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## Measurement of Singly Cabibbo Suppressed Decays

$$\Lambda_{c}^{+} \rightarrow p\pi^{+}\pi^{-} \text{ and } \Lambda_{c}^{+} \rightarrow pK^{+}K^{-}$$

M. Ablikim *et al.* (BESIII Collaboration)

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# 1 Measurement of Singly Cabibbo-Suppressed Decays $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ and $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$

2 M. Ablikim<sup>1</sup>, M. N. Achasov<sup>9,e</sup>, S. Ahmed<sup>14</sup>, X. C. Ai<sup>1</sup>, O. Albayrak<sup>5</sup>, M. Albrecht<sup>4</sup>, D. J. Ambrose<sup>44</sup>,  
3 A. Amoroso<sup>49A,49C</sup>, F. F. An<sup>1</sup>, Q. An<sup>46,a</sup>, J. Z. Bai<sup>1</sup>, O. Bakina<sup>23</sup>, R. Baldini Ferroli<sup>20A</sup>, Y. Ban<sup>31</sup>, D. W. Bennett<sup>19</sup>,  
4 J. V. Bennett<sup>5</sup>, N. Berger<sup>22</sup>, M. Bertani<sup>20A</sup>, D. Bettoni<sup>21A</sup>, J. M. Bian<sup>43</sup>, F. Bianchi<sup>49A,49C</sup>, E. Boger<sup>23,c</sup>, I. Boyko<sup>23</sup>,  
5 R. A. Briere<sup>5</sup>, H. Cai<sup>51</sup>, X. Cai<sup>1,a</sup>, O. Cakir<sup>40A</sup>, A. Calcaterra<sup>20A</sup>, G. F. Cao<sup>1</sup>, S. A. Cetin<sup>40B</sup>, J. Chai<sup>49C</sup>,  
6 J. F. Chang<sup>1,a</sup>, G. Chelkov<sup>23,c,d</sup>, G. Chen<sup>1</sup>, H. S. Chen<sup>1</sup>, J. C. Chen<sup>1</sup>, M. L. Chen<sup>1,a</sup>, S. Chen<sup>41</sup>, S. J. Chen<sup>29</sup>,  
7 X. Chen<sup>1,a</sup>, X. R. Chen<sup>26</sup>, Y. B. Chen<sup>1,a</sup>, H. P. Cheng<sup>17</sup>, X. K. Chu<sup>31</sup>, G. Cibinetto<sup>21A</sup>, H. L. Dai<sup>1,a</sup>, J. P. Dai<sup>34</sup>,  
8 A. Dbeyssi<sup>14</sup>, D. Dedovich<sup>23</sup>, Z. Y. Deng<sup>1</sup>, A. Denig<sup>22</sup>, I. Denysenko<sup>23</sup>, M. Destefanis<sup>49A,49C</sup>, F. De Mori<sup>49A,49C</sup>,  
9 Y. Ding<sup>27</sup>, C. Dong<sup>30</sup>, J. Dong<sup>1,a</sup>, L. Y. Dong<sup>1</sup>, M. Y. Dong<sup>1,a</sup>, Z. L. Dou<sup>29</sup>, S. X. Du<sup>53</sup>, P. F. Duan<sup>1</sup>, J. Z. Fan<sup>39</sup>,  
10 J. Fang<sup>1,a</sup>, S. S. Fang<sup>1</sup>, X. Fang<sup>46,a</sup>, Y. Fang<sup>1</sup>, R. Farinelli<sup>21A,21B</sup>, L. Fava<sup>49B,49C</sup>, S. Fegan<sup>22</sup>, F. Feldbauer<sup>22</sup>,  
11 G. Felici<sup>20A</sup>, C. Q. Feng<sup>46,a</sup>, E. Fioravanti<sup>21A</sup>, M. Fritsch<sup>14,22</sup>, C. D. Fu<sup>1</sup>, Q. Gao<sup>1</sup>, X. L. Gao<sup>46,a</sup>, Y. Gao<sup>39</sup>,  
12 Z. Gao<sup>46,a</sup>, I. Garzia<sup>21A</sup>, K. Goetzen<sup>10</sup>, L. Gong<sup>30</sup>, W. X. Gong<sup>1,a</sup>, W. Gradl<sup>22</sup>, M. Greco<sup>49A,49C</sup>, M. H. Gu<sup>1,a</sup>,  
13 Y. T. Gu<sup>12</sup>, Y. H. Guan<sup>1</sup>, A. Q. Guo<sup>1</sup>, L. B. Guo<sup>28</sup>, R. P. Guo<sup>1</sup>, Y. Guo<sup>1</sup>, Y. P. Guo<sup>22</sup>, Z. Haddadi<sup>25</sup>, A. Hafner<sup>22</sup>,  
14 S. Han<sup>51</sup>, X. Q. Hao<sup>15</sup>, F. A. Harris<sup>42</sup>, K. L. He<sup>1</sup>, F. H. Heinsius<sup>4</sup>, T. Held<sup>4</sup>, Y. K. Heng<sup>1,a</sup>, T. Holtmann<sup>4</sup>,  
15 Z. L. Hou<sup>1</sup>, C. Hu<sup>28</sup>, H. M. Hu<sup>1</sup>, J. F. Hu<sup>49A,49C</sup>, T. Hu<sup>1,a</sup>, Y. Hu<sup>1</sup>, G. S. Huang<sup>46,a</sup>, J. S. Huang<sup>15</sup>, X. T. Huang<sup>33</sup>,  
16 X. Z. Huang<sup>29</sup>, Y. Huang<sup>29</sup>, Z. L. Huang<sup>27</sup>, T. Hussain<sup>48</sup>, W. Ikegami Andersson<sup>50</sup>, Q. Ji<sup>1</sup>, Q. P. Ji<sup>15</sup>, X. B. Ji<sup>1</sup>,  
17 X. L. Ji<sup>1,a</sup>, L. W. Jiang<sup>51</sup>, X. S. Jiang<sup>1,a</sup>, X. Y. Jiang<sup>30</sup>, J. B. Jiao<sup>33</sup>, Z. Jiao<sup>17</sup>, D. P. Jin<sup>1,a</sup>, S. Jin<sup>1</sup>, T. Johansson<sup>50</sup>,  
18 A. Julin<sup>43</sup>, N. Kalantar-Nayestanaki<sup>25</sup>, X. L. Kang<sup>1</sup>, X. S. Kang<sup>30</sup>, M. Kavatsyuk<sup>25</sup>, B. C. Ke<sup>5</sup>, P. Kiese<sup>22</sup>,  
19 R. Kliemt<sup>10</sup>, B. Kloss<sup>22</sup>, O. B. Kolcu<sup>40B,h</sup>, B. Kopf<sup>4</sup>, M. Kornicer<sup>42</sup>, A. Kupsc<sup>50</sup>, W. Kühn<sup>24</sup>, J. S. Lange<sup>24</sup>,  
20 M. Lara<sup>19</sup>, P. Larin<sup>14</sup>, H. Leithoff<sup>22</sup>, C. Leng<sup>49C</sup>, C. Li<sup>50</sup>, Cheng Li<sup>46,a</sup>, D. M. Li<sup>53</sup>, F. Li<sup>1,a</sup>, F. Y. Li<sup>31</sup>, G. Li<sup>1</sup>,  
21 H. B. Li<sup>1</sup>, H. J. Li<sup>1</sup>, J. C. Li<sup>1</sup>, Jin Li<sup>32</sup>, K. Li<sup>33</sup>, K. Li<sup>13</sup>, Lei Li<sup>3</sup>, P. L. Li<sup>46,a</sup>, P. R. Li<sup>41</sup>, Q. Y. Li<sup>33</sup>, T. Li<sup>33</sup>,  
22 W. D. Li<sup>1</sup>, W. G. Li<sup>1</sup>, X. L. Li<sup>33</sup>, X. N. Li<sup>1,a</sup>, X. Q. Li<sup>30</sup>, Y. B. Li<sup>2</sup>, Z. B. Li<sup>38</sup>, H. Liang<sup>46,a</sup>, Y. F. Liang<sup>36</sup>,  
23 Y. T. Liang<sup>24</sup>, G. R. Liao<sup>11</sup>, D. X. Lin<sup>14</sup>, B. Liu<sup>34</sup>, B. J. Liu<sup>1</sup>, C. X. Liu<sup>1</sup>, D. Liu<sup>46,a</sup>, F. H. Liu<sup>35</sup>, Fang Liu<sup>1</sup>,  
24 Feng Liu<sup>6</sup>, H. B. Liu<sup>12</sup>, H. H. Liu<sup>1</sup>, H. H. Liu<sup>16</sup>, H. M. Liu<sup>1</sup>, J. Liu<sup>1</sup>, J. B. Liu<sup>46,a</sup>, J. P. Liu<sup>51</sup>, J. Y. Liu<sup>1</sup>, K. Liu<sup>39</sup>,  
25 K. Y. Liu<sup>27</sup>, L. D. Liu<sup>31</sup>, P. L. Liu<sup>1,a</sup>, Q. Liu<sup>41</sup>, S. B. Liu<sup>46,a</sup>, X. Liu<sup>26</sup>, Y. B. Liu<sup>30</sup>, Y. Y. Liu<sup>30</sup>, Z. A. Liu<sup>1,a</sup>,  
26 Zhiqing Liu<sup>22</sup>, H. Loehner<sup>25</sup>, Y. F. Long<sup>31</sup>, X. C. Lou<sup>1,a,g</sup>, H. J. Lu<sup>17</sup>, J. G. Lu<sup>1,a</sup>, Y. Lu<sup>1</sup>, Y. P. Lu<sup>1,a</sup>, C. L. Luo<sup>28</sup>,  
27 M. X. Luo<sup>52</sup>, T. Luo<sup>42</sup>, X. L. Luo<sup>1,a</sup>, X. R. Lyu<sup>41</sup>, F. C. Ma<sup>27</sup>, H. L. Ma<sup>1</sup>, L. L. Ma<sup>33</sup>, M. M. Ma<sup>1</sup>, Q. M. Ma<sup>1</sup>,  
28 T. Ma<sup>1</sup>, X. N. Ma<sup>30</sup>, X. Y. Ma<sup>1,a</sup>, Y. M. Ma<sup>33</sup>, F. E. Maas<sup>14</sup>, M. Maggiora<sup>49A,49C</sup>, Q. A. Malik<sup>48</sup>, Y. J. Mao<sup>31</sup>,  
29 Z. P. Mao<sup>1</sup>, S. Marcello<sup>49A,49C</sup>, J. G. Messchendorp<sup>25</sup>, G. Mezzadri<sup>21B</sup>, J. Min<sup>1,a</sup>, T. J. Min<sup>1</sup>, R. E. Mitchell<sup>19</sup>,  
30 X. H. Mo<sup>1,a</sup>, Y. J. Mo<sup>6</sup>, C. Morales Morales<sup>14</sup>, N. Yu. Muchnoi<sup>9,e</sup>, H. Muramatsu<sup>43</sup>, P. Musiol<sup>4</sup>, Y. Nefedov<sup>23</sup>,  
31 F. Nerling<sup>10</sup>, I. B. Nikolaev<sup>9,e</sup>, Z. Ning<sup>1,a</sup>, S. Nisar<sup>8</sup>, S. L. Niu<sup>1,a</sup>, X. Y. Niu<sup>1</sup>, S. L. Olsen<sup>32</sup>, Q. Ouyang<sup>1,a</sup>,  
32 S. Pacetti<sup>20B</sup>, Y. Pan<sup>46,a</sup>, P. Patteri<sup>20A</sup>, M. Pelizzaeus<sup>4</sup>, H. P. Peng<sup>46,a</sup>, K. Peters<sup>10,i</sup>, J. Pettersson<sup>50</sup>, J. L. Ping<sup>28</sup>,  
33 R. G. Ping<sup>1</sup>, R. Poling<sup>43</sup>, V. Prasad<sup>1</sup>, H. R. Qi<sup>2</sup>, M. Qi<sup>29</sup>, S. Qian<sup>1,a</sup>, C. F. Qiao<sup>41</sup>, L. Q. Qin<sup>33</sup>, N. Qin<sup>51</sup>,  
34 X. S. Qin<sup>1</sup>, Z. H. Qin<sup>1,a</sup>, J. F. Qiu<sup>1</sup>, K. H. Rashid<sup>48</sup>, C. F. Redmer<sup>22</sup>, M. Ripka<sup>22</sup>, G. Rong<sup>1</sup>, Ch. Rosner<sup>14</sup>,  
35 X. D. Ruan<sup>12</sup>, A. Sarantsev<sup>23,f</sup>, M. Savrié<sup>21B</sup>, C. Schnier<sup>4</sup>, K. Schoenning<sup>50</sup>, S. Schumann<sup>22</sup>, W. Shan<sup>31</sup>,  
36 M. Shao<sup>46,a</sup>, C. P. Shen<sup>2</sup>, P. X. Shen<sup>30</sup>, X. Y. Shen<sup>1</sup>, H. Y. Sheng<sup>1</sup>, M. Shi<sup>1</sup>, W. M. Song<sup>1</sup>, X. Y. Song<sup>1</sup>,  
37 S. Sosio<sup>49A,49C</sup>, S. Spataro<sup>49A,49C</sup>, G. X. Sun<sup>1</sup>, J. F. Sun<sup>15</sup>, S. S. Sun<sup>1</sup>, X. H. Sun<sup>1</sup>, Y. J. Sun<sup>46,a</sup>, Y. Z. Sun<sup>1</sup>,  
38 Z. J. Sun<sup>1,a</sup>, Z. T. Sun<sup>19</sup>, C. J. Tang<sup>36</sup>, X. Tang<sup>1</sup>, I. Tapan<sup>40C</sup>, E. H. Thorndike<sup>44</sup>, M. Tiemens<sup>25</sup>, I. Uman<sup>40D</sup>,  
39 G. S. Varner<sup>42</sup>, B. Wang<sup>30</sup>, B. L. Wang<sup>41</sup>, D. Wang<sup>31</sup>, D. Y. Wang<sup>31</sup>, K. Wang<sup>1,a</sup>, L. L. Wang<sup>1</sup>, L. S. Wang<sup>1</sup>,  
40 M. Wang<sup>33</sup>, P. Wang<sup>1</sup>, P. L. Wang<sup>1</sup>, W. Wang<sup>1,a</sup>, W. P. Wang<sup>46,a</sup>, X. F. Wang<sup>39</sup>, Y. Wang<sup>37</sup>, Y. D. Wang<sup>14</sup>,  
41 Y. F. Wang<sup>1,a</sup>, Y. Q. Wang<sup>22</sup>, Z. Wang<sup>1,a</sup>, Z. G. Wang<sup>1,a</sup>, Z. H. Wang<sup>46,a</sup>, Z. Y. Wang<sup>1</sup>, Z. Y. Wang<sup>1</sup>, T. Weber<sup>22</sup>,  
42 D. H. Wei<sup>11</sup>, P. Weidenkaff<sup>22</sup>, S. P. Wen<sup>1</sup>, U. Wiedner<sup>4</sup>, M. Wolke<sup>50</sup>, L. H. Wu<sup>1</sup>, L. J. Wu<sup>1</sup>, Z. Wu<sup>1,a</sup>, L. Xia<sup>46,a</sup>,  
43 L. G. Xia<sup>39</sup>, Y. Xia<sup>18</sup>, D. Xiao<sup>1</sup>, H. Xiao<sup>47</sup>, Z. J. Xiao<sup>28</sup>, Y. G. Xie<sup>1,a</sup>, Q. L. Xiu<sup>1,a</sup>, G. F. Xu<sup>1</sup>, J. J. Xu<sup>1</sup>, L. Xu<sup>1</sup>,  
44 Q. J. Xu<sup>13</sup>, Q. N. Xu<sup>41</sup>, X. P. Xu<sup>37</sup>, L. Yan<sup>49A,49C</sup>, W. B. Yan<sup>46,a</sup>, W. C. Yan<sup>46,a</sup>, Y. H. Yan<sup>18</sup>, H. J. Yang<sup>34,j</sup>,  
45 H. X. Yang<sup>1</sup>, L. Yang<sup>51</sup>, Y. X. Yang<sup>11</sup>, M. Ye<sup>1,a</sup>, M. H. Ye<sup>7</sup>, J. H. Yin<sup>1</sup>, Z. Y. You<sup>38</sup>, B. X. Yu<sup>1,a</sup>, C. X. Yu<sup>30</sup>,  
46 J. S. Yu<sup>26</sup>, C. Z. Yuan<sup>1</sup>, W. L. Yuan<sup>29</sup>, Y. Yuan<sup>1</sup>, A. Yuncu<sup>40B,b</sup>, A. A. Zafar<sup>48</sup>, A. Zallo<sup>20A</sup>, Y. Zeng<sup>18</sup>, Z. Zeng<sup>46,a</sup>,  
47 B. X. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, B. Y. Zhang<sup>1,a</sup>, C. Zhang<sup>29</sup>, C. C. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, D. H. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, H. H. Zhang<sup>38</sup>, H. Y. Zhang<sup>1,a</sup>, J. Zhang<sup>1</sup>,  
48 J. J. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, J. L. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, J. Q. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, J. W. Zhang<sup>1,a</sup>, J. Y. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, J. Z. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, K. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, L. Zhang<sup>1</sup>,  
49 S. Q. Zhang<sup>30</sup>, X. Y. Zhang<sup>33</sup>, Y. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, Y. Zhang<sup>1</sup>, Y. H. Zhang<sup>1,a</sup>, Y. N. Zhang<sup>41</sup>, Y. T. Zhang<sup>46,a</sup>,  
50 Yu Zhang<sup>41</sup>, Z. H. Zhang<sup>6</sup>, Z. P. Zhang<sup>46</sup>, Z. Y. Zhang<sup>51</sup>, G. Zhao<sup>1</sup>, J. W. Zhao<sup>1,a</sup>, J. Y. Zhao<sup>1</sup>, J. Z. Zhao<sup>1,a</sup>,  
51 Lei Zhao<sup>46,a</sup>, Ling Zhao<sup>1</sup>, M. G. Zhao<sup>30</sup>, Q. Zhao<sup>1</sup>, Q. W. Zhao<sup>1</sup>, S. J. Zhao<sup>53</sup>, T. C. Zhao<sup>1</sup>, Y. B. Zhao<sup>1,a</sup>,  
52 Z. G. Zhao<sup>46,a</sup>, A. Zhemchugov<sup>23,c</sup>, B. Zheng<sup>47</sup>, J. P. Zheng<sup>1,a</sup>, W. J. Zheng<sup>33</sup>, Y. H. Zheng<sup>41</sup>, B. Zhong<sup>28</sup>,  
53 L. Zhou<sup>1,a</sup>, X. Zhou<sup>51</sup>, X. K. Zhou<sup>46,a</sup>, X. R. Zhou<sup>46,a</sup>, X. Y. Zhou<sup>1</sup>, K. Zhu<sup>1</sup>, K. J. Zhu<sup>1,a</sup>, S. Zhu<sup>1</sup>, S. H. Zhu<sup>45</sup>,

X. L. Zhu<sup>39</sup>, Y. C. Zhu<sup>46,a</sup>, Y. S. Zhu<sup>1</sup>, Z. A. Zhu<sup>1</sup>, J. Zhuang<sup>1,a</sup>, L. Zotti<sup>49A,49C</sup>, B. S. Zou<sup>1</sup>, J. H. Zou<sup>1</sup>

(BESIII Collaboration)

<sup>1</sup> *Institute of High Energy Physics, Beijing 100049, People's Republic of China*

<sup>2</sup> *Beihang University, Beijing 100191, People's Republic of China*

<sup>3</sup> *Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, Beijing 102617, People's Republic of China*

<sup>4</sup> *Bochum Ruhr-University, D-44780 Bochum, Germany*

<sup>5</sup> *Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213, USA*

<sup>6</sup> *Central China Normal University, Wuhan 430079, People's Republic of China*

<sup>7</sup> *China Center of Advanced Science and Technology, Beijing 100190, People's Republic of China*

<sup>8</sup> *COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Lahore, Defence Road, Off Raiwind Road, 54000 Lahore, Pakistan*

<sup>9</sup> *G.I. Budker Institute of Nuclear Physics SB RAS (BINP), Novosibirsk 630090, Russia*

<sup>10</sup> *GSI Helmholtz Centre for Heavy Ion Research GmbH, D-64291 Darmstadt, Germany*

<sup>11</sup> *Guangxi Normal University, Guilin 541004, People's Republic of China*

<sup>12</sup> *Guangxi University, Nanning 530004, People's Republic of China*

<sup>13</sup> *Hangzhou Normal University, Hangzhou 310036, People's Republic of China*

<sup>14</sup> *Helmholtz Institute Mainz, Johann-Joachim-Becher-Weg 45, D-55099 Mainz, Germany*

<sup>15</sup> *Henan Normal University, Xinxiang 453007, People's Republic of China*

<sup>16</sup> *Henan University of Science and Technology, Luoyang 471003, People's Republic of China*

<sup>17</sup> *Huangshan College, Huangshan 245000, People's Republic of China*

<sup>18</sup> *Hunan University, Changsha 410082, People's Republic of China*

<sup>19</sup> *Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47405, USA*

<sup>20</sup> *(A)INFN Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, I-00044, Frascati,*

*Italy; (B)INFN and University of Perugia, I-06100, Perugia, Italy*

<sup>21</sup> *(A)INFN Sezione di Ferrara, I-44122, Ferrara, Italy; (B)University of Ferrara, I-44122, Ferrara, Italy*

<sup>22</sup> *Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Johann-Joachim-Becher-Weg 45, D-55099 Mainz, Germany*

<sup>23</sup> *Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, 141980 Dubna, Moscow region, Russia*

<sup>24</sup> *Justus-Liebig-Universitaet Giessen, II. Physikalisches Institut, Heinrich-Buff-Ring 16, D-35392 Giessen, Germany*

<sup>25</sup> *KVI-CART, University of Groningen, NL-9747 AA Groningen, The Netherlands*

<sup>26</sup> *Lanzhou University, Lanzhou 730000, People's Republic of China*

<sup>27</sup> *Liaoning University, Shenyang 110036, People's Republic of China*

<sup>28</sup> *Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing 210023, People's Republic of China*

<sup>29</sup> *Nanjing University, Nanjing 210093, People's Republic of China*

<sup>30</sup> *Nankai University, Tianjin 300071, People's Republic of China*

<sup>31</sup> *Peking University, Beijing 100871, People's Republic of China*

<sup>32</sup> *Seoul National University, Seoul, 151-747 Korea*

<sup>33</sup> *Shandong University, Jinan 250100, People's Republic of China*

<sup>34</sup> *Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai 200240, People's Republic of China*

<sup>35</sup> *Shanxi University, Taiyuan 030006, People's Republic of China*

<sup>36</sup> *Sichuan University, Chengdu 610064, People's Republic of China*

<sup>37</sup> *Soochow University, Suzhou 215006, People's Republic of China*

<sup>38</sup> *Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou 510275, People's Republic of China*

<sup>39</sup> *Tsinghua University, Beijing 100084, People's Republic of China*

<sup>40</sup> *(A)Ankara University, 06100 Tandogan, Ankara, Turkey; (B)Istanbul Bilgi*

*University, 34060 Eyup, Istanbul, Turkey; (C)Uludag University, 16059 Bursa,*

*Turkey; (D)Near East University, Nicosia, North Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey*

<sup>41</sup> *University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100049, People's Republic of China*

<sup>42</sup> *University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822, USA*

<sup>43</sup> *University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, USA*

<sup>44</sup> *University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627, USA*

<sup>45</sup> *University of Science and Technology Liaoning, Anshan 114051, People's Republic of China*

<sup>46</sup> *University of Science and Technology of China, Hefei 230026, People's Republic of China*

<sup>47</sup> *University of South China, Hengyang 421001, People's Republic of China*

<sup>48</sup> *University of the Punjab, Lahore-54590, Pakistan*

<sup>49</sup> (A)University of Turin, I-10125, Turin, Italy; (B)University of Eastern  
Piedmont, I-15121, Alessandria, Italy; (C)INFN, I-10125, Turin, Italy

<sup>50</sup> Uppsala University, Box 516, SE-75120 Uppsala, Sweden

<sup>51</sup> Wuhan University, Wuhan 430072, People's Republic of China

<sup>52</sup> Zhejiang University, Hangzhou 310027, People's Republic of China

<sup>53</sup> Zhengzhou University, Zhengzhou 450001, People's Republic of China

<sup>a</sup> Also at State Key Laboratory of Particle Detection and  
Electronics, Beijing 100049, Hefei 230026, People's Republic of China

<sup>b</sup> Also at Bogazici University, 34342 Istanbul, Turkey

<sup>c</sup> Also at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Moscow 141700, Russia

<sup>d</sup> Also at the Functional Electronics Laboratory, Tomsk State University, Tomsk, 634050, Russia

<sup>e</sup> Also at the Novosibirsk State University, Novosibirsk, 630090, Russia

<sup>f</sup> Also at the NRC "Kurchatov Institute", PNPI, 188300, Gatchina, Russia

<sup>g</sup> Also at University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, Texas 75083, USA

<sup>h</sup> Also at Istanbul Arel University, 34295 Istanbul, Turkey

<sup>i</sup> Also at Goethe University Frankfurt, 60323 Frankfurt am Main, Germany

<sup>j</sup> Also at Institute of Nuclear and Particle Physics, Shanghai Key Laboratory for  
Particle Physics and Cosmology, Shanghai 200240, People's Republic of China

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Using  $567 \text{ pb}^{-1}$  of data collected with the BESIII detector at a center-of-mass energy of  $\sqrt{s} = 4.599 \text{ GeV}$ , near the  $\Lambda_c^+ \bar{\Lambda}_c^-$  threshold, we study the singly Cabibbo-suppressed decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ . By normalizing with respect to the Cabibbo-favored decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$ , we obtain ratios of branching fractions:  $\frac{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-)}{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+)} = (6.70 \pm 0.48 \pm 0.25)\%$ ,  $\frac{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi)}{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+)} = (1.81 \pm 0.33 \pm 0.13)\%$ , and  $\frac{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K_{\text{non-}\phi}^-)}{\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+)} = (9.36 \pm 2.22 \pm 0.71) \times 10^{-3}$ , where the uncertainties are statistical and systematic, respectively. The absolute branching fractions are also presented. Among these measurements, the decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  is observed for the first time, and the precision of the branching fraction for  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K_{\text{non-}\phi}^-$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$  is significantly improved.

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Hadronic decays of charmed baryons provide an ideal laboratory to understand the interplay of the weak and strong interaction in the charm region [1–9], which is complementary to charmed mesons. They also provide essential input for studying the decays of  $b$ -flavored hadrons involving a  $\Lambda_c$  in the final state [10, 11]. In contrast to the charmed meson decays, which are usually dominated by factorizable amplitudes, decays of charmed baryons receive sizable nonfactorizable contributions from  $W$ -exchange diagrams, which are subject to color and helicity suppression. The study of nonfactorizable contributions is critical to understand the dynamics of charmed baryons decays.

Since the first discovery of the ground state charmed baryon  $\Lambda_c$  in 1979 [12, 13], progress with charmed baryons has been relatively slow, due to a scarcity of experimental data. Recently, based on an  $e^+e^-$  annihilation data sample of  $567 \text{ pb}^{-1}$  [14] at a center-of-mass (c.m.) energy of  $\sqrt{s} = 4.599 \text{ GeV}$ , the BESIII Collaboration measured the absolute branching fractions (BF) of twelve Cabibbo-favored (CF)  $\Lambda_c^+$  hadronic decays with a significantly improved precision [15]. For many other CF charmed baryon decay modes and most of the singly Cabibbo-suppressed (SCS) decays, however, no precision measurements are available; many of them

even have not yet been measured [16]. As a consequence, we are not able to distinguish between the theoretical predictions among the different models [3–9].

The SCS decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  proceeds via the external  $W$ -emission, internal  $W$ -emission and  $W$ -exchange processes, while the SCS decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$  proceeds via the internal  $W$ -emission and  $W$ -exchange diagrams only. Precisely measuring and comparing their BF's may help to reveal the  $\Lambda_c$  internal dynamics [1]. A measurement of the SCS mode  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$  is of particular interest because it receives contributions only from the internal  $W$ -emission diagrams, which can reliably be obtained by a factorization approach [1]. An improved measurement of the  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$  BF is thus essential to validate theoretical models and test the application of large- $N_c$  factorization in the charmed baryon sector [17], where,  $N_c$  is the number of colors.

In this Letter, we describe a search for the SCS decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  and present an improved measurement of the  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K_{\text{non-}\phi}^-$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$  BF's. The BF's are measured relative to the CF mode  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$ . Our analysis is based on the same data sample as that used in Ref. [15] collected by the BESIII detector. Details on the features and capabilities of the BESIII detector can

176 be found in Ref. [18]. Throughout this Letter, charge-233  
 177 conjugate modes are implicitly included, unless otherwise234  
 178 stated. 235

179 The GEANT4-based [19] Monte Carlo (MC) simula-236  
 180 tions of  $e^+e^-$  annihilations are used to understand the237  
 181 backgrounds and to estimate detection efficiencies. The238  
 182 generator KKMC [20] is used to simulate the beam-239  
 183 energy spread and initial-state radiation (ISR) of the240  
 184  $e^+e^-$  collisions. The inclusive MC sample includes  $\Lambda_c^+\bar{\Lambda}_c^-$ 241  
 185 events, charmed meson  $D_{(s)}^{(*)}$  pair production, ISR re-242  
 186 turns to lower-mass  $\psi$  states, and continuum processes  
 187  $e^+e^- \rightarrow q\bar{q}$  ( $q = u, d, s$ ). Decay modes as specified in the  
 188 PDG [16] are modeled with EVTGEN [21, 22]. Signal  
 189 MC samples of  $e^+e^- \rightarrow \Lambda_c^+\bar{\Lambda}_c^-$  are produced in which the  
 190  $\Lambda_c^+$  decays to the interested final state ( $pK^-\pi^+$ ,  $p\pi^+\pi^-$   
 191 or  $pK^+K^-$ ) together with the  $\bar{\Lambda}_c^-$  decaying generically  
 192 to all possible final states.

193 Charged tracks are reconstructed from hits in the MDC  
 194 and are required to have polar angles within  $|\cos\theta| <$   
 195  $0.93$ . The points of closest approach of the charged tracks  
 196 to the interaction point (IP) are required to be within 1  
 197 cm in the plane perpendicular to the beam ( $V_r$ ) and  $\pm 10$   
 198 cm along the beam ( $V_z$ ). Information from the TOF sys-  
 199 tem and  $dE/dx$  in the MDC are combined to form PID  
 200 confidence levels (C.L.) for the  $\pi$ ,  $K$  and  $p$  hypotheses.  
 201 Each track is assigned to the particle type with the high-  
 202 est PID C.L.. To avoid backgrounds from beam interac-  
 203 tions with residual gas or detector materials (beam pipe  
 204 and MDC inner wall), a further requirement  $V_r < 0.2$  cm  
 205 is imposed for proton.

206  $\Lambda_c^+$  candidates are reconstructed by considering all  
 207 combinations of charged tracks in the final states of inter-  
 208 est  $pK^-\pi^+$ ,  $p\pi^+\pi^-$  and  $pK^+K^-$ . Two variables,  
 209 the energy difference  $\Delta E = E - E_{\text{beam}}$  and the beam-  
 210 constrained mass  $M_{\text{BC}} = \sqrt{E_{\text{beam}}^2/c^4 - p^2/c^2}$ , are used  
 211 to identify the  $\Lambda_c^+$  candidates. Here,  $E_{\text{beam}}$  is the beam  
 212 energy, and  $E(p)$  is the reconstructed energy (momentum)  
 213 of the  $\Lambda_c^+$  candidate in the  $e^+e^-$  c.m. system. A  
 214  $\Lambda_c^+$  candidate is accepted with  $M_{\text{BC}} > 2.25\text{GeV}/c^2$  and  
 215  $|\Delta E| < 20$  MeV (corresponding to 3 time of resolution).  
 216 For a given signal mode, we accept only one candidate per  
 217  $\Lambda_c$  charge per event. If multiple candidates are found, the  
 218 one with the smallest  $|\Delta E|$  is selected. The  $\Delta E$  sideband  
 219 region,  $40 < |\Delta E| < 60$  MeV, is defined to investigate  
 220 potential backgrounds. 253

221 For the  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  decay, we reject  $K_S^0$  and  $\Lambda$  can-  
 222 didates by requiring  $|M_{\pi^+\pi^-} - M_{K_S^0}^{\text{PDG}}| > 15$  MeV/ $c^2$   
 223 and  $|M_{p\pi^-} - M_{\Lambda}^{\text{PDG}}| > 6$  MeV/ $c^2$ , corresponding to 3  
 224 times of the resolution, where  $M_{K_S^0}^{\text{PDG}}$  ( $M_{\Lambda}^{\text{PDG}}$ ) is the  
 225  $K_S^0$  ( $\Lambda$ ) mass quoted from the PDG [16] and  $M_{\pi^+\pi^-}$   
 226 ( $M_{p\pi^-}$ ) is the  $\pi^+\pi^-$  ( $p\pi^-$ ) invariant mass. These re-  
 227 quirements suppress the peaking backgrounds of the CF  
 228 decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow \Lambda\pi^+$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK_S^0$ , which have the same  
 229 final state as the signal. 263

230 With the above selection criteria, the  $M_{\text{BC}}$  distribu-264  
 231 tions are depicted in Fig. 1 for the decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$ 265  
 232 and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  and in Fig. 2 (a) for the decay266

$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ . Prominent  $\Lambda_c^+$  signals are observed.  
 The inclusive MC samples are used to study potential  
 backgrounds. For the decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow$   
 $pK^+K^-$ , no peaking background is evidenced in the  $M_{\text{BC}}$   
 distributions. While for the decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ , the  
 peaking backgrounds of  $28.2 \pm 1.6$  events from the de-  
 cays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow \Lambda\pi^+$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK_S^0$  are expected, where the  
 uncertainty comes from the measured BF's in Ref. [15].  
 The cross feed between the decay modes is negligible by  
 the MC studies.

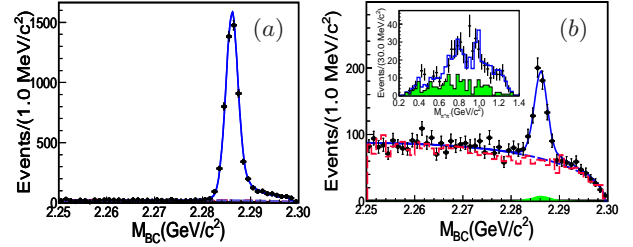


FIG. 1. (color online). Distributions of  $M_{\text{BC}}$  for the de-  
 cays (a)  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$  and (b)  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ . Points with  
 error bar are data, the blue solid lines show the total fits,  
 the blue long dashed lines are the combinatorial background  
 shapes, and the red long dashed histograms are data from the  
 $\Delta E$  sideband region for comparison. In (b), the green shaded  
 histogram is the peaking background from the CF decays  
 $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK_S^0$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow \Lambda\pi^+$ . The insert plot in (b) shows the  
 $\pi^+\pi^-$  invariant mass distribution with additional requirement  
 $|\Delta E| < 8$  MeV and  $2.2836 < M_{\text{BC}} < 2.2894$  GeV/ $c^2$ , where  
 the dots with error bar are for the data, the blue solid histogram  
 shows the fit curve from PWA, and the green shaded  
 histogram shows background estimated from the  $M_{\text{BC}}$  side-  
 band region.

To obtain the signal yields of the decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$   
 and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ , a maximum likelihood fit is per-  
 formed to the corresponding  $M_{\text{BC}}$  distributions. The  
 signal shape is modeled with the MC simulated shape  
 convoluted with a Gaussian function representing the res-  
 olution difference and potential mass shift between the  
 data and MC simulation. The combinatorial background  
 is modeled by an ARGUS function [23]. In the decay  
 $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ , the peaking background is included in the  
 fit, and is modeled with the MC simulated shape con-  
 voluted with the same Gaussian function for the signal,  
 while the magnitude is fixed to the MC prediction. The  
 fit curves are shown in Fig. 1. The  $M_{\text{BC}}$  distribution  
 for events in the  $\Delta E$  sideband region is also shown in  
 Fig. 1(b) and a good agreement with the fitted back-  
 ground shape is indicated. The signal yields are summa-  
 rized in Table I.

For the decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ , a prominent  $\phi$  signal is  
 observed in the  $M_{K^+K^-}$  distribution, as shown in Fig. 2  
 (b). To determine the signal yields via  $\phi$  ( $N_{\text{sig}}^\phi$ ) and non- $\phi$   
 ( $N_{\text{sig}}^{\text{non-}\phi}$ ) processes, and to better model the background,  
 we perform a two-dimensional unbinned extended maxi-  
 mum likelihood fit to the  $M_{\text{BC}}$  versus  $M_{K^+K^-}$  distribu-  
 tions for events in the  $\Delta E$  signal region and sideband re-

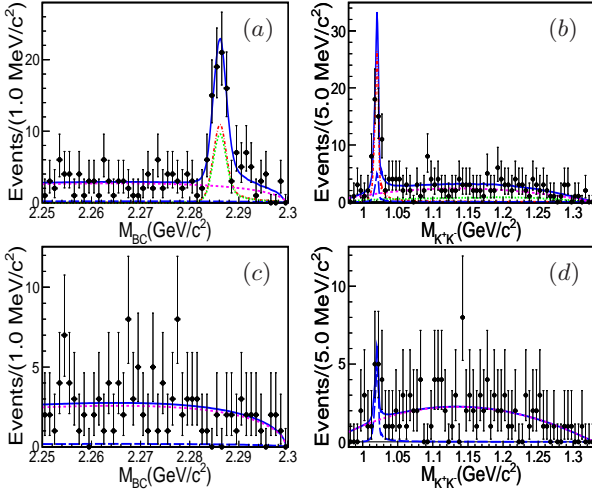


FIG. 2. (color online). Distributions of  $M_{BC}$  (left) and  $M_{K+K-}$  (right) for data in the  $\Delta E$  signal region (upper) and sideband region (bottom) for the decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ . The blue solid curves are for the total fit results, the red dash-dotted curves show the  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi \rightarrow pK^+K^-$  signal, the green dotted curves show the  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-_{\text{non-}\phi}$  signal, the blue long-dashed curves are the background with  $\phi$  production, and the magenta dashed curves are the non- $\phi$  background.

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{side}} = \frac{e^{-(N_{\text{bkg}}^\phi + N_{\text{bkg}}^{\text{non-}\phi})}}{N_{\text{side}}!} \times \prod_{i=1}^{N_{\text{side}}} [N_{\text{bkg}}^\phi B_{M_{BC}}(M_{BC}^i) \times B_{M_{KK}}^\phi(M_{K+K-}^i) + N_{\text{bkg}}^{\text{non-}\phi} B_{M_{BC}}(M_{BC}^i) \times B_{M_{KK}}^{\text{non-}\phi}(M_{K+K-}^i)], \quad (2)$$

where the parameter  $N_{\text{sig}}$  ( $N_{\text{side}}$ ) is the total number of selected candidates in the  $\Delta E$  signal (sideband) region, and  $M_{BC}^i$  and  $M_{K+K-}^i$  are the values of  $M_{BC}$  and  $M_{K+K-}$  for the  $i$ -th event. We use the product of PDFs, since the  $M_{BC}$  and  $M_{K+K-}$  are verified to be uncorrelated for each component by MC simulations.

The signal yields are extracted by minimizing the negative log-likelihood  $-\ln \mathcal{L} = (-\ln \mathcal{L}_{\text{sig}}) + (-\ln \mathcal{L}_{\text{side}})$ . The fit curves are shown in Fig. 2 and the yields are listed in Table I. The significance is estimated by comparing the likelihood values with and without the signal components included, incorporating with the change of the number of free parameters, listed in Table I.

TABLE I. Summary of signal yields in data ( $N_{\text{signal}}$ ), detection efficiencies ( $\varepsilon$ ), and the significances. The errors are statistical only.

Decay modes	$N_{\text{signal}}$	$\varepsilon(\%)$	significance
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$	$5940 \pm 85$	$48.0 \pm 0.1$	-
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$	$495 \pm 35$	$59.7 \pm 0.1$	$16.2\sigma$
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ (via $\phi$ )	$44 \pm 8$	$40.2 \pm 0.1$	$9.6\sigma$
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ (non- $\phi$ )	$38 \pm 9$	$32.7 \pm 0.1$	$5.4\sigma$

gion simultaneously. In the  $M_{BC}$  distribution, the shapes of  $\Lambda_c$  signal (via  $\phi$  or non- $\phi$  process) and background, denoted as  $S_{M_{BC}}$  and  $B_{M_{BC}}$ , are modeled similarly to those in the decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ . In the  $M_{K+K-}$  distribution, the  $\phi$  shape for the  $\Lambda_c$  process ( $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ ),  $S_{M_{KK}}^\phi$ , is modeled with a relativistic Breit-Wigner function convoluted with a Gaussian function representing the detector resolution, while that for the  $\Lambda_c$  decay without  $\phi$  ( $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ ),  $S_{M_{KK}}^{\text{non-}\phi}$ , is represented by the MC shape with a uniform distribution in  $K^+K^-$  phase space. The shape for the non- $\Lambda_c$  background including  $\phi$  state,  $B_{M_{KK}}^\phi$ , has the same parameters as  $S_{M_{KK}}^\phi$ , while that for the background without  $\phi$ ,  $B_{M_{KK}}^{\text{non-}\phi}$ , is described by a 3rd-order polynomial function. Detailed MC studies indicate the non- $\Lambda_c$  background (both with and without  $\phi$  included) have the same shapes and yields in both  $\Delta E$  signal and sideband regions, where the yields are denoted as  $N_{\text{bkg}}^\phi$  and  $N_{\text{bkg}}^{\text{non-}\phi}$ , respectively. The Likelihoods for the events in  $\Delta E$  signal and sideband regions are given in equation (1) and (2), respectively.

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{sig}} = \frac{e^{-(N_{\text{sig}}^\phi + N_{\text{sig}}^{\text{non-}\phi} + N_{\text{bkg}}^\phi + N_{\text{bkg}}^{\text{non-}\phi})}}{N_{\text{sig}}!} \times \prod_{i=1}^{N_{\text{sig}}} [N_{\text{sig}}^\phi S_{M_{BC}}(M_{BC}^i) \times S_{M_{KK}}^\phi(M_{K+K-}^i) + N_{\text{sig}}^{\text{non-}\phi} S_{M_{BC}}(M_{BC}^i) \times S_{M_{KK}}^{\text{non-}\phi}(M_{K+K-}^i) + N_{\text{bkg}}^\phi B_{M_{BC}}(M_{BC}^i) \times B_{M_{KK}}^\phi(M_{K+K-}^i) + N_{\text{bkg}}^{\text{non-}\phi} B_{M_{BC}}(M_{BC}^i) \times B_{M_{KK}}^{\text{non-}\phi}(M_{K+K-}^i)], \quad (1)$$

In the decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ , the detection efficiencies are estimated with data-driven MC samples generated according to the results of a simple partial wave analysis (PWA) by the covariant helicity coupling amplitude [24, 25] for the quasi-two body decays. In the decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ , prominent structures arising from  $\rho^0(770)$  and  $f_0(980)$  resonances are observed in the  $M_{\pi^+\pi^-}$  distribution as shown in the insert plot of Fig. 1(b), and are included in PWA. Due to the limited statistics and relatively high background, the PWA does not allow for a reliable extraction of BF's for intermediate states; it however does describe the kinematics well and it is reasonable for the estimation of the detection efficiency. The corresponding uncertainty is taken into account as a systematic error. For the decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$  via  $\phi$  or non- $\phi$ , the detection efficiencies are estimated with phase space MC samples, where the angular distribution of the decay  $\phi \rightarrow K^+K^-$  is considered.

We measure the relative BF's of the SCS decays with respect to that of the CF decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$ , and the absolute BF's by incorporating  $\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+) = (5.84 \pm 0.27 \pm 0.23)\%$  from the most recent BESIII measurement [15]. Several sources of systematic uncertainty, including tracking and PID efficiencies, the total number of  $\Lambda_c^+ \bar{\Lambda}_c^-$  pairs in data, cancel when calculating the

ratio of BFs, due to the similar kinematics between the SCS and CF decays. When calculating these uncertainties, cancellation has been taken into account whenever possible.

TABLE II. The systematic uncertainties (in %) in the relative BF measurements. The uncertainty of the reference BF  $\mathcal{B}_{\text{ref}}$  applies only to the absolute BF measurements.

Sources	$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$	$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$	$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K_{\text{non-}\phi}^-$
Tracking	1.1	2.6	1.6
PID	1.3	1.5	1.9
$V_r$ requirement	0.6	2.5	2.5
$K_S^0/\Lambda$ vetoes	0.7	—	—
$\Delta E$ requirement	0.5	0.7	0.9
Fit	2.7	5.8	6.6
Cited BR	—	1.0	—
MC model	1.4	1.0	1.1
MC statistics	0.3	0.4	0.4
Total	3.7	7.2	7.6
$\mathcal{B}_{\text{ref}}$	6.1	6.1	6.1

The uncertainties associated with tracking and PID efficiencies for  $\pi$ ,  $K$  and proton are studied as a function of (transverse) momentum with samples of  $e^+e^- \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-\pi^+\pi^-$ ,  $K^+K^-\pi^+\pi^-$  and  $p\bar{p}\pi^+\pi^-$  from data taken at  $\sqrt{s} > 4.0$  GeV. To extract tracking efficiency for particle  $i$  ( $i = \pi, K$ , or proton), we select the corresponding samples by missing particle  $i$  with high purity, the ratio to find the track  $i$  around the missing direction is the tracking efficiency. Similarly, we select the control sample without PID requirement for particle  $i$ , and then the PID requirement is further implemented. The PID efficiency is the ratio between the number of candidate with and without PID requirement. The differences on the efficiency between the data and MC simulation weighted by the (transverse) momentum according to data are assigned as uncertainties.

The uncertainties due to the  $V_r$  requirements and  $K_S^0/\Lambda$  vetoes (in  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  only) are investigated by repeating the analysis with alternative requirements ( $V_r < 0.25$  cm,  $|M_{\pi^+\pi^-} - M_{K_S^0}^{\text{PDG}}| > 20$  MeV/ $c^2$  and  $|M_{p\pi^-} - M_{\Lambda}^{\text{PDG}}| > 8$  MeV/ $c^2$ , respectively). The resulting differences in the BF are taken as the uncertainties. Uncertainties related to the  $\Delta E$  resolution are estimated by widening the  $\Delta E$  windows from  $3\sigma$  to  $4\sigma$  of the resolution.

For the decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ , the signal yields are determined from fits to the  $M_{\text{BC}}$  distributions. Alternative fits are carried out by varying the fit range, signal shape, background shape and the expected number of peaking background. The resultant changes in the BFs are taken as uncertainties. In the decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ , the uncertainties associated with the fit are studied by varying the fit ranges, signal and background shapes for both the  $M_{\text{BC}}$  and  $M_{K^+K^-}$  distributions and  $\Delta E$  sideband region.

The following four aspects are considered for the MC simulation model uncertainty. *a)* The uncertainties related-

ed to the beam energy spread are investigated by changing its value in simulation by  $\pm 0.4$  MeV, where the nominal values is 1.5 MeV determined by data. The larger change in the measurement is taken as systematic uncertainty. *b)* The uncertainties associated with the input line shape of  $e^+e^- \rightarrow \Lambda_c^+\bar{\Lambda}_c^-$  cross section is estimated by replacing the line shape directly from BESIII data with that from Ref. [26]. *c)* The  $\Lambda_c^+$  polar angle distribution in  $e^+e^-$  rest frame is parameterized with  $1 + \alpha \cos^2 \theta$ , where the  $\alpha$  value is extracted from data. The uncertainties due to the  $\Lambda_c^+$  polar angle distribution is estimated by changing  $\alpha$  value by one standard deviation. *d)* The decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$  are modeled by a data-driven method according to PWA results. The corresponding uncertainties are estimated by changing the intermediate states included, changing the parameters of the intermediate states by one standard deviation quoted in the PDG [16], and varying the background treatment in the PWA and the output parameters for the coupling. Assuming all of the above PWA uncertainties are independent, the uncertainty related to MC modelling is the quadratic sum of all individual values. For the non- $\phi$  decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ , phase space MC samples with  $S$ -wave for  $K^+K^-$  pair is used to estimate the detection efficiency. An alternative MC sample with  $P$ -wave between  $K^+K^-$  pair is also used, and the resultant difference in efficiency is taken as the uncertainty. The uncertainties due to limited MC statistics in both the measured and reference modes are taken into account.

Assuming all uncertainties, summarized in Table II, are independent, the total uncertainties in the relative BF measurements are obtained by adding the individual uncertainties in quadrature. For the absolute BF measurements, the uncertainty due to the reference BF  $\mathcal{B}_{\text{ref}}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+)$ , listed in Table II too, is included.

In summary, based on 567 pb $^{-1}$  of  $e^+e^-$  annihilation data collected at  $\sqrt{s} = 4.599$  GeV with the BESIII detector, we present the first observation of the SCS decays  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$ , and improved (or comparable) measurements of the  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$  and  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K_{\text{non-}\phi}^-$  BFs comparing to PDG values [16]. The relative BFs with respect to the CF decay  $\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$  are measured. Taking  $\mathcal{B}(\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+) = (5.84 \pm 0.27 \pm 0.23)\%$  from Ref. [15], we also obtain absolute BFs for the SCS decays. All the results are summarized in Table III. The results provide important data to understand the dynamics of  $\Lambda_c^+$  decays. They especially help to distinguish predictions from different theoretical models and understand contributions from factorizable effects [1].

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TABLE III. Summary of relative and absolute BFs, and comparing with the results from PDG [16]. Uncertainties are statistical, experimental systematic, and reference mode uncertainty, respectively.

Decay modes	$\mathcal{B}_{\text{mode}}/\mathcal{B}_{\text{ref.}}$ (This work)	$\mathcal{B}_{\text{mode}}/\mathcal{B}_{\text{ref.}}$ (PDG average)
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$	$(6.70 \pm 0.48 \pm 0.25) \times 10^{-2}$	$(6.9 \pm 3.6) \times 10^{-2}$
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$	$(1.81 \pm 0.33 \pm 0.13) \times 10^{-2}$	$(1.64 \pm 0.32) \times 10^{-2}$
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ (non- $\phi$ )	$(9.36 \pm 2.22 \pm 0.71) \times 10^{-3}$	$(7 \pm 2 \pm 2) \times 10^{-3}$
–	$\mathcal{B}_{\text{mode}}$ (This work)	$\mathcal{B}_{\text{mode}}$ (PDG average)
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\pi^+\pi^-$	$(3.91 \pm 0.28 \pm 0.15 \pm 0.24) \times 10^{-3}$	$(3.5 \pm 2.0) \times 10^{-3}$
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow p\phi$	$(1.06 \pm 0.19 \pm 0.08 \pm 0.06) \times 10^{-3}$	$(8.2 \pm 2.7) \times 10^{-4}$
$\Lambda_c^+ \rightarrow pK^+K^-$ (non- $\phi$ )	$(5.47 \pm 1.30 \pm 0.41 \pm 0.33) \times 10^{-4}$	$(3.5 \pm 1.7) \times 10^{-4}$

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