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Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/05s005w7

Journal
Physical review letters, 68(1)

ISSN
0031-9007

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Publication Date
1992

DOI
10.1103/physrevlett.68.13

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Search for the Production of the Final States $\tau^+\tau^-e^+e^-$, $\tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^-$, and $\tau^+\tau^-\pi^+\pi^-$ in $e^+e^-$ Collisions at $\sqrt{s}=29$ GeV


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(Received 16 August 1991)

We have searched for the reaction $e^+e^-\rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-ff$, where $f$ is either an electron, muon, or charged pion, at $\sqrt{s}=29$ GeV using the Mark II detector at the SLAC storage ring PEP. One candidate event is found while 2.3 events are expected from known processes. We would expect to see 11 events if the cross section for $e^+e^-\rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-ff$ at $\sqrt{s}=29$ GeV were enhanced by the factor of 4.7 which the ALEPH Collaboration reports for $\sqrt{s}=91$ GeV. We also look for $e^+e^-\rightarrow e^+e^-ff$ and $e^+e^-\rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-ff$, and for $e^+e^-\rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-\gamma$, using a similar analysis procedure, and see the number of events predicted by the standard model.

PACS numbers: 13.10.+q, 13.65.+i

The ALEPH Collaboration has recently reported an anomalously large number of events of the type

$$e^+e^-\rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-ff, \quad f=e^-,\mu^-,\pi^+, \quad \text{at } \sqrt{s}=91 \text{ GeV} \ [1].$$

An excess of $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ events is seen in comparisons both of the observed number of $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ events with the standard model prediction for the absolute rate and of the number of $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ events relative to $e^+e^-ff$ and $\mu^+\mu^-ff$ events. In this paper we report a search for events of the type $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ at $\sqrt{s}=29$ GeV using 205 pb$^{-1}$ of data collected by the Mark II detector at the SLAC storage ring PEP.

Selecting four lepton candidates.—The Mark II detector has been described previously [2]. The drift-chamber charged-particle tracking systems covered the central 85% of the solid angle. The lead-liquid-argon electromagnetic calorimeter covered 65% of the solid angle. We used tracks which satisfy the following requirements. Charged tracks must have a momentum in the plane perpendicular to the beam axis greater than 0.08 GeV/c. An energy cluster in the calorimeter is treated as an independent neutral track if it has an energy greater than 0.2 GeV and is not associated with a charged track by the calorimeter-cluster-reconstruction algorithm.

Candidate events must have four or six charged tracks with total charge equal to zero. The total number of tracks, charged and neutral, must be no greater than ten. We require that no pair of charged particles be consistent with photon conversion [3]. The total energy in an event, defined to be the sum of the energies of all charged and neutral tracks, must be greater than 9 and less than 27 GeV. This favors the type of events we desire (we discuss this event type in detail below). The thrust axis is calculated using all charged and neutral tracks. To ensure our ability to simulate the detector response, we require that the absolute value of the cosine of the angle between the thrust axis and the beam axis be less than 0.74.

Selecting $\tau^+\tau^-V$ candidates.—The remainder of our analysis consists of testing the hypothesis that the event was produced by the reaction $e^+e^-\rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-ff$. We note here that the following selection procedure was tuned on a sample of $\tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^-$ Monte Carlo [4] events in which all $\tau^+\tau^-$ masses were greater than 9 GeV/c$^2$ and all $\mu^+\mu^-$ masses were between 0.3 and 5 GeV/c$^2$. This is the event type for which the ALEPH experiment had an enhanced rate. The production amplitude for these events is dominated by the Feynman diagram with the $ff$ appearing as radiation from an outgoing $\tau$ leg.

The $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ selection must discriminate against several physics backgrounds. The most troublesome are hadronic $\tau^+\tau^-$, $e^+e^-ff$, and $\mu^+\mu^-ff$ events. As we describe the selection procedure we will identify which background is being reduced.

The first step in isolating the signal is to assign the charged and neutral tracks in the event to the $\tau$-decay products and to the $f$ and $\bar{f}$. We try all possible such "$\tau^+\tau^-ff$ configurations" and keep the one that is most consistent with the reaction $e^+e^-\rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-ff$. Using the nomenclature of the ALEPH paper we call the sum of the four-momenta of the $f$ and $\bar{f}$ tracks the "$V$." The $V$ must have a charge of zero and a mass of less than 5 GeV/c$^2$. The angle between the $f$ and $\bar{f}$ tracks must also...
be less than $110^\circ$ in the laboratory frame.

The $\tau^+\tau^-$ candidate system is the initial $e^+e^-$ system minus the measured $V$, i.e., the $V$-missing-mass system. We require that the invariant mass of this system be at least 14 GeV/$c^2$.

After assigning charged tracks to the $V$, the remaining charged and neutral tracks are boosted to the center of mass of the $\tau^+\tau^-$ candidate system. A thrust analysis is performed on these tracks in this frame and they are then grouped according to thrust hemispheres. If after this grouping the net charge of each thrust hemisphere is not $\pm 1$, the $\tau^+\tau^-\tau^+\tau^-$ configuration is discarded. To eliminate $\tau^+\tau^-\tau^-\tau^-$ events, we discard configurations for which the mass of the charged particles in one hemisphere combined with the $V$ is less than 1.8 GeV/$c^2$. We form two four-vectors $p_i$ by summing the four-momenta of the charged and neutral tracks assigned to each thrust hemisphere ($i = 1, 2$). We define $m_i$ to be the invariant mass of $p_i$.

We use the fact that $p_i$ should correspond to the four-vector sum of all visible decay products of one of the $\tau$ leptons to impose a series of cuts on $p_i$. We require that the angle between $p_1$ and $p_2$ be greater than $90^\circ$ in the laboratory frame. Because of our choice of signal this costs little and ensures that the events we do get have the kinematics of interest. Next we calculate the mass of the sum of the four-momenta of $p_i$ and the $V$ where $p_i = p_1$, if the $V$ makes a smaller angle to $p_1$ than $p_2$ in the laboratory frame and $p_i = p_2$ otherwise. To reduce $\tau^+\tau^-$ and hadronic background, we require that this mass be greater than 3.0 GeV/$c^2$.

In order to further reduce hadronic background we keep only configurations for which the $\tau$-decay product masses $m_i$ are small enough. The maximum allowed value depends on the number of charged and neutral tracks in thrust hemisphere $i$ (Table I). Figure 1 shows the hemisphere mass distribution for the five cases.

We also cut on the variables $\eta_i = E_i/E_{i}$, $i = 1, 2$, where $E_i$ is the energy of $p_i$ and $E_{i}$ is half the center-of-mass energy of the $\tau^+\tau^-$ candidate system. As defined, $\eta_i$ is the fraction of the $\tau$'s energy that goes into visible decay products. The primary purpose of cutting on this variable is to remove background from $e^+e^-\rightarrow e^+e^-\tau^+\tau^-$, $\mu^+\mu^-\tau^+\tau^-$. As a consequence, the cut on $\eta_i$ will be harder for leptonic $\tau$ decays than for hadronic $\tau$ decays. We distinguish between leptonic and hadronic decays according to $m_i$. If $m_i$ is less than 0.15 GeV/$c^2$, then the decay is considered a "leptonic" decay, otherwise it is a "hadronic" decay. Note that with this scheme $\tau$ decays to single charged pions are classified as leptonic decays.

The cuts on $\eta_i$ are as follows. If $p_i$ is classified as a leptonic $\tau$ decay, then $\eta_i$ must be greater than 0.16 and less than 0.77. The lower limit is imposed to reject unusual low-multiplicity hadronic events and the upper limit is imposed to reject $e^+e^-\mu^+\mu^-$ events. If both $p_1$ and $p_2$ are classified as leptonic $\tau$ decays, then we further require that the sum $\eta_1 + \eta_2$ be less than 1.4.

If $p_1$ is classified as a hadronic $\tau$ decay, then $\eta_1$ must be greater than 0.22. Again the lower limit is imposed to reject hadronic events while there is no upper limit because the $e^+e^-\mu^+\mu^-$ background is negligible in this case. We call a $\tau^+\tau^-\tau^+\tau^-$ configuration which passes all of the above cuts a "valid $\tau^+\tau^-\tau^+\tau^-$ configuration."

At this point the hadronic Monte Carlo calculations predict that there will still be a substantial background. To remove the remaining hadronic events we calculate the square of the missing mass in each $\tau$ decay and compare it with the distribution predicted by the $\tau^+\tau^-\tau^+\tau^-$ Monte Carlo calculation. Hadronic $\tau$ decays have a missing mass squared of zero, within experimental resolution, and the spectrum for the missing mass squared of leptonic $\tau$ decays is broader with the mean shifted to a small positive value. Hadronic events tend to produce

![Image](image_url)

**FIG. 1.** Hemisphere mass distribution from the $\tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^-$ simulation for (a) 1 charged track, 1 neutral track; (b) 1 charged track, 2 neutral tracks; (c) 1 charged track, $\geq 3$ neutral tracks; (d) 3 charged tracks, no neutral tracks; and (e) 3 charged tracks, $\geq 1$ neutral track. The arrows indicate the locations of the cuts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of charged tracks in hemisphere</th>
<th>Number of neutral tracks in hemisphere</th>
<th>Maximum acceptable hemisphere mass (GeV/$c^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$\leq 1$</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$\geq 3$</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$\geq 1$</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
large negative values for the missing mass squared because the assumption that tracks come from the decay of a \( \tau \) is wrong.

Let \( M_1 \) and \( M_2 \) be the missing masses for the \( \tau \) decays in thrust hemispheres 1 and 2, respectively. Let \( \theta \) and \( \phi \) be the polar and azimuthal angles of the \( \tau \) lepton in hemisphere 1 in the \( \tau^+ \tau^- \) candidate rest system. Figure 2 contains the distributions in \( M_1 \) for \( e^+e^- \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^- \) Monte Carlo events. A full detector simulation has been used in calculating \( M_1 \) in Fig. 2 with the exception that \( \theta \) and \( \phi \) are taken directly from the Monte Carlo generator. Figure 2(a) shows the distribution of \( M_1 \) for hadronic \( \tau \) decays and Fig. 2(b) shows the distribution for leptonic \( \tau \) decays.

Let \( f_H(M_1) \) be the distribution in \( M_1 \) for hadronic \( \tau \) decays, and \( f_L(M_1) \) be the distribution in \( M_1 \) for leptonic \( \tau \) decays. They are normalized such that their peak values are 1.0. Since we cannot measure \( \theta \) and \( \phi \), we allow them to vary. Let

\[
\psi = \max_{0 \leq \theta \leq \pi} f_H(M_1(\theta, \phi)) f_L(M_2(\theta, \phi)),
\]

where \( f_H(x) = f_H(x) \) if thrust hemisphere \( i \) is classified as a leptonic \( \tau \) decay and \( f_H(x) = f_H(x) \) if thrust hemisphere \( i \) is classified as a hadronic \( \tau \) decay.

We define \( \psi \) to be the maximum value of \( \psi \) over all valid \( \tau^+ \tau^- \) configurations in an event. Figure 3(a) shows the distribution of \( \psi \) from the \( \tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^- \) simulation, which we can compare to the distribution from the \( q\bar{q} \) simulation shown in Fig. 3(b). We see that \( \psi \) clearly separates \( \tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^- \) events from hadronic events. For our final cut we require that \( \psi \) be greater than 0.3. Figure 3(c) shows the distribution of \( \psi \) from the data. Our lone \( \tau^+\tau^- \) candidate has \( \psi = 0.71 \) and is shown in Fig. 4.

Table II contains the expected number of events with \( \psi > 0.3 \) for various processes. Summed over \( \tau^+\tau^-e^+e^- , \tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^- , \) and \( \tau^+\tau^-\pi^+\pi^- \), the total number of events expected for \( e^+e^- \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^- \) is 2.33.

Systematics.—To check our efficiency and cross-section calculations for \( e^+e^- \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^- f\bar{f} \), we modify

FIG. 3. The distribution of \( \psi \) for (a) the \( \tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^- \) simulation, (b) the \( q\bar{q} \) simulation, and (c) the data. The arrows show the location of the cut.

FIG. 4. Lone \( \tau^+\tau^- \) candidate event viewed along the beam axis.
TABLE II. Expected events from known processes. Items within parentheses are not included in the total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Number of events expected to pass $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$e^+e^-\rightarrow\tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^-$</td>
<td>0.69 ± 0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$e^+e^-\rightarrow\tau^+\tau^-\mu^+\mu^-$</td>
<td>0.36 ± 0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$e^+e^-\rightarrow\mu^+\mu^-ff$</td>
<td>(0.4 ± 0.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.33 ± 0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 65 data events which pass our cuts for $e^+e^-\rightarrow e^+e^-ff, \mu^+\mu^-ff$, compared to 62.2 events expected from all processes.

In summary, we see one candidate event for the final state $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ in $e^+e^-$ collisions at $\sqrt{s}=29$ GeV. We expect to see 2.33 such events due to known processes. We set an upper limit on a uniform enhancement factor of 2.0 at the 95% confidence level. If the production of $\tau^+\tau^-ff$ were enhanced by the factor of 4.7 which ALEPH reports at $\sqrt{s}=91$ GeV, then we would expect to see 11.0 events. The probability of seeing 0 or 1 event when expecting 11.0 is $2 \times 10^{-4}$.

This work was supported in part by the Department of Energy, Contracts No. DE-AC03-76SF00515 and No. DE-AC03-76SF00098.

[4] This sample, and all other four-lepton final-state samples used in this paper, was generated with the Monte Carlo program written by Berends, Daverveldt, and Kleiss which is described in F. A. Berends et al., Nucl. Phys. B253, 441 (1985).
[5] This number, and others from the hadronic Monte Carlo program, is sensitive to the details of the generator. We use JETSET 6.3. See A. Petersen, Phys. Rev. D 37, 1 (1988), for a complete description. This Monte Carlo program is used only for tuning cuts. It is not used in obtaining the result in any other way.