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MILC results for light pseudoscalars

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We present the latest preliminary results of MILC's analysis of the light pseudoscalar meson sector. The analysis includes data from new ensembles with smaller lattice spacings, smaller light quark masses and lighter-than-physical strange quark masses. Both SU(2) and SU(3) chiral fits, including NNLO chiral logarithms, are shown. We give results for decay constants, quark masses, Gasser-Leutwyler low energy constants, and condensates in the two- and three-flavor chiral limits.

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a (fm)	$a\hat{m}'$ / am'_s	$10/g^2$	size	# lats.	u_0	r_1/a	$m_\pi L$
$\approx$0.09	0.0124 / 0.031	7.11	$28^3 \times 96$	531	0.8788	3.712(4)	5.78
$\approx$0.09	0.0093 / 0.031	7.10	$28^3 \times 96$	1124	0.8785	3.705(3)	5.04
$\approx$0.09	0.0062 / 0.031	7.09	$28^3 \times 96$	591	0.8782	3.699(3)	4.14
$\approx$0.09	0.00465 / 0.031	7.085	$32^3 \times 96$	480	0.8781	3.697(3)	4.11
$\approx$0.09	0.0031 / 0.031	7.08	$40^3 \times 96$	945	0.8779	3.695(4)	4.21
$\approx$0.09	0.00155 / 0.031	7.075	$64^3 \times 96$	491	0.877805	3.691(4)	4.80
$\approx$0.09	0.0062 / 0.0186	7.10	$28^3 \times 96$	985	0.8785	3.801(4)	4.09
$\approx$0.09	0.0031 / 0.0186	7.06	$40^3 \times 96$	580	0.8774	3.697(4)	4.22
$\approx$0.09	0.0031 / 0.0031	7.045	$40^3 \times 96$	380	0.8770	3.742(8)	4.20
$\approx$0.06	0.0072 / 0.018	7.48	$48^3 \times 144$	625	0.8881	5.283(8)	6.33
$\approx$0.06	0.0054 / 0.018	7.475	$48^3 \times 144$	465	0.88800	5.289(7)	5.48
$\approx$0.06	0.0036 / 0.018	7.47	$48^3 \times 144$	751	0.88788	5.296(7)	4.49
$\approx$0.06	0.0025 / 0.018	7.465	$56^3 \times 144$	768	0.88776	5.292(7)	4.39
$\approx$0.06	0.0018 / 0.018	7.46	$64^3 \times 144$	826	0.88764	5.281(8)	4.27
$\approx$0.06	0.0036 / 0.0108	7.46	$64^3 \times 144$	601	0.88765	5.321(9)	5.96
$\approx$0.045	0.0028 / 0.014	7.81	$64^3 \times 192$	801	0.89511	7.115(20)	4.56

Table 1: List of lattice ensembles used in this study.

1. Introduction

The MILC collaboration has been carrying out simulations of 2+1 flavor lattice QCD with an improved staggered quark action for about 10 years. The physics program has recently been reviewed in [1]. An important aspect of MILC's research program has been the study of the light pseudoscalar meson sector. Here we give the latest update of this program. Compared to the last status report in [2] lattice ensembles with smaller lattice spacings, smaller light quark masses and lighter-than-physical strange quark masses are analyzed. Furthermore, we do fits based on both SU(2) and SU(3) chiral perturbation theory (χPT), rather than just SU(3) as before, and we now include NNLO chiral logarithms.

2. The ensembles and the fitting procedures

MILC has generated lattice configuration ensembles at six different lattice spacings, ranging from $a \approx 0.18$ fm down to $a \approx 0.045$ fm. In the present analysis, only the $a \approx 0.09$ fm ("fine"), $a \approx 0.06$ fm ("superfine") and $a \approx 0.045$ fm ("ultrafine") ensembles are considered. With our very precise numerical data, adding in coarser lattice spacings would require inclusion of higher order discretization effects in the fits, which is currently not feasible.

The ensembles considered in this study are listed in Table 1. $a\hat{m}'$ is the simulation light quark mass, with up and down quark masses being equal, and am'_s is the simulation strange quark mass. Notice that several ensembles have an unphysically light am'_s, about 60% of the physical strange quark mass, and one ensemble has three degenerate (light) quarks. These ensembles were created specifically to have good control over the SU(3) χPT fits.

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a (fm)	Goldstone	RMS	singlet
0.15	241	542	673
0.12	265	460	558
0.09 ($a\hat{m}' = 0.00155$, $am'_s = 0.031$ ensemble only)	177	281	346
0.09 (all other fine ensembles)	246	329	386
0.06	224	258	280
0.045 (some valence pions are lighter)	324	334	341

Table 2: Masses (in MeV, using $r_1 = 0.3117$ fm for the scale) for the lightest sea-quark pions of various tastes at each lattice spacing. The Goldstone pion is the taste pseudoscalar and has the lightest mass of all tastes, the taste singlet has the heaviest mass, and the root-mean-squared (RMS) mass is the average that is used in the NNLO chiral logarithms. Unless otherwise indicated, the masses given are also the lightest valence-quark pions on each ensemble at that lattice spacing.

We determine the scale r_1 on every ensemble from the static quark potential (see [1]). The values listed in Table 1 come from a smooth interpolation. For the analysis presented here, however, we use a mass independent scheme, where r_1 is taken from the smooth interpolation with the quark masses set to their physical values. This procedure avoids spurious dependence on the quark masses in the χPT fits.

Even with the use of the improved staggered (asqtad) fermions and the fairly small lattice spacings considered, the taste violation lattice artifacts are significant, and need to be accounted for in the analysis. We do this, as in our previous studies, by using rooted staggered χPT forms (rSχPT) at NLO in our chiral fits [3, 4]. The "rooting procedure," taking the fourth root of the fermion determinant when generating the lattices, is used to eliminate the unwanted tastes present with the use of staggered fermions. As reviewed in Ref. [1], recent work suggests strongly that the procedure does indeed produce the desired theory in the continuum limit.

As a new feature in the present analysis, our χPT fits now include the NNLO chiral logarithms derived by Bijnens, Danielsson and Lahde [5, 6, 7]. In contrast to the NLO chiral logs, however, lattice artifacts are not included in the NNLO chiral logs. Instead, we use the root mean square average (over tastes) pion mass for the argument of the NNLO chiral logs. This is only systematic if chiral symmetry violations from taste-violating lattice effects are significantly smaller than the usual chiral violations from mass terms. That begins to be true for the $a \approx 0.09$ fm points, and is better satisfied for the $a \approx 0.06$ and 0.045 fm ensembles. It is not true for ensembles with $a \geq 0.12$ fm, which is why that data is omitted from the analysis. Table 2 gives some representative pion masses for our ensembles.

The SU(3) chiral fits are done in two stages. The first consists of "low-mass" fits used to determine the LO and NLO low energy constants (LECs), namely what we call f_3 and B_3 (at LO) and the Gasser-Leutwyler parameters L_i (at NLO). Here the goal is to keep only those ensembles and valence points where meson masses (including kaons, which have a quark of mass m'_s) are suffi-

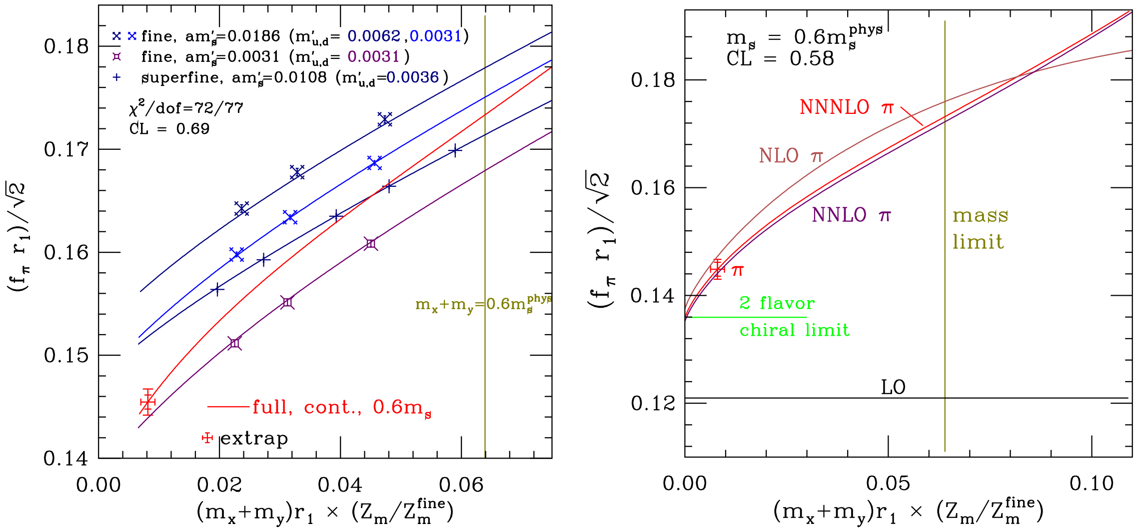

Figure 1: Low-mass SU(3) chiral fits. The left plot shows the fit giving the LO and NLO LECs. The right plot illustrates the convergence of SU(3) χPT fits in the continuum, with the strange quark mass fixed at $0.6m_s^{phys}$. For this test we also included NNNLO analytic terms in the fit.

ciently light that SU(3) χPT may be expected to be rapidly convergent. In addition, taste splitting should be small enough that omission of taste-violations from the NNLO terms (but inclusion at NLO) is systematic; this, for example, is another reason to drop the $a \approx 0.09$ fm ensemble with $a\hat{m}' = 0.00155$, $am'_s = 0.031$. After these cuts, only the three fine and one superfine ensembles with $m'_s \lesssim 0.6m_s^{phys}$ are included, and the valence masses are limited by $m_x + m_y \leq 0.6m_s^{phys}$. The fits are illustrated in Fig. 1 (left). To test convergence, the full set of NNNLO analytic terms may also be added; as shown in Fig. 1 (right), the convergence is satisfactory. Addition of such terms does not improve the goodness of fit, as can be seen by comparing the confidence levels (CL) of the two fits in Fig. 1. While we only show data for f_π in Fig. 1, the fits include data for the pseudoscalar meson masses and decay constants with all combinations of valence quark masses that satisfy $m_x + m_y \leq 0.6m_s^{phys}$.

In the second stage, the "high-mass" SU(3) χPT fits, all ensembles listed in Table 1 are included with the valence masses restricted to $m_x + m_y \leq 1.2m_s^{phys}$. The LO and NLO LECs are fixed at the values from the low-mass fits. NNNLO and NNNNLO analytic terms are included, but not the corresponding logs. These terms are needed to obtain good confidence levels, and they allow us to interpolate around the (physical) strange quark mass. That fact that they are required indicates that SU(3) χPT is not converging rapidly at these mass values, unlike the situation in the low-mass case. Since the LO and NLO LECs dominate the chiral extrapolation to the physical point, the results for decay constants and masses are insensitive to the form of these NNNLO and NNNNLO interpolating terms, as long as the fits are good. The high-mass fits are used to give the central values of the physical decay constants and other quantities involving the strange quark mass, such as f_2, B_2 and chiral condensate $\langle \bar{u}u \rangle_2$, which are defined in the two-flavor chiral limit ($\hat{m} \to 0$, m_s fixed at m_s^{phys}). The high-mass fits are illustrated in Fig. 2.

Finally, we also perform SU(2) χPT fits. Here we consider the five superfine ensembles with $m'_s \approx m_s^{phys}$ and the ultrafine ensemble. The fits are systematic, with rSχPT forms at NLO and

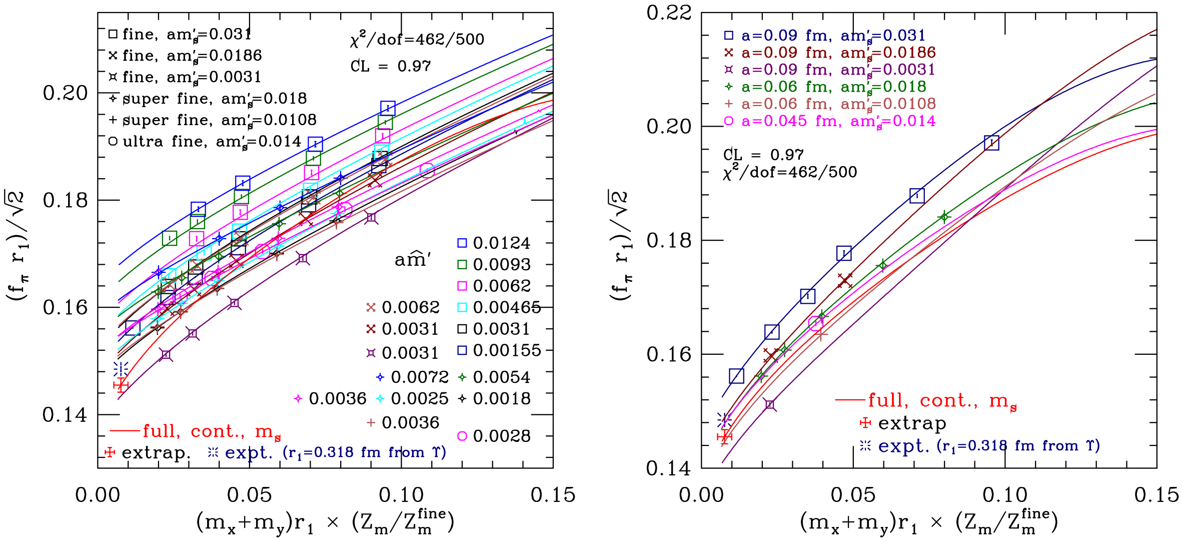

Figure 2: High-mass SU(3) chiral fits; in the left plot selected partially quenched data points are shown, while in the right plot only full QCD points, *i.e.,* points with sea and valence quark masses set equal, are shown.

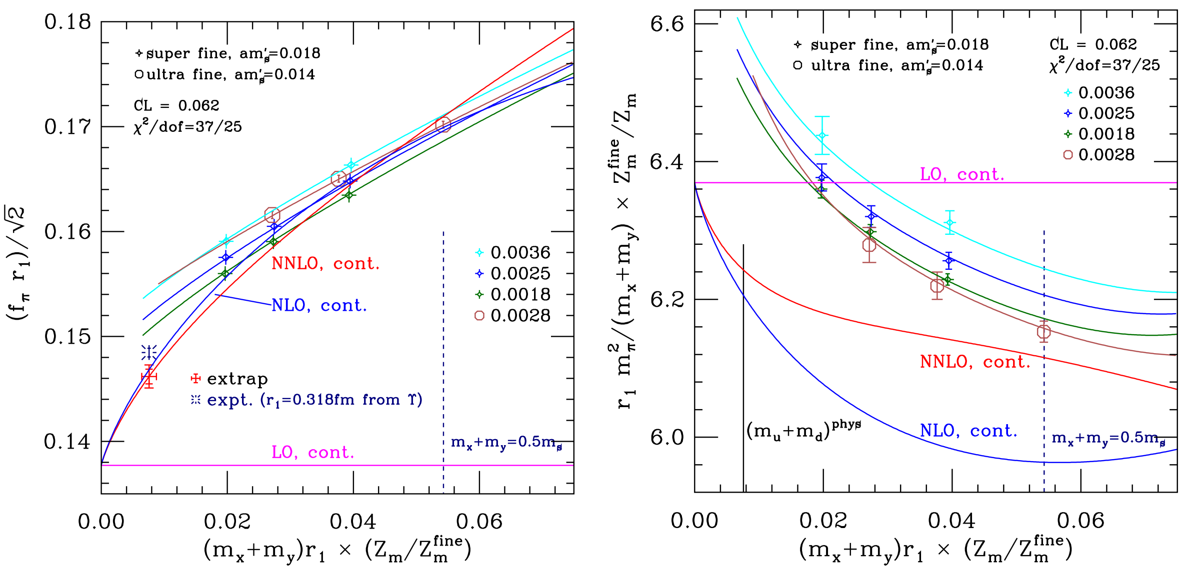

Figure 3: SU(2) chiral fits with convergence (after setting $a = 0$) for f_π (left) and $m_\pi^2/(m_x + m_y)$ (right).

continuum NNLO chiral logs with RMS pseudoscalar masses as arguments. The valence masses are restricted to $m_x + m_y \leq 0.5 m_s^{phys}$. The fits, and the convergence, are illustrated in Fig. 3, where here we show both decay constant and meson mass.

3. Preliminary results

In a first analysis we use, as before, a lattice scale determined from ϒ-splittings [8] which leads to $r_1^{phys} = 0.318(7)$ fm [9]. With this, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} f_\pi &= 128.0 \pm 0.3 \pm 2.9 \text{ MeV} , \\ f_K &= 153.8 \pm 0.3 \pm 3.9 \text{ MeV} , \\ f_K/f_\pi &= 1.201(2)(9) . \end{aligned} \tag{3.1}$$

Here, and in the following results, the first error is statistical and the second is systematic.

Our result for f_π agrees nicely with the latest PDG 2008 value, $f_\pi = 130.4 \pm 0.2\,\text{MeV}$ [10]. Since f_π is our most accurately determined dimensionful quantity, we can use it to determine the scale. This gives $r_1^{phys} = 0.3117(6)(^{+12}_{-31})$ fm. Redoing our analysis with this more accurate scale, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} f_K &= 156.2 \pm 0.3 \pm 1.1 \text{ MeV} , & f_K/f_\pi &= 1.198(2)(^{+6}_{-8}) , \\ f_2 &= 122.8 \pm 0.3 \pm 0.5 \text{ MeV} , & B_2 &= 2.87(1)(4)(14) \text{ GeV} , \\ f_3 &= 110.8 \pm 2.0 \pm 4.1 \text{ MeV} , & B_3 &= 2.39(8)(10)(12) \text{ GeV} , \\ f_\pi/f_2 &= 1.062(1)(3) , & f_\pi/f_3 &= 1.172(3)(43) , \\ \langle \bar{u}u \rangle_2 &= -(279(1)(2)(4) \text{ MeV})^3 , & \langle \bar{u}u \rangle_3 &= -(245(5)(4)(4) \text{ MeV})^3 , \\ 2L_6 - L_4 &= 0.16(12)(2) , & 2L_8 - L_5 &= -0.48(8)(21) , \\ L_4 &= 0.31(13)(4) , & L_5 &= 1.65(12)(36) , \\ L_6 &= 0.23(10)(3) , & L_8 &= 0.58(5)(7) , \\ m_s &= 89.0(0.2)(1.6)(4.5)(0.1) \text{ MeV} , & \hat{m} &= 3.25(1)(7)(16)(0) \text{ MeV} , \\ m_u &= 1.96(0)(6)(10)(12) \text{ MeV} , & m_d &= 4.53(1)(8)(23)(12) \text{ MeV} , \\ m_s/\hat{m} &= 27.41(5)(22)(0)(4) , & m_u/m_d &= 0.432(1)(9)(0)(39) . \end{aligned} \tag{3.2}$$

Here the NLO LECs L_i are in units of 10^{-3}, evaluated at chiral scale m_η, and the LO LECs B_j, quark masses and chiral condensates are in the $\overline{\text{MS}}$ scheme at 2 GeV. For the conversion from the bare quantities we use the two-loop renormalization factor of [11]. The resulting perturbative error is listed as the third error in these quantities. The subscripts "2" and "3" refer to the two-flavor (with m_s at its physical value) and three-flavor chiral limits, respectively. The quark condensates are related to the LO LECs by $\langle \bar{u}u \rangle_j = -f_j^2 B_j/2$. Quark masses, finally, have a fourth error, accounting for our limited knowledge of electromagnetic effects on pion and kaon masses (see [12] for how we address this).

We note that most of our new results agree, well within errors, with our previous analysis [2] and have smaller errors. Not surprisingly, an exception are the NLO LECs, some of which changed considerably with the inclusion of NNLO chiral logs. Similar changes have been observed in continuum extractions of these NLO LECs; see for example Ref. [13].

For the SU(3) NLO χPT correction to the physical pion mass [14] we find

$$\delta_\pi^{(2)} = 0.04(5)(2) . \tag{3.3}$$

Using one-loop conversion formulae [15] we obtain from the SU(3) NLO LECs in Eq. (3.2) the scale invariant SU(2) NLO LECs [16]

$$\bar{l}_3 = 3.32(64)(45) , \qquad \bar{l}_4 = 4.03(16)(17) . \tag{3.4}$$

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From our SU(2) chiral fits we obtain the preliminary result, using the scale from Υ-splittings,

$$f_\pi = 128.7 \pm 0.9^{+3.2}_{-2.7} \text{ MeV} , \tag{3.5}$$

to be compared to Eq. (3.1), and using the more accurate scale from f_π,

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{l}_3 &= 3.0(6)(^{+9}_{-6}) , & \bar{l}_4 &= 3.9(2)(3) , \\ f_2 &= 123.7 \pm 0.8^{+1.3}_{-1.4} \text{ MeV} , & B_2 &= 2.89(2)(^{+3}_{-8})(14) \text{ GeV} , \\ \hat{m} &= 3.21(3)(^{+6}_{-4})(16)(0) \text{ MeV} , & \langle \bar{u}u \rangle_2 &= -(280(2)(^{+4}_{-8})(4) \text{ MeV})^3 , \end{aligned} \tag{3.6}$$

to be compared to Eqs. (3.2) and (3.4). We observe nice agreement between our SU(2) and SU(3) chiral fit results. This indicates that a careful use of SU(3) χPT may be justified in the extrapolation of other quantities calculated on the lattice, such as B_K.

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