



Institute of Electrical Engineering Chinese Academy of Sciences

High performance iron-based superconducting wires: fabrication and properties

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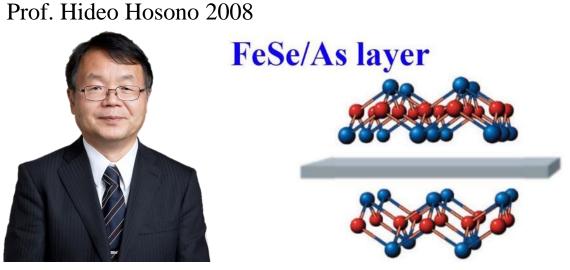
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Outline

- **Background on iron-based superconductors (IBS)**
- **2** Development of high J_c PIT 122 IBS wires
- **3** Application property of the IBS wires
- 4 Recent advances in long-length wires, joints, pancake & racetrack coils, cables
- **5 Conclusions and outlook**

Iron-Based Superconductors (IBS)



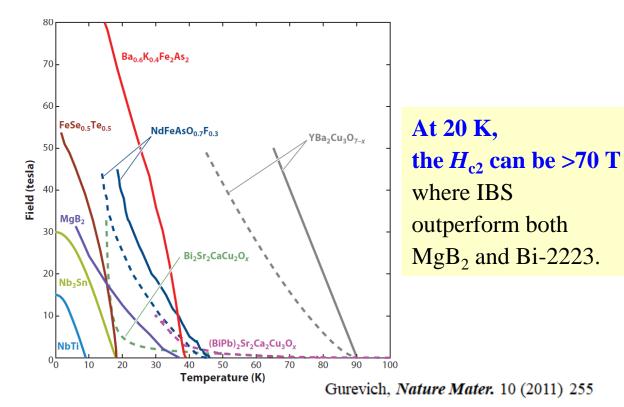
Varieties of Iron-based superconductors (IBS)

High performance:

 \square High $T_c \sim 55$ K

- **\Box** High H_{c2} ~100 **T**, H_{irr} very close to H_{c2}
- \Box Small anisotropy, $\gamma < 2$

 \Box High $J_c \sim 6$ MA/cm² & J_c -depairing ~ 160 MA/cm²



	Bi-system	YBCO	IBS 122	MgB ₂
γ	50-90	5-7	1-2	2
ξ_{ab}	2.3	2.1	2.4	8
Gi	1	10-2	10-4	10-5

IBS are considered as "Cheap conductor for high fields"

OP Publishing

Supercond. Sci. Technol. 32 (2019) 070501 (3pp)

Superconductor Science and Technology https://doi.org/10.1088/1361-6668/ab1fc9

Q

Viewpoint

Constructing high field magnets is a real tour de force

Jan Jaroszynski 🗈

National High Magnetic Field, Laboratory, Talkahassee, FL, 32310, United States of America E-mail: jaroszy@magnet.fsu.edu This is a viewpoint on the letter by Dongliang Wang et al (2019 Supercond. Sci. Technol. 32 04LT01).

Following the discovery of superconductivity in 1911, Heike Kamerlingh Onnes foresaw the generation of strong magnetic fields as its possible application. He designed a 10T electromagnet made of lead–tin wire, citing only the difficulty in obtaining 'relatively modest financial support' for his laboratory in Leiden. However, he soon found [1] that superconductivity disappears in the presence of a magnetic field above a critical value H_e, or a current density above a critical limit, J_c. For all known superconductors of the time, these critical values were low, making fabrication of strong magnets impossible.

It took half a century, and the investigation of thousands of different superconducting metals, compounds, and alloys [2], until the useful superconductors Nb₃Sn [3] and NbTi [4], with a high H_c and J_c, were found. Within a short time, kilometer lengths of Nb₃Sn wire were fabricated and the first 6T 'supermagnet' was tested the same year. During the following decades, these low temperature superconductors (LTS) entered their industrial phase. NbTi magnets are the most widely used, taking ~80% of the market, while NbTi + Nb₃Sn magnets are used where fields above 10 T are needed. The record magnetic field generated by LTS is 23.5T [5].

Meanwhile, a microscopic theory of superconductivity (Bardeen–Cooper– Schriffer) in 1957 [6] made it possible to understand the phenomenon of LTS, however, this new theory had only a minor impact on the search for new superconducting materials.

After the discovery of high-temperature superconductors (HTS) in 1986 [7], it took around 30 years to construct prototypes of 32 T [8], and more [9], only partially HTS magnets. Despite intensive efforts by the HTS community, hightemperature superconductivity still lacks a widely accepted microscopic model.

At present, long superconducting wires are only produced from six superconductors: NbTi, Nb₃Sb, MgB₂, Bi2223, Bi2212 and REBCO. Only wires of Nb compounds are used industrially, with intensive work on Nb₃Sn optimization still under way. The other materials are still considered in the research and development phase.

Thus, the discovery of a new class of iron based superconductors (IBS) in 2008 [10] opened the doors to a new perspective for microscopic models. Intensive studies show that IBS phenomenology and superconducting parameters bridge the gap between conventional superconductors and cuprates and may be helpful in explaining the latter. From a practical point of view, IBS are ideal candidates for applications. Indeed, some of them have quite a high critical current density, even in strong magnetic fields, and a low superconducting anisotropy. Moreover, the cost of IBS wire can be four to five times lower than that of Nb₃Sn, making it more expensive than NbTi, but with much higher critical parameters than Nb₃Sn. Attempts to make a superconducting wire started immediately, using either the powder-in-tube (PIT) [11–13] or coated conductor [14, 15] methods.

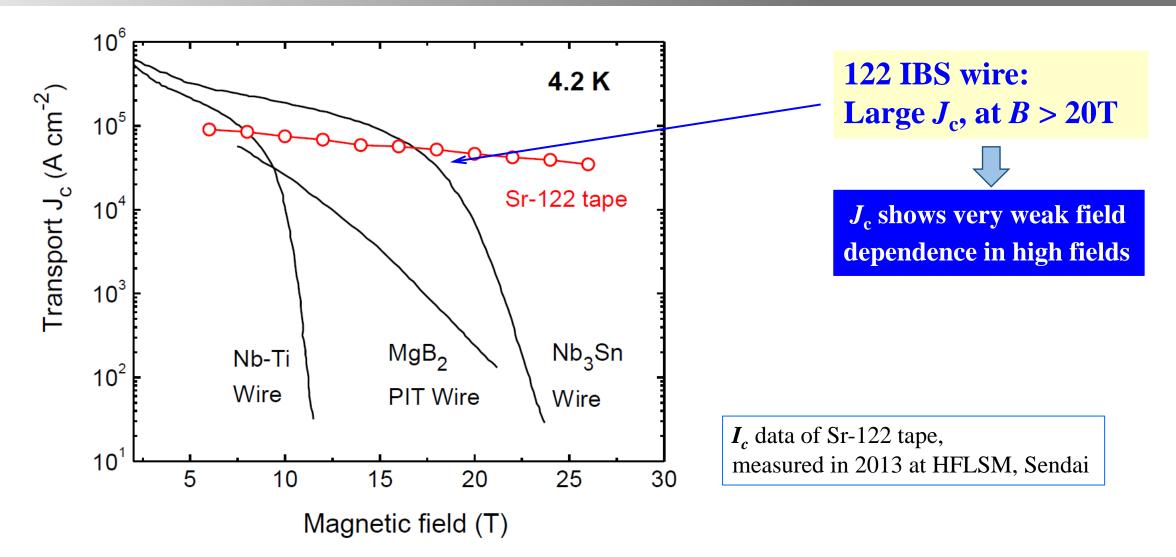
--Jan Jaroszynski, Supercond. Sci. Technol. 32 (2019) 070501

The cost of IBS wire can be four to five times lower than that of Nb₃Sn, making it more expensive than NbTi, but with much higher critical parameters than Nb₃Sn.

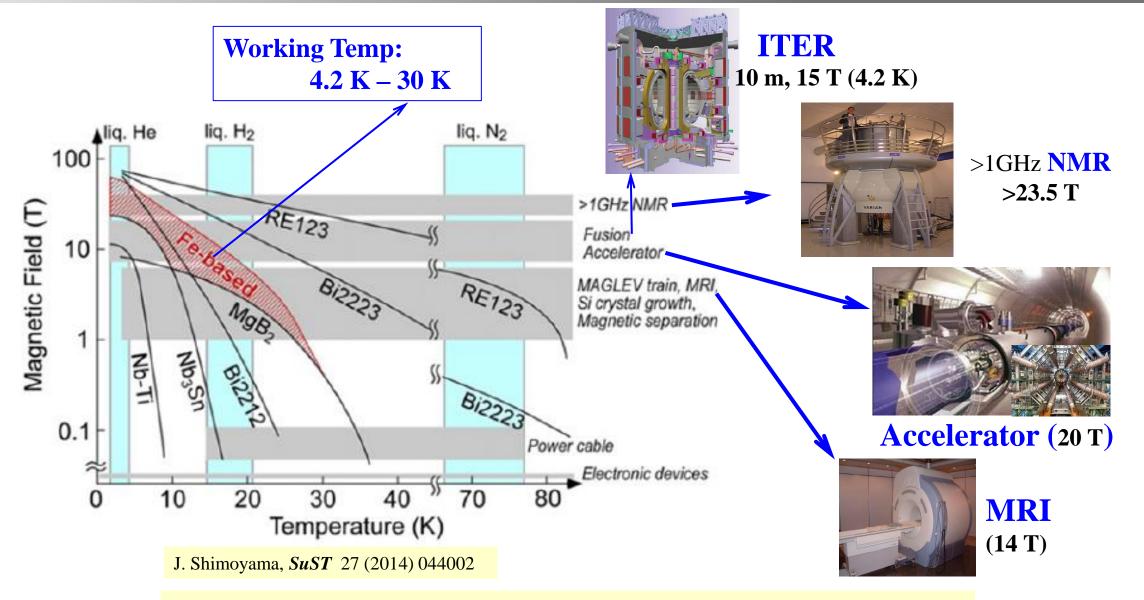


From a practical point of view, IBS are ideal candidates for applications.

High J_c of IBS wires: Very weak field dependence in high field region

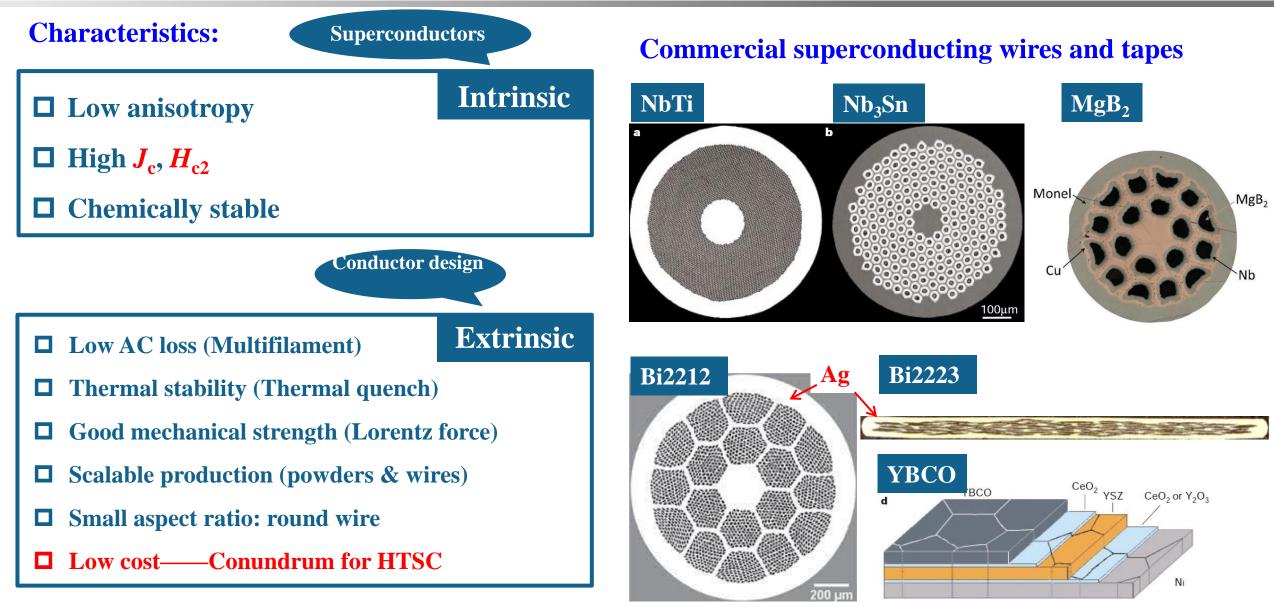


IBS have potential for high-field applications



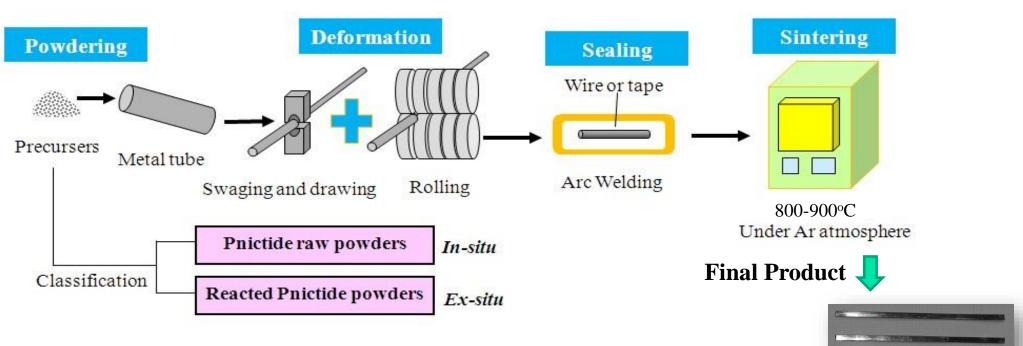
Development of high-performance conductors is essential

What makes a good superconducting wire?



Fabrication process for IBS wires and tapes

(Powder-in-tube method)

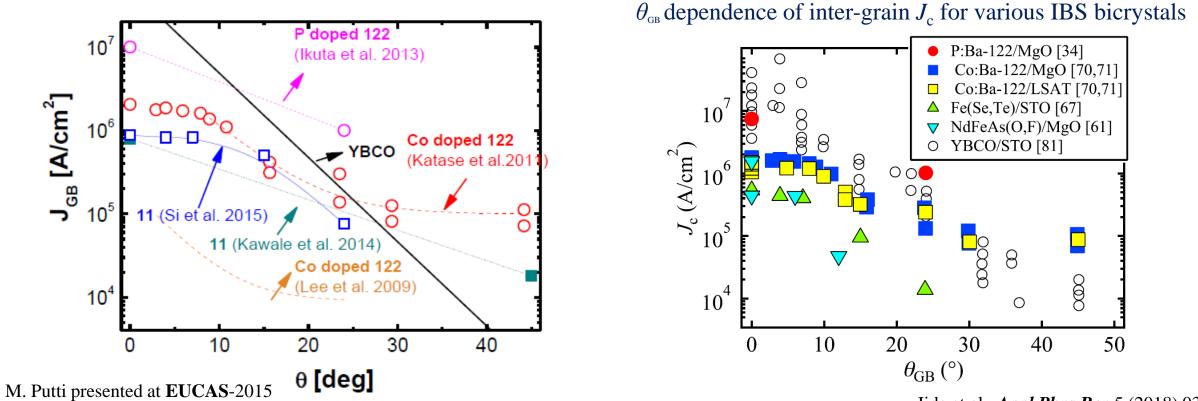


-Low cost, simple deformation process

> 122 PIT wires are expected to be much cheaper than BSCCO conductors:

Many types of sheaths of Ag, Cu, Fe, and Ag-based composites (Ag/Fe, Ag/Cu, Ag/stainless steel) can be employed.
For BSCCO, Ag is the only material that is inert to the BSCCO superconductor and permeable to oxygen at the annealing temperature.

Misorientation dependence of J_c : GBs are less detrimental to current flow



Iida et al., Appl Phys Rev 5 (2018) 031304

YBCO $\theta_c \approx 3^\circ$ vs **122 IBS** $\theta_c \approx 9^\circ$ (The critical angle of GBs)

• Misorientation angle of IBS grains $< 9^{\circ}$ usually do not impede the J_{c} flow

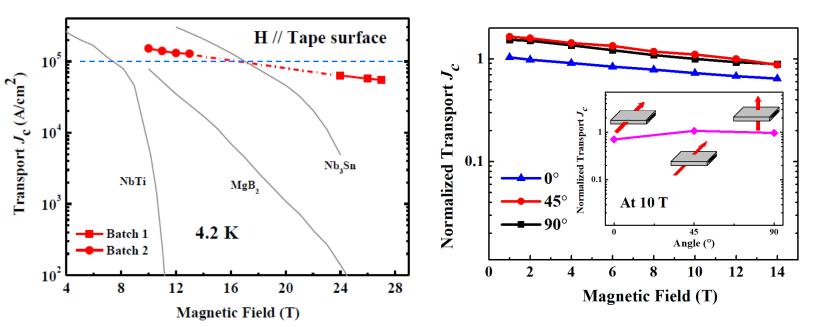
• Highly textured templates are not necessary: *PIT and low-cost CCs are possible*



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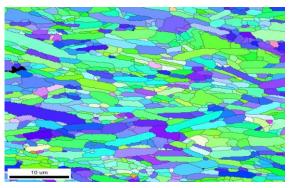
Powder-In-Tube 122 tapes: High *J***_c**

High J_c values were achieved in hot pressed (HP) Ba122/Ag tapes Huang et al., SuST 31 (2018) 015017



10 um

The grains are aligned along the c-axis, most of the misorientation angles are 5-20



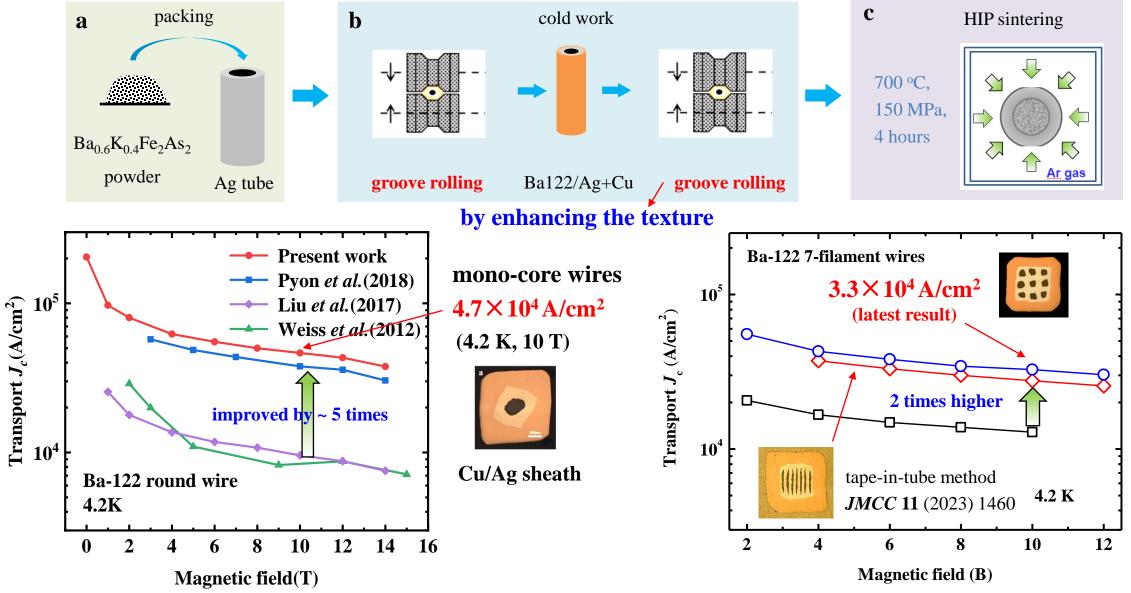
No apparent in-plane texture was found

At 4.2 K, 10 T: $J_c \sim 1.5 \times 10^5 \text{ A/cm}^2$, I_c =437 A, $\gamma = 1.37$ 18 T: $J_c \sim 10^5 \text{ A/cm}^2$ 27 T: $J_c \sim 5.5 \times 10^4 \text{ A/cm}^2$

Latest: Record J_c of HP Ba122 tape= 1.81×10^5 A/cm² at 4.2 K, 10 T

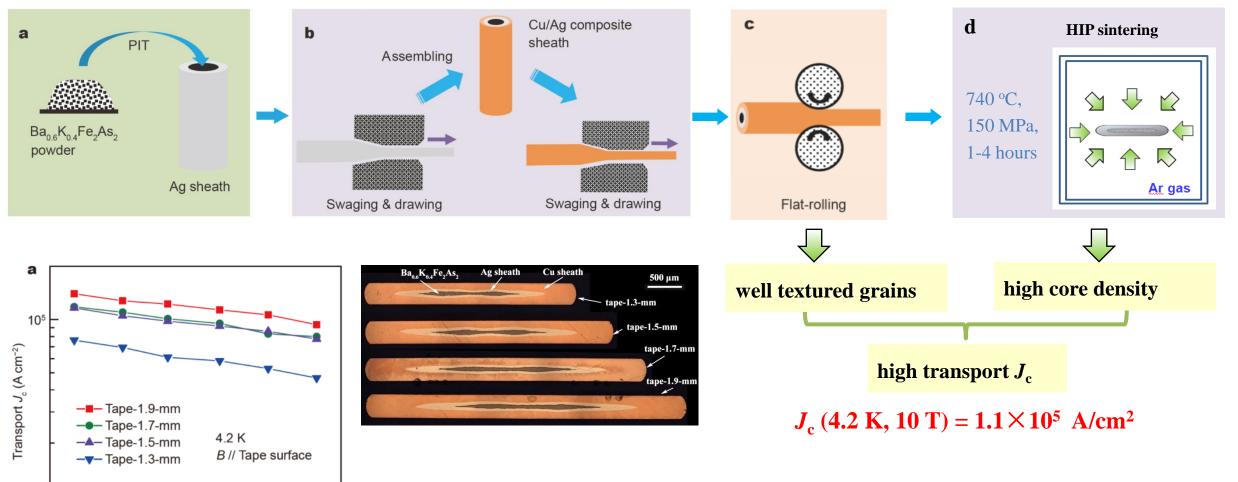
EBSD

High-J_c Ba-122 HIP wires improved by GR+HIP



SuST 34 (2021) 094001, Physica C 585 (2021) 1353870

Cu/Ag sheathed Ba-122 tapes with practical level J_c



104

6

8

Magnetic field (T)

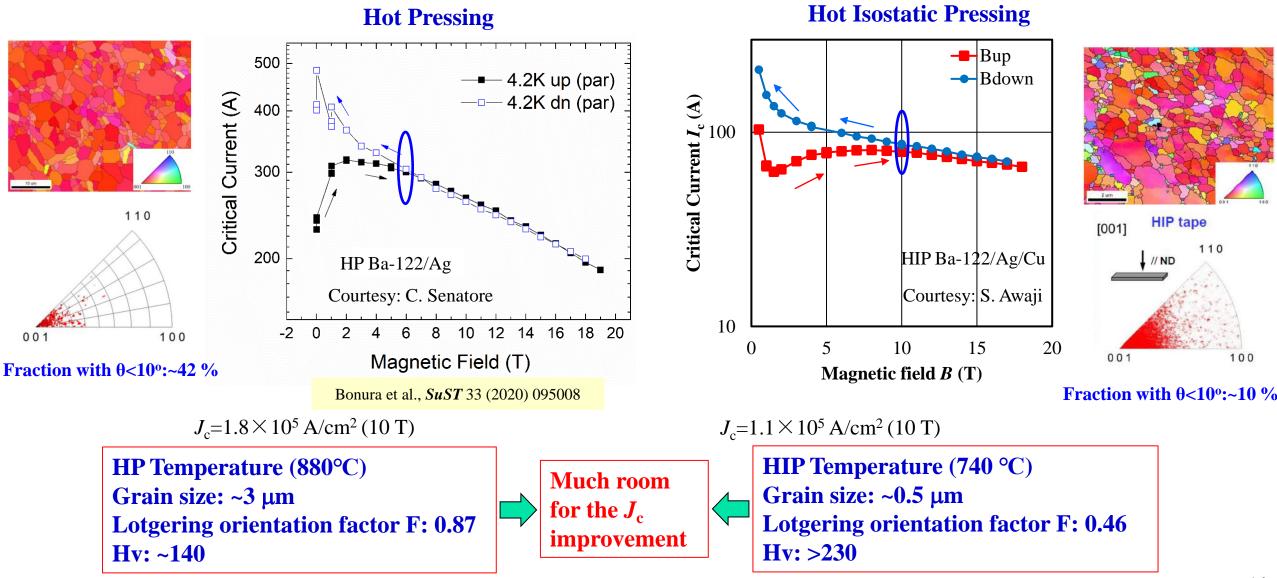
12

14

10

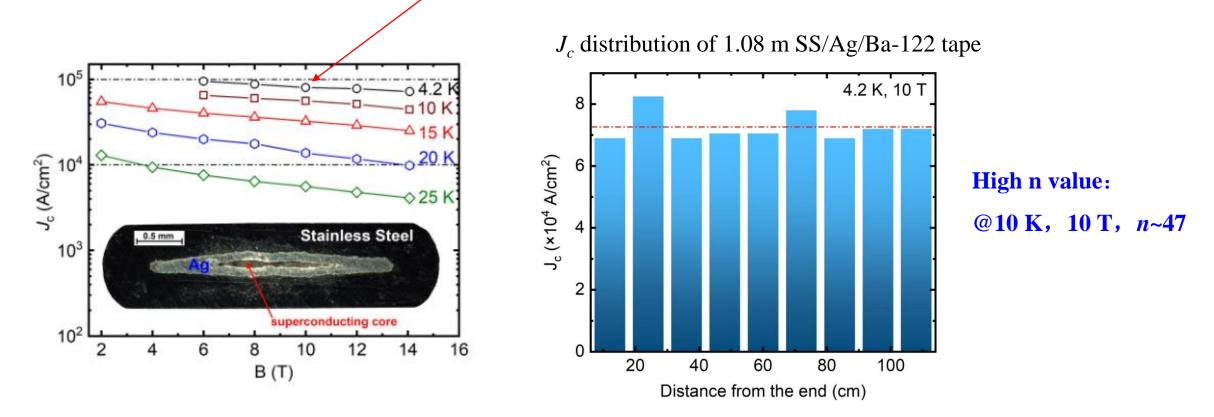
J_c exceeding 10⁵ A/cm² for the first time for Cu/Ag sheathed tapes
A scalable and cost-effective fabrication route!

Comparison of hysteresis loops for HP and HIP 122 tapes



Powder-In-Tube 122 tapes: High *J***_c & high strength**

High J_c values were achieved in Stainless Steel (SS)/Ag/Ba122 tapes, due to higher core density (Hv~230), the J_c is 8×10⁴ A/cm² at 4.2 K and 10 T.

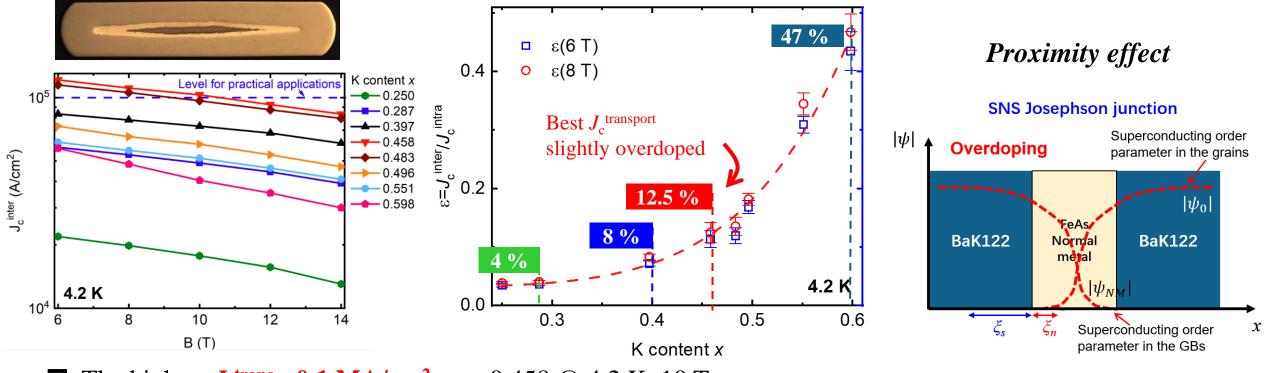


• 1.08 m long SS/Ag/Ba122 tape shows good J_c uniformity, the lowest J_c is over 7×10^4 A/cm².

Dong et al., *IEEE TAS* 29 (2019) 7300504

Critical current density of SS/Ag composite tapes

Stainless steel/Ag/Ba_{1-x}K_xFe₂As₂ tapes were made with a wide doping range (0.25≤x≤0.6)



D The highest $J_c^{\text{trans}} > 0.1 \text{ MA/cm}^2$ at x=0.458 @ 4.2 K, 10 T

 \Box Grain boundary transparency parameter $\epsilon = J_c^{\text{inter}} / J_c^{\text{intra}}$ continuously increases with doping

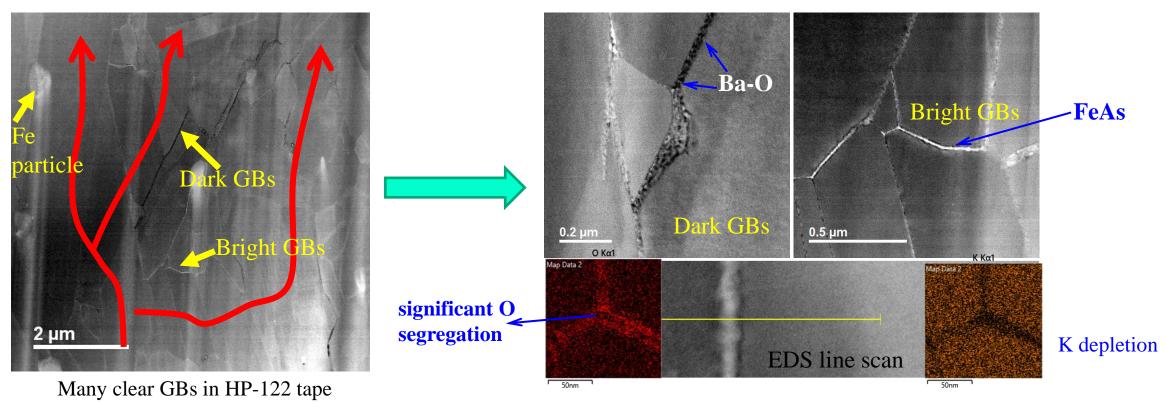
Grain boundaries are contaminated by FeAs, doping enhances proximity effect and inter-grain J_c .

Cheng et al., *Mater. Today Phys.* 28 (2022) 100848

Bright field STEM for HP Ba-122 tapes: Second phases at GB



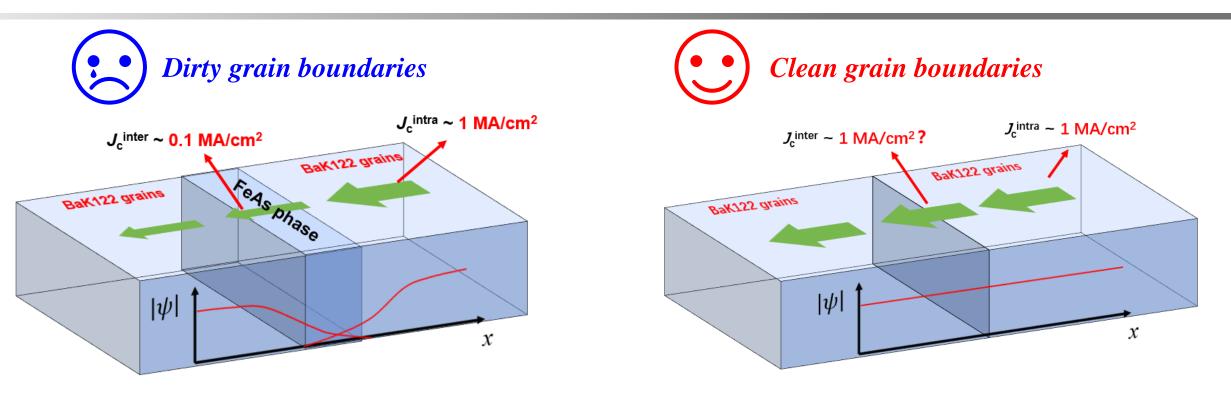




The state-of-art high J_c tapes still contain many contaminated GBs which disconnect the Ba122 grains. The J_c can be largely improved if we can eliminate these secondary phases.

Kametani et al., Appl. Phys. Express 17 (2024) 013004

NEXT STEP for iron-based PIT wires?



□ Most GBs are contaminated by FeAs, largely limiting intergrain current transport

\Box Slightly overdoping is a good way to enhance J_c^{trans}

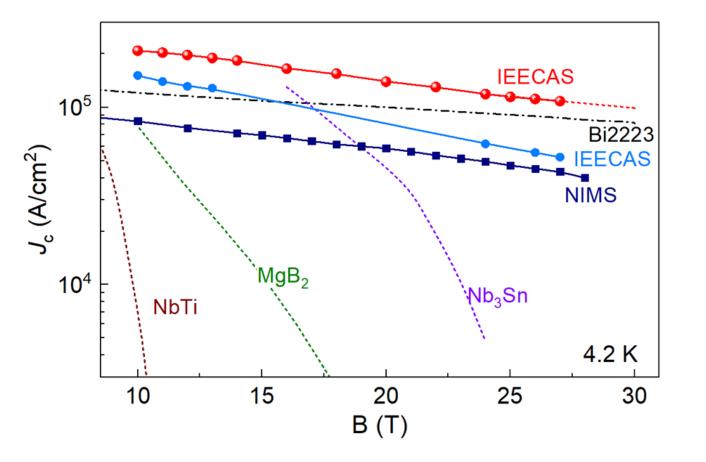
Clean GBs without FeAs phase is always the best choice!

 $\Box \epsilon \sim 100\%$ may be achieved in the GBs without FeAs (misorientation angle $\theta < 9^{\circ}$)

But how to remove FeAs ?

New record high J_c in PIT SS/Ag Ba122 tapes

Special technique to remove FeAs wetting phase, details will be published soon.



D High J_c @ 4.2 K :



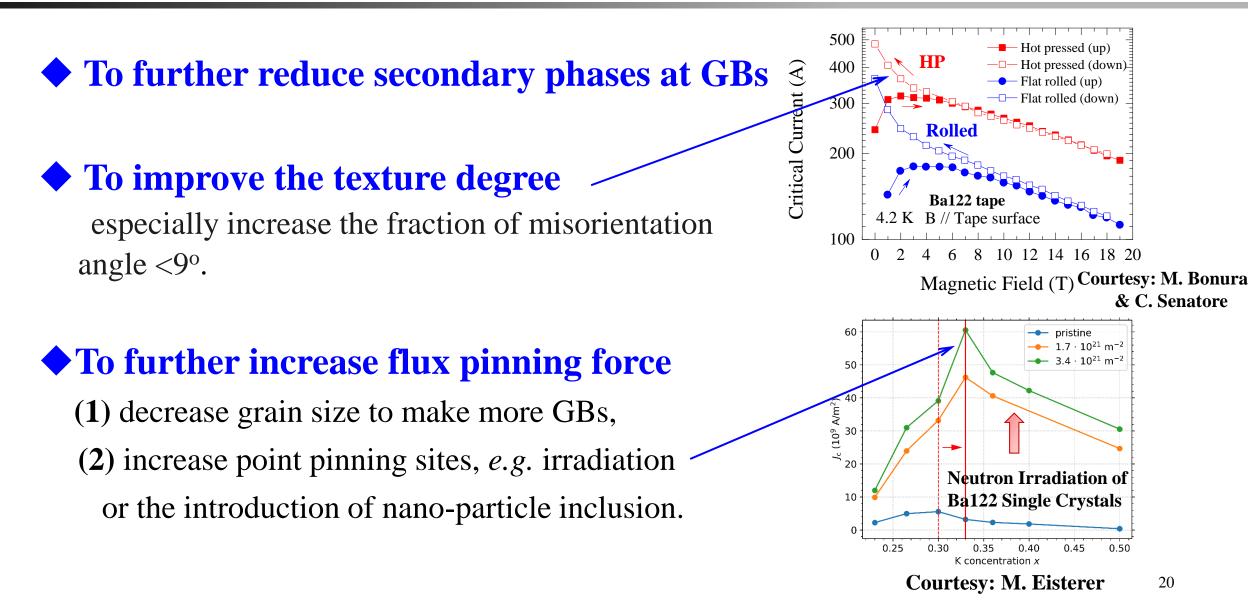
 $\Box J_{c} \sim 2.2 \times 10^{5} \text{ A/cm}^{2} @ 10 \text{ T}$

- $\Box J_{c} > 10^{5} \text{ A/cm}^{2} \text{ even } @ 30 \text{ T}$
- □ High mechanical strength
- □ Low material cost
- Easy fabrication process scalable to long length tapes

Very promising to be used in high field magnets!

No published data

Strategies to further improve J_c in 122 PIT wires





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----- Jc

0.1

-D-n-value

0.2

10⁵

10⁴

 10^{3}

0.0

Transport $J_{\rm c}$ (A/cm²)

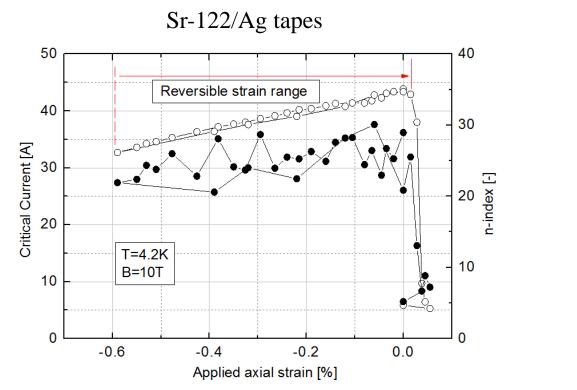
7-filament Sr-122/Ag/Monel tapes

Sr-122/Ag/Monel conductors

0.3

Compressive strain (%)

122 tapes – Strain properties



Liu et al., SuST 30 (2017) 07LT01

Reversible critical currents under a large compressive strain of $\epsilon = -0.6\%$

Yao et al. 2017 *SuST* 30 075010 Almost no *J*_c degradation under a large compressive strain of 0.6%

0.4

4.2 K, 1 T

0.5

0.6

The I_c of 122 tapes exhibits less strain sensitivity than that of the Nb₃Sn, which is important for ITER application.

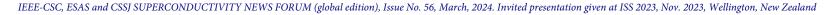
40

30

20

10

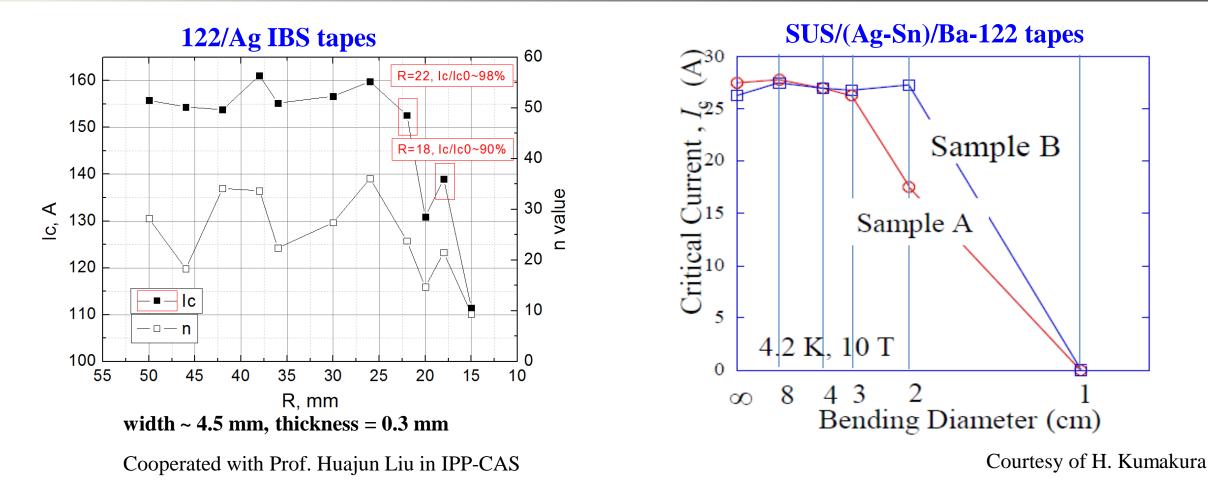
n-value





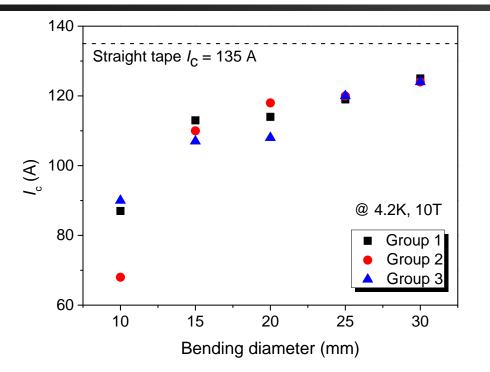
Straight \Rightarrow Bent \Rightarrow Straighten Bending test of 122 IBS tapes

--Heated samples



The critical bending diameter is 4.4 cm for Sr-122/Ag tapes in thickness of 0.3 mm.
For high strength Ba-122 tapes, the bending diameter is even smaller, only of 2~3 cm.

Bending diameter of 7-filament 122/Ag tapes

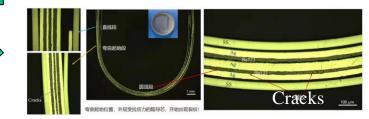


By courtesy of Prof. Q. Xu at IHEP-CAS

Ratio = I_c (bending) / I_c (pristine~135A)

- ✓ Good retention above Φ15 mm
- ✓ Rapid decrease of I_c in the D10 sample





Cracks in the D10 sample

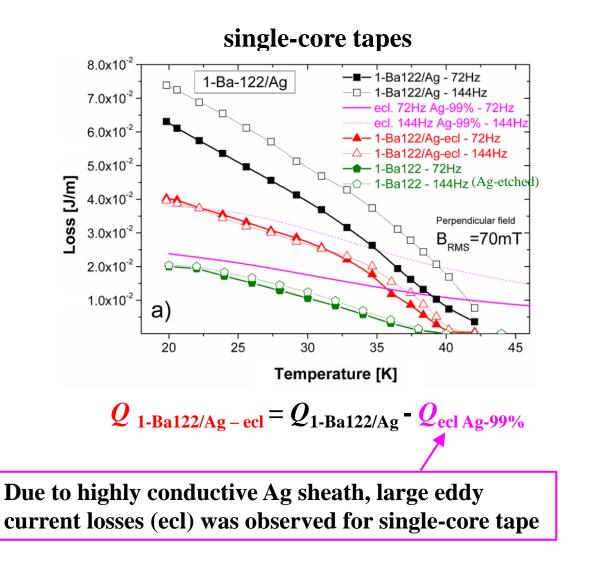
lc@4.2K/10T	D10		D15		D20	D25	D30
Group 1	90		113		114	119	125
Group 2	70	110			118	120	124
Group 3	95		107		110	121	125
Average Ic (A)	85		110		114	120	125
Ratio (%)	63.0%		81.5%		84.4%	88.9%	92.6%

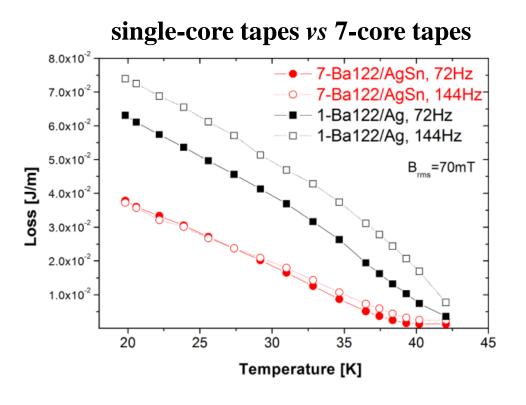




Li et al., *IEEE TAS* 32 (2022) 7300304

122/Ag tape – Magnetization AC loss



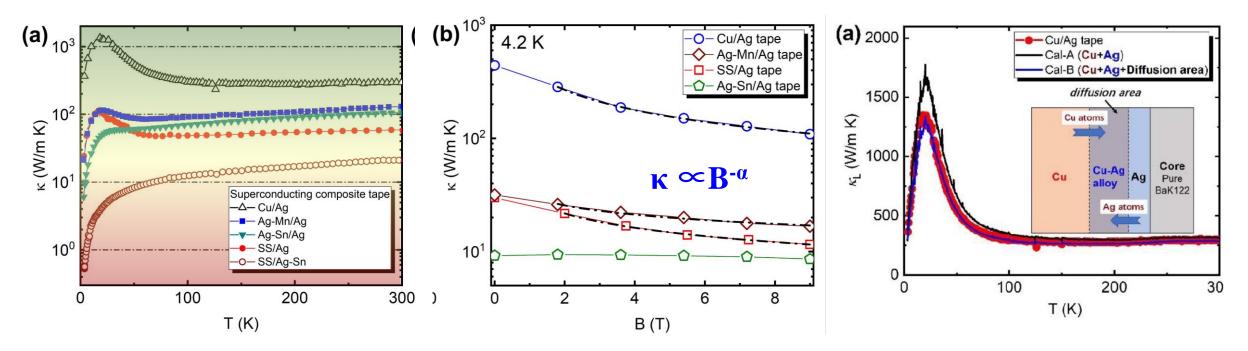


◆ The AC loss for 7-core tapes reduced by ~50% at 20 K,

• due to the negligible eddy current losses by using more resistive AgSn alloy outer sheath.

Kovac et al., Cryogenics 116 (2021) 103281

Thermal conductivity of composite Ba122 tapes



□ Thermal properties are dominated by the sheath materials

The thermal conductivity ranges from 1 to 1000 W/m K by adjusting the sheath materials

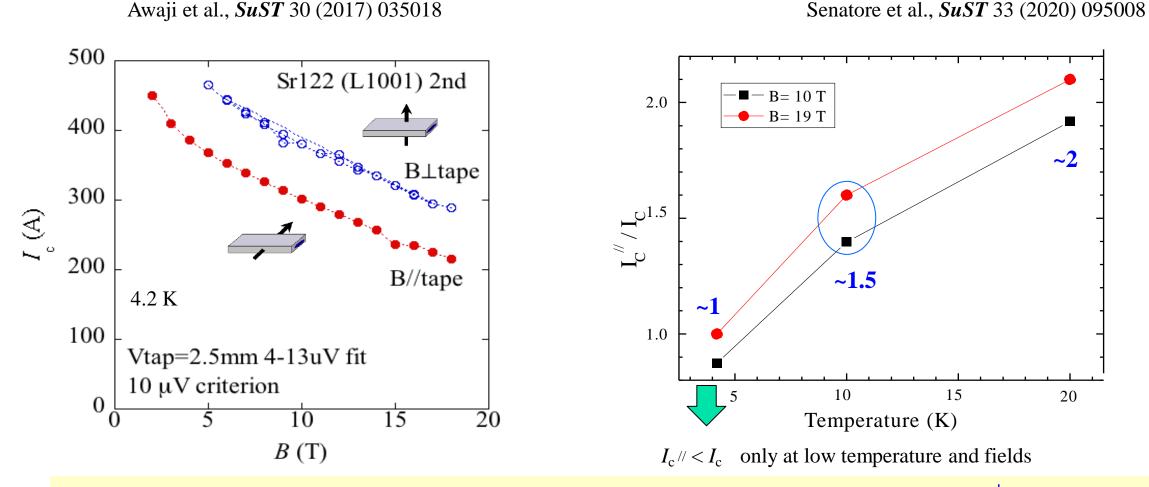
@4.2 K: Cu/Ag: 400 W/m K at 0 T; >100 W/m K at 9 T--magnets

SS/Ag: ~10 W/m K-- current leads

Atoms diffusion between different sheathes and superconducting cores

Supercond. Sci. Technol. 33, 075010 (2020)

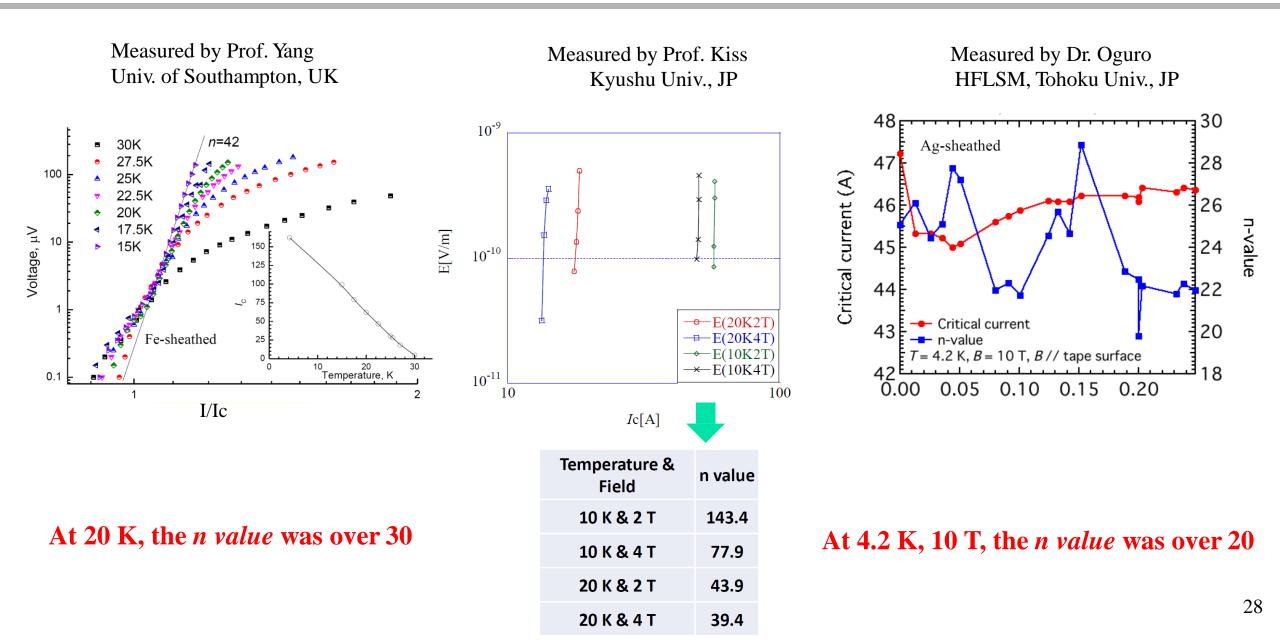
J_c anisotropy of 122/Ag tapes



• The I_c in applied magnetic fields is slightly higher in the perpendicular field (I_c^{\perp}) than in the parallel field $(I_c^{\prime\prime})$.

• The anisotropy ratio ($\Gamma = I_c \perp / I_c''$) is quite low, less than 2, very good for applications.

n value of 122 tapes

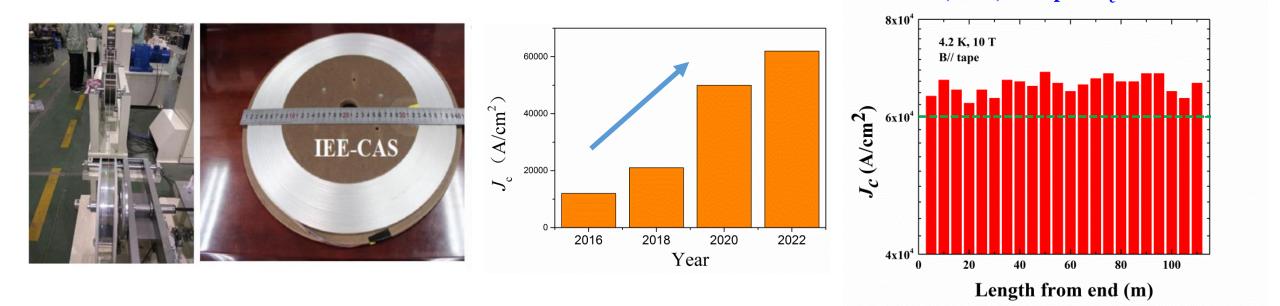




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Powder-In-Tube 122 tapes: Long length

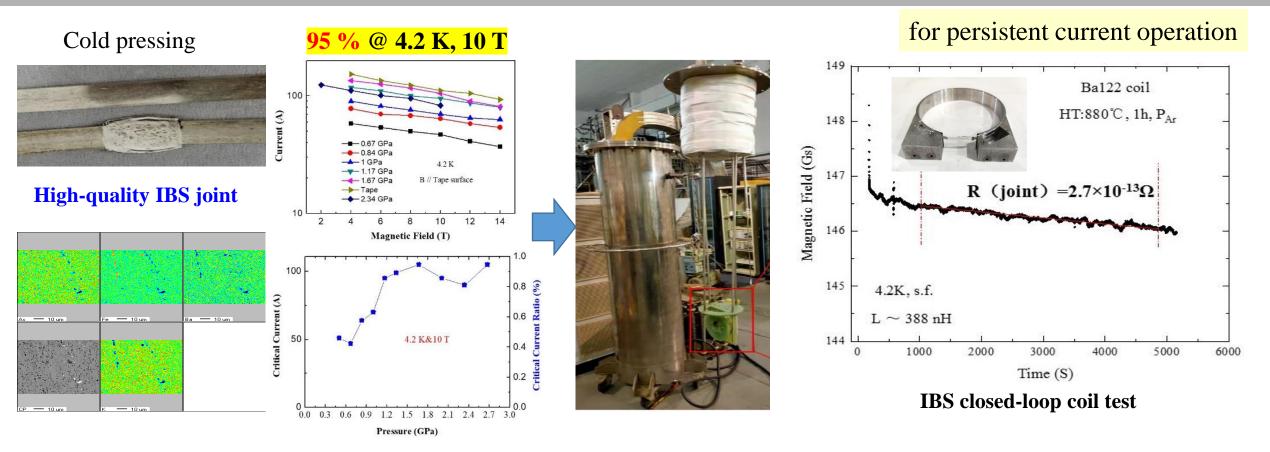
100 m long, 7-core Ba122 tapes are fabricated by rolling process, and the J_c is continuously improving. @4.2 K, 10 T, transport $J_c > 60000 \text{ A/cm}^2$



Recently, the J_c of long wires has been increased above 6×10^4 A/cm² @ 4.2 K, 10 T by optimizing fabrication process

Supported by the Strategic Priority Research Program of Chinese Academy of Sciences (Grant No. XDB25000000)

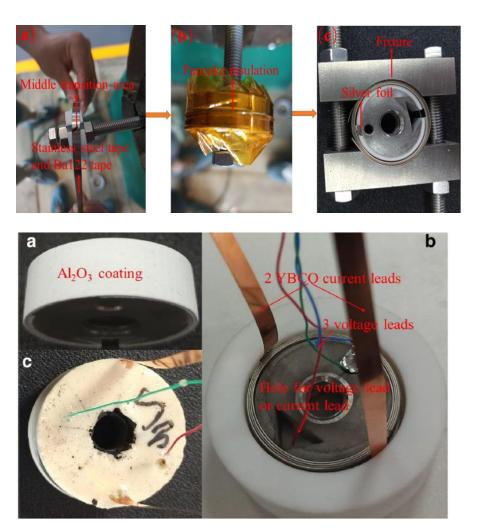
Powder-In-Tube 122 tapes: Superconducting joints



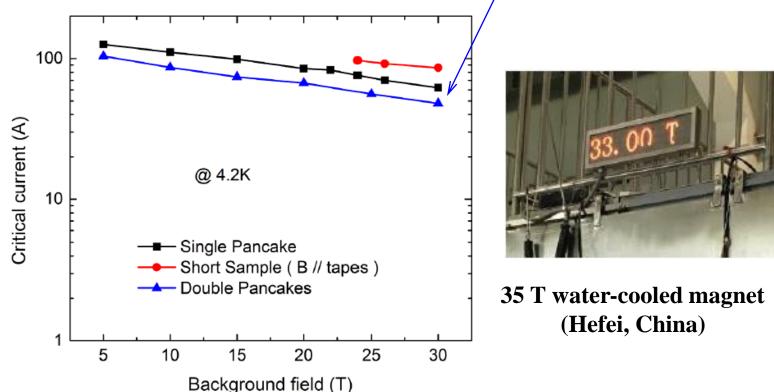
- ♦ High-performance joints were developed for IBS tapes, with a high critical current ratio (CCR) of 95%.
- ◆ The IBS joint was tested in a closed-loop coil, showing a low resistance of 2.7 × 10⁻¹³ Ohm.
- ◆ Meet the application requirements in persistent mode MRI magnets.

Zhu et al., *SuST* 35 (2022) 03LT01

Powder-In-Tube 122 tapes: Pancake coils

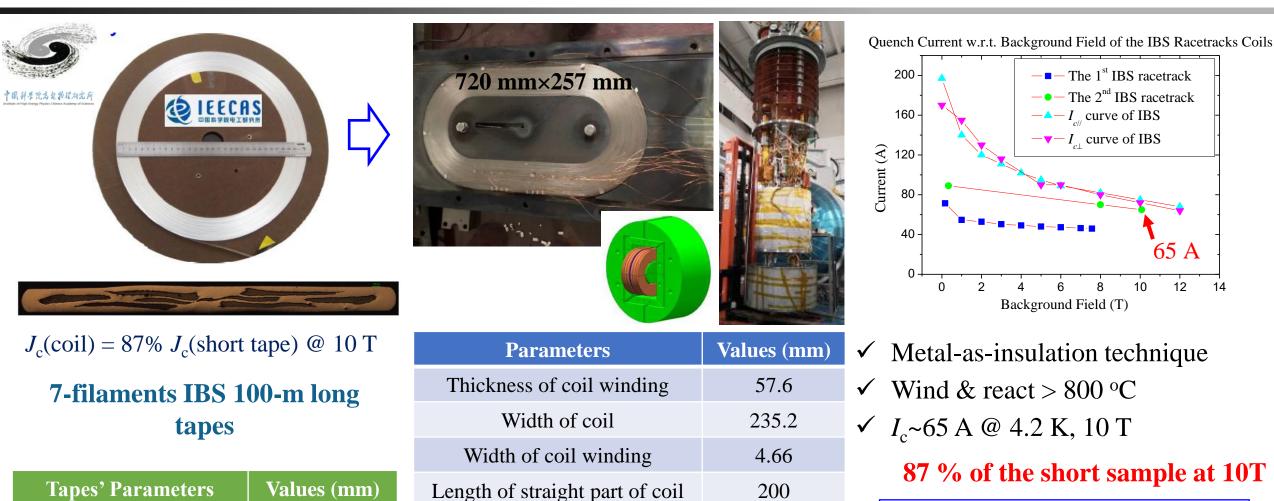


New IBS pancake coils have been made, measured up to very high fields reaching 62 A @ 4.2 K, 30 T



Qian et al., Physica C 580 (2021) 1353787

IBS Racetrack coils made using the 100 m long tapes



Thickness of SS tape

Turns

Bending radius

Thickness of IBS tape

Width of IBS tape

Non-SC/SC ratio

0.33

4.5

5

Very promising for next generation accelerator!

Zhang et al., *SuST* 34 (2021) 035021

0.3

96

60

First Tesla class IBS coil for high field application





Tesla class IBS coil

- \checkmark Six double pancake coils
- ✓ Self field 1.03 T @ 4.2 K, 20 T

The poorest IBS double pancake coil still had a critical current of about 84 A at the background field of 20 T

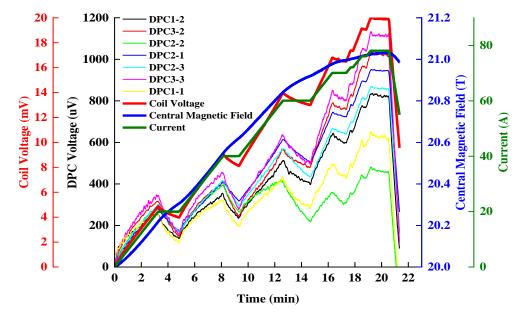
Outperformed all previously reported IBS coils

Courtesy of Prof. Wenge Chen



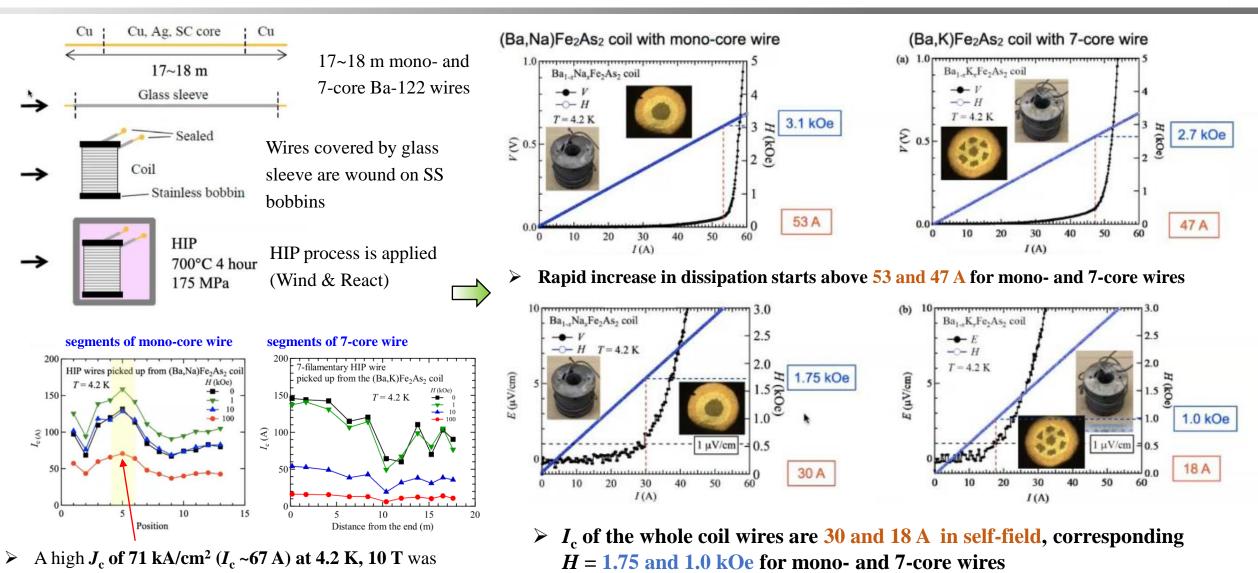


20 T background field



Powder-In-Tube HIP 122 wires: Coils





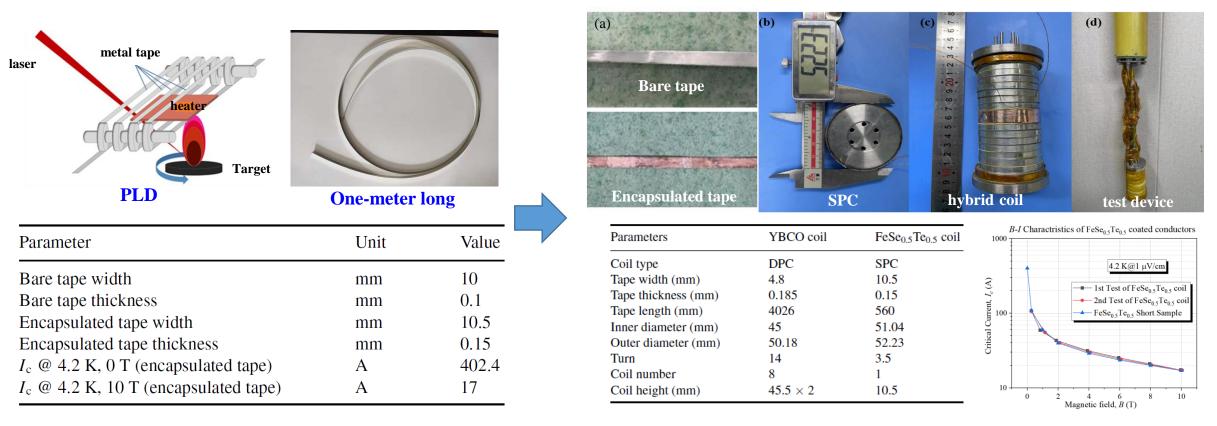
measured in short segments picked up from the mono-core coil

Pyon et al., *SuST* 26 (2023) 015009

FeSe_{0.5}**Te**_{0.5} **coated conductor tape and coil**



FeSe_{0.5}Te_{0.5} single pancake coil (SPC) was fabricated and tested under magnetic field

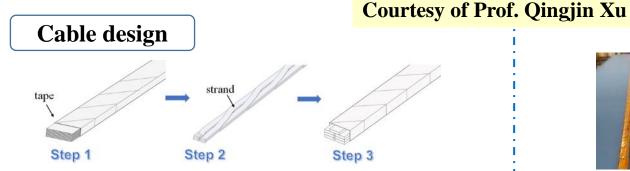


• One-meter $\text{FeSe}_{0.5}\text{Te}_{0.5}$ coated conductor tapes can be fabricated via PLD

◆ The transport critical current of the SPC was 108 A at self-field and 17 A at 10 T, which is as same as the tape.

High Field Model Dipole Magnet: HTS Cable R&D





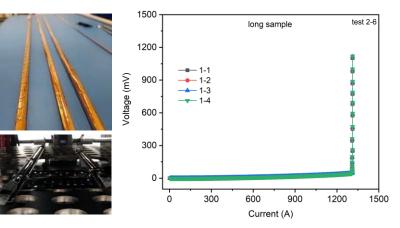
Schematic illustration of the transposed cable and the fabrication steps

The advantages of the designed cable:

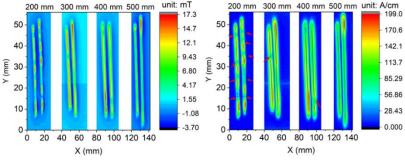
- High current-carrying compacity
- Low dynamic loss
- ◆ High mechanical stability



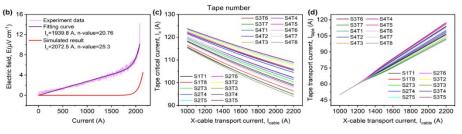
IBS transposed cable reached 1.3 kA



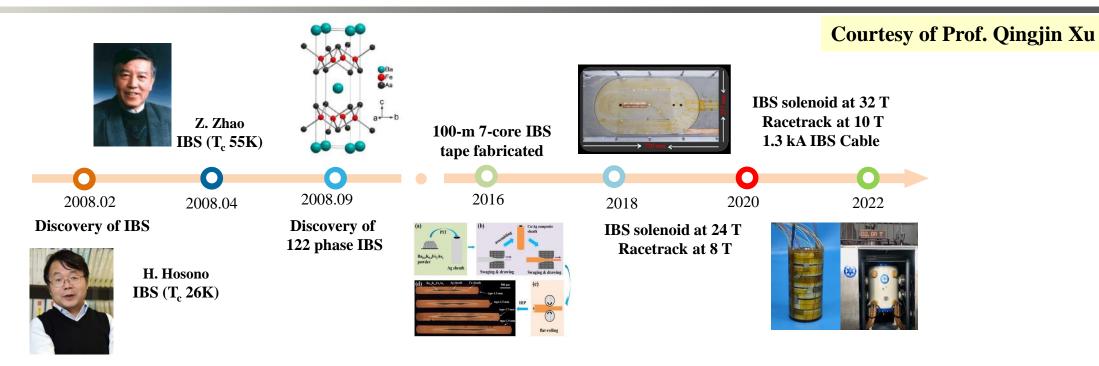
REBCO transposed cable reached 2 kA



J. Wang et al, Superconductivity 3 (2022) 100019



IBS Technology: Status and Outlook



- The **engineering current density** of the long-length IBS still needs a significant improvement, to reach the similar level as ReBCO or Bi-2212 conductors.
- The materials of stabilizer should be shifted to copper or any other low-cost metals to realize the low cost of IBS.
- Structure and fabrication methods of IBS and corresponding coils should be further optimized to minimize the J_c degradation at high field and high stress.
- Many other issues like detailed magnetic and mechanical properties study of IBS, quench detection and protection of the IBS coils/magnets and etc.

Platform for kilometer-scale IBS wire



Currently, a platform for the preparation of kilometerscale long IBS wire is constructing in China.



Equipment in place

Wire drawing machine

Tape rolling machine

Projects on IBS & Financial support



CAS funded "Science and Technology Frontier Research for the Next Generation Superconducting Magnet Applications" within the Strategic Priority Research Program of CAS





MoST funded "Next Generation High-field Magnet Technology Based on Iron-based Superconductor" within the National Key R&D Program of China рануще и инструментации и инструментаци



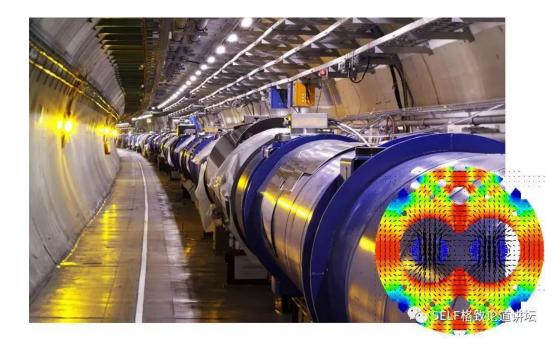
NSFC funded "High-performance Fe-based Superconducting Materials for High Magnetic Field Applications" within Major International (Regional) Joint Research Project



Conclusions

- Currently, iron-based wires and tapes are in the rapid development stage of research and development.
- ✓ Transport J_c of 122-type IBS wires has been significantly improved, and has surpassed the practical level at 4.2 K & 10 T with a maximum of 2.2×10⁵ A/cm².
- ✓ Transport J_c of 100-m-class Ba-122 IBS tapes was further improved to > 6×10⁴ A/cm² at 10 T & 4.2 K.
- Highlights some remarkable advances of IBS relevant to practical applications, including superconducting joints, cable, the first IBS inserted coils and racetrack coils.
- ✓ We believe that Fe-based wires are very promising for applications in high magnetic fields, e.g. >20 T at 4.2 K or >10 T at 20-30 K.

Thank you for your attention!





From a movie: Avatar