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## $\sigma\text{-Channel Threshold Enhancement in Double-Pionic Fusion*}$

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## Summary

The observed invariant mass and angular distributions reveal the ABC-effect to be a  $\sigma$  channel phenomenon associated with the formation of a  $\Delta\Delta$  system in the intermediate state. The most pronounced feature is the enormeous low-mass enhancement in the observed  $\pi^0\pi^0$  invariant mass distributions, which in the  $\pi^0\pi^0$  channel is larger than in the  $\pi^+\pi^-$  channel, since the latter also contains isovector contributions \cite{bash}. In contrast to previous inclusive measurements and theoretical predictions we observe no high-mass enhancement.

The differential distributions for the  $\pi^0\pi^0$  channels can be well described, if a strong attraction between two  $\Delta s$  in the intermediate state or even a bound  $\Delta\Delta$  system is assumed. Such a boundstate situation had been predicted previously \cite{oka,wang}. This ansatz is capable of describing also the results of previous inclusive measurements on  $^4{\rm He}$  as well as the resonance-like energy dependence of the total cross sections. The latter are in favor of a substantial binding between the two  $\Delta s$ .

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