masses of the B_1 and B_2^* are

$$\begin{aligned} M(B_1) &= 5720.6 \pm 2.4 \pm 1.4 \text{ MeV}/c^2, \\ M(B_2^*) &= 5746.8 \pm 2.4 \pm 1.7 \text{ MeV}/c^2. \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

The number of B_J decays is found to be $N = 662 \pm 91$. The $\chi^2/\text{d.o.f.}$ of the fit is $33/40$. Without the B_J signal contribution, the $\chi^2/\text{d.o.f.}$ of the fit increases to $97/45$, which implies that this structure is observed with a statistical significance of more than 7σ . Fitting with only one peak, with floating width, increases the $\chi^2/\text{d.o.f.}$ to $54/42$, which corresponds to more than a 4σ significance that more than one resonance is observed. With the $B_2^* \rightarrow B^{*+} \pi$ decay removed from the fit, the $\chi^2/\text{d.o.f.}$ of the fit increases to $41/41$. Although with the current statistics we cannot distinguish between the two- and three-peaks hypotheses, theory suggests that B_2^* decays with almost equal branching ratios into $B\pi$ and $B^{*+} \pi$ [3,7], and our fit indeed indicates a preference for this expected pattern.

The number of B_J mesons and values f_1 and f_2 obtained from the fit are used to measure the production and decay ratios of B_1 and B_2^* :

$$\begin{aligned} R_1 &= \frac{Br(B_1 \rightarrow B^{*+} \pi)}{Br(B_J \rightarrow B^{(*)} \pi)} = f_1 \frac{\varepsilon_0}{\varepsilon_1} = 0.477 \pm 0.069 \pm 0.062, \\ R_2 &= \frac{Br(B_2^* \rightarrow B^* \pi)}{Br(B_2^* \rightarrow B^{(*)} \pi)} = f_2 \frac{\varepsilon_3}{\varepsilon_2} = 0.475 \pm 0.095 \pm 0.069, \\ R_J &= \frac{Br(b \rightarrow B_J^0 \rightarrow B^{(*)} \pi)}{Br(b \rightarrow B^+)} = \frac{3N(B_J)}{2N(B^+)} \varepsilon_0 \\ &= 0.139 \pm 0.019 \pm 0.032. \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

Here ε_1 , ε_2 , and ε_3 are the efficiencies to select an additional pion from the B_J decay for decay modes $B_1 \rightarrow B^{*+} \pi^-$, $B_2^* \rightarrow B^{*+} \pi^-$ and $B_2^* \rightarrow B^+ \pi^-$, respectively. They are determined from a simulation separately for each decay mode (1)–(3). The overall efficiency for detecting a pion from any $B_J \rightarrow B^{(*)} \pi^-$ decay is $\varepsilon_0 = 0.342 \pm 0.008 \pm 0.028$. The value for R_J takes into account the decay $B_J \rightarrow B^0 \pi^0$ assuming isospin conservation.

For the B_J mass fit, the influences of different sources of systematic uncertainty are estimated by examining the changes in the fit parameters under a number of variations. Different background parametrizations are used in the fit to the ΔM distribution. In addition, the effect of binning is tested by varying the bin width and position. The parameters describing the background are allowed to vary in the fit and their uncertainties are included in our results. To check the effect of fixing Γ_1 and Γ_2 at $10 \text{ MeV}/c^2$, a range of widths from 0 to $20 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ is used. The effect of the uncertainty on the mass difference $M(B^{*+}) - M(B^+)$ [1] is also taken into account. Different parametrizations of the detector mass resolution are tested, and in addition the fit is made without the 10% mass resolution correction. The uncertainty in the absolute momentum scale, which results in a small shift of all measured masses, is also taken into account. The summary of all systematic uncertainties in the B_J mass fit is given in Table I.

The measurement of the relative production rate R_J uses the pion detection efficiencies predicted in simulation, as well as the numbers of B_J and B^+ events. To estimate the systematic uncertainty on the number of B^+ events, different parametrizations of the signal and background are used

TABLE I. Systematic uncertainties of the B_J parameters determined from the ΔM fit. The rows show the various sources of systematic error as described in the text. The columns show the resulting uncertainties for each of the five free signal parameters as described in Eq. (4). $\Delta M(B_1)$ and $\Delta[M(B_2^*) - M(B_1)]$ are in MeV/c^2 .

Source	$\Delta M(B_1)$	$\Delta[M(B_2^*) - M(B_1)]$	ΔR_1	ΔR_2	ΔN
Background parametrization	0.15	0.15	0.010	0.009	19
Bin widths/positions	0.85	0.70	0.006	0.026	12
Value of $\Gamma_{1,2}$	0.75	0.55	0.023	0.032	138
B^{*+} mass uncertainty	0.30	0.25	0.004	0.004	6
Momentum scale	0.50	0.03	0.000	0.000	0
Resolution uncertainty	0.20	0.05	0.007	0.004	10
Efficiency uncertainties			0.056	0.054	
Total	1.30	0.90	0.062	0.069	140

for the fit. The resulting uncertainty is $\pm 200 B^+$ events. The systematic uncertainty on the number of B_J events is ± 140 (see Table I). The uncertainty of the impact parameter resolution in the simulation is estimated to be $\approx 10\%$ [21]. It can influence the measurement of the selection efficiency of the pion from the B_J decay, and its contribution to the systematic uncertainty of R_J is found to be 0.0056. The track reconstruction efficiency for particles with low transverse momentum is measured in Ref. [22] and good agreement between data and simulation is found. This comparison is valid within the uncertainties of branching fractions of different B semileptonic decays, which is about 7%. This uncertainty results in a 0.0096 variation of R_J . An additional systematic uncertainty of 0.0008 associated with the difference in the momentum distributions of selected particles in data and in simulation is taken into account. Combining all these effects in quadrature, the total systematic uncertainty in the relative production rate R_J is found to be 0.032, of which the dominant contribution comes from the uncertainty on the number of B_J events.

In conclusion, there is strong evidence that the B_1 and B_2^* mesons are resolved for the first time as two separate states. Their measured masses are given by Eq. (5). The B_J production rate, the branching fraction of B_2^* to the excited state B^* , and the fraction of the B_1 meson in the B_J production rate are also measured as given in Eq. (7). Our results are consistent with all previous observations [8–12] of excited B states. These results will help to develop models describing bound states with heavy quarks.

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*Visitor from Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD, USA.

[†]Visitor from The University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK.

[‡]Visitor from ICN-UNAM, Mexico City, Mexico.

[§]Visitor from Helsinki Institute of Physics, Helsinki, Finland.

^{||}Visitor from Universität Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland.

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