Evidence of New States Decaying into $\Xi_c^+\pi$


(CLEO Collaboration)

1Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853
2University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611
3Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138
4University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
5University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois 61801
6Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1S 5B6 and the Institute of Particle Physics, Canada
7McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3A 2T8 and the Institute of Particle Physics, Canada
8Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York 14850
9University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045
10University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
11State University of New York at Albany, Albany, New York 12222
12The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210
13University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma 73019
14Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907
15University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627
16Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94309
17Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas 75275
18Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York 13244
19Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee 37235
20Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
21Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan 48202
22California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California 91125
23University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, California 92093
24University of California, Santa Barbara, California 93106
25University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80309-0390

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Using data recorded by the CLEO II detector at the Cornell Electron Storage Ring, we report evidence for two new charmed baryons, one decaying into $\Xi_c^+\pi^+\pi^-$ via an intermediate $\Xi_c^{*0}$ and its isospin partner decaying into $\Xi_c^{*+}\pi^+\pi^-$ via an intermediate $\Xi_c^{*+}$. We measure the mass differences of the two states to be $M(\Xi_c^+\pi^+\pi^-) - M(\Xi_c^{*+}) = 348.6 \pm 0.6 \pm 1.0$ MeV, and $M(\Xi_c^{*+}\pi^+\pi^-) - M(\Xi_c^+)$ = 347.2 $\pm$ 0.7 $\pm$ 2.0 MeV. We interpret these new states as the $J^P = \frac{3}{2}^-$ $\Xi_{c1}$ particles, the charmed-strange analogs of the $\Lambda_{c1}(2625)$.

In recent years there has been great progress in charmed baryon spectroscopy. Three experiments [1] have now seen a doublet of particles decaying into $\Lambda_0^+$, and the consensus is that these states are the lowest lying orbitally excited states of the $\Lambda_0^+$. The quark model picture of these excited $\Lambda_0^+$ baryons is that they consist of a light diquark which has one unit of orbital angular momentum with respect to the heavy (charmed) quark, leading to a $J^P = \frac{1}{2}^+$, $\frac{3}{2}^-$ doublet. They are now commonly referred to as the $\Lambda_c(1)$ particles [2], where the numerical subscript refers to the total angular momentum of the light degrees of freedom. Clearly similar orbital excitations must exist in the $\Xi_c^+$ sector. Using data from the CLEO II detector, we present the first evidence of two new states, one decaying into $\Xi_c^+\pi^+\pi^-$ via an intermediate $\Xi_c^{*0}$ and the other decaying into $\Xi_c^{0}\pi^+\pi^-$ via an intermediate $\Xi_c^{*+}$. We identify these states as the $J^P = \frac{3}{2}^-$ $\Xi_{c1}$ isospin doublet. Such states correspond to $cqs$ quark combinations where $q$ is a $u$ or $d$ quark, the $q$ and $s$ spins are antiparallel, and the $qs$ diquark has orbital angular momentum $L = 1$ with respect to the charmed quark. Preliminary versions of this analysis were presented elsewhere [3,4]. The analysis presented here includes mass dependent fitting of the particle trajectories taking into account energy loss through the detector, improved secondary and tertiary vertex detection, and an increased number of $\Xi_c^+$ decay modes used for $\Xi_c^+$ reconstruction.

The data presented here were taken by the CLEO II detector [5] operating at the Cornell Electron Storage Ring (CESR). The sample used in this analysis corresponds to an integrated luminosity of 4.8 fb$^{-1}$ from data taken on the $Y(4S)$ resonance and in the continuum at energies just above and below the $Y(4S)$. We detected charged tracks with a cylindrical drift chamber system inside a solenoidal magnet. Photons were detected using an electromagnetic calorimeter consisting of 7800 cesium iodide crystals.

We first obtain large samples of reconstructed $\Xi_c^+$ and $\Xi_c^0$ particles, using their decays into $\Lambda_c$, $\Xi_c^-$, $\Omega_c^-$, and $\Xi_c^0$ hyperons as well as $K^*$, $\pi^*$, and protons. (Charge conjugate states are implied throughout.) The analysis chain for reconstructing these particles follows closely that presented in our previous publications [6].

We fitted the invariant mass distributions for each decay mode to a sum of a Gaussian signal function and a second order polynomial background. The yields from all the decay modes are summarized in Table I. We note that this is the first observation of the decay modes $\Xi_c^+ \rightarrow \Lambda K^0$ and $\Xi_c^0 \rightarrow \Lambda K^-\pi^+$. $\Xi_c^+$ candidates were defined as those combinations within 2$\sigma$ of the known mass of the $\Xi_c^+$ or $\Xi_c^0$, where $\sigma$ is the detector resolution measured mode by mode by a Monte Carlo simulation program. To illustrate the good statistics and signal to noise ratio of the $\Xi_c^+$ signals, we have placed a cut $x_p > 0.5$, where $x_p = p_\text{beam}/p_{\text{max}}$, $p$ is the momentum of the charged baryon, $p_{\text{max}} = \sqrt{E_{\text{beam}} - M^2}$, and $M$ is the calculated $\Xi_c^+$ mass, and we present the results for the various decay modes in Table I. In the final analysis we prefer to apply an $x_p$ cut only on the $\Xi_c^+\pi^-\pi^+$ combinations.

The $\Xi_c^+$ candidates defined above were then combined with each remaining charged track in the event and the mass differences $\Delta M = M(\Xi_c^+\pi^-\pi^+) - M(\Xi_c^+)$ and $M(\Xi_c^+\pi^-\pi^+) - M(\Xi_c^0)$ were calculated. We consider those combinations within 5 MeV of the previously measured $\Xi_c^+$ peaks found in these plots [6] as $\Xi_c^+$ candidates.

We then combine these $\Xi_c^+$ candidates with one more correctly charged track in the event and plot $M(\Xi_c^+\pi^-\pi^+) - M(\Xi_c^+)$ for both the $\Xi_c^+$ (Fig. 1a) and the $\Xi_c^0$ (Fig. 1b), with a requirement of $x_p > 0.6$ on the final combination. We prefer to present the data as a dipion mass difference rather than $M(\Xi_c^+\pi) - M(\Xi_c^+)$ because the latter measurement is complicated by the intrinsic width of the $\Xi_c^+$, which is not well known. In both figures there is a peak at around 348 MeV. We fit these two peaks to sums of Gaussians of fixed width ($\sigma = 1.8$ MeV, found from simulated events) and a polynomial background function. For the charged case, we find a signal of 19.7 $\pm$ 4.5 events at $\Delta M$ of 348.6 $\pm$ 0.6 MeV. For the neutral case, we find an excess of 9.5 $\pm$ 3.2 events at $\Delta M$ of 347.2 $\pm$ 0.7 MeV.

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**Table I. Measured yield for each submode.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\Xi_c^+$ Decay mode</th>
<th>yacht $P &lt; 0.5$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\Xi_c^+\pi^-\pi^-$</td>
<td>369 $\pm$ 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Xi_c^0\pi^-\pi^+$</td>
<td>231 $\pm$ 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Lambda K^0\pi^+$</td>
<td>61 $\pm$ 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Xi_c^+\pi^+$</td>
<td>130 $\pm$ 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Omega K^-$</td>
<td>37 $\pm$ 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Xi_c^0\pi^+$</td>
<td>230 $\pm$ 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Xi_c^0\pi^0$</td>
<td>103 $\pm$ 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Lambda K^0\pi^+$</td>
<td>86 $\pm$ 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Lambda K^0$</td>
<td>33 $\pm$ 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
signal peaks, and plot combinations that lie in the \( J = 0 \) band. In both cases \( x_p > 0.6 \) cut is applied.

Both peaks are satisfactorily fit using this fitting function; however, to investigate the natural widths of these orbitally excited states, we have also fit to a Breit-Wigner function convoluted with a Gaussian resolution function. This gives limits to the natural widths of the states of \( \Gamma < 3.5 \text{ MeV} \) and \( \Gamma < 6.5 \text{ MeV} \), respectively, each at the 90% confidence level. We estimate the systematic uncertainty on the measured mass differences to be 1 MeV and 2 MeV, respectively. This estimate takes into account the spread of results obtained using different fitting functions as well as uncertainties in the momentum measurements. The systematic uncertainty in the neutral case is large as this measurement is particularly sensitive to the choice of fitting function.

In order to check that all the \( \Xi_{c1} \) decays proceed via an intermediate \( \Xi_c^+ \), we release the cuts on \( M(\Xi_c^+ \pi^-) - M(\Xi_{c1}^0) \), select combinations within 5 MeV of our final signal peaks, and plot \( M(\Xi_c^+ \pi^-) - M(\Xi_{c1}^0) \). Both plots (Figs. 2a and 2b) show signals which were fit to a Breit-Wigner function convoluted with a Gaussian resolution function, plus a flat background. The masses and widths for the \( \Xi_c^+ \) particles found in this way are consistent with our previously published results. It is clear that the data are consistent with all the \( \Xi_{c1} \) decays proceeding via an intermediate \( \Xi_c^+ \).

Although the statistics are very limited, they are sufficient to do a rough investigation of the momentum spectrum with which the new particles are produced. We add the two isospin states together as we would expect them to have very similar momentum distributions. We relax the \( x_p \) cut from 0.6 to 0.5 and fit the dipion mass difference plots (Fig. 2) in bins of \( x_p \). The fit uses a fixed width derived from the Monte Carlo study, with the mass fixed at the value found for \( x_p > 0.6 \). The yields in each bin of \( x_p \) were corrected for the detector efficiency, and the resulting \( x_p \) distribution shown in Fig. 3. The fit to this spectrum is of the functional form due to Peterson et al. [7]. The fitted parameter \( \epsilon_r \) is measured to be \( \epsilon_r = 0.07^{+0.03}_{-0.02} \). This value is very similar to that found for the \( \Lambda_{c1}^+ \) spectrum [1] and harder than those found for charmed baryons with no orbital angular momentum.

There has been little theoretical work in recent years on the spectroscopy of orbitally excited \( \Xi_c \) states. However, the models [8] that do exist predict that the excitation energy of the first orbitally excited doublet should be similar to the analogous value in the \( \Lambda_c^+ \) case (308 and 3392 MeV).
Furthermore the decay patterns of the $\Xi_{c1}^+$ states should be closely analogous to those of the $\Lambda_{c1}^+$. The preferred decay of the $J^P = \frac{3}{2}^-$ $\Xi_{c1}^+$ should be to $\Xi_{c}^+\pi$ because the spin parity of the baryons allows this decay to proceed via an $S$-wave decay. Decays to $\Xi_{c}^+$ would have to proceed via a $D$ wave and would therefore be suppressed. In the case of the $J^P = \frac{5}{2}^-$ $\Xi_{c1}^+$ the situation is reversed. It is natural therefore to expect a particle found by its decay to $\Xi_{c}^+\pi$ to have $J^P = \frac{3}{2}^-$. When the total spin and parity of the baryon is considered, decays directly to the ground state of $\Xi_{c1}$ are allowed for the $\Lambda_{c1}^+$ because of isospin conservation, are allowed for the $\Xi_{c1}^+$ via a $D$ wave. Taking into account the large phase space available, such decays might be expected to be large. However, in the heavy quark effective theory (HQET) [9], where the angular momentum and parity of the light diquark degrees of freedom must be considered separately from those of the heavy quark, such decays are forbidden. Thus in the HQET picture, we would expect that the dominant decay of a $J^P = \frac{3}{2}^-$ $\Xi_{c1}^+$ would be to $\Xi_{c}^+\pi$, consistent with our observation.

Following our first analysis of the $\Xi_{c1}^+$, there have been two papers that include theoretical calculations of the expected $\Xi_{c1}^+$ widths. Pirjol and Yan [10] calculate $2.37 - 15.00$ MeV, whereas Chiladze and Falk [11] calculate $5.4$ MeV. Both calculations use the experimentally measured width of the $\Lambda_{c1}(2593)$ as input. Our results favor a natural width for each of the $\Xi_{c1}^+$ particles at the lower end of these predictions.

In conclusion, we present evidence for the production of two new states. The first of these states decay into $\Xi_{c}^+\pi^+$ with measured mass given by $M(\Xi_{c}^+\pi^+) - M(\Xi_{c}^+) = 348.6 \pm 0.6 \pm 1.0$ MeV, and width, $\Gamma < 3.5$ MeV at the 90% confidence level. The second state decays into $\Xi_{c}^+\pi^+$ with a mass given by $M(\Xi_{c}^+\pi^+) - M(\Xi_{c}^+) = 347.2 \pm 0.7 \pm 2.0$ MeV, and width, $\Gamma < 6.5$ MeV at the 90% confidence level. Although we do not measure the spin or parity of these states, the observed decay modes, masses, and momentum distributions are all consistent with the new states being the $J^P = \frac{3}{2}^- \Xi_{c1}^+$ and $\Xi_{c1}^0$ states, the charmed-strange analogs of the $\Lambda_{c1}^+(2625)$.

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*Permanent address: University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712.
†Permanent address: Yonsei University, Seoul 120-749, Korea.
‡Permanent address: University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221.