

Abstract Submitted
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Laboratory verification of electron-scale diffusion regions modulated by a three-dimensional instability¹ SAMUEL GREESS, JAN EGEDAL, University of Wisconsin - Madison, ADAM STANIER, Los Alamos National Laboratory, JOSEPH OLSON, University of Wisconsin - Madison, WILLIAM DAUGHTON, Los Alamos National Laboratory, RACHEL MYERS, ALEXANDER MILLET-AYALA, University of Wisconsin - Madison, ARI LE, Los Alamos National Laboratory, MICHAEL CLARK, JOHN WALLACE, DOUGLASS ENDRIZZI, CARY FOREST, University of Wisconsin - Madison — During magnetic reconnection, the electron fluid decouples from the magnetic field within narrow current layers, and theoretical models for the process can be distinguished in terms of their predicted current layer widths. In agreement with numerical and theoretical results, we present laboratory observations that confirm the presence of electron scale current layer widths. Although the layers are modulated by a current-driven instability, the narrow experimental current layers are consistent with a 3D simulation for which off-diagonal stress in the electron pressure tensor is responsible for fast reconnection.

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Samuel Greess
University of Wisconsin - Madison

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