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Search for Higgs Bosons Predicted in Two-Higgs-Doublet Models via Decays to Tau Lepton Pairs in 1.96 TeV $p\bar{p}$ Collisions

T. Aaltonen
Harvard University

J. Adelman
Carnegie Mellon University

T. Akimoto
Università degli Studi di Trieste

B. Álvarez González
Universidad de Cantabria

S. Amerio
University of Oxford

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

T. Aaltonen, J. Adelman, T. Akimoto, B. Álvarez González, S. Amerio, D. Amidei, A. Anastassov, A. Annovi, J. Antos, G. Apollinari, A. Apresyan, T. Arisawa, A. Artikov, W. Ashmanskas, A. Attal, A. Aurisano, F. Azfar, W. Badgett, A. Barbaro-Galtieri, V. E. Barnes, B. A. Barnett, P. Barria, P. Bartos, V. Bartsch, G. Bauer, P. H. Beauchemin, F. Bedeschi, and D. Beecher

Search for Higgs Bosons Predicted in Two-Higgs-Doublet Models via Decays to Tau Lepton Pairs in 1.96 TeV $p\bar{p}$ Collisions

T. Aaltonen,²⁴ J. Adelman,¹⁴ T. Akimoto,⁵⁶ B. Álvarez González,^{12,u} S. Amerio,^{44b,44a} D. Amidei,³⁵ A. Anastassov,³⁹ A. Annovi,²⁰ J. Antos,¹⁵ G. Apollinari,¹⁸ A. Apresyan,⁴⁹ T. Arisawa,⁵⁸ A. Artikov,¹⁶ W. Ashmanskas,¹⁸ A. Attal,⁴ A. Aurisano,⁵⁴ F. Azfar,⁴³ W. Badgett,¹⁸ A. Barbaro-Galtieri,²⁹ V. E. Barnes,⁴⁹ B. A. Barnett,²⁶ P. Barria,^{47c,47a} P. Bartos,¹⁵ V. Bartsch,³¹ G. Bauer,³³ P.-H. Beauchemin,³⁴ F. Bedeschi,^{47a} D. Beecher,³¹ S. Behari,²⁶ G. Bellettini,^{47b,47a} J. Bellinger,⁶⁰ D. Benjamin,¹⁷ A. Beretvas,¹⁸ J. Beringer,²⁹ A. Bhatti,⁵¹ M. Binkley,¹⁸ D. Bisello,^{44b,44a} I. Bizjak,^{31,z} R. E. Blair,² C. Blocker,⁷ B. Blumenfeld,²⁶ A. Bocci,¹⁷ A. Bodek,⁵⁰ V. Boisvert,⁵⁰ G. Bolla,⁴⁹ D. Bortoletto,⁴⁹ J. Boudreau,⁴⁸ A. Boveia,¹¹ B. Brau,^{11,b} A. Bridgeman,²⁵ L. Brigliadori,^{6b,6a} C. Bromberg,³⁶ E. Brubaker,¹⁴ J. Budagov,¹⁶ H. S. Budd,⁵⁰ S. Budd,²⁵ S. Burke,¹⁸ K. Burkett,¹⁸ G. Busetto,^{44b,44a} P. Bussey,²² A. Buzatu,³⁴ K. L. Byrum,² S. Cabrera,^{17,w} C. Calancha,³² M. Campanelli,³⁶ M. Campbell,³⁵ F. Canelli,^{14,18} A. Canepa,⁴⁶ B. Carls,²⁵ D. Carlsmith,⁶⁰ R. Carosi,^{47a} S. Carrillo,^{19,o} S. Carron,³⁴ B. Casal,¹² M. Casarsa,¹⁸ A. Castro,^{6b,6a} P. Catastini,^{47c,47a} D. Cauz,^{55b,55a} V. Cavaliere,^{47c,47a} M. Cavalli-Sforza,⁴ A. Cerri,²⁹ L. Cerrito,^{31,q} S. H. Chang,⁶² Y. C. Chen,¹ M. Chertok,⁸ G. Chiarelli,^{47a} G. Chlachidze,¹⁸ F. Chlebana,¹⁸ K. Cho,⁶² D. Chokheli,¹⁶ J. P. Chou,²³ G. Choudalakis,³³ S. H. Chuang,⁵³ K. Chung,^{18,p} W. H. Chung,⁶⁰ Y. S. Chung,⁵⁰ T. Chwalek,²⁷ C. I. Ciobanu,⁴⁵ M. A. Ciocci,^{47c,47a} A. Clark,²¹ D. Clark,⁷ G. Compostella,^{44a} M. E. Convery,¹⁸ J. Conway,⁸ M. Cordelli,²⁰ G. Cortiana,^{44b,44a} C. A. Cox,⁸ D. J. Cox,⁸ F. Crescioli,^{47b,47a} C. Cuenca Almenar,^{8,w} J. Cuevas,^{12,u} R. Culbertson,¹⁸ J. C. Cully,³⁵ D. Dagenhart,¹⁸ M. Datta,¹⁸ T. Davies,²² P. de Barbaro,⁵⁰ S. De Cecco,^{52a} A. Deisher,²⁹ G. De Lorenzo,⁴ M. Dell'Orso,^{47b,47a} C. Deluca,⁴ L. Demortier,⁵¹ J. Deng,¹⁷ M. Deninno,^{6a} P. F. Derwent,¹⁸ A. Di Canto,^{47b,47a} G. P. di Giovanni,⁴⁵ C. Dionisi,^{52b,52a} B. Di Ruzza,^{55b,55a} J. R. Dittmann,⁵ M. D'Onofrio,⁴ S. Donati,^{47b,47a} P. Dong,⁹ J. Donini,^{44a} T. Dorigo,^{44a} S. Dube,⁵³ J. Efron,⁴⁰ A. Elagin,⁵⁴ R. Erbacher,⁸ D. Errede,²⁵ S. Errede,²⁵ R. Eusebi,¹⁸ H. C. Fang,²⁹ S. Farrington,⁴³ W. T. Fedorko,¹⁴ R. G. Feild,⁶¹ M. Feindt,²⁷ J. P. Fernandez,³² C. Ferrazza,^{47d,47a} R. Field,¹⁹ G. Flanagan,⁴⁹ R. Forrest,⁸ M. J. Frank,⁵ M. Franklin,²³ J. C. Freeman,¹⁸ I. Furic,¹⁹ M. Gallinaro,^{52a} J. Galyardt,¹³ F. Garbersson,¹¹ J. E. Garcia,²¹ A. F. Garfinkel,⁴⁹ P. Garosi,^{47c,47a} K. Genser,¹⁸ H. Gerberich,²⁵ D. Gerdes,³⁵ A. Gessler,²⁷ S. Giagu,^{52b,52a} V. Giakoumopoulou,³ P. Giannetti,^{47a} K. Gibson,⁴⁸ J. L. Gimmell,⁵⁰ C. M. Ginsburg,¹⁸ N. Giokaris,³ M. Giordani,^{55b,55a} P. Giromini,²⁰ M. Giunta,^{47a} G. Giurgiu,²⁶ V. Glagolev,¹⁶ D. Glenzinski,¹⁸ M. Gold,³⁸ N. Goldschmidt,¹⁹ A. Golossanov,¹⁸ G. Gomez,¹² G. Gomez-Ceballos,³³ M. Goncharov,³³ O. González,³² I. Gorelov,³⁸ A. T. Goshaw,¹⁷ K. Goulianos,⁵¹ A. Gresele,^{44b,44a} S. Grinstein,²³ C. Grosso-Pilcher,¹⁴ R. C. Group,¹⁸ U. Grundler,²⁵ J. Guimaraes da Costa,²³ Z. Gunay-Unalan,³⁶ C. Haber,²⁹ K. Hahn,³³ S. R. Hahn,¹⁸ E. Halkiadakis,⁵³ B.-Y. Han,⁵⁰ J. Y. Han,⁵⁰ F. Happacher,²⁰ K. Hara,⁵⁶ D. Hare,⁵³ M. Hare,⁵⁷ S. Harper,⁴³ R. F. Harr,⁵⁹ R. M. Harris,¹⁸ M. Hartz,⁴⁸ K. Hatakeyama,⁵¹ C. Hays,⁴³ M. Heck,²⁷ A. Heijboer,⁴⁶ J. Heinrich,⁴⁶ C. Henderson,³³ M. Herndon,⁶⁰ J. Heuser,²⁷ S. Hewamanage,⁵ D. Hidas,¹⁷ C. S. Hill,^{11,d} D. Hirschbuehl,²⁷ A. Hocker,¹⁸ S. Hou,¹ M. Houlden,³⁰ S.-C. Hsu,²⁹ B. T. Huffman,⁴³ R. E. Hughes,⁴⁰ U. Husemann,⁶¹ M. Hussein,³⁶ J. Huston,³⁶ J. Incandela,¹¹ G. Introzzi,^{47a} M. Iori,^{52b,52a} A. Ivanov,⁸ E. James,¹⁸ D. Jang,¹³ B. Jayatilaka,¹⁷ E. J. Jeon,⁶² M. K. Jha,^{6a} S. Jindariani,¹⁸ W. Johnson,⁸ M. Jones,⁴⁹ K. K. Joo,⁶² S. Y. Jun,¹³ J. E. Jung,⁶² T. R. Junk,¹⁸ T. Kamon,⁵⁴ D. Kar,¹⁹ P. E. Karchin,⁵⁹ Y. Kato,^{42,n} R. Kephart,¹⁸ W. Ketchum,¹⁴ J. Keung,⁴⁶ V. Khotilovich,⁵⁴ B. Kilminster,¹⁸ D. H. Kim,⁶² H. S. Kim,⁶² H. W. Kim,⁶² J. E. Kim,⁶² M. J. Kim,²⁰ S. B. Kim,⁶² S. H. Kim,⁵⁶ Y. K. Kim,¹⁴ N. Kimura,⁵⁶ L. Kirsch,⁷ S. Klimentenko,¹⁹ B. Knuteson,³³ B. R. Ko,¹⁷ K. Kondo,⁵⁸ D. J. Kong,⁶² J. Konigsberg,¹⁹ A. Korytov,¹⁹ A. V. Kotwal,¹⁷ M. Kreps,²⁷ J. Kroll,⁴⁶ D. Krop,¹⁴ N. Krumnack,⁵ M. Kruse,¹⁷ V. Krutelyov,¹¹ T. Kubo,⁵⁶ T. Kuhr,²⁷ N. P. Kulkarni,⁵⁹ M. Kurata,⁵⁶ S. Kwang,¹⁴ A. T. Laasanen,⁴⁹ S. Lami,^{47a} S. Lammel,¹⁸ M. Lancaster,³¹ R. L. Lander,⁸ K. Lannon,^{40,t} A. Lath,⁵³ G. Latino,^{47c,47a} I. Lazzizzera,^{44b,44a} T. LeCompte,² E. Lee,⁵⁴ H. S. Lee,¹⁴ S. W. Lee,^{54,v} S. Leone,^{47a} J. D. Lewis,¹⁸ C.-S. Lin,²⁹ J. Linacre,⁴³ M. Lindgren,¹⁸ E. Lipeles,⁴⁶ A. Lister,⁸ D. O. Litvintsev,¹⁸ C. Liu,⁴⁸ T. Liu,¹⁸ N. S. Lockyer,⁴⁶ A. Loginov,⁶¹ M. Loretì,^{44b,44a} L. Lovas,¹⁵ D. Lucchesi,^{44b,44a} C. Luci,^{52b,52a} J. Lueck,²⁷ P. Lujan,²⁹ P. Lukens,¹⁸ G. Lungu,⁵¹ L. Lyons,⁴³ J. Lys,²⁹ R. Lysak,¹⁵ D. MacQueen,³⁴ R. Madrak,¹⁸ K. Maeshima,¹⁸ K. Makhoul,³³ T. Maki,²⁴ P. Maksimovic,²⁶ S. Malde,⁴³ S. Malik,³¹ G. Manca,^{30,f} A. Manousakis-Katsikakis,³ F. Margaroli,⁴⁹ C. Marino,²⁷ C. P. Marino,²⁵ A. Martin,⁶¹ V. Martin,^{22,1} M. Martínez,⁴ R. Martínez-Ballarín,³² T. Maruyama,⁵⁶ P. Mastrandrea,^{52a} T. Masubuchi,⁵⁶ M. Mathis,²⁶ M. E. Mattson,⁵⁹ P. Mazzanti,^{6a} K. S. McFarland,⁵⁰ P. McIntyre,⁵⁴ R. McNulty,^{30,k} A. Mehta,³⁰ P. Mehtala,²⁴ A. Menzione,^{47a} P. Merkel,⁴⁹ C. Mesropian,⁵¹ T. Miao,¹⁸ N. Miladinovic,⁷ R. Miller,³⁶ C. Mills,²³ M. Milnik,²⁷ A. Mitra,¹ G. Mitselmakher,¹⁹ H. Miyake,⁵⁶ N. Moggi,^{6a} M. N. Mondragon,^{18,o} C. S. Moon,⁶² R. Moore,¹⁸ M. J. Morello,^{47a} J. Morlock,²⁷ P. Movilla Fernandez,¹⁸ J. Mülmenstädt,²⁹ A. Mukherjee,¹⁸

Th. Muller,²⁷ R. Mumford,²⁶ P. Murat,¹⁸ M. Mussini,^{6b,6a} J. Nachtman,^{18,p} Y. Nagai,⁵⁶ A. Nagano,⁵⁶ J. Naganoma,⁵⁶ K. Nakamura,⁵⁶ I. Nakano,⁴¹ A. Napier,⁵⁷ V. Necula,¹⁷ J. Nett,⁶⁰ C. Neu,^{46,x} M. S. Neubauer,²⁵ S. Neubauer,²⁷ J. Nielsen,^{29,h} L. Nodulman,² M. Norman,¹⁰ O. Norniella,²⁵ E. Nurse,³¹ L. Oakes,⁴³ S. H. Oh,¹⁷ Y. D. Oh,⁶² I. Oksuzian,¹⁹ T. Okusawa,⁴² R. Orava,²⁴ K. Osterberg,²⁴ S. Pagan Griso,^{44b,44a} C. Pagliarone,^{55a} E. Palencia,¹⁸ V. Papadimitriou,¹⁸ A. Papaikonomou,²⁷ A. A. Paramonov,¹⁴ B. Parks,⁴⁰ S. Pashapour,³⁴ J. Patrick,¹⁸ G. Pauletta,^{55b,55a} M. Paulini,¹³ C. Paus,³³ T. Peiffer,²⁷ D. E. Pellett,⁸ A. Penzo,^{55a} T. J. Phillips,¹⁷ G. Piacentino,^{47a} E. Pianori,⁴⁶ L. Pinera,¹⁹ K. Pitts,²⁵ C. Plager,⁹ L. Pondrom,⁶⁰ O. Poukhov,^{16,a} N. Pounder,⁴³ F. Prakoshyn,¹⁶ A. Pronko,¹⁸ J. Proudfoot,² F. Ptohos,^{18,j} E. Pueschel,¹³ G. Punzi,^{47b,47a} J. Pursley,⁶⁰ J. Rademacker,^{43,d} A. Rahaman,⁴⁸ V. Ramakrishnan,⁶⁰ N. Ranjan,⁴⁹ I. Redondo,³² P. Renton,⁴³ M. Renz,²⁷ M. Rescigno,^{52a} S. Richter,²⁷ F. Rimondi,^{6b,6a} L. Ristori,^{47a} A. Robson,²² T. Rodrigo,¹² T. Rodriguez,⁴⁶ E. Rogers,²⁵ S. Rolli,⁵⁷ R. Roser,¹⁸ M. Rossi,^{55a} R. Rossin,¹¹ P. Roy,³⁴ A. Ruiz,¹² J. Russ,¹³ V. Rusu,¹⁸ B. Rutherford,¹⁸ H. Saarikko,²⁴ A. Safonov,⁵⁴ W. K. Sakumoto,⁵⁰ O. Saltó,⁴ L. Santi,^{55b,55a} S. Sarkar,^{52b,52a} L. Sartori,^{47a} K. Sato,¹⁸ A. Savoy-Navarro,⁴⁵ P. Schlabach,¹⁸ A. Schmidt,²⁷ E. E. Schmidt,¹⁸ M. A. Schmidt,¹⁴ M. P. Schmidt,^{61,a} M. Schmitt,³⁹ T. Schwarz,⁸ L. Scodellaro,¹² A. Scribano,^{47c,47a} F. Scuri,^{47a} A. Sedov,⁴⁹ S. Seidel,³⁸ Y. Seiya,⁴² A. Semenov,¹⁶ L. Sexton-Kennedy,¹⁸ F. Sforza,^{47b,47a} A. Sfyrla,²⁵ S. Z. Shalhout,⁵⁹ T. Shears,³⁰ P. F. Shepard,⁴⁸ M. Shimojima,^{56,s} S. Shiraishi,¹⁴ M. Shochet,¹⁴ Y. Shon,⁶⁰ I. Shreyber,³⁷ P. Sinervo,³⁴ A. Sisakyan,¹⁶ A. J. Slaughter,¹⁸ J. Slaunwhite,⁴⁰ K. Sliwa,⁵⁷ J. R. Smith,⁸ F. D. Snider,¹⁸ R. Snihur,³⁴ A. Soha,⁸ S. Somalwar,⁵³ V. Sorin,³⁶ T. Spreitzer,³⁴ P. Squillacioti,^{47c,47a} M. Stanitzki,⁶¹ R. St. Denis,²² B. Stelzer,³⁴ O. Stelzer-Chilton,³⁴ D. Stentz,³⁹ J. Strologas,³⁸ G. L. Strycker,³⁵ J. S. Suh,⁶² A. Sukhanov,¹⁹ I. Suslov,¹⁶ T. Suzuki,⁵⁶ A. Taffard,^{25,g} R. Takashima,⁴¹ Y. Takeuchi,⁵⁶ R. Tanaka,⁴¹ M. Tecchio,³⁵ P. K. Teng,¹ K. Terashi,⁵¹ J. Thom,^{18,i} A. S. Thompson,²² G. A. Thompson,²⁵ E. Thomson,⁴⁶ P. Tipton,⁶¹ P. Tito-Guzmán,³² S. Tkaczyk,¹⁸ D. Toback,⁵⁴ S. Tokar,¹⁵ K. Tollefson,³⁶ T. Tomura,⁵⁶ D. Tonelli,¹⁸ S. Torre,²⁰ D. Torretta,¹⁸ P. Totaro,^{55b,55a} S. Tourneur,⁴⁵ M. Trovato,^{47d,47a} S.-Y. Tsai,¹ Y. Tu,⁴⁶ N. Turini,^{47c,47a} F. Ukegawa,⁵⁶ S. Vallecorsa,²¹ N. van Remortel,^{24,c} A. Varganov,³⁵ E. Vataga,^{47d,47a} F. Vázquez,^{19,o} G. Velev,¹⁸ C. Vellidis,³ M. Vidal,³² R. Vidal,¹⁸ I. Vila,¹² R. Vilar,¹² T. Vine,³¹ M. Vogel,³⁸ I. Volobouev,^{29,v} G. Volpi,^{47b,47a} P. Wagner,⁴⁶ R. G. Wagner,² R. L. Wagner,¹⁸ W. Wagner,^{27,y} J. Wagner-Kuhr,²⁷ T. Wakisaka,⁴² R. Wallny,⁹ S. M. Wang,¹ A. Warburton,³⁴ D. Waters,³¹ M. Weinberger,⁵⁴ J. Weinelt,²⁷ W. C. Wester III,¹⁸ B. Whitehouse,⁵⁷ D. Whiteson,^{46,g} A. B. Wicklund,² E. Wicklund,¹⁸ S. Wilbur,¹⁴ G. Williams,³⁴ H. H. Williams,⁴⁶ P. Wilson,¹⁸ B. L. Winer,⁴⁰ P. Wittich,^{18,i} S. Wolbers,¹⁸ C. Wolfe,¹⁴ T. Wright,³⁵ X. Wu,²¹ F. Würthwein,¹⁰ S. Xie,³³ A. Yagil,¹⁰ K. Yamamoto,⁴² J. Yamaoka,¹⁷ U. K. Yang,^{14,r} Y. C. Yang,⁶² W. M. Yao,²⁹ G. P. Yeh,¹⁸ K. Yi,^{18,p} J. Yoh,¹⁸ K. Yorita,⁵⁸ T. Yoshida,^{42,m} G. B. Yu,⁵⁰ I. Yu,⁶² S. S. Yu,¹⁸ J. C. Yun,¹⁸ L. Zanello,^{52b,52a} A. Zanetti,^{55a} X. Zhang,²⁵ Y. Zheng,^{9,e} and S. Zucchelli^{6b,6a}

(CDF Collaboration)

¹*Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan 11529, Republic of China*²*Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, Illinois 60439, USA*³*University of Athens, 157 71 Athens, Greece*⁴*Institut de Física d'Altes Energies, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, E-08193, Bellaterra (Barcelona), Spain*⁵*Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798, USA*^{6a}*Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare Bologna, I-40127 Bologna, Italy*^{6b}*University of Bologna, I-40127 Bologna, Italy*⁷*Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts 02254, USA*⁸*University of California, Davis, Davis, California 95616, USA*⁹*University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California 90024, USA*¹⁰*University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, California 92093, USA*¹¹*University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California 93106, USA*¹²*Instituto de Física de Cantabria, CSIC-University of Cantabria, 39005 Santander, Spain*¹³*Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213, USA*¹⁴*Enrico Fermi Institute, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois 60637, USA*¹⁵*Comenius University, 842 48 Bratislava, Slovakia; Institute of Experimental Physics, 040 01 Kosice, Slovakia*¹⁶*Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, RU-141980 Dubna, Russia*¹⁷*Duke University, Durham, North Carolina 27708, USA*¹⁸*Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, Illinois 60510, USA*¹⁹*University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611, USA*²⁰*Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, I-00044 Frascati, Italy*²¹*University of Geneva, CH-1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland*²²*Glasgow University, Glasgow G12 8QQ, United Kingdom*

- ²³Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138, USA
- ²⁴Division of High Energy Physics, Department of Physics, University of Helsinki and Helsinki Institute of Physics, FIN-00014, Helsinki, Finland
- ²⁵University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois 61801, USA
- ²⁶The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland 21218, USA
- ²⁷Institut für Experimentelle Kernphysik, Universität Karlsruhe, 76128 Karlsruhe, Germany
- ²⁸Center 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; Chonbuk National University, Jeonju 561-756, Korea
- ²⁹Ernest Orlando Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley, California 94720, USA
- ³⁰University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 7ZE, United Kingdom
- ³¹University College London, London WC1E 6BT, United Kingdom
- ³²Centro de Investigaciones Energeticas Medioambientales y Tecnologicas, E-28040 Madrid, Spain
- ³³Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, USA
- ³⁴Institute 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
- ³⁵University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109, USA
- ³⁶Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824, USA
- ³⁷Institution for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, ITEP, Moscow 117259, Russia
- ³⁸University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131, USA
- ³⁹Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois 60208, USA
- ⁴⁰The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210, USA
- ⁴¹Okayama University, Okayama 700-8530, Japan
- ⁴²Osaka City University, Osaka 588, Japan
- ⁴³University of Oxford, Oxford OX1 3RH, United Kingdom
- ^{44a}Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Sezione di Padova-Trento, I-35131 Padova, Italy
- ^{44b}University of Padova, I-35131 Padova, Italy
- ⁴⁵LPNHE, Universite Pierre et Marie Curie/IN2P3-CNRS, UMR7585, Paris, F-75252 France
- ⁴⁶University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104, USA
- ^{47a}Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare Pisa, I-56127 Pisa, Italy
- ^{47b}University of Pisa, I-56127 Pisa, Italy
- ^{47c}University of Siena, I-56127 Pisa, Italy
- ^{47d}Scuola Normale Superiore, I-56127 Pisa, Italy
- ⁴⁸University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260, USA
- ⁴⁹Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907, USA
- ⁵⁰University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627, USA
- ⁵¹The Rockefeller University, New York, New York 10021, USA
- ^{52a}Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Sezione di Roma 1, I-00185 Roma, Italy
- ^{52b}Sapienza Università di Roma, I-00185 Roma, Italy
- ⁵³Rutgers University, Piscataway, New Jersey 08855, USA
- ⁵⁴Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843, USA
- ^{55a}Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare Trieste/Udine, I-34100 Trieste, Italy
- ^{55b}University of Trieste/Udine, I-33100 Udine, Italy
- ⁵⁶University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305, Japan
- ⁵⁷Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts 02155, USA
- ⁵⁸Waseda University, Tokyo 169, Japan
- ⁵⁹Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan 48201, USA
- ⁶⁰University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706, USA
- ⁶¹Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut 06520, USA
- ⁶²Center 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

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We present the results of a search for Higgs bosons predicted in two-Higgs-doublet models, in the case where the Higgs bosons decay to tau lepton pairs, using 1.8 fb^{-1} of integrated luminosity of $p\bar{p}$ collisions recorded by the CDF II experiment at the Fermilab Tevatron. Studying the mass distribution in events where one or both tau leptons decay leptonically, no evidence for a Higgs boson signal is observed. The result is used to infer exclusion limits in the two-dimensional space of $\tan\beta$ versus m_A (the ratio of the vacuum expectation values of the two Higgs doublets and the mass of the pseudoscalar boson, respectively).

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Understanding the origin of electroweak symmetry breaking is one of the central goals of particle physics. The Higgs mechanism [1] in the standard model (SM) provides a possible explanation, but the calculated mass of the Higgs boson suffers from large radiative corrections. Remedies for this problem such as supersymmetry [2] require at least two Higgs doublets [3] and result in a more complicated Higgs boson sector than that of the SM. The minimal supersymmetric standard model (MSSM) [4] predicts the existence of three neutral Higgs bosons. The MSSM is an example of a Type II two-Higgs-doublet model (Type II 2HDM) in which there is a light scalar h , a heavy scalar H , and a pseudoscalar A . The masses of these states are governed mainly by two parameters in the theory, usually taken to be $\tan\beta$, the ratio of the vacuum expectation values of the two Higgs doublets, and m_A , the mass of the pseudoscalar.

In $p\bar{p}$ collisions at 1.96 TeV center of mass energy at the Fermilab Tevatron, Type II 2HDM Higgs bosons would be predominantly produced by gluon-gluon fusion through a b quark loop [5] or by $b\bar{b}$ fusion [6]. The couplings and masses of the Higgs bosons are such that if $\tan\beta$ is greater than about 20 and m_A is smaller (greater) than about $125 \text{ GeV}/c^2$, one finds that the h (H) and A are degenerate in mass to within a few GeV/c^2 , and are produced with a cross section proportional to $\tan^2\beta$, while the production of H (h) is suppressed.

These $\tan^2\beta$ -enhanced production cross sections can be in the range 0.1–10 pb depending on the Higgs boson masses, and are orders of magnitude greater than the corresponding ones for a SM Higgs boson and also the more familiar associated production modes of a SM Higgs boson with a vector boson. The Higgs bosons decay to fermion pairs with a partial width proportional to the fermion mass squared; thus the decays $\phi \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ and $\phi \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$ (with $\phi = h, A, H$) predominate, with the branching ratio to $b\bar{b}$ approximately 90% and the branching ratio to $\tau^+\tau^-$ about 9% for $m_A > 100 \text{ GeV}/c^2$.

This Letter presents the results of a search for the production of Higgs bosons in Type II 2HDM such as the MSSM, using data collected with the CDF II detector at the Fermilab Tevatron $p\bar{p}$ collider corresponding to 1.8 fb^{-1} of integrated luminosity. Full details of the analysis are available elsewhere [7]; this result supersedes our previ-

ously published result [8], and is similar to the search performed by the D0 Collaboration [9]. The analysis is sensitive to a region of MSSM parameter space which is complementary to that explored by the LEP 2 experiments [10].

The analysis presented here uses the tau pair decay modes, since it is possible to efficiently trigger on and reconstruct the leptons in decays of the tau lepton to $e\nu\bar{\nu}$ or $\mu\nu\bar{\nu}$. Indeed, despite the $10\times$ larger branching ratio to $b\bar{b}$, the search in the tau mode is more sensitive because the SM background is much smaller.

CDF II [11] is a general-purpose detector with an overall cylindrical geometry surrounding the $p\bar{p}$ interaction region. The three-dimensional trajectories of charged particles produced in $p\bar{p}$ collisions are measured at small radii ($<30 \text{ cm}$) using multiple layers of silicon microstrip detectors, and at outer radii ($>30 \text{ cm}$) with a multiwire drift chamber. The tracking system is inside a solenoidal magnet with uniform 1.4 T magnetic field oriented along the beam direction. Outside the solenoid are the electromagnetic and hadronic calorimeters, which are segmented in pseudorapidity (η) and azimuth in a projective “tower” geometry [12]. A set of strip and wire chambers located at a depth of six radiation lengths aids in identifying photons and electrons from the electromagnetic shower shape. Muons are identified by a system of drift chambers and scintillators placed outside the calorimeter steel, which acts as an absorber for hadrons. The integrated luminosity of the $p\bar{p}$ collisions is measured using Čerenkov luminosity counters [13].

We seek events with tau pairs where one or both taus decay leptonically (excluding e^+e^- and $\mu^+\mu^-$ which suffer from excessive background from Z/γ^* production). These final states are denoted $e + \tau$, $\mu + \tau$, and $e + \mu$ (where “ τ ” here means the reconstructed hadronic part of a tau decay). Events with a high- p_T (8 GeV/c or more) e or μ candidate plus a high- p_T charged track (5 GeV/c or more) or a second e or μ (4 GeV/c or more) are identified using high-speed trigger electronics and are recorded for later analysis. The performance of the trigger and lepton identification algorithms is described in detail elsewhere [14,15].

The reconstruction of hadronic decays of tau leptons [16] relies on defining tau signal and isolation region cones

centered around seed tracks having $p_T > 6$ GeV/ c ; we demand one or three charged tracks in the tau cone, and include in addition any π^0 candidates. The main way to discriminate between hadronic tau lepton decays and hadronic jets from quantum chromodynamic processes is to demand no additional charged tracks or π^0 candidates in an isolation annulus outside the tau signal cone but within 30° of the tau seed track. The half-angle of the tau signal cone decreases with increasing visible tau energy due to the Lorentz boost of the tau lepton, further aiding the discrimination of taus from jets. Additional suppression of hadronic jets comes from imposing a mass requirement on the tau candidate decay products. Electrons and muons are removed using information from the calorimeters and muon detectors.

To select the $e + \tau$ and $\mu + \tau$ events we require an isolated e or μ with $p_T > 10$ GeV/ c , and a τ with visible hadronic decay products with total $p_T > 15$ GeV/ c (20 GeV/ c for three-charged-pion decays). For the $e + \mu$ channel we require one lepton to have $p_T > 10$ GeV/ c and the other to have $p_T > 6$ GeV/ c .

The main SM contributions to the selected event sample include $Z/\gamma^* \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$, and $W + \text{jet}$ events where $W \rightarrow \ell\nu$ (with $\ell = e, \mu$) and the hadronic jet is misidentified as a hadronically decaying τ . The $W + \text{jet}$ events are largely removed by requiring that the missing transverse energy \vec{E}_T not point along the direction opposite the momentum of the $\ell + \tau$ system. The remaining $W + \text{jet}$ background, and all other background stemming from jets misreconstructed as taus (“fakes”) is estimated from events recorded with a jet trigger. There are small contributions from $Z \rightarrow e^+e^-$, $Z \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-$, diboson, and $t\bar{t}$ production.

The acceptances for signal and the nonfake backgrounds are estimated from samples of simulated events produced by the PYTHIA event generator [17] with CTEQ5L [18] parton distribution functions. The Higgs boson widths and masses are those for an MSSM model with $\tan\beta = 50$. Tau decays are simulated by the TAUOLA package [19]. A GEANT-based [20] model simulates the interactions of all final-state particles in the detector.

TABLE I. Mean expected SM backgrounds and observed numbers of selected events in the final sample. The uncertainties include all systematic effects, some of which are correlated.

Background	$e + \mu$	$e + \tau$	$\mu + \tau$
$Z/\gamma^* \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$	605 ± 51	1378 ± 117	1353 ± 116
$Z/\gamma^* \rightarrow e^+e^-$	1.5 ± 1.2	70 ± 10	negl.
$Z/\gamma^* \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-$	17.9 ± 4.5	negl.	107 ± 13
dibosons	11.4 ± 3.7	4.2 ± 2.1	3.3 ± 1.8
$t\bar{t}$	9.1 ± 3.3	4.0 ± 2.1	3.3 ± 1.9
$W + \text{jet, multijet}$	57.1 ± 13.5	467 ± 73	285 ± 46
Total	702 ± 55	1922 ± 141	1752 ± 129
Observed	726	1979	1666

Table I shows the mean expected contributions of SM sources, and the number of observed events in the three channels. The uncertainties listed include all systematic effects discussed below, including correlations.

To discriminate a Higgs boson signal from the backgrounds, we perform a binned likelihood fit of background and signal to the observed distribution of the “visible mass” m_{vis} , derived from the sum of the observed lepton four-momenta and the missing transverse energy. The observed distribution of this quantity is dominated by the effects of the missing neutrino energy in the tau decays and experimental resolution. Figure 1 shows the observed and fit distributions for the search channels, including the contribution from a Higgs boson signal as described below.

Various uncertainties limit the sensitivity of our search. The one with the largest effect is due to the imprecisely known tau energy. The distribution of the observed transverse momentum of the τ in $W \rightarrow \tau\nu$ events constrains the ratio of the reconstructed tau energy in the observed events to that in the simulation to less than 1%, but the residual uncertainty allows for shifts in the background m_{vis} spectra mimicking a Higgs boson signal, particularly for the lower masses considered ($m_A < 140$ GeV/ c^2). At larger Higgs boson masses the search sensitivity is limited more by other systematic effects considered, including the lepton trigger and identification uncertainties (2.4% for electrons, 2.7% for muons, and 4.2% for hadronically decaying taus), the uncertainty in the integrated luminosity (6%),

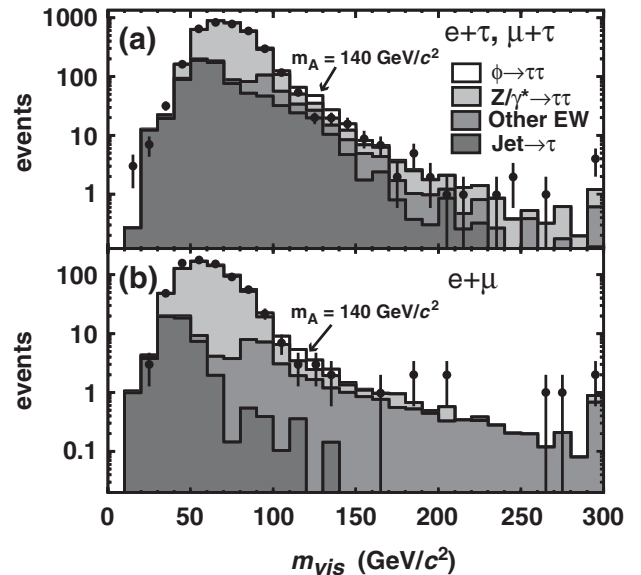


FIG. 1. Observed and predicted distributions of m_{vis} for the $e + \tau$ and $\mu + \tau$ channels (a) and $e + \mu$ channel (b). The predicted signal distribution (for $\phi = h/A/H$) corresponds to that for the $m_A = 140$ GeV/ c^2 signal assuming a value of the cross section excluded at 95% C.L. Note that in each plot the last bin is an overflow bin. Here “Other EW” refers to all SM backgrounds other than $Z/\gamma^* \rightarrow \tau\tau$ and background arising from jet $\rightarrow \tau$ misidentification.

TABLE II. Observed 95% C.L. upper limits, and median expected limits under the null hypothesis on the Higgs boson production cross section times branching ratio σB versus m_A .

m_A GeV/ c^2	Median expected limit (pb)	Observed limit (pb)
90	28.115	28.978
100	19.884	23.465
110	9.382	11.063
120	5.447	5.288
130	3.374	2.770
140	2.340	1.812
150	1.751	1.392
160	1.400	1.198
170	1.124	1.051
180	0.933	0.880
190	0.782	0.808
200	0.707	0.709
230	0.470	0.505
250	0.379	0.451

$Z \rightarrow \tau^+ \tau^-$ cross section (2.2%), and Higgs boson production cross section (5.7%) [21].

We represent all the systematic uncertainties by Gaussian-constrained nuisance parameters in the likelihood, and eliminate these parameters by maximizing the likelihood with respect to them. This procedure is numerically nearly identical to eliminating them by Bayesian marginalization with a Gaussian prior density, which takes much longer to compute.

The resulting likelihood is calculated as a function of the Higgs boson signal cross section times branching ratio to tau pairs σB , and then converted to a posterior density in σB assuming a uniform prior density. We exclude with 95% C.L. any σB above which 5% of the posterior probability lies.

The likelihood as a function of σB reveals no evidence for the presence of a Higgs boson signal, and all nuisance parameters remain consistent with their nominal values. Figure 1 and other kinematic distributions not shown in this Letter all reveal excellent agreement of the observed distributions with the predictions. We therefore proceed to use the null result to infer upper limits on the Higgs boson production cross section.

Table II lists the observed 95% C.L. upper limits on σB , and the median upper limits expected under the null hypothesis. Figure 2 depicts the results, including $\pm 1\sigma$ and $\pm 2\sigma$ ranges for the expected limits. We note that these bounds would apply to any scalar with similar production kinematics decaying to tau pairs. The Higgs boson signal distribution shown in Fig. 1 corresponds to that excluded at 95% C.L. for $m_A = 140$ GeV/ c^2 .

We can interpret the upper limits on σB in the context of the MSSM parameters $\tan\beta$ and m_A . The resulting excluded regions are shown in Fig. 3 for various assumptions

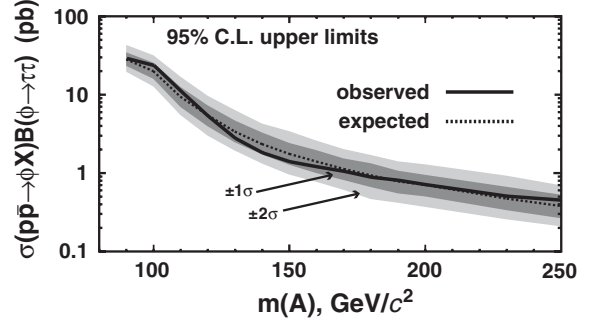


FIG. 2. Observed 95% C.L. upper limits on the cross section for $\phi = h/A/H$ production as a function of m_A . The grey bands show the median expected limit under the null hypothesis, and indicate the $\pm 1\sigma$ and $\pm 2\sigma$ standard-deviation ranges.

about the sign of the Higgsino mass parameter μ and two extremes for the nature of scalar top mixing [22], denoted m_h^{\max} and “no mixing.” The excluded regions are the most stringent published to date in the high $\tan\beta$ region, and are remarkably insensitive to changes in theoretical assumptions due to cancellation of effects in the Higgs boson production and decay [23].

In summary, we have used a sample of data from the Tevatron collider recorded by the CDF II detector corresponding to 1.8 fb^{-1} of integrated luminosity to search for Higgs bosons predicted in two-Higgs-doublet models, via the Higgs boson decays to tau lepton pairs. No evidence for a Higgs boson signal is observed, and we use the null result to infer cross sections excluded at the 95% C.L. as a

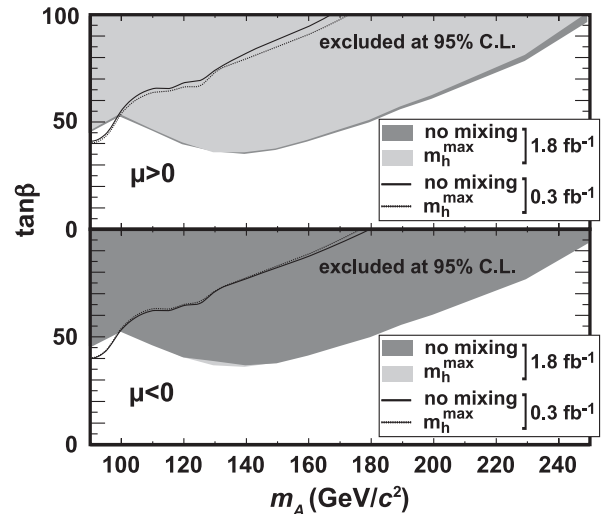


FIG. 3. Regions in the MSSM plane of $\tan\beta$ versus m_A excluded at 95% C.L. assuming heavy ($\sim 1 \text{ TeV}/c^2$) sfermions. The top panel shows excluded regions for Higgsino mass parameter $\mu > 0$, and the bottom panel shows excluded regions for $\mu < 0$. Each panel shows the slightly different excluded regions for two scalar top mixing scenarios. The solid and dashed curves show the previously published bounds [8].

function of the Higgs mass, and 95% C.L. excluded regions of the MSSM parameter space $\tan\beta$ versus m_A .

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^aDeceased.

^bVisitor from University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA 01003, USA.

^cVisitor from Universiteit Antwerpen, B-2610 Antwerp, Belgium.

^dVisitor from University of Bristol, Bristol BS8 1TL, United Kingdom.

^eVisitor from Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100864, China.

^fVisitor from Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Sezione di Cagliari, 09042 Monserrato (Cagliari), Italy.

^gVisitor from University of California Irvine, Irvine, CA 92697, USA.

^hVisitor from University of California Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, USA.

ⁱVisitor from Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, USA.

^jVisitor from University of Cyprus, Nicosia CY-1678, Cyprus.

^kVisitor from University College Dublin, Dublin 4, Ireland.

^lVisitor from University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH9 3JZ, United Kingdom.

^mVisitor from University of Fukui, Fukui City, Fukui Prefecture, Japan 910-0017.

ⁿVisitor from Kinki University, Higashi-Osaka City, Japan 577-8502.

^oVisitor from Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico D.F., Mexico.

^pVisitor from University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242, USA.

^qVisitor from Queen Mary, University of London, London, E1 4NS, England.

^rVisitor from University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, England.

^sVisitor from Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science, Nagasaki, Japan.

^tVisitor from University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556, USA.

^uVisitor from University de Oviedo, E-33007 Oviedo, Spain.

^vVisitor from Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79609, USA.

^wVisitor from IFIC(CSIC-Universitat de Valencia), 46071 Valencia, Spain.

^xVisitor from University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22904, USA.

^yVisitor from Bergische Universität Wuppertal, 42097 Wuppertal, Germany.

^zOn leave from J. Stefan Institute, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

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