

MAR16-2015-003177

Abstract for an Invited Paper  
for the MAR16 Meeting of  
the American Physical Society

### **Order by Disorder in the XY Pyrochlore Antiferromagnet $\text{Er}_2\text{Ti}_2\text{O}_7$ <sup>1</sup>**

BRUCE D. GAULIN, McMaster University

Crystal field effects associated with  $\text{Er}^{3+}$  magnetic moments in  $\text{Er}_2\text{Ti}_2\text{O}_7$  give rise to local XY anisotropy and effective quantum  $S=1/2$  spins which are antiferromagnetically coupled on this materials cubic pyrochlore lattice [1].  $\text{Er}_2\text{Ti}_2\text{O}_7$  orders into a non-collinear antiferromagnetic  $\Psi_2$  state below  $\sim 1.2$  K, in zero magnetic field, but the mechanism for its ground state selection has been a puzzle for more than a decade. We have carried out inelastic neutron scattering measurements on single crystal samples of  $\text{Er}_2\text{Ti}_2\text{O}_7$  at low temperatures and in the presence of a strong [110] magnetic field, allowing us to determine the underlying spin Hamiltonian for this quantum antiferromagnet [2, 3]. These results point to ground state selection via an order-by-quantum-disorder mechanism [3], and a concomitant order-by-disorder gap of  $\sim 0.05$  meV has also been observed [4], associated with the pseudo-Goldstone modes in the low field ordered state. In addition, we have explored the sensitivity of the ground state selection to magnetic dilution by preparing and studying single crystals of  $\text{Er}_{2-x}\text{Y}_x\text{Ti}_2\text{O}_7$  [5]. These studies are particularly topical in light of two theoretical predictions [6,7] that the  $\Psi_2$  ordered state may be unstable to formation of the related  $\Psi_3$  phase at low temperatures, in the presence of quenched disorder. [1] J.D.M. Champion et al., Phys. Rev. B 68, 020401 (2003). [2] J.P.C. Ruff et al., Phys. Rev. Lett., 101, 147205 (2005). [3] L. Savary et al. Phys. Rev. Lett., 109, 167201 (2012). [4] K.A. Ross et al. Phys. Rev. Lett. 112, 057201 (2014). [5] J.F. Niven, Proc. R. Soc. A, 470: 20140387 (2014). [6] V. S. Maryasin and M. E. Zhitomirsky, Phys. Rev. B 90, 094412 (2014). [7] A. Andreev and P. A. McClarty, Phys. Rev. B 91, 064401 (2015).

<sup>1</sup>Research supported by NSERC of Canada and the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research