
MEEN 432 –Automotive Engineering

Fall 2026

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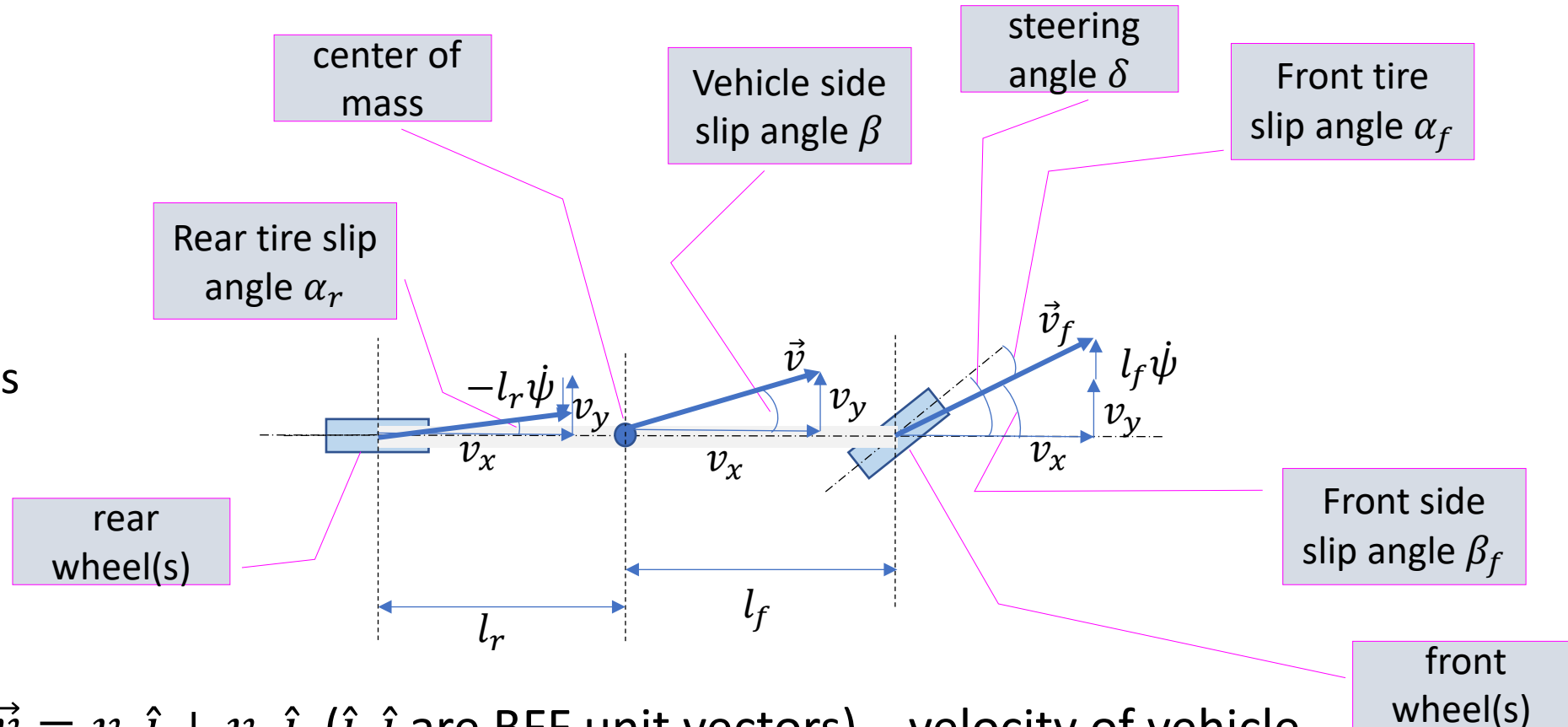
Acknowledgement: Most of the material for this class was developed by Dr. Swami Gopalswamy

Lecture 6: Vehicle Lateral Dynamics

- Race Car – simulation system architecture
- Tire Forces
- Vehicle Forces

Bicycle (!) Model of a Car

- Vehicle “collapsed” along longitudinal line of symmetry
 - Two wheels collapse into each other



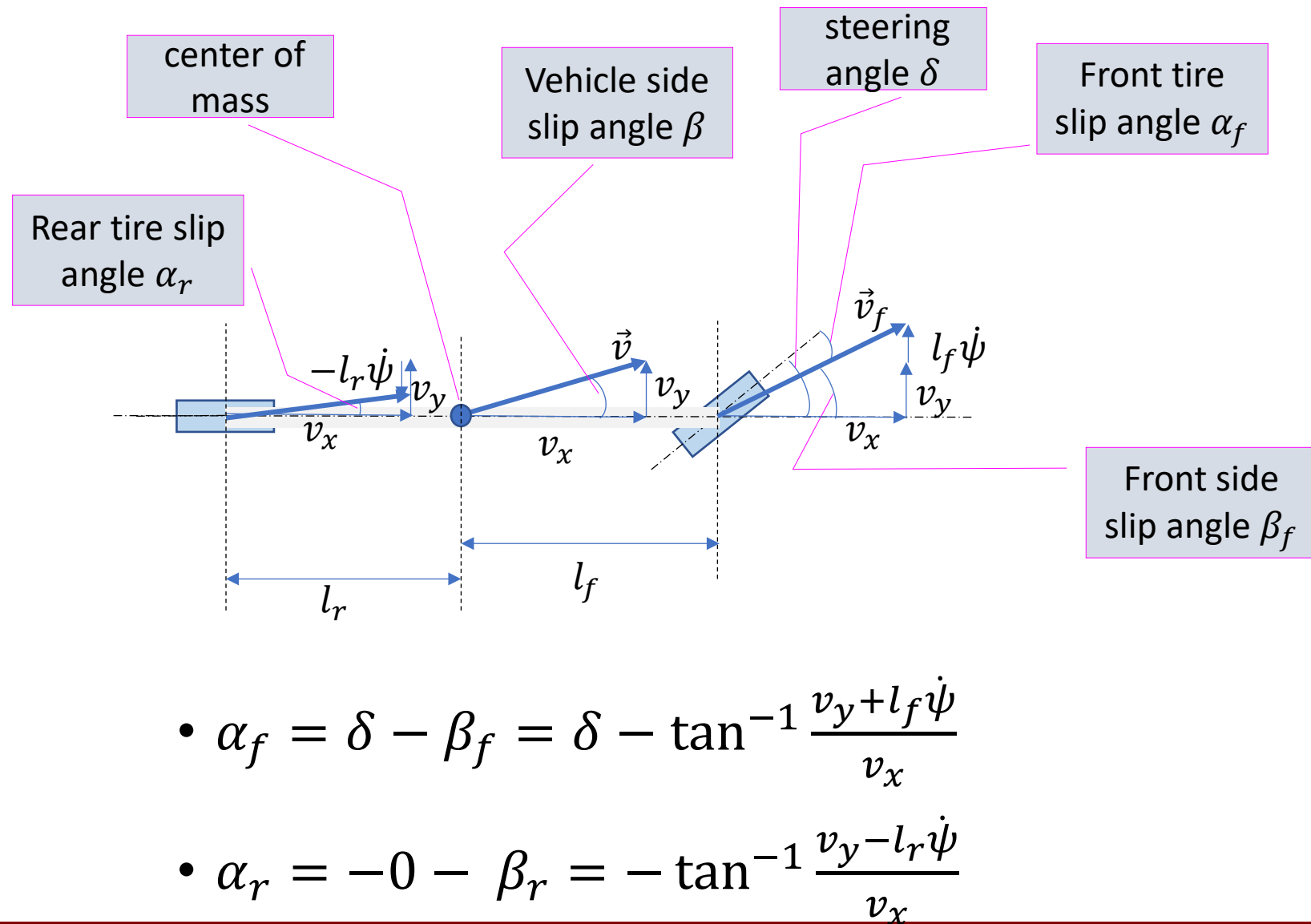
- $\vec{v} = v_x \hat{i} + v_y \hat{j}$ (\hat{i}, \hat{j} are BFF unit vectors) – velocity of vehicle
- $\vec{v}_f = v_x \hat{i} + (v_y + l_f \dot{\psi}) \hat{j}$ - velocity of vehicle at front axle
- $\vec{v}_r = v_x \hat{i} + (v_y - l_r \dot{\psi}) \hat{j}$ - velocity of vehicle at rear axle

Bicycle (!) Model of a Car

- $\vec{v} = v_x \hat{i} + v_y \hat{j}$
- $\vec{v}_f = v_x \hat{i} + (v_y + l_f \dot{\psi}) \hat{j}$
- $\vec{v}_r = v_x \hat{i} + (v_y - l_r \dot{\psi}) \hat{j}$

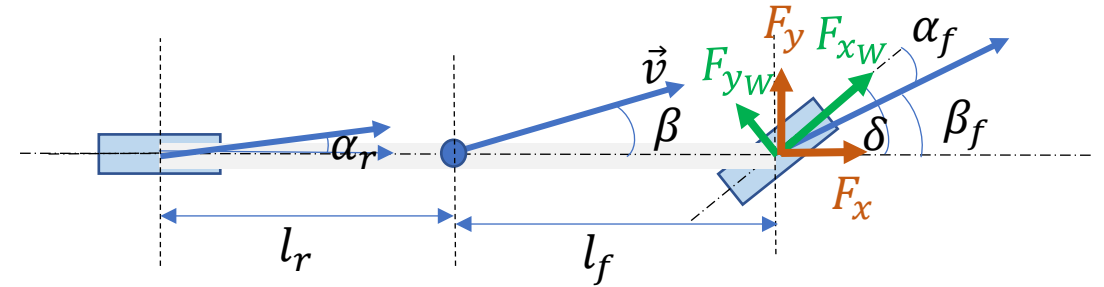
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- $\beta = \tan^{-1} \frac{v_y}{v_x}$
- $\beta_f = \tan^{-1} \frac{v_y + l_f \dot{\psi}}{v_x}$
- $\beta_r = \tan^{-1} \frac{v_y - l_r \dot{\psi}}{v_x}$



Tire Forces in BFF

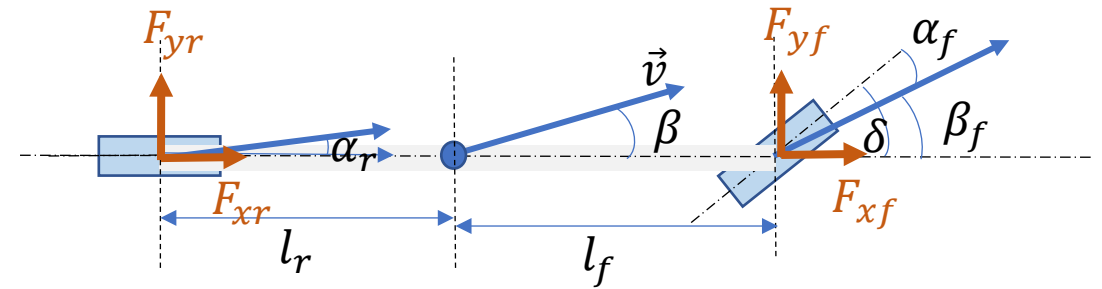
- We previously described the tire forces in the TFF – now we transform it to the BFF:
 - Tire forces $F_{x_W}(\lambda)$ and $F_{y_W}(\alpha)$ are in TFF
 - Their impact on the vehicle F_x (the longitudinal traction force) and F_y (the lateral force) are in BFF
 - $F_x = F_{x_W}(\lambda) \cos \delta - F_{y_W}(\alpha) \sin \delta$
 - $F_y = F_{x_W}(\lambda) \sin \delta + F_{y_W}(\alpha) \cos \delta$



- Often a “small angle approximation” is employed: δ and α are small
 - $\cos \delta \approx 1, \cos \alpha \approx 1$
 - $\sin \delta \approx \delta, \sin \alpha \approx \alpha$
- Then:
 - $F_x = F_{x_W} - F_{y_W} \delta$
 - $F_y = F_{x_W} \delta + F_{y_W}$

Vehicle Forces

- We consider the tire forces at both the front and rear, in BFF
- NOTE: We need to consider both the right and left wheels together, i.e. sum the forces at each axle
- Net Forces:
 - $\Sigma F_x = F_{xf} + F_{xr} - F_{drag} - F_{gravity}$
 - $\Sigma F_y = F_{yf} + F_{yr}$
- Net Moment:
 - $\Sigma M = F_{yf}l_f - F_{yr}l_r$



- Expanding (assuming Front Wheel Steer):
 - $\Sigma F_x = F_{x_{Wf}}(\lambda_f) \cos \delta - F_{y_{Wf}}(\alpha_f) \sin \delta + F_{x_{Wr}}(\lambda_r) - F_{drag} - F_{gravity}$
 - $\Sigma F_y = F_{x_{Wf}}(\lambda) \sin \delta + F_{y_{Wf}}(\alpha) \cos \delta + F_{y_{Wr}}(\alpha)$
 - $\Sigma M = (F_{x_{Wf}}(\lambda) \sin \delta + F_{y_{Wf}}(\alpha) \cos \delta) l_f - F_{y_{Wr}}(\alpha) \cos \delta l_r$

Vehicle Dynamics

$$\bullet \begin{bmatrix} \dot{v}_x \\ \dot{v}_y \\ \dot{\omega} \\ \dot{\psi} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} v_y \omega + (F_{x_{Wf}}(\lambda_f) \cos \delta - F_{y_{Wf}}(\alpha_f) \sin \delta + F_{x_{Wr}}(\lambda_r) - F_{drag} - F_{gravity})/m \\ -v_x \omega + (F_{x_{Wf}}(\lambda) \sin \delta + F_{y_{Wf}}(\alpha) \cos \delta + F_{y_{Wr}}(\alpha))/m \\ ((F_{x_{Wf}}(\lambda) \sin \delta + F_{y_{Wf}}(\alpha) \cos \delta) l_f - F_{y_{Wr}}(\alpha) \cos \delta l_r)/I \\ \omega \end{bmatrix}$$