

1 Simulation of the time resolution of a 50 μm low-gain
2 avalanche detector.

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7 **Abstract**

In this paper we report simulation results on the timing resolution of a 50 μm low-gain avalanche detector (LGAD). The simulation includes: sensor fluctuations, front-end electronics, and quantization. Comparisons on the performance for different front-end electronics (FEE) bandwidths (BW) are presented, as well as the dependance on singal-to-noise ratio (SNR). Two approaches to measure the timestamp are presented: leading edge (LE) and constant-fraction-discrimination (CFD). Additionally, the time resolution is studied as function of the irradiation of the sensor. Simulated LGAD pulses before irradiation, and after neutron fluences of $5 \times 10^{14} \text{ n/cm}^2$ and $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ n/cm}^2$, are studied. The time resolution a 50 μm LGADs was found to be 30 ps for FE electronics BWs larger than 350 MHz and SNRs larger than 30. The time resolution at a SNR of 30 for fluences of $5 \times 10^{14} \text{ n/cm}^2$ and $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ n/cm}^2$ were found to be 30 ps and 40 ps, respectively.

8 *Key words:*

9 Silicon, Timing, LGAD

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24 1. Introduction

25 LGADs are envisioned to be used in the CMS and ATLAS experiment upgrades for
26 HL-LHC in order to overcome the event reconstruction challenges posed by the high rate
27 of concurrent collisions per beam crossing. The implemented regions of pseudorapidity
28 (η) are: $|\eta| > 1.5$, and $2.4 < |\eta| < 4.2$ for CMS and ATLAS, respectively. In order
29 to achieve the desired timing precision across a large area of the detectors, the sensors
30 will need to provide high uniformity of signal response and timing resolution. Beam test
31 measurements have provided encouraging results towards achieving such detectors [1].

32 In this paper, we report simulation results on the timing resolution of a $50\ \mu\text{m}$ low-
33 gain avalanche detector (LGAD) which includes the effects of the sensor fluctuations,
34 front-end electronics (FEE), and quantization. Our results indicate that for FEE analog
35 bandwidths (BW) larger than 350 MHz and signal-to-noise ratios (SNRs) larger than
36 30, measured at the output of the FFE, time resolutions of 30 ps and 40 ps are obtained
37 when using time-walk corrections based on time-over-threshold (ToT) measurements to
38 both timestamping techniques: constant-fraction-discrimination (CFD) and leading-edge
39 (LE), respectively. These results are compatible with previous measurements on LGAD
40 timing resolutions carried out in laboratory and beam test conditions [1–3]. We study
41 the time resolution for four different FEE shaping times: 0.5 ps, 1.0 ps, 2.0 ps, and 4.0 ps;
42 three SNR: 20, 30, 100; and three irradiation levels: pre-radiation, $5 \times 10^{14}\ \text{n/cm}^2$, and
43 $1 \times 10^{15}\ \text{n/cm}^2$. For every point in this scan we evaluate the time resolution for LE and
44 CFD.

45 The paper is organized as follows: the simulation is described in Sec. 2; algorithms
46 used in the timing reconstruction and analysis are described in Sec. 3; simulation results
47 are presented in Sec. 4, followed by the conclusion in Sec. 5.

48 2. Simulation Framework

49 The simulation framework is based on c++ programming language. The LGAD pulses
50 are obtained from Weightfield2 (WF2), a 2-dimensional silicon simulator [?]. WF2
51 provides sets of 1000 LGAD pulses which models the response of the sensor to minimum
52 ionizing particles (MIPs). We generated 3 sets of LGAD pulses for a $50\ \mu\text{m}$ LGAD:
53 pre-irradiation, and after neutron fluences of $5 \times 10^{14}\ \text{n/cm}^2$ and $1 \times 10^{15}\ \text{n/cm}^2$. The
54 simulation framework takes the LGAD pulses (from WF2) and adds gaussian white noise
55 (hereafter white noise). At this point the LGAD pulses with the added white noise are
56 fed into the simulation of the FEE (see Fig. 1). The output of the FEE simulation is
57 the convolution of the impulse response function and the input signal at the FEE. We
58 consider four shaping constants for the impulse response of the FEE: 0.5, 1.0, 2.0, and
59 4.0 ns (the FEE simulation will be described in detail in Sec. 2.2). At the output of
60 the FEE block we have a "realistic" LGAD pulse which includes the effects of sensor

fluctuations, shaping of the FEE, and noise. A waveform analysis is performed with the pulses obtained at the output of the FEE block. We assign timestamps to each pulse by using algorithms that emulate an ideal LE discriminator and an ideal CFD. For each threshold we obtain a LE and CFD timestamps as well as the corresponding time-over-threshold (ToT) of the pulse. The SNR is defined as the ratio of the most probable value (MPV) of the amplitude distribution to the width of the amplitude distribution at a fixed sample (where only noise is present). We study 3 SNR scenarios: 20, 30, and 100. A schematic diagram of the simulation is shown in Fig. 1.

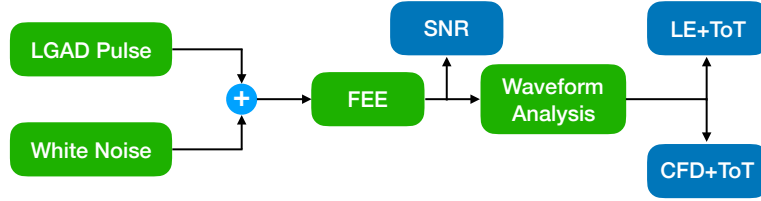


Figure 1: A schematic diagram of the simulation. Each simulation configurable block is shown in green. The most relevant outputs of the simulation are shown in blue.

2.1. LGAD pulse library and simulation

We need to ask Nicolo to send us a paragraph for the Weightfield2 (WF2)

2.2. Fron-end Electronics simulation and noise injection

The front-end simulation is implemented in c++ programming language. It combines analytical calculations when possible but it mostly relies on numerical methods. We implement most calculations in the time domain, while the frequency domain is mostly used to cross-check noise and the FEE expected response. Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 detail the front-end and noise implementation in the simulation.

2.2.1. front-end implementation

The front-end simulation is based on a single amplification stage. We focus on the BW of such amplifier rather than variations thereof. The front-end chose is a second order low-pass filter which transfer function and impulse response are given by equations 1 and 2, respectively.

$$H(S) = \frac{\frac{1}{\tau_s^2}}{(S + 1/\tau_s)^2} \quad (1) \quad h(t) = \frac{t}{\tau_s^2} e^{-t/\tau_s} \quad (2)$$

The output pulse of the FEE is the convolution (in time domain) of the pulse from the LGAD library and the FEE impulse response (see Eq. 2). The time base for the pulses and the convolution is 10 ps – this sampling time is used throughout the simulation. As stated above we focus the study on the BW of the FEE, to that end we scan the τ_s parameter in Eq. 2 in the following set: {0.5, 1, 2, 4} ns, this parameter is hereafter referred to as shaping time (ST). Figure 2 (left) shows the comparison of the impulse and LGAD responses for a ST of 1 ns while Figure 2 (right) shows the LGAD response

for all STs studied. We observe that the LGAD response is delayed with respect to the impulse response, and that pulse slew rate is decreased in the first nanosecond of the pulse. We also observe the expected behavior when comparing the LGAD responses for the different STs, pulse risetimes scale with the ST and the decay time is dominated by the ST.

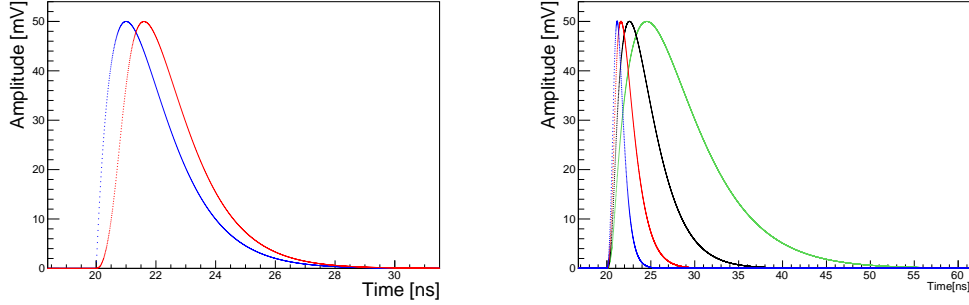


Figure 2: (Left) Comparison of impulse and LGAD responses for a shaping time (ST) of 1 ns. (Right) LGAD response for the four shaping times studied: $\{0.5, 1, 2, 4\}$ ns. All pulses have been normalized to achieve a peak amplitude of 50 mV. Legends for the shaping times are shown in the plots.

Shaping time (ns)	0.5	1.0	2.0	4.0
Risetime (ns)	$0.7 \pm xx$	$0.9 \pm xx$	$1.4 \pm xx$	$2.5 \pm xx$

Table 1: Measured risetime for all shaping times studied: $\{0.5, 1, 2, 4\}$ ns. Risetime is the 10% – 90% time difference as measured by the CFD algorithm described in Sec. 3.1.

2.2.2. noise injection

Gaussian white noise is simulated by sampling the full time window (0 - 100 ns) in 10 ps intervals. At each sampled time we assign a random amplitude which is drawn from a gaussian distribution with zero mean and width corresponding to the SNR under study. It is important to note that the width of the gaussian parameter is not exactly the SNR and needs to be adjusted depending on the ST of the FEE. The left panel of Figure 3 shows the gaussian white noise before and after a 1 ns FEE. The expected behavior for the noise is obtained. The left panel of Figure 3 shows the output of the FEE block, with a 1 ns ST, for a pre-radiation LGAD pulse when noise has been injected. The injected noise is such that the SNR is 30. SNR is defined ratio of the landau peak of the maximum amplitude to the the r.m.s of the 100th sample over an ensemble of 1000 pulses.

3. Timing Reconstruction and Analysis

The time reconstruction is based on a waveform analysis. We generate an ensemble of 1000 pulses sampled every 10 ps. Each pulse is interpolated using a the WhittakerShannon formula ($\sin(x)/x$), using the interpolated pulse we assign a timestamp by finding

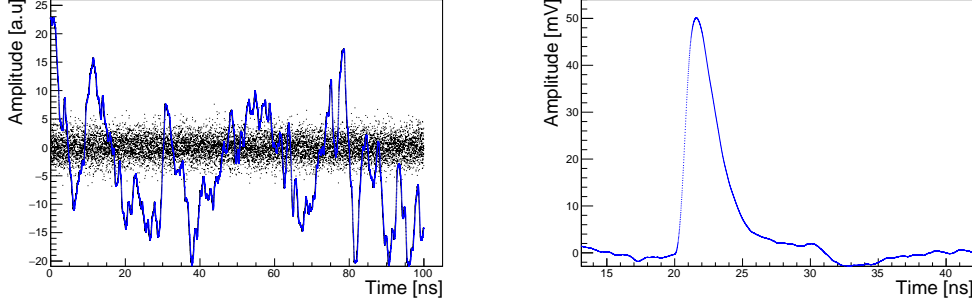


Figure 3: (Left) Comparison of gaussian white noise before and after the FEE. (Right) Example pulse at the output of the FEE block with a SNR of 30. Both figure use a shaping time (ST) of 1 ns. Legends for the shaping times are shown in the plots.

when each pulse crosses a voltage threshold. The threshold can be a constant value (LE) or a constant fraction of the maximum amplitude of pulse (CFD), more details about the algorithms are given in Sec. 3.1. The time resolution is estimated by the width parameter of a gaussian fit to the timestamps obtain for a particular threshold. We apply a time time-walk correction based on the time-over-threshold of the pulse, we note that this correction has a large improvement on the time resolution measured using the LE algorithm while the CFD algorithm is mostly insensitive to this correction. Details about this correction are covered in Sec. 3.2. The timestamps are measured with a 20 ps binning while the time-over-threshold is measured with a 100 ps in order to simulate the effect of quantization. We scan the LE and CFD threshold such that we find the one with the lowest jitter.

3.1. Leading edge and constant fraction discriminators

The leading edge and constant fraction discriminator algorithms are ideal in the sense that they don't simulate the effect of electronics in a real implementation. The approach taken is to sample the pulses every 10 ps and subsequently interpolate them using a the WhittakerShannon formula ($\sin(x)/x$) to more accurately find the threshold crossing. In the LE case the threshold is scanned from 3 - 60 mV, while the CFD is scanned from 5 - 90 % of the current pulse maximum amplitude. For each threshold we obtain two timestamps: when the pulse first crosses the threshold (t_0) and when it crosses the second time (t_1), now in the opposite direction. The time-over-threshold is defined as the difference of the two timestamps ($ToT = t_1 - t_0$). The first timestamp, t_0 , is used to determine the time resolution at given threshold. The time resolution is defined as the width of a gaussian fit to the t_0 distribution binned with a bin-width of 20 ps. The time resolution is obtained in two cases: before and after a time-walk correction. The time-walk correction aims to correct the known drift effect on the timestamps when dealing with pulses of different amplitudes. The time walk correction is based on the measured ToT and explained in detail in Sec. 3.2. We note that the effect of the time-walk correction is large for LE and almost negligible for CFD. Fig. 4 shows a typical t_0 distribution, using the LE and CFD algorithms, for the pre-radiation LGAD after the

140 ToT correction has been applied. The time resolution (σ_t) is measured to be 37.6 ± 2.0
 141 and 32.9 ± 1.4 for the LE and CFS, respectively.

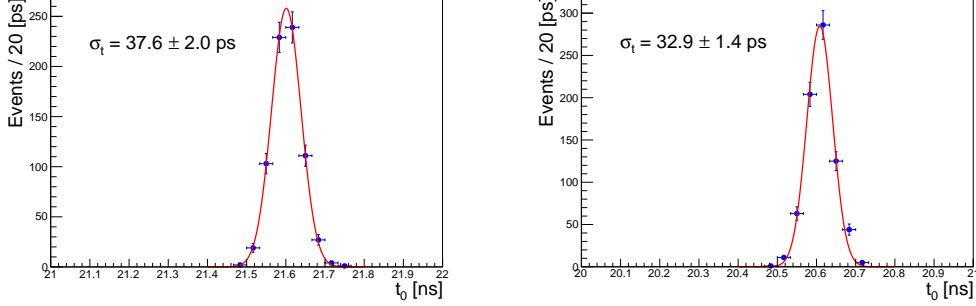


Figure 4: (Left) timestamp (t_0) distribution for a 30 mV threshold using a leading edge discriminator. (Left) timestamp (t_0) distribution for a 35% threshold using a constant fraction discriminator. Both figures include the time-walk correction based on the measured ToT. Both figures use a shaping time (ST) of 1 ns and correspond to SNR of 30.

142 3.2. Time-walk correction and time-over-threshold

143 A time-walk correction is applied in order to correct the timestamp drift when dealing
 144 with pulse of varying amplitudes. The correction is based on the measured time-over-
 145 threshold: $\text{ToT} = t_1 - t_0$. We observe, as expected, that ToT correction is large for the LE
 146 case and negligible for CFD (see Fig. 6). Figure (left) 5 show a typical two dimensional
 147 map of t_0 and ToT for the LE algorithm, wherein a clear correlation between t_0 and ToT
 148 is observed. The time-walk correction is obtain by measuring the average t_0 in each ToT
 149 bin and subsequently fitting a 2th-order polinomial (see Fig. (right) 5). The resulting
 150 analytical expresion after the fit is then used to correct the dependece of t_0 on ToT.
 151 The time-walk correction is expressed in Eq. 3, where p_2 and p_1 are the quadratic and
 152 linear coefficients of the 2th-oder polinomial fit. The procedure is updated every time
 153 any parameter on the simulation changes, i.e ST, SNR, and LGAD library inputs. As
 154 shown in Fig. (left) 6 the effect of the time-walk dependes on the threshold used and
 155 correcting for it can yield significant improvements in the time resolution.

$$t_0 = t_0 - (p_2 \text{ToT}^2 + p_1 \text{ToT}) \quad (3)$$

156 4. LGAD Front-end Electronics Performance

157 Herein we present a number of studies for different a 50 μm LGAD. We study the
 158 time resolution as a function of irradiation for three different scenarios: pre-radiation,
 159 and after neutron fluences of $5 \times 10^{14} \text{ n/cm}^2$ and $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ n/cm}^2$. We also quantify the
 160 effect of the BW of the FEE by varying the the ST (τ_s), four STs are considerd: $\{0.5, 1,$
 161 $2, 4\}$ ns. Additionally, we study the effect of noise by varying the SNR in all the scenatios
 162 described above. We consider three SNR: 20, 30, and 100. Sec. 4.1 summarizes the effect
 163 of the shaping time, Sec. summarizes the effect of SNR, and and Sec. 4.2 summarizes the
 164 effect of LGAD radiation.

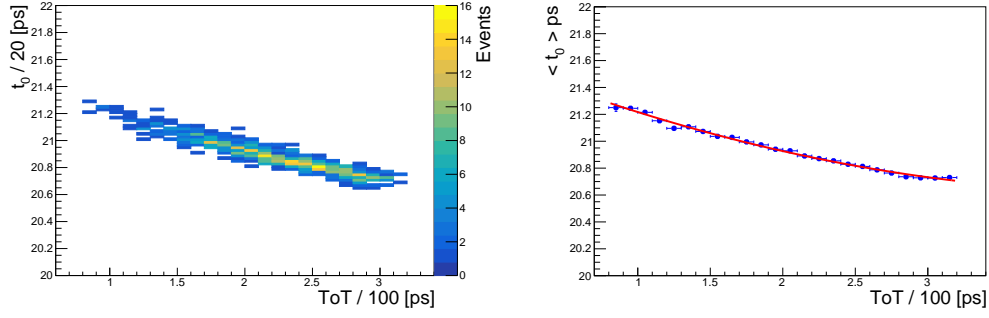


Figure 5: (Left) two dimensional map of the timestamp (t_0) and ToT ($t_1 - t_0$). (Right) one dimensional projection of the timestamp (t_0) dependence on ToT, the red curve is the 2th-order polinomial fit that ultimately is used to correct t_0 . Both figures use a shaping time (ST) of 1 ns and correspond to a SNR of 30.

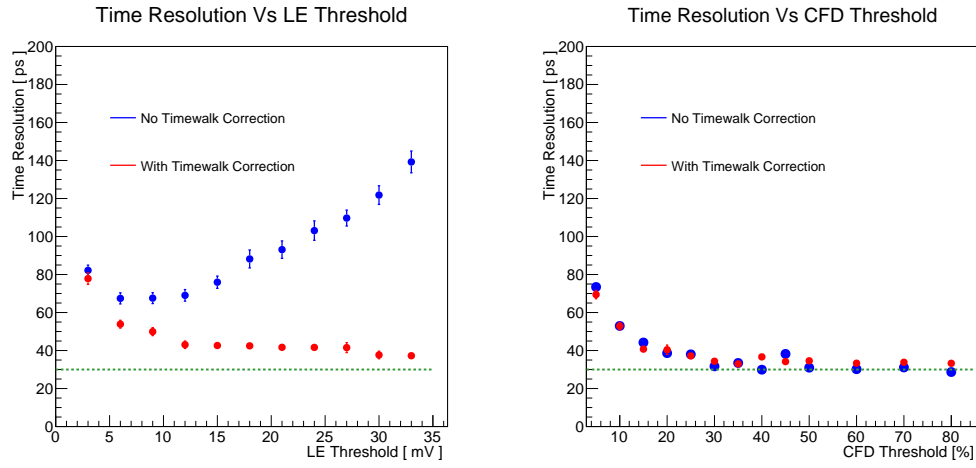


Figure 6: (Left) Comparison of gaussian white noise before and after the FEE. (Right) Example pulse at the output of the FEE block with a SNR of 30. Both figure use a shaping time (ST) of 1 ns. Legends for the shaping times are shown in the plots.

Time Resolution (ps)						
ST (ns)	Leading Edge			Constant Fraction		
	SNR = 20	SNR = 30	SNR = 100	SNR = 20	SNR = 30	SNR = 100
0.5	$37.5 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
1.0	$50.0 \pm xx$	$40.0 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
2.0	$60.0 \pm xx$	$50.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$50.0 \pm xx$	$37.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
4.0	$100.0 \pm xx$	$75.0 \pm xx$	$40.0 \pm xx$	$75.0 \pm xx$	$55.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$

Table 2: 50 μm pre-radiation LGAD sensor simulation: summary of best time resolution obtained for SNRs of 20, 30, and 100. Leading edge and constant fraction results are shown.

Time Resolution (ps)						
ST (ns)	Leading Edge			Constant Fraction		
	SNR = 20	SNR = 30	SNR = 100	SNR = 20	SNR = 30	SNR = 100
0.5	$37.5 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
1.0	$50.0 \pm xx$	$40.0 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
2.0	$60.0 \pm xx$	$50.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$50.0 \pm xx$	$37.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
4.0	$100.0 \pm xx$	$75.0 \pm xx$	$40.0 \pm xx$	$75.0 \pm xx$	$55.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$

Table 3: 50 μm LGAD sensor simulation after neutron fluence of 5×10^{14} n/cm²: summary of best time resolution obtained for SNRs of 20, 30, and 100. Leading edge and constant fraction results are shown.

165 4.1. Front-end electronics shaping time and SNR studies

166 We scan the ST of the FEE and the SNR. The results for the pre-radiation sensor are
167 summarized in Table. 4.1. We observe that the best results are consistently obtained by
168 the 0.5 and 1.0 ?? STs regardless of the SNR. We also observe that longer STs are more
169 affected by less favorable SNR, e.g for and SNR of 20 the time resolution is 37 ps and
170 100 ps for a 0.5 ns and 4.0 ns ST, respectively. We also observe that CFD consistently
171 outperforms LE, this effect is more clearly observed for less favorable SNR and slower
172 ST. Comparing CFD and LE for the 1.0 ns ST with SNR of 20 yields a difference in
173 performance of 35 ps (when subtrated in quadrature). Finally, we observe that time
174 resolution better than 30 ps could not be achieved which is consitent with the known
175 intrinsic LGAD jitter. This last effect is taking into account by the WF2 simulation and
176 confirmed in our simulation where we use a SNR of 1000 and obtained a time resolution
177 consistent with 30 ps. In the case of the pre-radiation sensor we obseved that time
178 resolutions of the order of 30 - 35 ps are achievable for STs between 0.5 - 1.0 ns and a
179 SNR of 30.

180 4.2. Timing Performace as a function of irradiation

181 We study the effect of irradiation on the time resolution of a 50 μm sensor, we employ
182 LGAD simulation files that include the effect of radiation damage. We consider two cases
183 besides pre-radiation: neutron fluences of 5×10^{14} n/cm² and 1×10^{15} n/cm². We perform
184 the same studies as in the pre-radiation case and covered in Sec. 4.1. The results for
185 the irradiated LGAD are presented in Table ?? and Table 4.1 for neutron fluences of
186 5×10^{14} n/cm² and 1×10^{15} n/cm², respectively. The ratios of the simulated sensor were
187 3:3:2 for the pre-radiation, 5×10^{14} n/cm², and 1×10^{15} n/cm². The observe similar
188 trends to those of the pre-radiation sensor described in Sec. 4.1. We note that when

ST (ns)	Time Resolution (ps)					
	Leading Edge			Constant Fraction		
	SNR = 20	SNR = 30	SNR = 100	SNR = 20	SNR = 30	SNR = 100
0.5	$37.5 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
1.0	$50.0 \pm xx$	$40.0 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
2.0	$60.0 \pm xx$	$50.0 \pm xx$	$32.5 \pm xx$	$50.0 \pm xx$	$37.5 \pm xx$	$30.0 \pm xx$
4.0	$100.0 \pm xx$	$75.0 \pm xx$	$40.0 \pm xx$	$75.0 \pm xx$	$55.0 \pm xx$	$35.0 \pm xx$

Table 4: 50 μm LGAD sensor simulation after neutron fluence of 1×10^{15} n/cm²: summary of best time resolution obtained for SNRs of 20, 30, and 100. Leading edge and constant fraction results are shown.

using STs between 0.5 - 1.0 ns and a SNR of 30, time resolutions of the order of 30 - 35 ps and 40 - 50 ps are obtained for 5×10^{14} n/cm² and 1×10^{15} n/cm², respectively.

5. Conclusion

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