**Is v_3 necessary or even informative in describing angular corre-
lation data from RHIC and the LHC?**[1] LANNY RAY, U. Texas at Austin,
THOMAS TRAINOR, DUNCAN PRINDLE, U. Washington — One of the more
interesting observations from the heavy-ion program at RHIC and now at the LHC
are long-range correlations on relative pseudorapidity at small azimuth opening an-
gles. In 2010 Alver and Roland [1] suggested that this so-called same-side ridge
could be explained in terms of higher-order, azimuth cosine distributions generated
by event-wise energy density fluctuations in the initial-state plus hydrodynamic flow.
Applications of third- and higher-order harmonics in analysis of angular correlations
from heavy-ion collisions have become ubiquitous in the literature. However, we
question the introduction of "higher harmonics" to the 2D data description. Ex-
tending previous work we examine the necessity and utility of v_3. We find that the
net effect of v_3 is to accommodate minor non-Gaussian structure in the same-side 2D
peak for p_t-integral correlations from RHIC. A single Gaussian hypothesis for those
data is not falsified within statistics. Model ambiguities and instabilities resulting
from v_3 are discussed and resolved. Lastly, we demonstrate that the 0-1% angular
correlation data for 2.76 TeV Pb-Pb collisions from ATLAS [2] do not require a v_3
component.

[1] Phys. Rev. C81, 054905 (2010).
[2] ATLAS, Phys. Rev. C86, 014907 (2012).

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