

DEVELOPMENT OF AN AUTONOMOUS CRYOGENICS PLANT COOL-DOWN

by

William Harris Buhrig IV
B.S. December 2023, Old Dominion University
A.S. May 2022, Tidewater Community College

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
December 2025

Approved by:

K.N. Kaipa (Director)

Brian Mastracci (Co-Director)

Geoffrey Kraft (Member)

Jean Delayen (Member)

ABSTRACT

DEVELOPMENT OF AN AUTONOMOUS CRYOGENICS PLANT COOL-DOWN

William Harris Buhrig IV
Old Dominion University, 2025
Director: Dr. K.N. Kaipa

This paper aims to outline the possible structure and application of a high-level planned control system to adjust and modify existing control structures implemented on all Thomas Jefferson National Laboratory (JLab) Cryogenic Refrigeration Plants to allow for future Autonomous cool-downs.

© Copyright, 2025, by William Harris Buhrig IV, All Rights Reserved.

This dedication is for my Mom because you've been there through it all. Your support and understanding mean everything to me. We've definitely got the ticket now.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to start my list of acknowledgments with Dr. Geoffrey Kraft for giving me the opportunity in the first place to get where I am today by offering me a tour of the Old Dominion Center for Accelerator Physics and giving me the choice to join the Virginia Innovative Traineeships in Accelerators program. Followed by both Dr. Krishnanand N. Kaipa and Brian Mastracci for always being there to support me in my goals. I want to also acknowledge the entirety of the Cryogenics Department at Thomas Jefferson National Laboratory for being so supportive and providing so many affable conversations.

NOMENCLATURE

A	area, m ²
C	stream capacity,
c	specific heat capacity,
Gr	Grashof Number, (No Units)
M	molecular mass, kg/mole
m	mass, kg
W	mass flow, kg/s
Pr	Prandtl Number, (No Units)
R	universal gas-constant,
Re	Reynolds Number, (No Units)
ϵ	effectiveness, (No Units)

Subscripts

O	initial condition, (No Units)
iso	isothermal process, (No Units)
lma	log mean average, (No Units)
m	mean value, (No Units)
p	constant pressure, (No Units)
v	constant volume, (No Units)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
 Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND	1
1.2 END STAGE REFRIGERATOR TWO	1
1.3 OBJECTIVE OF SYSTEM	1
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	3
2.1 FLUID PROPERTIES & MECHANICS	3
2.2 HEAT EXCHANGERS	3
2.3 TURBOMACHINERY	3
2.4 THERMOSYPHON	3
3. PLANT MODEL	4
3.1 HEAT EXCHANGERS	4
3.2 TURBOMACHINERY	4
3.3 THERMOSYPHON	4
3.4 CONTROL VALVES	4
4. CONTROL MODEL	5
4.1 CONTROL HIERARCHY	5
4.2 PRINCIPLE CONTROLLER	5
4.3 MANAGERIAL CONTROLLER	5
4.4 SECTIONAL CONTROLLER	5
5. DATA COLLECTION STRATAGEM	6
5.1 RAW COLLECTION	6
5.2 PREFILTERING	6
5.3 PROBABILISTIC FAILURE RATING	6
5.4 RECOVERY SYSTEM	6
6. DATA ANALYSIS	7
6.1 EXPECTATION VERSUS REALITY	7
6.2 RESULTS OF MISMATCHED EXPECTATIONS	7
7. FUTURE IMPLEMENTATIONS	8
7.1 APPLICATION WITHIN OTHER CRYOPLANTS	8

	Page
7.2 FAILURE PREDICTION & CORRECTION	8
7.3 MACHINE LEARNING	8
7.4 COMPUTATIONAL FLUID DYNAMICS	8
8. CONCLUSION	9
REFERENCES	10
SUPPLEMENTAL SOURCES CONSULTED	10
APPENDICES	
A. MATERIAL PROPERTIES	13
VITA	14

LIST OF TABLES

Table

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

Page

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

- Purpose of Existence
- Superconducting Accelerator Technology
- Current JLab Cryoplants
- Control System Failure

1.2 END STAGE REFRIGERATOR TWO

- Working Fluid
- Energy Sources
- Compressors
- Thermosyphon
- Heat Exchangers
- Turbomachinery

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF SYSTEM

- Modeling
- Control System
- Testing
- Implementation

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 FLUID PROPERTIES & MECHANICS

2.2 HEAT EXCHANGERS

Working within the order of precedence of sources referenced within this document. It is best to start with the work of Kays and London *Compact Heat Exchangers*, which is a landmark of the field and is still highly cited in modern research as its ubiquitous use in the design of simple heat exchangers (6); in addition, the referenced articles within the chapters of the book are in my opinion essential in the understanding of the dynamics of traditional two-stream heat exchangers (4, 7, 8).

As (9, 10, 13)

2.3 TURBOMACHINERY

2.4 THERMOSYPHON

CHAPTER 3

PLANT MODEL

3.1 HEAT EXCHANGERS

3.2 TURBOMACHINERY

3.3 THERMOSYPHON

3.4 CONTROL VALVES

CHAPTER 4

CONTROL MODEL

4.1 CONTROL HIERARCHY

4.2 PRINCIPLE CONTROLLER

4.3 MANAGERIAL CONTROLLER

4.4 SECTIONAL CONTROLLER

CHAPTER 5

DATA COLLECTION STRATAGEM

5.1 RAW COLLECTION

5.2 PREFILTERING

5.3 PROBABILISTIC FAILURE RATING

5.4 RECOVERY SYSTEM

CHAPTER 6

DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 EXPECTATION VERSUS REALITY

6.2 RESULTS OF MISMATCHED EXPECTATIONS

CHAPTER 7

FUTURE IMPLEMENTATIONS

7.1 APPLICATION WITHIN OTHER CRYOPLANTS

7.2 FAILURE PREDICTION & CORRECTION

7.3 MACHINE LEARNING

7.4 COMPUTATIONAL FLUID DYNAMICS

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

REFERENCES

9. R. Niroomand, M. Saidi, S. Hannani, *Applied Thermal Energy* **157**, 113730, ISSN: 1359-4311 (July 2019).
10. R. Niroomand, M. Saidi, S. Hannani, *International Journal of Heat and Mass Transfer* **156**, 119730, ISSN: 0017-9310 (Aug. 2020).
13. F. Röbler, P. Freko, I. Thomas, R. Kender, S. Rehfeldt, H. Klein, *Computers & Chemical Engineering* **163**, 107821, ISSN: 0098-1354 (July 2022).

SUPPLEMENTAL SOURCES CONSULTED

1. D. Alciatore, *Introduction to Mechatronics and Measurement Systems* (McGraw-Hill Education, New York, ed. 5, 2019), ISBN: 978-1-259-89234-9.
2. T. Bergman, A. Lavine, F. Incropera, D. Dewitt, *Fundamentals of Heat and Mass Transfer*, ed. by L. Ratts, R. Marchione, S. Dumas, T. Kulesa (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, ed. 7, 2011), ISBN: 978-0470-50197-9.
3. R. Budynas, J. Nisbett, *Shigley's Mechanical Engineering Design*, ed. by V. Bradshaw (McGraw-Hill Education, New York, ed. 10, 2015), ISBN: 978-0-07-339820-4.
4. G. Dusinberre, *Journal of Fluids Engineering* **67**, 703–710, ISSN: 0098-2202 (Nov. 1945).
5. A. Haldar, S. Mahadevan, *Probability, Reliability and Statistical Methods in Engineering Design*, ed. by W. Anderson, P. McFadden, G. Aiello (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 2000), ISBN: 978-0-471-33119-3.

6. W. Kays, A. London, *Compact Heat Exchangers* (Krieger Publishing Company, Malabar, ed. 3, 1998), ISBN: 1-57524-060-2.
7. A. London, F. Biancardi, J. Mitchell, *Journal of Engineering for Power* **81**, 433–448, ISSN: 0742-4795 (Oct. 1959).
8. A. London, R. Cima, *Journal of Fluids Engineering* **80**, 1169–1175, ISSN: 0098-2202 (Jan. 1958).
11. N. Nise, *Control Systems Engineering* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 2011), ISBN: 978-0-470-54756-4.
12. E. Oberg, F. Jones, H. Horton, H. Ryffel, C. McCauley, *Machinery's Handbook*, ed. by C. McCauley, L. Brengelman (Industrial Press, Inc., South Norwalk, ed. 31, 2020), ISBN: 978-0-831-13731-1.
14. E. Schlünder, K. Bell, D. Chisholm, G. Hewitt, F. Schmidt, D. Spalding, J. Taborek, A. Žukauskas, V. Gnielinski, *Heat Exchanger Design Handbook*, ed. by B. Brienza, J. Gandy, L. Lackenbach (Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, Washington, 1983), vol. 1, ISBN: 3-18-41-9080-3.
15. L. Tong, Y. Tang, *Boiling Heat Transfer and Two-Phase Flow*, ed. by H. Seltzer, L. Lackenbach (Taylor & Francis, Washington, ed. 2, 1997), ISBN: 1-56032-485-6.
16. C. Westfall, “The founding of CEBAF, 1979 to 1987”, tech. rep. (Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility (TJNAF), Newport News, VA . . . , Feb. 1995).

17. C. Westfall, “Jefferson Lab’s 1985 Switch to Superconducting Accelerator Technology”, tech. rep. (Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility (TJNAF), Newport News, VA . . . , June 1996).
18. C. Westfall, *Physics in Perspective* **16**, 37–68, ISSN: 1422-6944 (Mar. 2014).
19. Y. Çengel, *Introduction to Thermodynamics and Heat Transfer* (McGraw-Hill Education, New York, ed. 2, 1997), ISBN: 978-0-070-11498-2.
20. Y. Çengel, J. Cimbala, *Fluid mechanics: fundamentals and applications* (McGraw-Hill Education, New York, ed. 4, 2017), ISBN: 978-1-259-69653-4.
21. Y. Çengel, J. Cimbala, A. Ghajar, *Fundamentals of Thermal-Fluid Sciences* (McGraw-Hill Education, New York, ed. 6, 2012), ISBN: 978-1-260-59758-5.

APPENDIX A

MATERIAL PROPERTIES

The following tables will include graphed and-or tabulated results of select material properties of Aluminum and Helium within the operating domain of 300 to 2 Kelvin and 20 to 0.125 Atmospheres.

VITA

William Harris Buhrig IV

Department of Mechanical Engineering

Old Dominion University

Norfolk, VA 23529

EDUCATION

2024-2025, M.S., Mechanical Engineering, Old Dominion University

2022-2023, B.S., Mechanical Engineering, Old Dominion University

2020-2022, A.S., Engineering, Tidewater Community College

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2024-2025, Cryogenics Graduate User, Thomas Jefferson National Laboratory

2023, Aerospace Engineering Intern, Calspan Corporation