

Simplified Template Cross Section measurements of $H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ at CMS

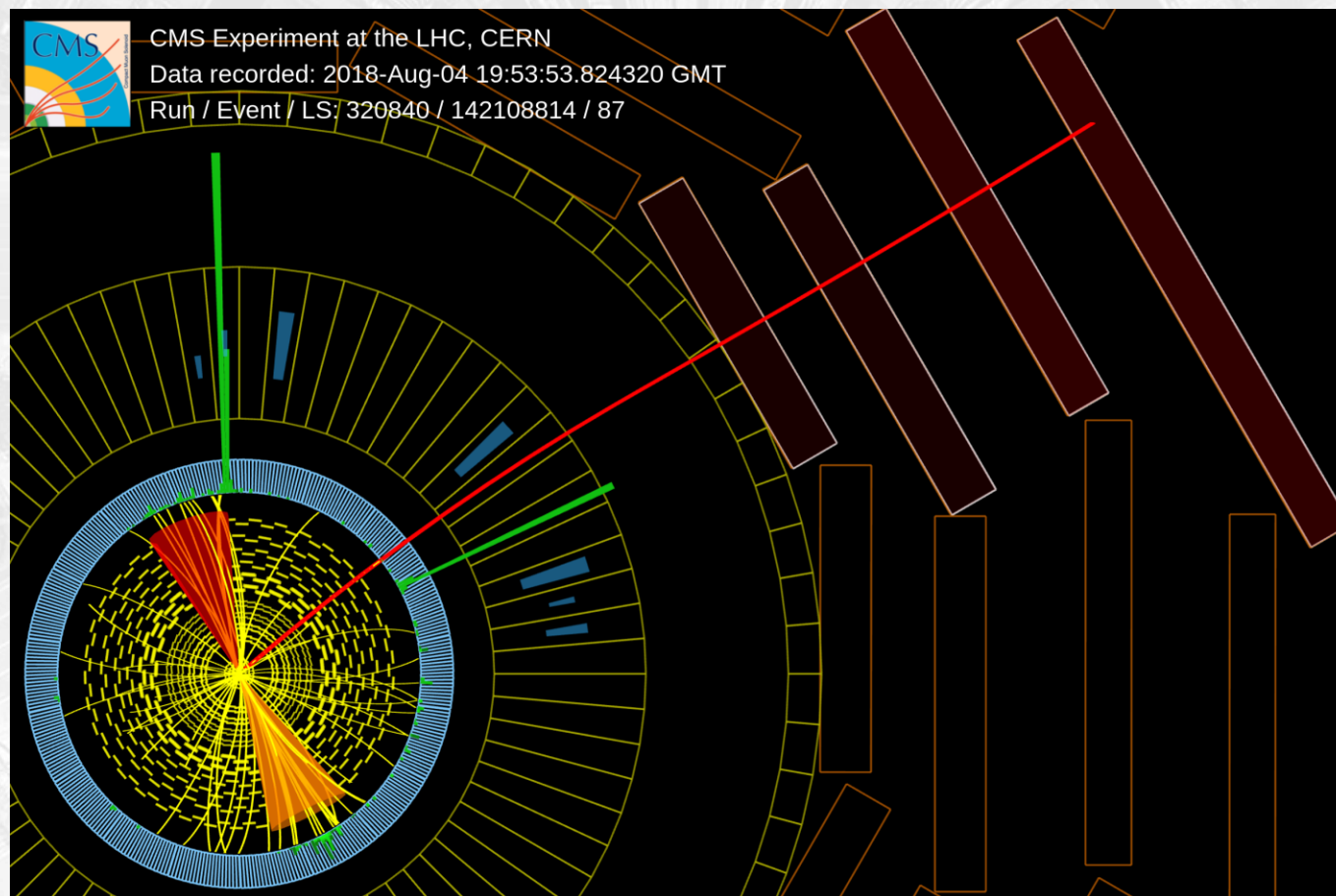
IOP Joint APP and HEPP Conference, Edinburgh

08th April 2026

Tom Runting

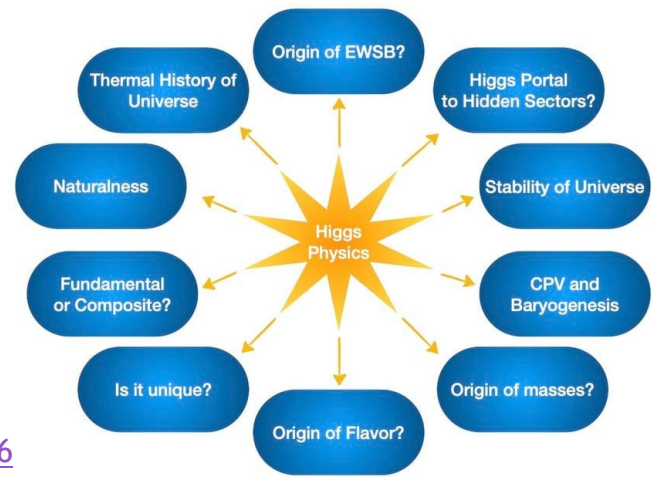
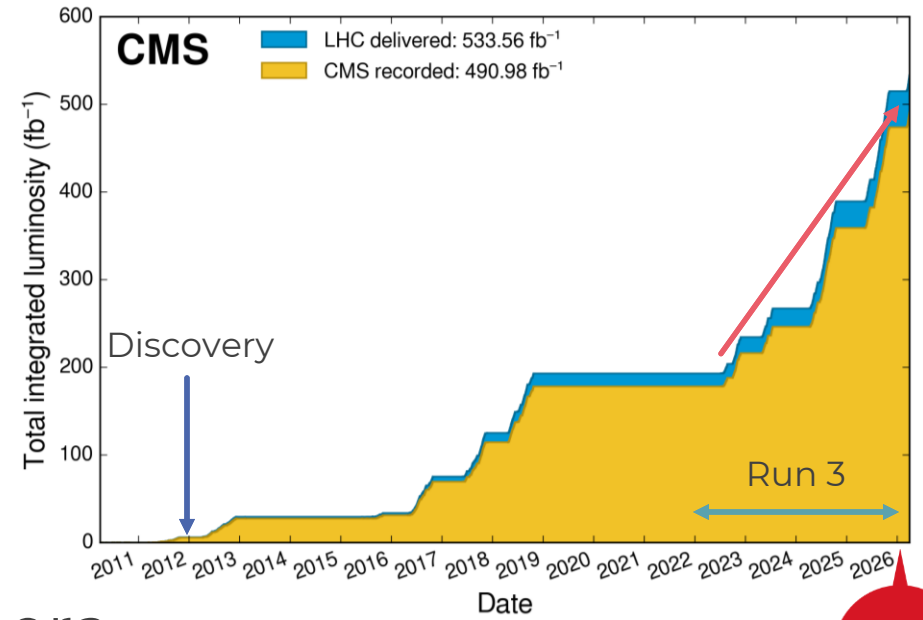
Supervisors: Jonathon Langford, Nicholas Wardle

The Higgs boson at CMS



Higgs – from observation to precision

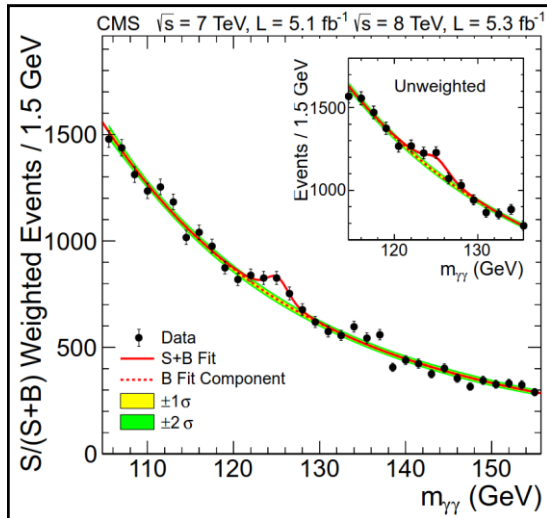
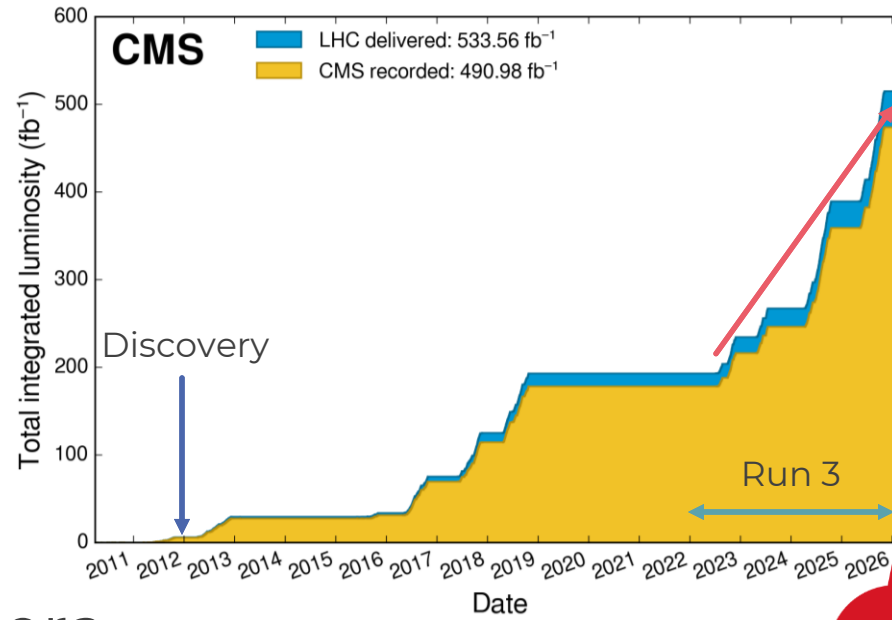
- ▶ Approaching 15 years since discovery, with $\sim 25x$ discovery integrated luminosity already recorded in Run 3
- ▶ Accordingly, measurements have moved into the precision era



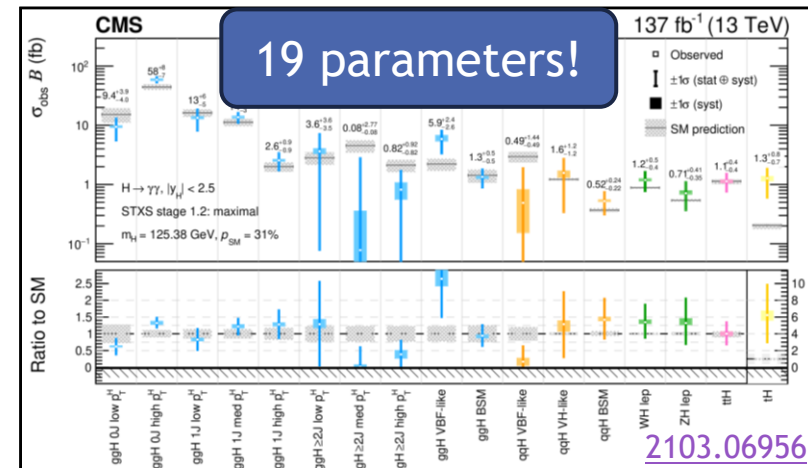
- ▶ Several outstanding questions about the Higgs sector remain and *all* require precise measurements

Higgs – from observation to precision

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1303.4571



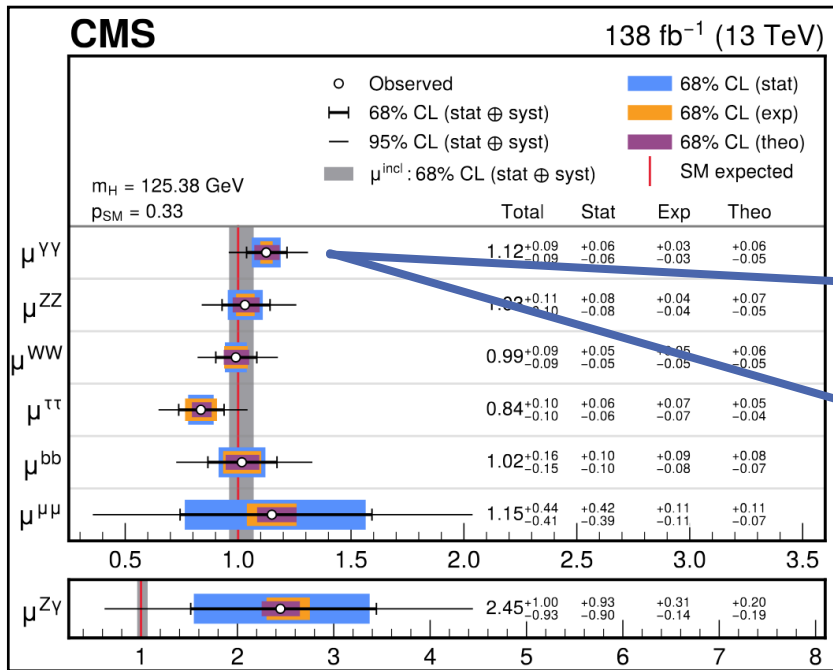
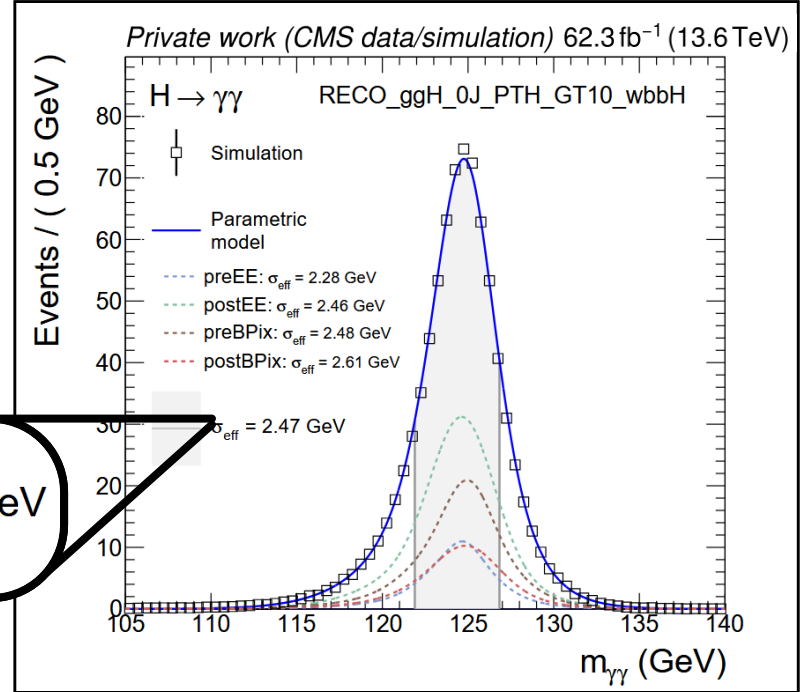
YOU ARE HERE

2103.06956

1 parameter affecting total Higgs yield

Higgs – why $H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$?

- ▶ Small $\mathcal{B}(H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma) \approx 0.23\%$, but experimentally clean final state yielding very good resolution and precise measurements



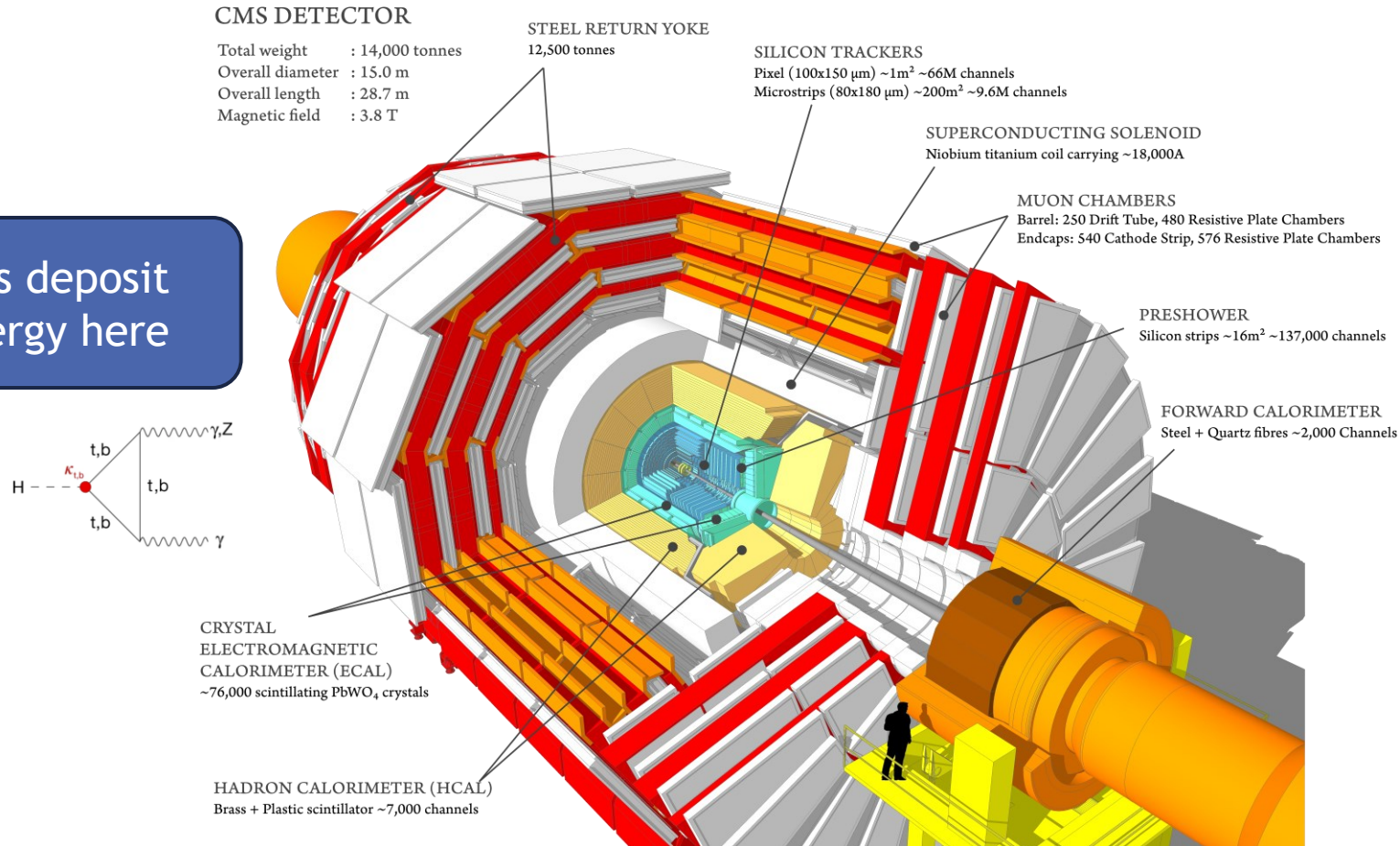
$\sigma_{\text{eff}} = 2.47$ GeV



Higgs – how $H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$?

- ▶ CMS is a general-purpose detector, and for precision measurements we need every part of it

ECAL: Photons deposit
~all their energy here

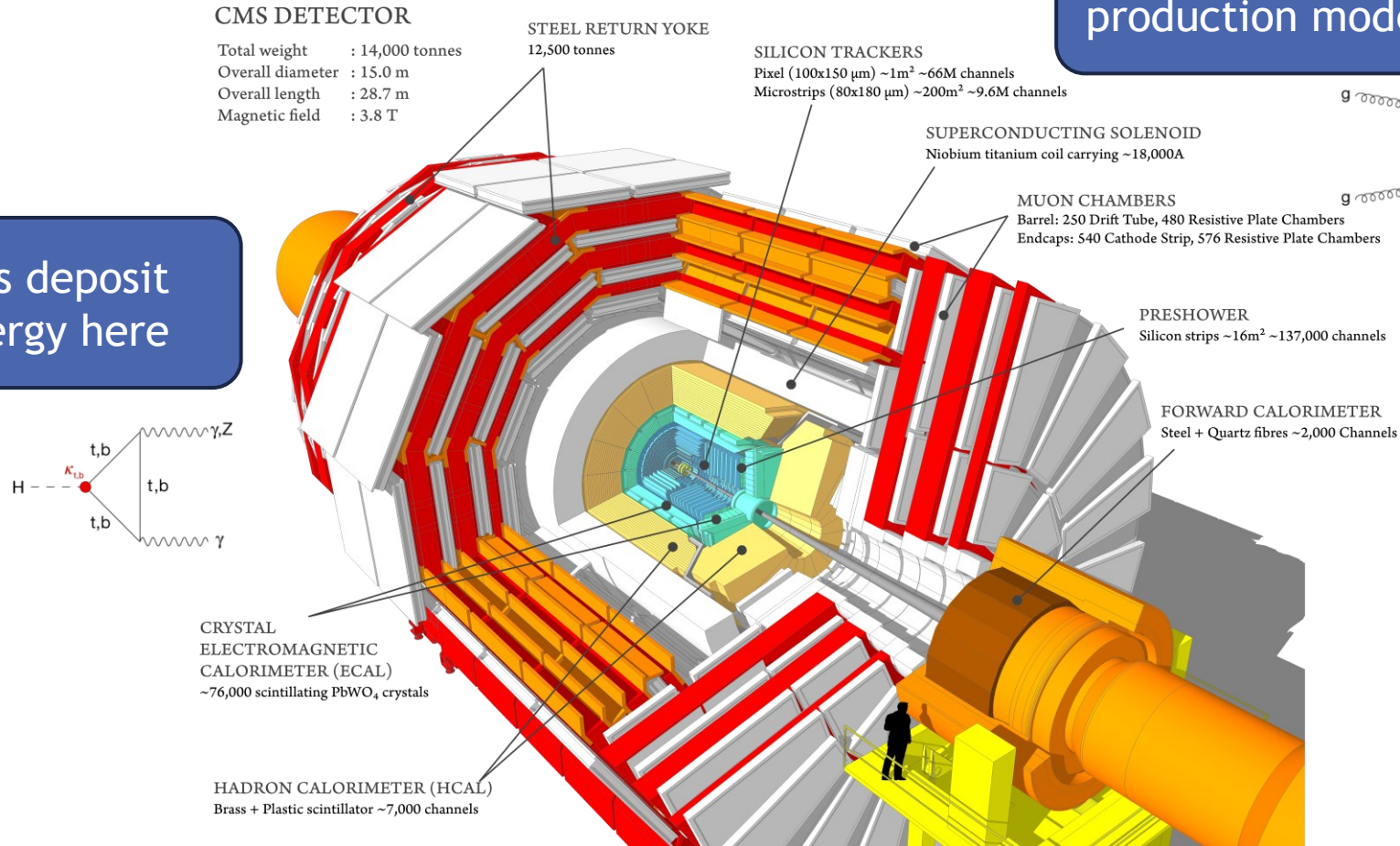


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CMS DETECTOR
 Total weight : 14,000 tonnes
 Overall diameter : 15.0 m
 Overall length : 28.7 m
 Magnetic field : 3.8 T

STEEL RETURN YOKE
 12,500 tonnes

SILICON TRACKERS
 Pixel (100x150 μm) ~1m² ~66M channels
 Microstrips (80x180 μm) ~200m² ~9.6M channels

SUPERCONDUCTING SOLENOID
 Niobium titanium coil carrying ~18,000A

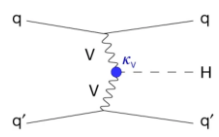
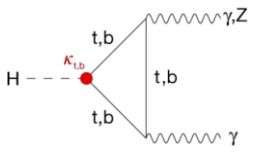
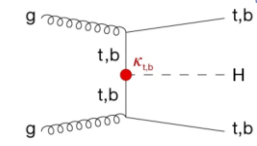
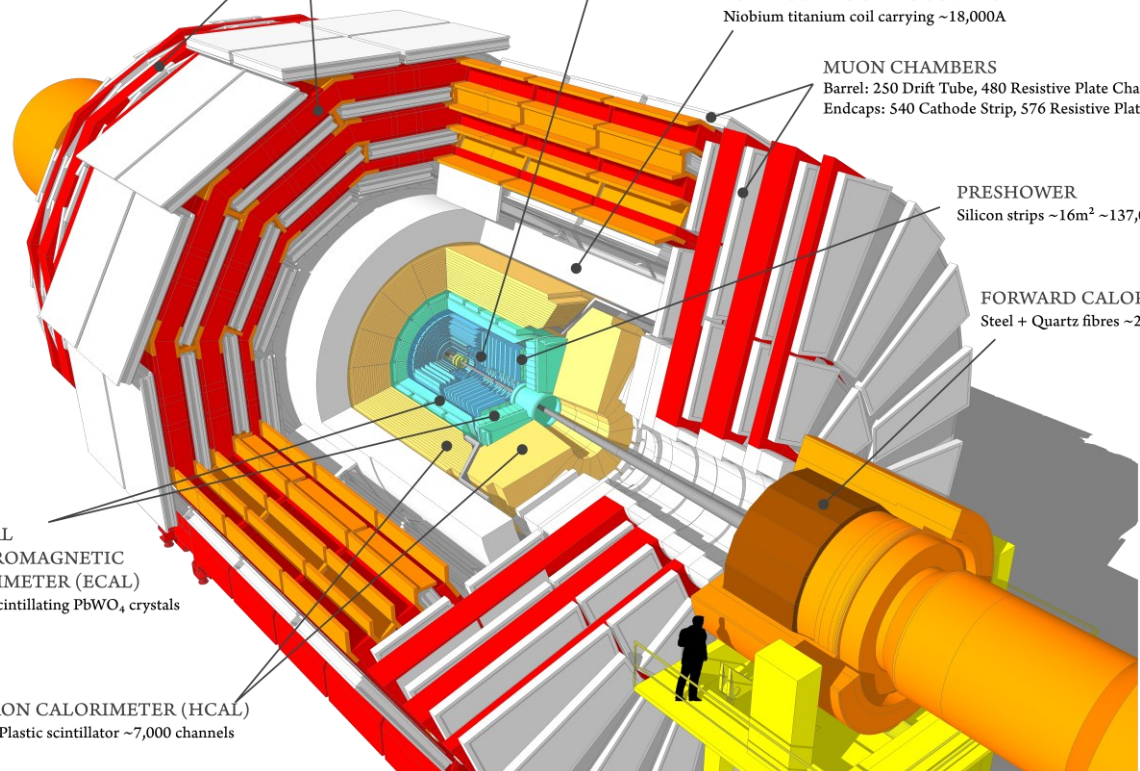
MUON CHAMBERS
 Barrel: 250 Drift Tube, 480 Resistive Plate Chambers
 Endcaps: 540 Cathode Strip, 576 Resistive Plate Chambers

PRESHOWER
 Silicon strips ~16m² ~137,000 channels

FORWARD CALORIMETER
 Steel + Quartz fibres ~2,000 Channels

CRYSTAL ELECTROMAGNETIC CALORIMETER (ECAL)
 ~76,000 scintillating PbWO₄ crystals

HADRON CALORIMETER (HCAL)
 Brass + Plastic scintillator ~7,000 channels



HCAL: Jets from e.g. VBF production

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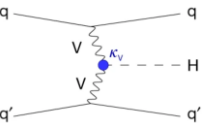
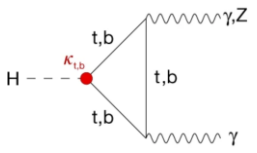
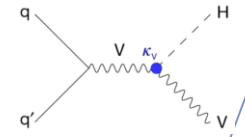
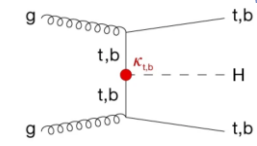
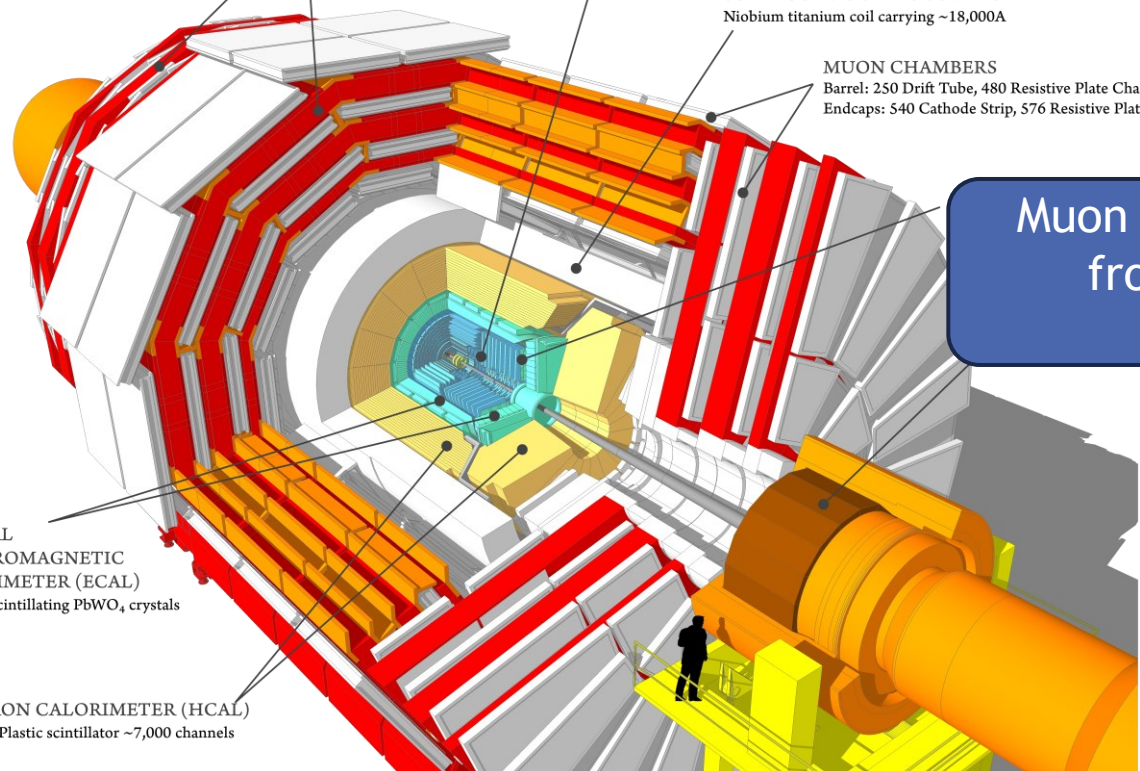
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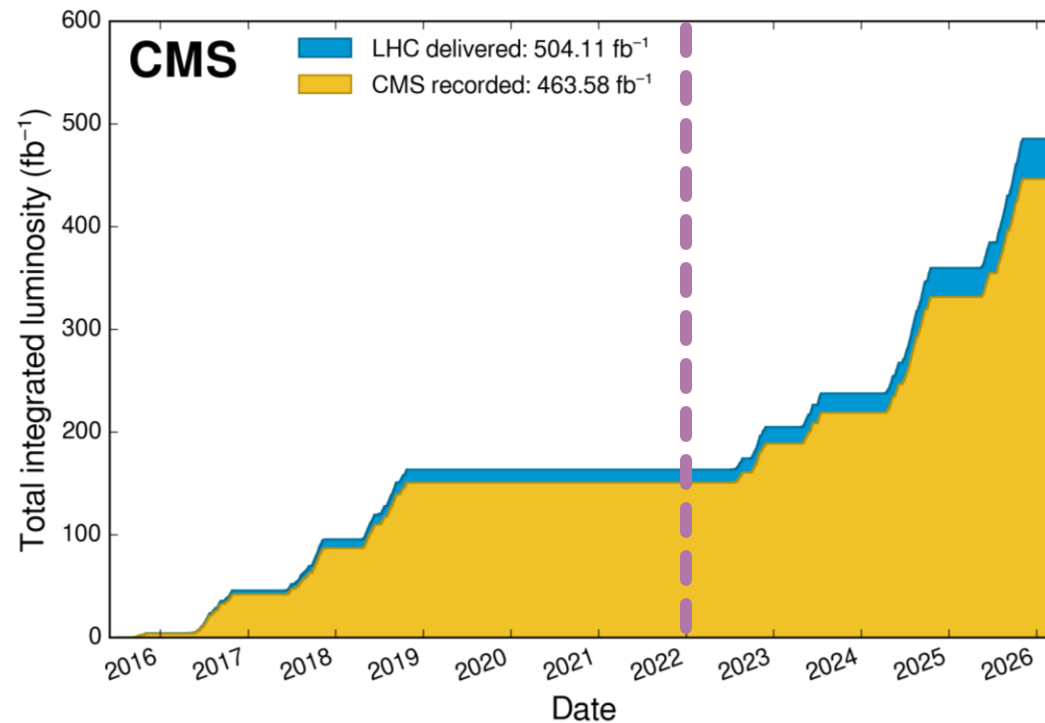
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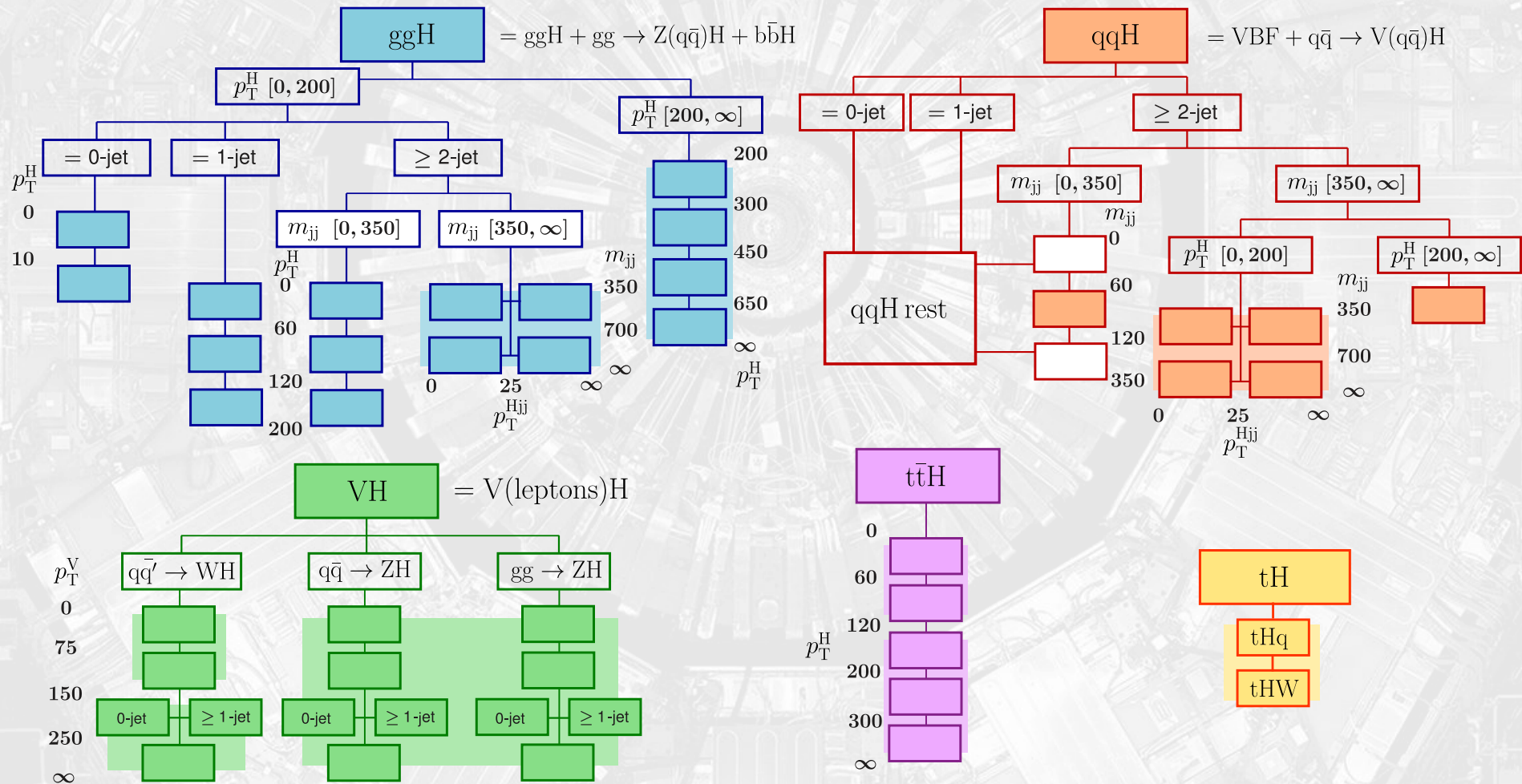
HCAL: Jets from e.g. VBF production

Higgs – how $H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$?

- ▶ Since 2022, CMS has collected a dataset with $\mathcal{L} > 300\text{fb}^{-1}$
 - ▶ ~15 million events with a Higgs boson ($\sim 40\text{k } H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$) to analyse!
- ▶ An opportunity to try new analysis techniques, increase granularity and use this wealth of data to better understand the Higgs boson

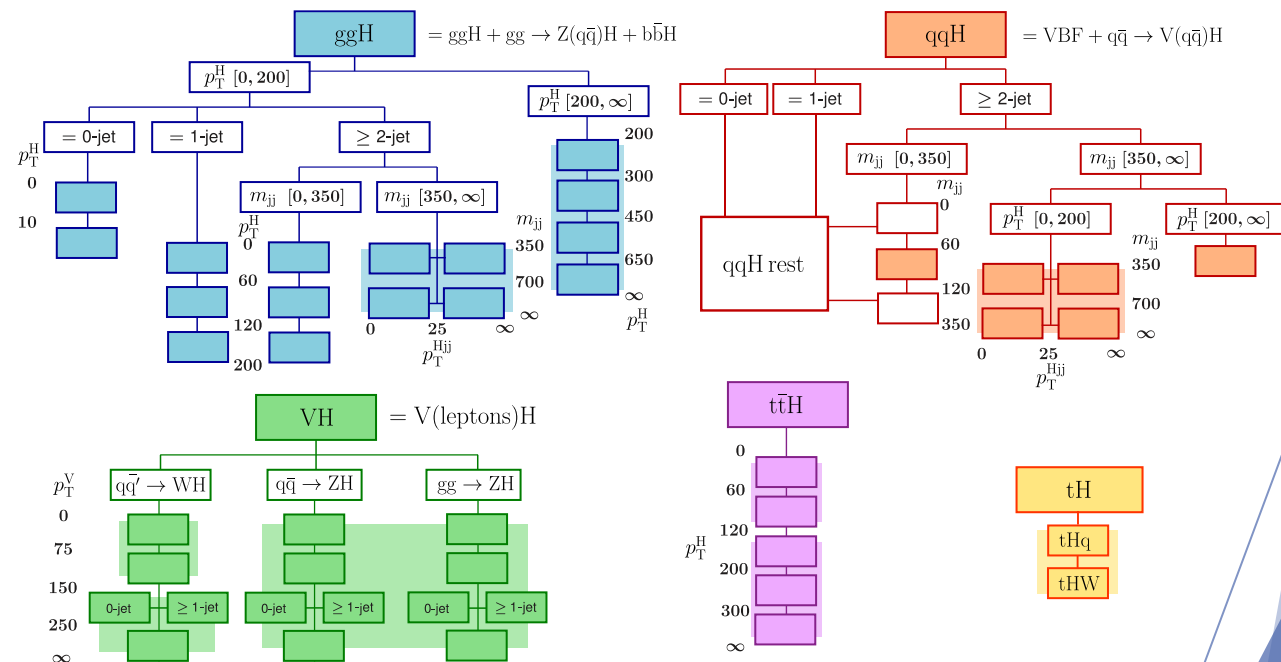


STXS $H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ in Run 3



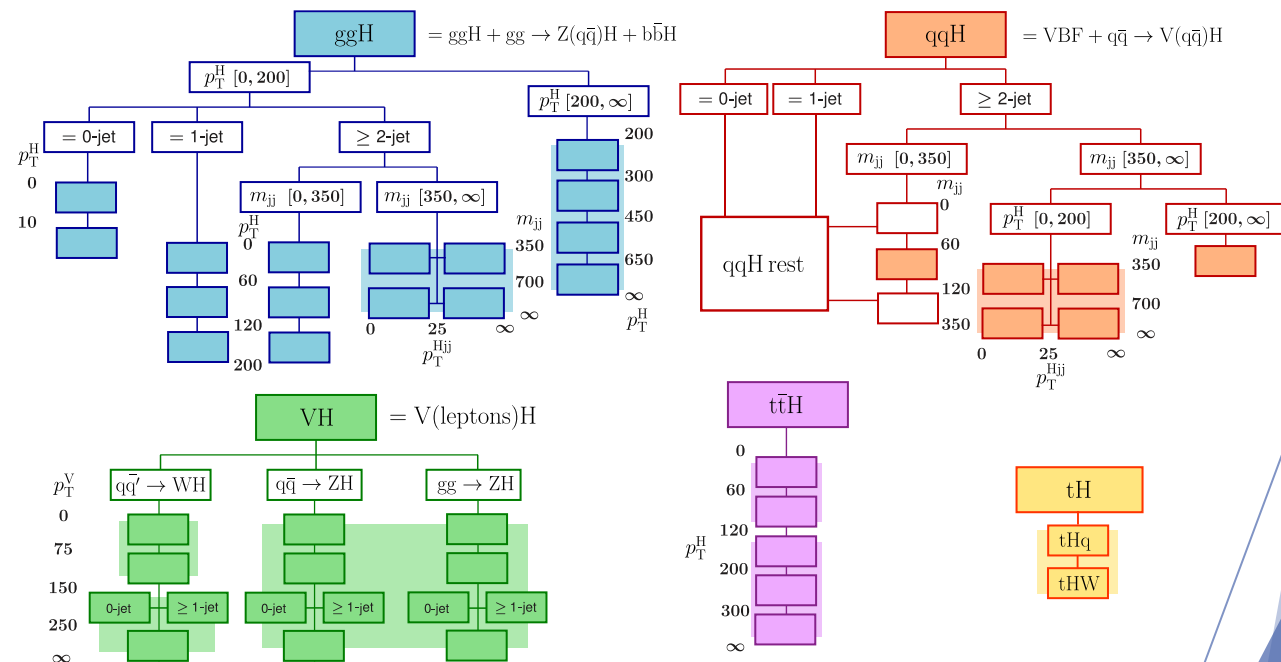
Simplified Template Cross Sections

- ▶ So, we want to measure the Higgs with better precision and potentially discover new physics
- ▶ If the inclusive σ_H agrees with the SM, deviations could still occur in rarer regions of phase space (e.g., high p_T^H)
- ▶ Construct a few “particle-level” regions of phase space (split by production mode) and measure the cross-section in each



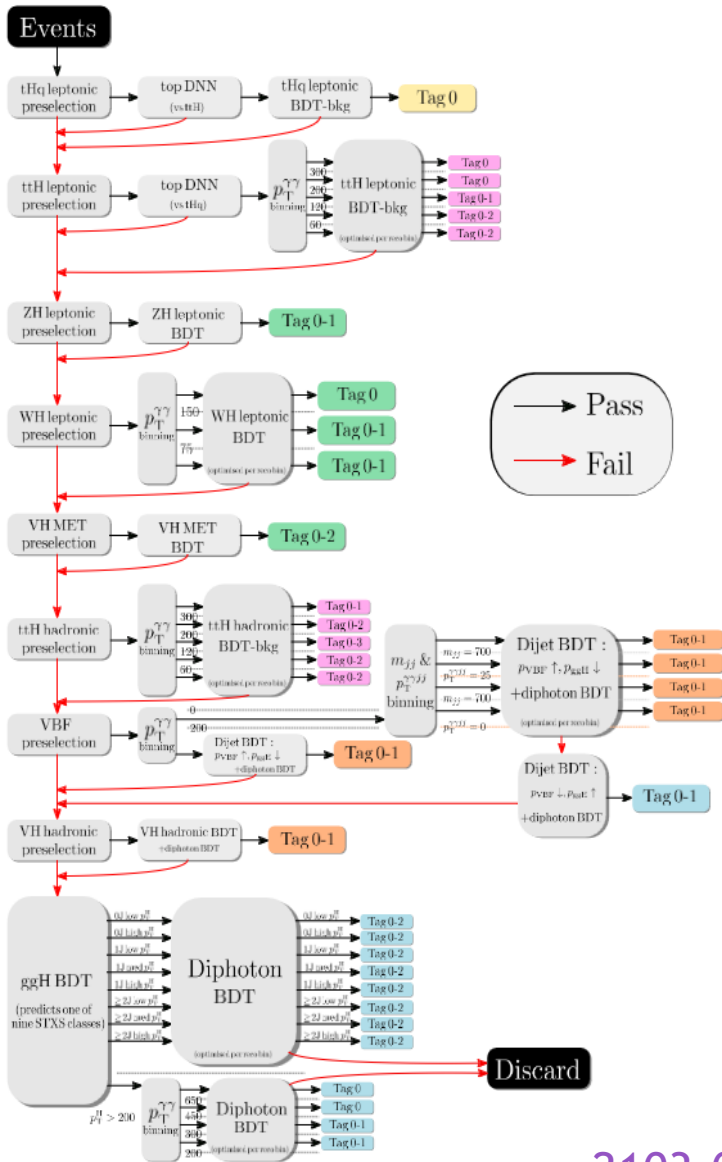
Simplified Template Cross Sections

- ▶ Use simulation to relate the observed events to these underlying categories
- ▶ Complementary to differential measurements
- ▶ Unfolding to “particle-level” allows the results to remain long-term useful
- ▶ Fixed binning scheme useful for combinations!



Analysis strategy

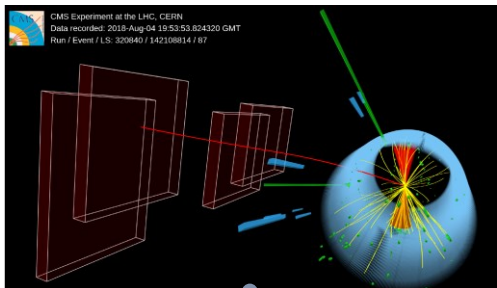
Run 2



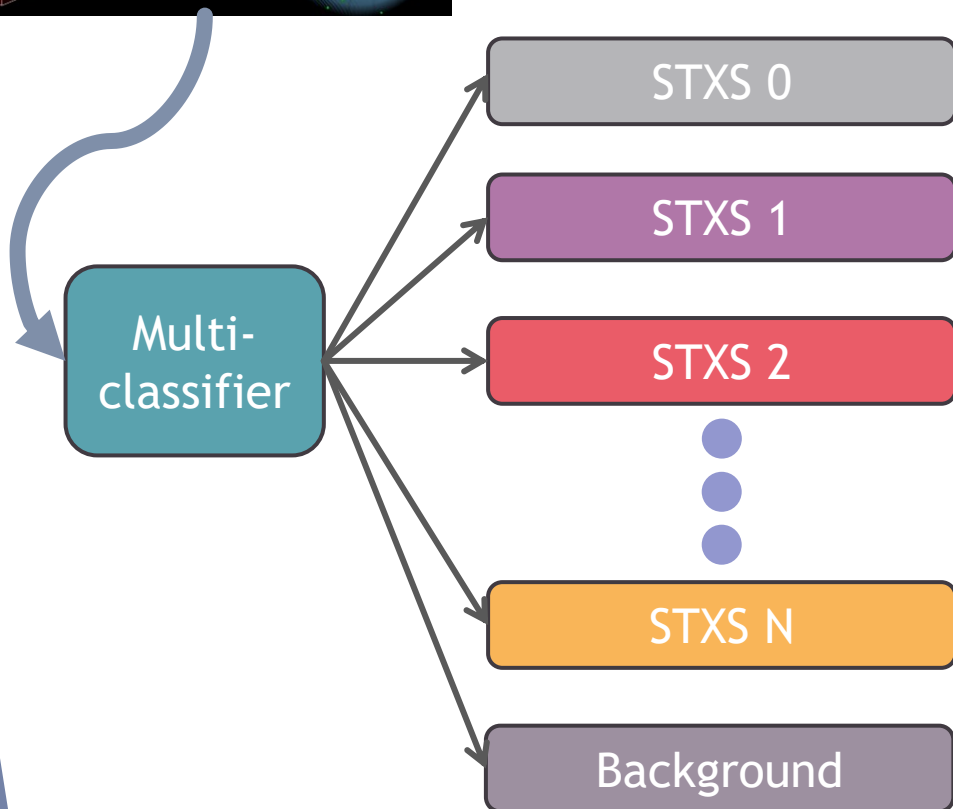
- ▶ Run 2 analysis used a complicated sequence of selection cuts + BDTs to categorise events into analysis categories (~STXS regions)
- ▶ Define “tag sequence” to prioritise rare production modes
- ▶ Each BDT optimised sensitivity to just a few STXS regions
- ▶ No global view of how categorising an event affects the other “out-of-scope” regions

Analysis strategy

Run 3

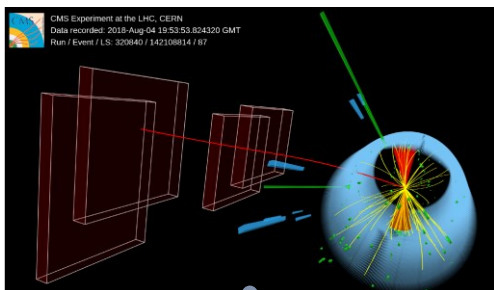


- ▶ Goal for Run 3 is to use classification techniques which maintain a global view

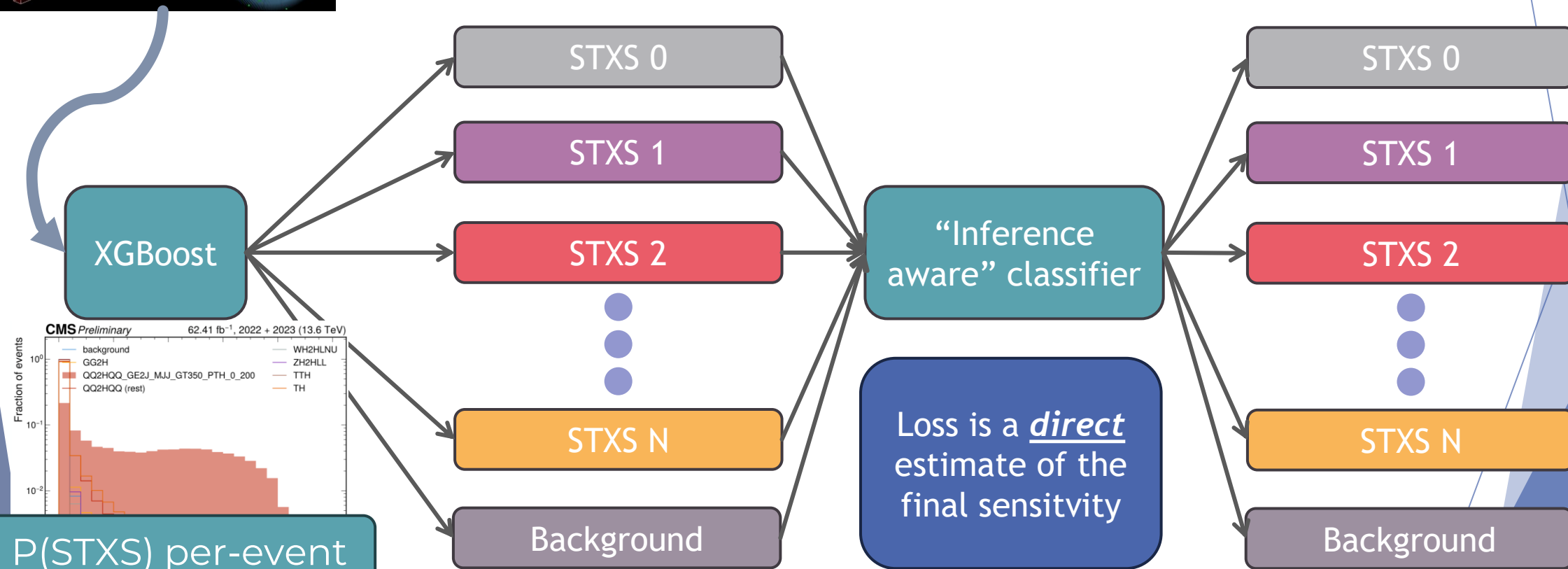


Analysis strategy

Run 3



- ▶ Goal for Run 3 is to use classification techniques which maintain a *global view*
- ▶ Current implementation has two steps

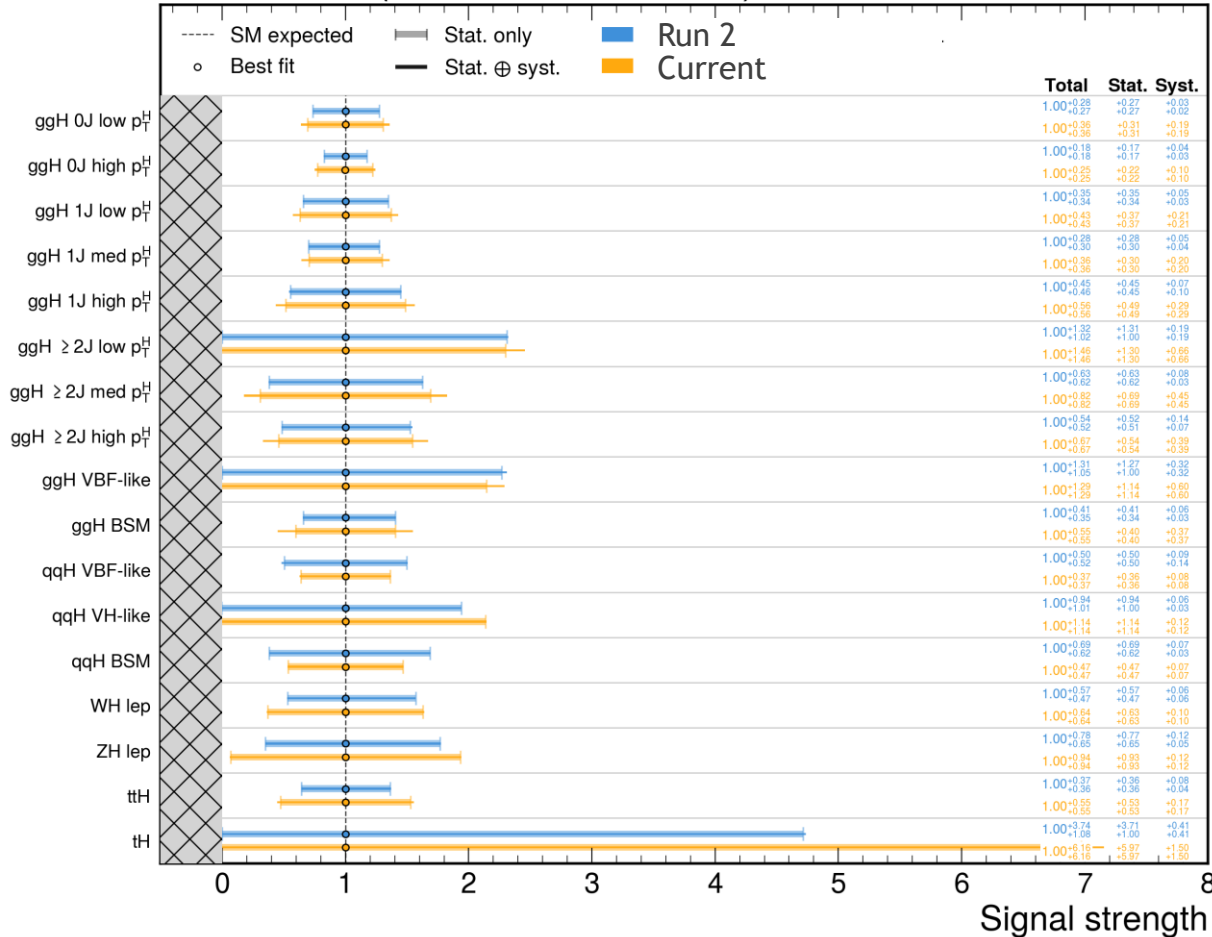


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Current performance

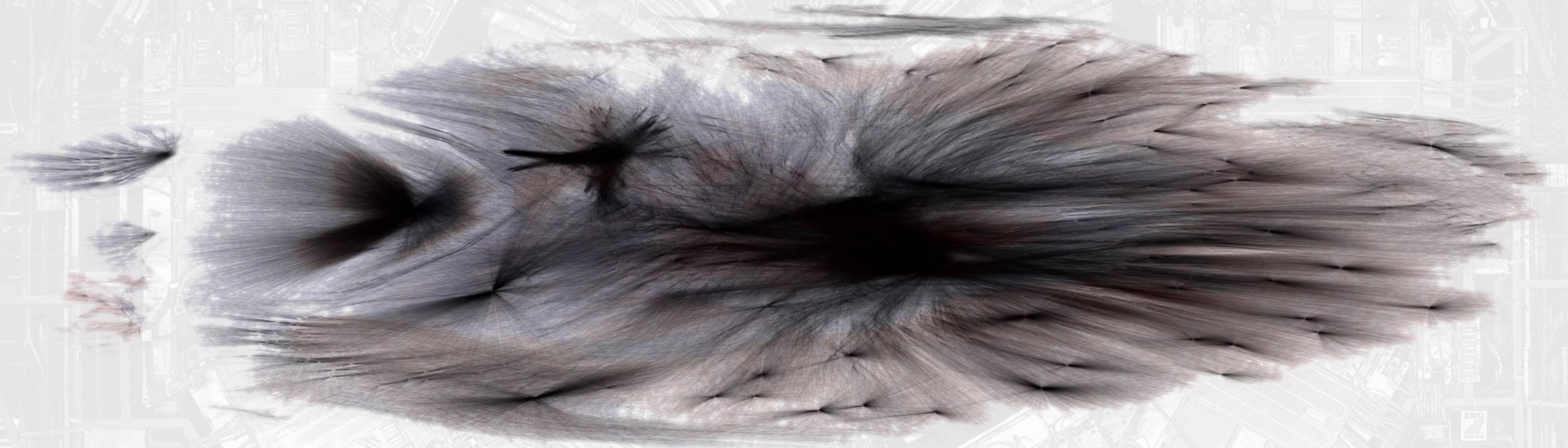
- ▶ Approaching Run 2 sensitivity when scaled to the same luminosity

Private work (CMS data/simulation)



- ▶ Significant improvements expected soon from:
 - ▶ Splitting categories by resolution
 - ▶ Splitting categories like $Z(l\ell)H$ into $Z(l^+l^-)H$ and $Z(\nu\nu)H$
 - ▶ Including data from 2024 ($\sim 110\text{fb}^{-1}$)

Statistical procedure



Statistical model

- ▶ Eventually, we fit to the $m_{\gamma\gamma}$ distribution

$$\mathcal{L} = \prod_c^{N_C} \prod_{b=1}^{N_B^c} \text{Pois} \left(n_{cb}; n_{cb}^{\text{exp}}(\vec{\mu}, \vec{\nu}) \right) \times \prod_e p_e(y_e; \nu_e)$$

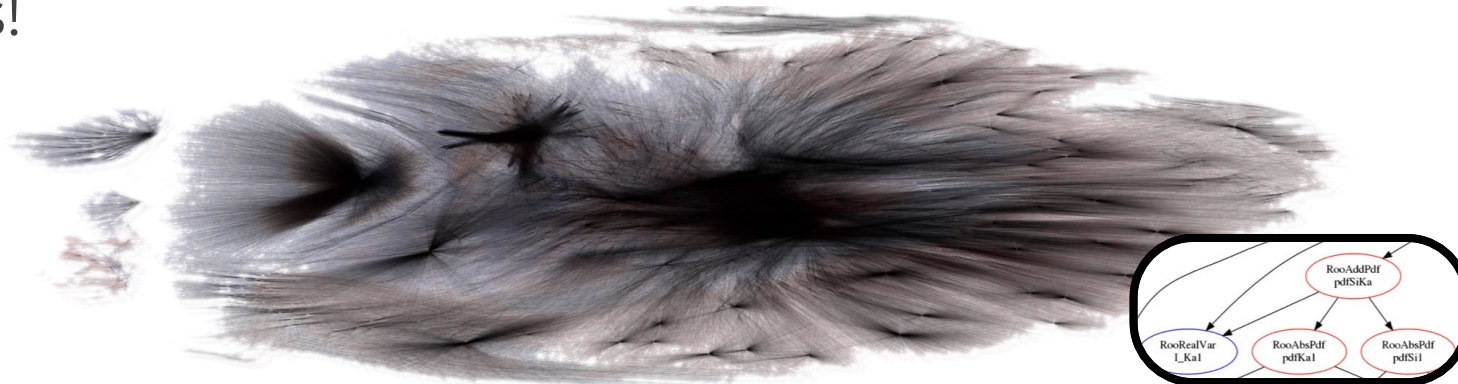
Signal and background modelling

$$n_{cb}^{\text{exp}} = \sum_p \mu_p S_{cb}(\vec{\mu}, \vec{\nu}) + B_{cb}(\vec{\mu}, \vec{\nu})$$

Nuisance parameters

where we have c categories with bins b , processes p and nuisances e

- ▶ Can get large quickly – the STXS combination in Run 2 had $\mathcal{O}(10^4)$ parameters!



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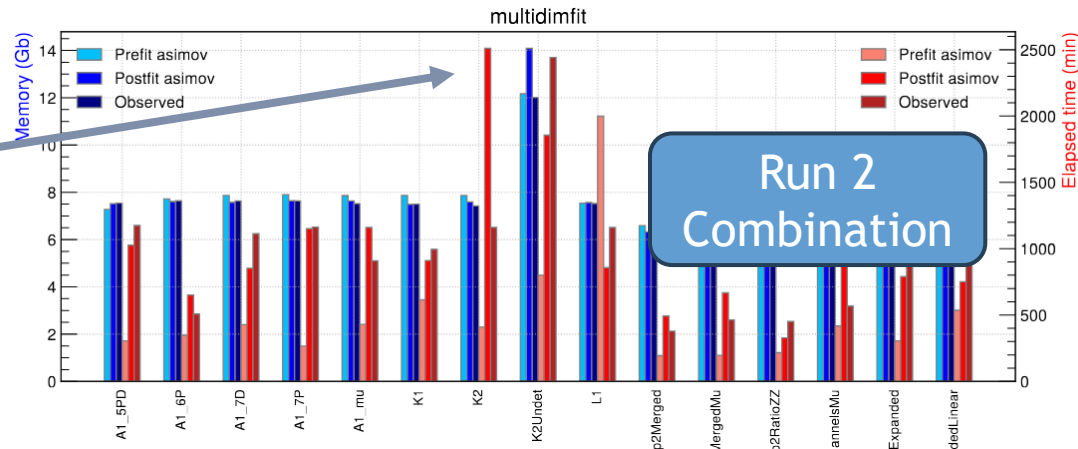
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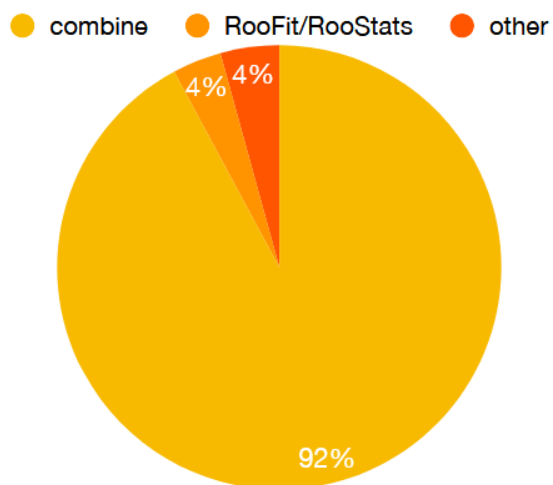
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Some fits taking almost 2 days!

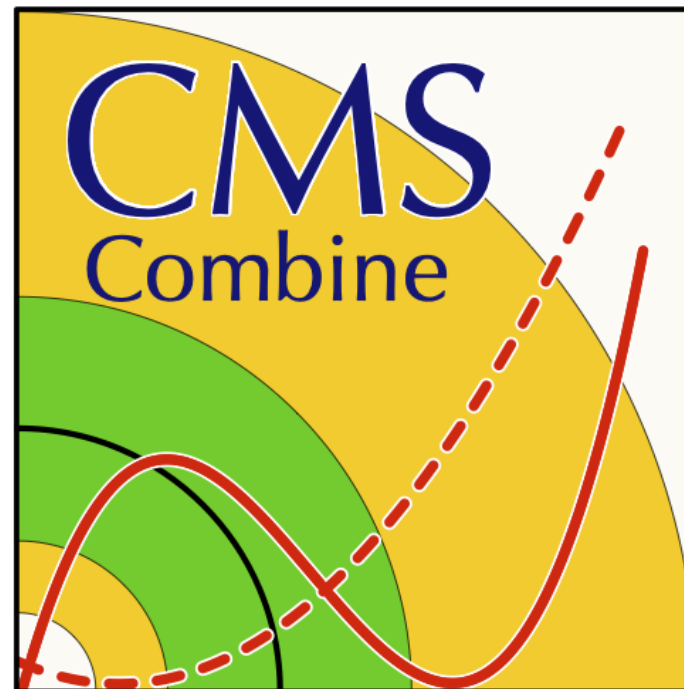


Automatic Differentiation in Combine

- ▶ Combine is the most widely-used statistical analysis tool within CMS, providing a command-line interface to many statistical techniques
- ▶ Originally developed during Run 1 for the Higgs search, now used by the majority of analyses



From Statistics Committee Questionnaires
2021-2022



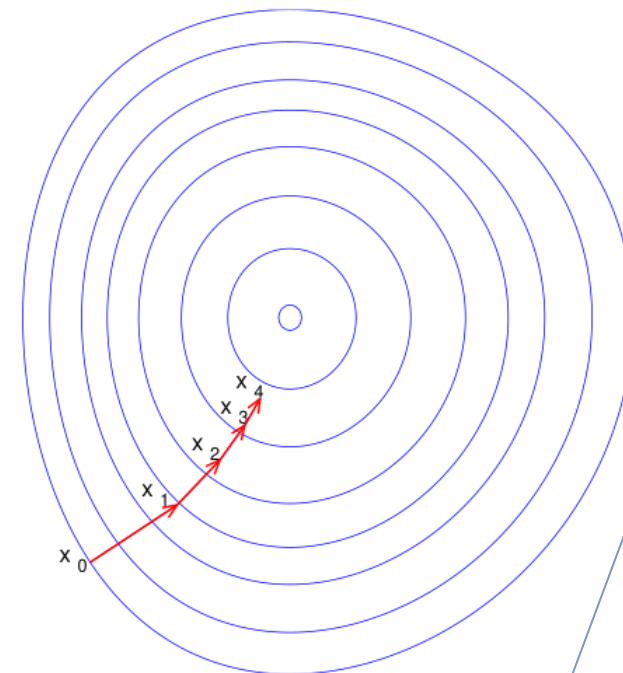
Automatic Differentiation in Combine

- ▶ Many choices for which specific optimizer to use within Combine, but almost exclusively the defaults are used: MINUIT with the MIGRAD optimizer
- ▶ At its core, MIGRAD is a gradient-descent algorithm, where parameters \vec{x} are iteratively updated according to

$$\vec{x}_{n+1} = \vec{x}_n - \alpha \nabla f(\vec{x}_n)$$

Step-size

Gradient of
target function



2404.06614

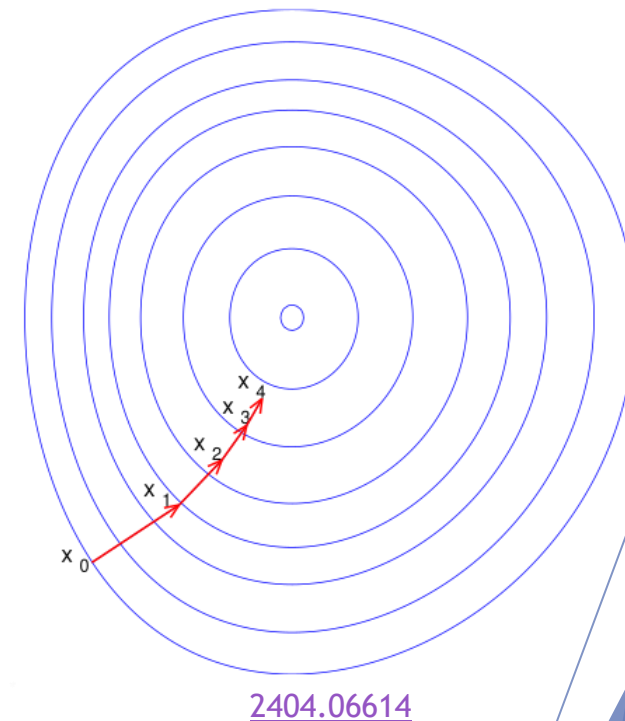
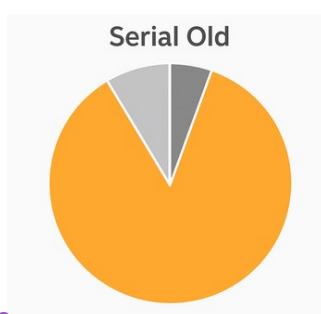
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- ▶ At present, Combine differentiates numerically, where for each x_n^i in \vec{x}_n , we need to calculate

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial x_n^i} \approx \frac{f(\vec{x}_n + h\vec{e}_i) - f(\vec{x}_n)}{h}$$




Automatic Differentiation in Combine

- ▶ For the past ~4 years, the RooFit team have worked to provide an *automatic differentiation* backend
- ▶ Implemented using Clad, a source-code transformation plugin for the Clang compiler

```
double absFunc(double x) {  
    if (x < 0) return -x;  
    else return x;  
}
```

`clad::differentiate(absFunc)`

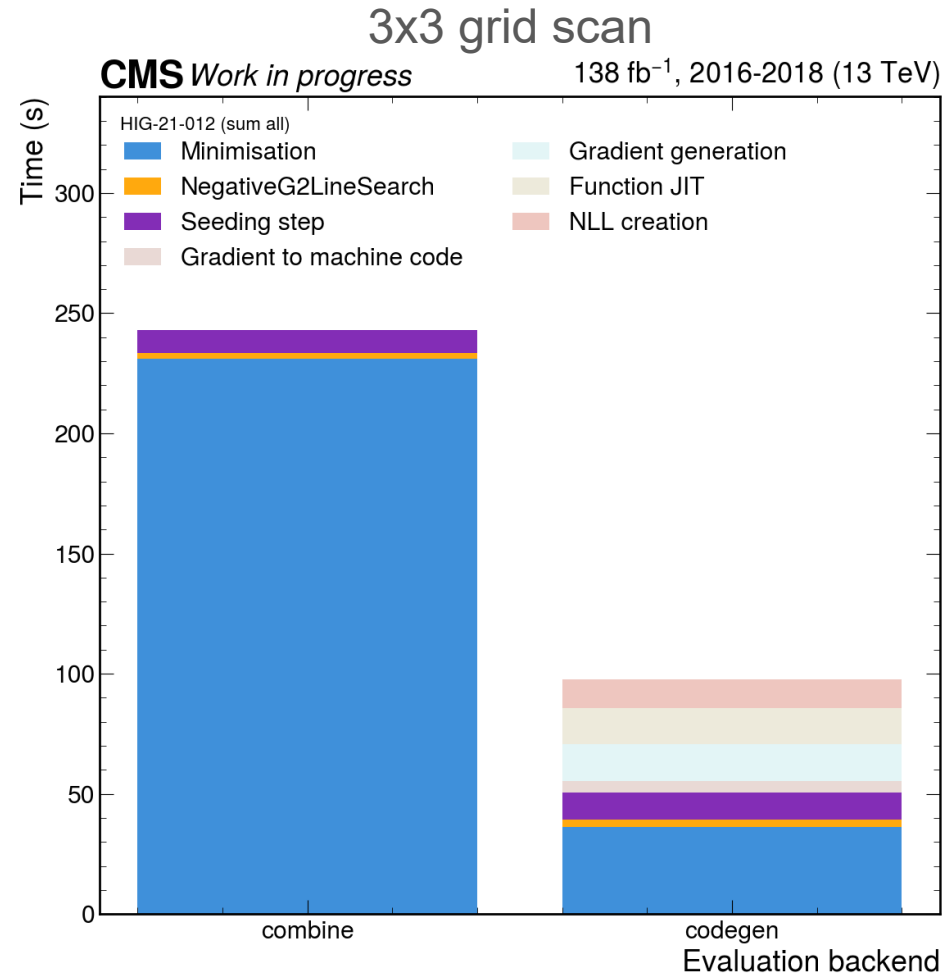
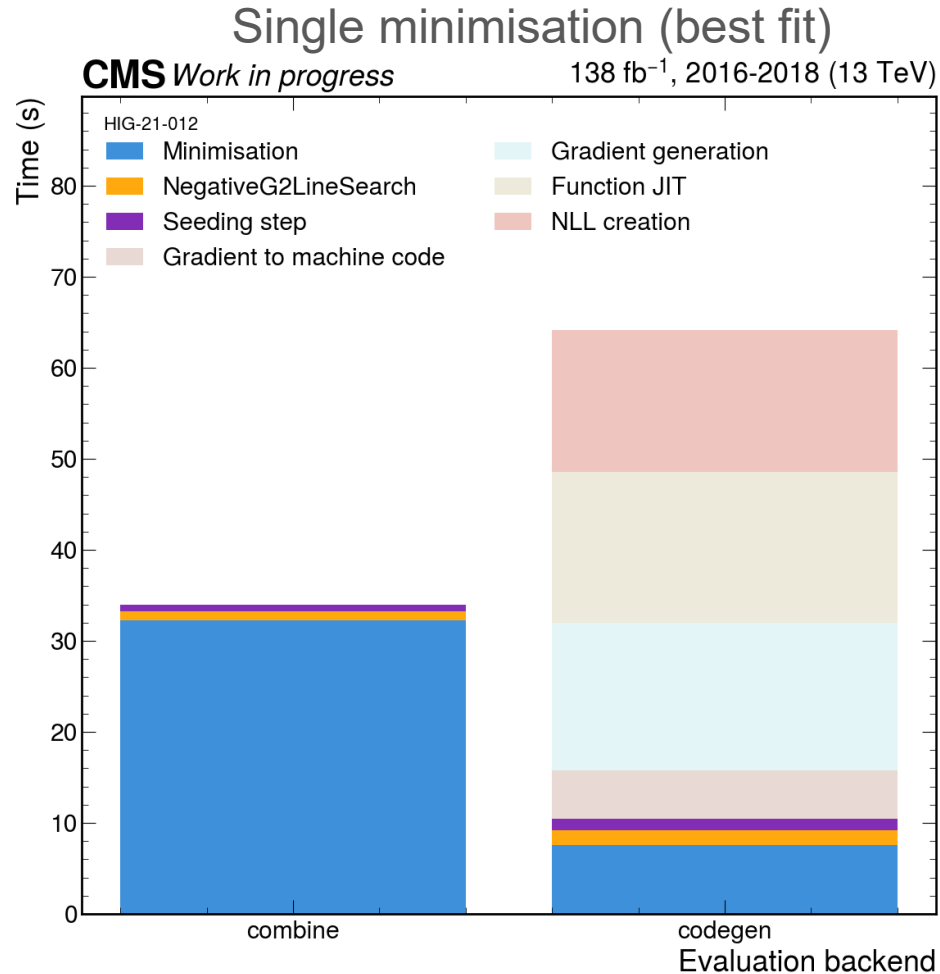


```
double absFunc_darg0(double x) {  
    double _d_x = 1;  
    if (x < 0) return -_d_x;  
    else return _d_x;  
}
```

- ▶ Source-code transformation allows for compiler optimisation of the gradient code, in principle faster than operator overloading (c.f. PyTorch, TensorFlow, JAX)

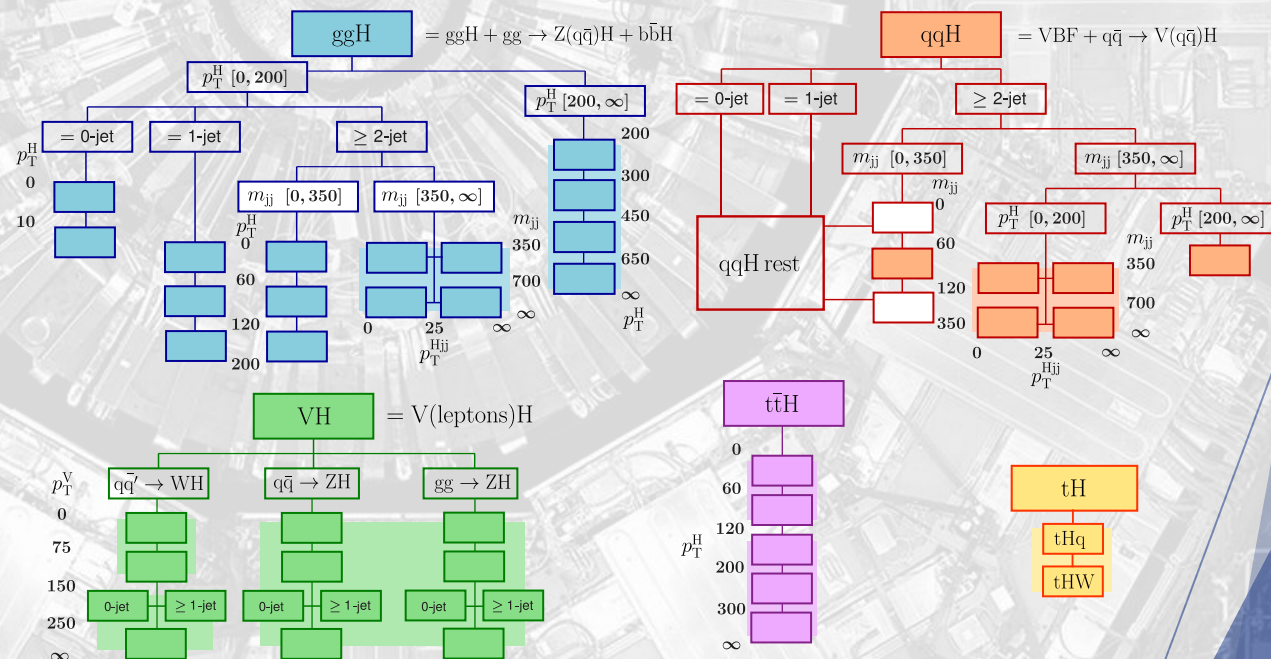
Automatic Differentiation in Combine

► Preliminary results look promising, with ~5x faster fits!



Summary

- ▶ Run 3 $H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ STXS measurement progressing well
- ▶ Improved, global categorisation strategy with clear avenues to improve
- ▶ Computational advances underway to enable the most precise measurements in the future





Thank you

The image features a highly detailed, circular, multi-layered structure that resembles a particle accelerator or a large-scale data center. The structure is composed of numerous concentric rings and radial components, creating a complex, symmetrical pattern. The central part of the structure is a small, circular hub, from which various components radiate outwards. The overall appearance is that of a sophisticated, high-tech facility. The word "Backup" is prominently displayed in the center of the image, overlaid on the structure. The text is in a dark blue, sans-serif font. The background is a light blue gradient, with a darker blue, geometric shape on the right side. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and technical.

Backup

Automatic Differentiation example

- ▶ Consider some general $f(\vec{x}) = \sum_{i=0}^N g_i(x_i)$
- ▶ Cost to evaluate the function is $T_f = \sum_{i=1}^N c_i$, where c_i is the cost to evaluate $g_i(x_i)$

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- ▶ The gradient is $\nabla f(\vec{x}) = (g'_1(x_1), \dots, g'_n(x_n))$

Automatic Differentiation example

▶ The gradient is $\nabla f(\vec{x}) = (g'_1(x_1), \dots, g'_n(x_n))$

▶ Numerically:

$$\nabla f(\vec{x}) \approx \left(\frac{f(\vec{x} + he_1) - f(\vec{x})}{h}, \dots, \frac{f(\vec{x} + he_n) - f(\vec{x})}{h} \right)$$

▶ Already evaluated $f(\vec{x})$ and the cost of $f(\vec{x} + he_i)$ is the same as that of $f(\vec{x})$

▶ Total cost for the gradient is N lots of T_f : $\mathcal{O}_{\text{num}}(N \cdot T_f)$

▶ For function + gradient, cost is

$$\mathcal{O}_{\text{num}}^{\text{grad}}(N \cdot T_f) + \mathcal{O}_{\text{num}}^f(T_f) = \mathcal{O}_{\text{num}}^{\text{tot}}(N \cdot T_f)$$

Automatic Differentiation example

- ▶ The gradient is $\nabla f(\vec{x}) = (g'_1(x_1), \dots, g'_n(x_n))$
- ▶ With AD: When we evaluate $f(\vec{x})$, we store the intermediate values

$$x_i \rightarrow_{\text{store}} v_i := g_i(x_i) \rightarrow_{\text{store}} f = \sum_i v_i$$

so we are left with a “tape”: $\{x_1, \dots, x_N, v_1, \dots, v_N, f\}$.

- ▶ When we come to compute the gradients, we go back through the tape, applying the chain rule

$$\bar{v}_i = \frac{\partial f}{\partial v_i} = 1 \quad \text{O}(1) \text{ per node}$$

$$\bar{x}_i = \bar{v}_i \cdot g'_i(x_i) = 1 \cdot g'_i(x_i)$$

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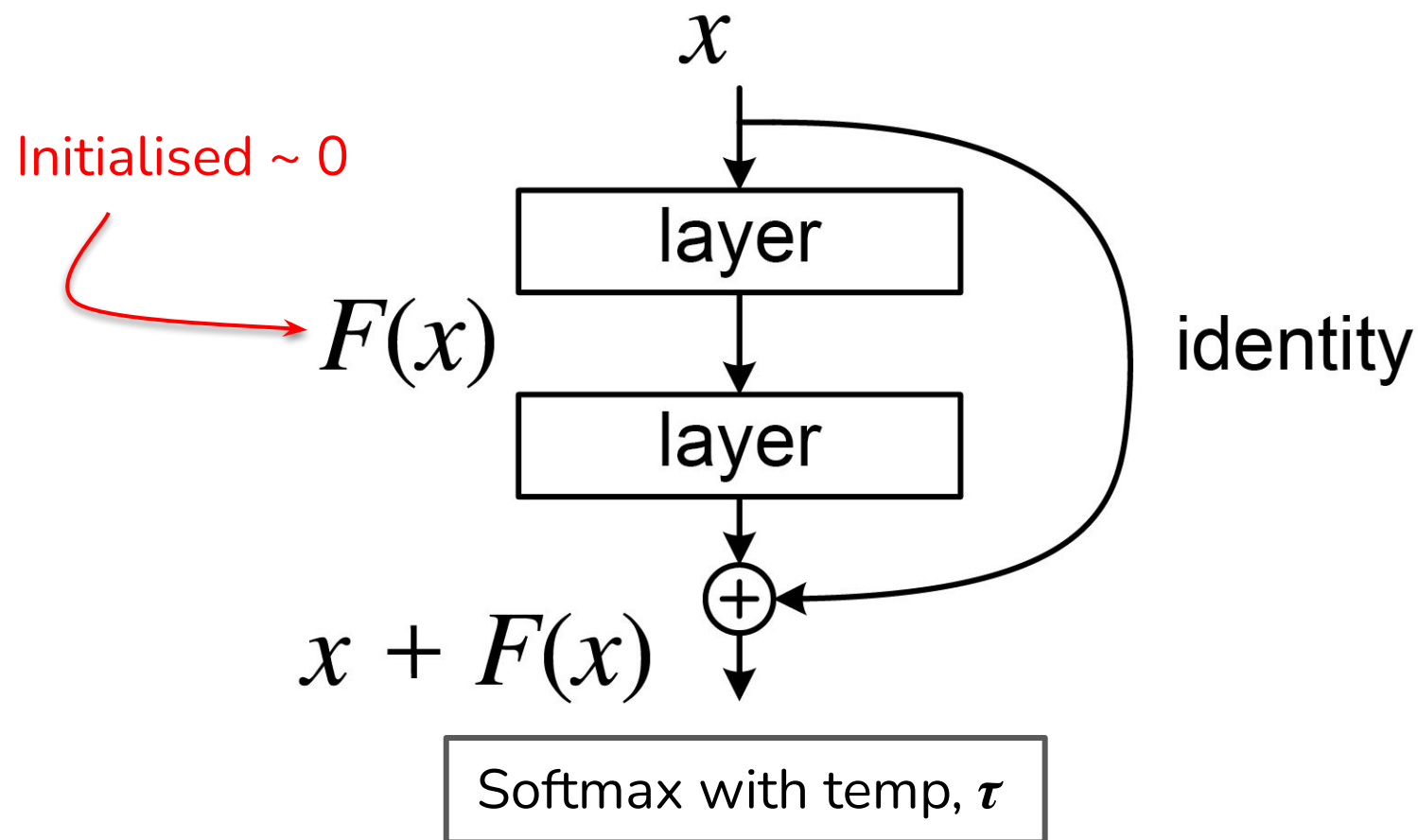
Total cost:

$$\mathcal{O}_{\text{AD}}^{\text{grad}}(N \cdot 1) + \mathcal{O}_{\text{AD}}^f(T_f) = \mathcal{O}_{\text{AD}}^{\text{tot}}(T_f)$$

Current approach

21 XGBoost probabilities

Category weights applied for these studies



21 analysis categories

Inference-aware loss

Likelihood = Product of Poisson terms over categories, k

$$L(\vec{\mu}) = \prod_k e^{-\lambda_k(\vec{\mu})} \lambda_k(\vec{\mu})^{n_k} / n_k!$$

Signal + background yields from MC in [120, 130] GeV, where index i labels STXS region to be measured

$$\lambda_k(\vec{\mu}) = \sum_i \mu_i s_{ik} + b_k \quad n_k = \lambda_k|_{\vec{\mu}=1} = \sum_i s_{ik} + b_k$$

Asimov

$$\text{NLL}(\vec{\mu}) \equiv -\ln L(\vec{\mu}) = \sum_k \lambda_k(\vec{\mu}) - n_k \ln \lambda_k(\vec{\mu}) + \ln n_k!$$

Analytic expression for Hessian matrix, H

$$\frac{\partial \text{NLL}(\vec{\mu})}{\partial \mu_i} = \sum_k s_{ik} - \frac{n_k s_{ik}}{\lambda_k(\vec{\mu})} \quad \frac{\partial^2 \text{NLL}(\vec{\mu})}{\partial \mu_i \partial \mu_j} = \sum_k \frac{n_k s_{ik} s_{jk}}{\lambda_k(\vec{\mu})}$$

1st derivative 2nd derivative

$$\mathcal{H}_{ij} = \left. \frac{\partial^2 \text{NLL}(\vec{\mu})}{\partial \mu_i \partial \mu_j} \right|_{\vec{\mu}=1} = \sum_k \frac{s_{ik} s_{jk}}{n_k}$$

Loss functional of covariance matrix

$$\text{Cov} = \mathcal{H}^{-1}$$

$$\mathcal{L}[\text{Cov}] = \text{Tr}(\text{Cov}) = \sum_i \text{Var}(\mu_i)$$

Loss vs epoch

- Vast improvement on **category weights** approach used in July

