

Hadronic light-by-light contribution to muon $g - 2$

RBC/UKQCD update 2026

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Outline

- 1 RBC-UKQCD-23 calculation of HLbL
- 2 HLbL master formula
- 3 Improvement on direct, and π^0 -exchange calculations
- 4 Results and summary

Results from previous work

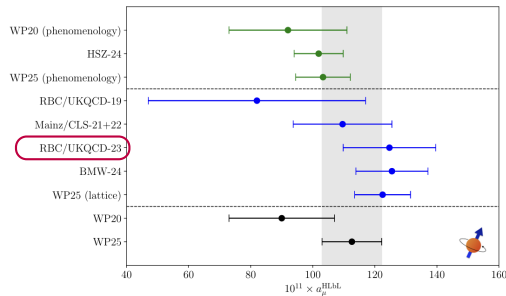
The HLbL contribution calculated with the 48l unitary mass ensemble in [Blum et al., 2023]:

$$a_{\mu}^{\text{HLbL}} \times 10^{10} = 12.47 (1.15)_{\text{stat}} (0.95)_{\text{syst}} [1.49].$$

Significant sources of systematic uncertainty come from a^2 -correction and π^0 -exchange contribution [Blum et al., 2023].

Previous work and improvements

48l light π^0 -exchange	2.00 (0.11) _{stat} (0.28) _{syst} [0.30]
48l light FV-correction	−0.47 (0.11) _{syst}
48l light m_{π} -correction	0.35 (0.07) _{stat} (0.17) _{syst} [0.19]
This talk:	Improved long distance formula
48l light a^2 -correction	0.00 (0.83) _{syst}
This talk:	New calculation on 64l
48l light no-pion	0.31 (0.22) _{stat} (0.31) _{syst} [0.38]



Summary of HLbL calculations.

HLbL master formula

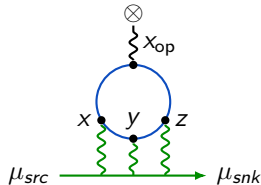
The master formula for the HLbL contribution to muon $g - 2$ in position space is given by [Blum et al., 2017]:

$$a_{\mu}^{\text{HLbL}} = \frac{2me^2}{3} \frac{1}{VT} \sum_{x_{\text{op}}} \sum_{x,y,z} \frac{1}{2} \epsilon_{ijk} (x_{\text{op}} - x_{\text{ref}}(x,y,z))_j (6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}(x_{\text{op}}, x, y, z) \mathcal{M}_{i\rho\sigma\lambda}(x, y, z)$$

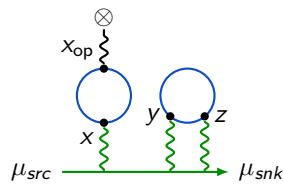
where $\mathcal{H}$ is the hadronic four-point function, $\mathcal{G}$ is the continuum QED weighting function evaluated in infinite volume, and $x_{\text{ref}}(x, z, y)$ is the moment-method reference position.

$$\mathcal{M}_{i\rho\sigma\lambda}(x, y, z) = \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr} \left[\frac{1}{6} i^3 \mathcal{G}_{\rho\sigma\lambda}(x, y, z) \Sigma_i \right]$$

$$6e^4 \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}(x_{\text{op}}, x, y, z) = \langle 0 | T \{ J_k(x_{\text{op}}) J_{\rho}(x) J_{\sigma}(y) J_{\lambda}(z) \} | 0 \rangle$$



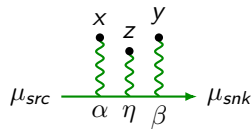
Connected diagram



Leading order disconnected diagram

QED weighting function

$$\mathcal{M}_{i\rho\sigma\lambda}(x, y, z) = \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr} \left[\frac{1}{6} i^3 \mathcal{G}_{\rho\sigma\lambda}(x, y, z) \Sigma_i \right]$$



The QED weighting function $\mathcal{G}$ can be expressed in terms of muon and photon propagators:

$$\mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}(y, z, x) = \lim_{\substack{t_{\text{src}} \rightarrow -\infty \\ t_{\text{snk}} \rightarrow \infty}} e^{m_\mu(t_{\text{snk}} - t_{\text{src}})} \int_{\alpha, \beta, \eta, x_{\text{snk}}, x_{\text{src}}} G(x, \alpha) G(y, \beta) G(z, \eta) S_\mu(x_{\text{snk}}, \beta) i\gamma_\sigma S_\mu(\beta, \eta) i\gamma_\kappa S_\mu(\eta, \alpha) i\gamma_\rho S_\mu(\alpha, x_{\text{src}})$$

Remove the infrared divergence:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(y, z, x) &= \frac{1}{2} \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}(y, z, x) \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{2} [\mathfrak{G}_{\rho\kappa\sigma}(x, z, y)]^\dagger \end{aligned}$$

Subtraction scheme:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(2)}(y, z, x) &= \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(y, z, x) \\ &\quad - \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(z, z, x) - \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(y, z, z) \end{aligned}$$

$$i^3 \mathcal{G}_{\rho\sigma\kappa}(x, y, z) = \mathfrak{G}_{\rho\sigma\kappa}^{(2)}(x, y, z) + [\text{all perms}]$$

Comparison with the Mainz subtraction scheme

Due to the current conservation in $\mathcal{H}$ we can allow several forms of subtraction schemes to reduce the discretization error:

RBC/UKQCD subtraction [Blum et al., 2017]

$$\mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(2)}(y, z, x) = \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(y, z, x) - \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(z, z, x) - \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(y, z, z)$$

Mainz subtraction [Asmussen et al., 2023; Chao et al., 2021]

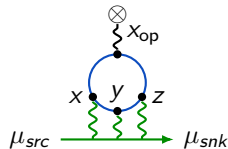
$$\begin{aligned}\mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(\text{Mainz})}(y, z, x) &= \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(y, z, x) \\ &\quad - \partial_\sigma^y \left((y-x)_\alpha e^{-\Lambda m_\mu^2 (y-x)^2/2} \right) \mathfrak{G}_{\alpha\kappa\rho}^{(1)}(x, z, x) \\ &\quad - \partial_\kappa^z \left((z-x)_\alpha e^{-\Lambda m_\mu^2 (z-x)^2/2} \right) \mathfrak{G}_{\sigma\alpha\rho}^{(1)}(y, x, x)\end{aligned}$$

note that while a_μ^{HLbL} is independent of the subtraction scheme, the integrands and partial sums are *not directly comparable*.

Long distance + short distance calculations

We define a cutoff function $R_{\max}$:

$$R_{\max} = \max(|x - y|, |x - z|, |y - z|).$$



The total can be written as the sum of all contributions from two regions:

$$a_{\mu}^{\text{HLbL}} = a_{\mu}(R_{\max} < R_{\max}^{\text{cut}}) + a_{\mu}(R_{\max} > R_{\max}^{\text{cut}})$$

- The first term is the partial sum of the a_{μ}^{HLbL} summand over vertex coordinates within the range $0 \leq R_{\max} < R_{\max}^{\text{cut}}$; the second term is the reverse partial sum with respect to the same cutoff.
- $R_{\max}^{\text{cut}}$ needs to be large enough so that $a_{\mu}(R_{\max} > R_{\max}^{\text{cut}}) \approx a_{\mu}^{\pi^0\text{-exchange}}$. Our previous work [Blum et al., 2023] used $R_{\max}^{\text{cut}} = 4.0$ fm in the reported final result.

Long distance + short distance calculations

$$a_{\mu}^{\text{HLbL}} = a_{\mu}(R_{\text{max}} < R_{\text{max}}^{\text{cut}}) + a_{\mu}(R_{\text{max}} > R_{\text{max}}^{\text{cut}})$$

Direct and π^0 -exchange (indirect) calculations

$$a_{\mu}(R_{\text{max}} < R_{\text{max}}^{\text{cut}})$$

- Direct calculation using two point source propagators (~ 2000 propagators per configuration).
- Field-sparsening is employed to reduce contraction costs.

$$a_{\mu}(R_{\text{max}} > R_{\text{max}}^{\text{cut}})$$

- Long distance region is dominated by the π^0 -exchange contribution.
- Indirect calculation using π^0 transition form factors (TFF).

Long-distance π^0 exchange contribution

In the long-distance region where $|z - y| \ll \min(|x - z|, |x - y|)$, the largest contribution to $\mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}$ comes from the π^0 intermediate state:

$$\mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}(x_{\text{op}}, x, y, z) \approx \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0}(x_{\text{op}}, x, y, z),$$
$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0}(x_{\text{op}}, x, y, z) = \int \frac{d^3 q}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2E_{\pi, \vec{q}}} \langle 0 | T \{ J_k(x_{\text{op}}) J_\rho(x) \} | \pi_{\vec{q}}^0 \rangle \langle \pi_{\vec{q}}^0 | T \{ J_\sigma(y) J_\lambda(z) \} | 0 \rangle$$

The π^0 transition form factor is given by:

$$\tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{k\rho}(\tilde{x}, q) = \langle 0 | T \{ J_k(\frac{\tilde{x}}{2}) J_\rho(-\frac{\tilde{x}}{2}) \} | \pi_{\vec{q}}^0 \rangle = \epsilon_{k\rho\alpha\beta} \tilde{x}_\alpha q_\beta \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}(\tilde{x}^2, q \cdot \tilde{x})$$

Long-distance π^0 exchange contribution

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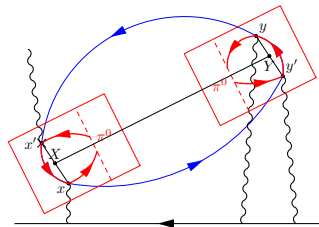
$\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ can then be expressed in terms of products of form factors and scalar pion propagator:

$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0}(x', x, y', y) = \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{k\rho}(\tilde{x}, -i\frac{\partial}{\partial X}) \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\sigma\lambda}(\tilde{y}, -i\frac{\partial}{\partial Y}) D_{\pi^0}(|R_\pi|)$$

$$X = \frac{x' + x}{2}, \quad Y = \frac{y' + y}{2}$$

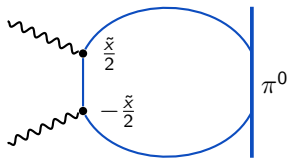
$$R_\pi = X - Y$$

$$\tilde{x} = x' - x, \quad \tilde{y} = y' - y$$

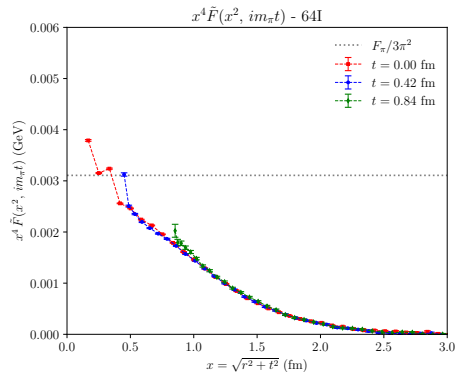


Long-distance π^0 exchange contribution

$$\tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{k\rho}(x, q) = \langle 0 | T \{ J_k(\frac{x}{2}) J_\rho(-\frac{x}{2}) \} | \pi_q^0 \rangle = \epsilon_{k\rho\alpha\beta} x_\alpha q_\beta \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}(x^2, q \cdot x)$$



$\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ transition form factor



$\tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}(x^2, q \cdot x)$ has a weak dependence on $q \cdot x$.

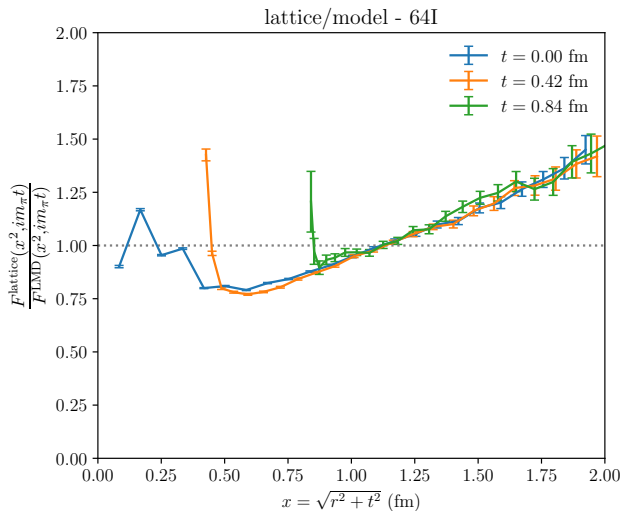
Long-distance π^0 exchange contribution

- Ratio of the lattice scalar form factor to the LMD model form factor.

$$F^{\text{VMD}} = \frac{m_V^2}{q_1^2 + m_V^2} \frac{m_V^2}{q_2^2 + m_V^2}$$

$$F^{\text{TE}} = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{m_V^2}{q_1^2 + m_V^2} + \frac{m_V^2}{q_2^2 + m_V^2} \right)$$

$$F^{\text{LMD}} = F^{\text{VMD}} + \frac{8\pi^2 F_\pi^2}{3m_V^2} (F^{\text{TE}} - F^{\text{VMD}})$$



Long-distance π^0 exchange contribution

$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0}(x', x, y', y) = \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{k\rho}(\tilde{x}, -i\frac{\partial}{\partial X}) \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\sigma\lambda}(\tilde{y}, -i\frac{\partial}{\partial Y}) D_{\pi^0}(|R_\pi|)$$

For leading order in $1/|R_\pi|$, the derivative with respect to the propagator can be written as:

$$-i\frac{\partial}{\partial X^\beta} D_\pi(|X - Y|) \approx \left(im_\pi \frac{(X-Y)_\beta}{|X-Y|} \right) D_{\pi^0}(|X - Y|).$$

Two formulations of $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$

Previous work (2023): derivative approximation on the entire $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$

$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0(RBC-UKQCD23)}(x', x, y', y) = \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{k\rho}(\tilde{x}, im_\pi \hat{R}_\pi) \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\sigma\lambda}(\tilde{y}, -im_\pi \hat{R}_\pi) D_{\pi^0}(|R_\pi|)$$

Improved (this work): derivative approximation only on $\tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}(\tilde{x}^2, -i\frac{\partial}{\partial X})$

$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0(new)}(x', x, y', y) \approx \epsilon_{k\rho\alpha\beta} \epsilon_{\sigma\lambda\gamma\zeta} \tilde{x}_\alpha \tilde{y}_\gamma \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}^E(\tilde{x}^2, im_\pi \hat{R}_\pi \cdot \tilde{x}) \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}^E(\tilde{y}^2, -im_\pi \hat{R}_\pi \cdot \tilde{y}) \\ \times \left(-i\frac{\partial}{\partial X^\beta} \right) \left(-i\frac{\partial}{\partial Y^\zeta} \right) D_{\pi^0}(|R_\pi|)$$

Long-distance π^0 exchange contribution

$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0}(x', x, y', y) = \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{k\rho}(\tilde{x}, -i\frac{\partial}{\partial X}) \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\sigma\lambda}(\tilde{y}, -i\frac{\partial}{\partial Y}) D_{\pi^0}(|R_\pi|)$$

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$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\pi^0(\text{new})}(x', x, y', y) \approx \epsilon_{k\rho\alpha\beta} \epsilon_{\sigma\lambda\gamma\zeta} \tilde{x}_\alpha \tilde{y}_\gamma \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}^E(\tilde{x}^2, im_\pi \hat{R}_\pi \cdot \tilde{x}) \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{\pi^0\gamma\gamma}^E(\tilde{y}^2, -im_\pi \hat{R}_\pi \cdot \tilde{y}) \\ \times \left(-i\frac{\partial}{\partial X^\beta} \right) \left(-i\frac{\partial}{\partial Y^\zeta} \right) D_{\pi^0}(|R_\pi|)$$

Calculation details

Using approximations for $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ described in the previous slide, we perform Monte Carlo importance sampling to evaluate:

$$a_{\mu}^{\pi^0\text{-exch}} = \frac{1}{VT} \sum_{x', x, y', y} I^{\pi^0\text{-exchange}}(x', x, y', y)$$

using the following **weighting function**:

$$w(x', x, y', y) = \frac{1}{|x' - x|^4 + \tilde{a}^2} \frac{1}{|y' - y|^4 + \tilde{b}^2} \frac{135 \text{ MeV } K_1(135 \text{ MeV } R_{\pi})}{4\pi^2 R_{\pi}}$$

π^0 propagation distance: $R_{\pi} = \left| \frac{x'+x}{2} - \frac{y'+y}{2} \right|, \quad (\tilde{a} = \tilde{b} = 30.0)$

	48l	64l
m_{π} (MeV)	139	139
m_K (MeV)	499	508
a^{-1} (GeV)	1.730	2.359
a (fm)	0.114	0.084
L (fm)	5.47	5.35
# configs	113	119

Lattice parameters for 48l and 64l ensembles

Long-distance π^0 -exchange contribution - $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ (2023) vs $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ (improved)

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

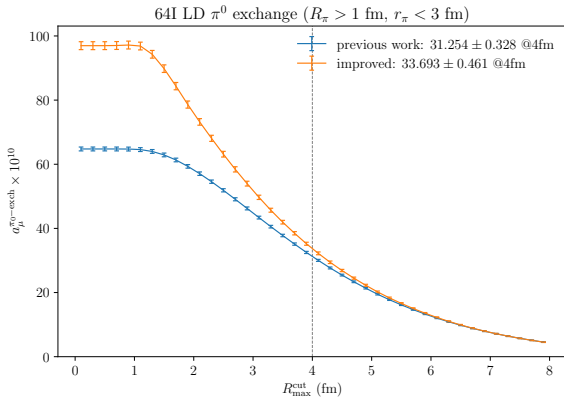
- Cut functions for the reverse partial sum

$$R_{\max} = \max(|x - y|, |x - z|, |y - z|)$$

$$r_{\pi} = \max(|x_{\text{op}} - x|, |y - z|)$$

$$R_{\pi} = \left| \frac{x_{\text{op}} + x}{2} - \frac{y + z}{2} \right|$$

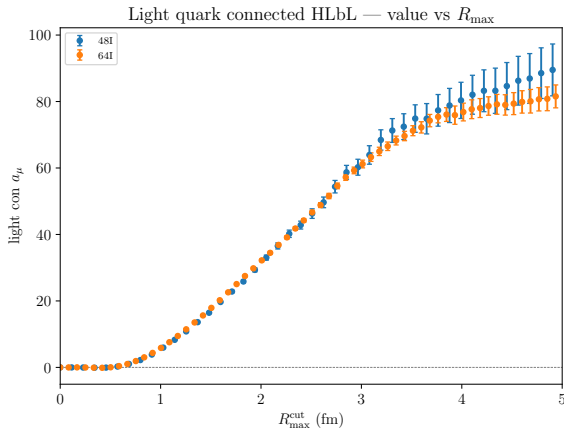
- The relative uncertainty between previous work and this work at $R_{\max}^{\text{cut}} = 4.0$ fm is $\sim 7.8\%$, which is within the 14% estimated systematic error of the π^0 -exchange calculation in [Blum et al., 2023].



Light quark connected - direct calculation

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

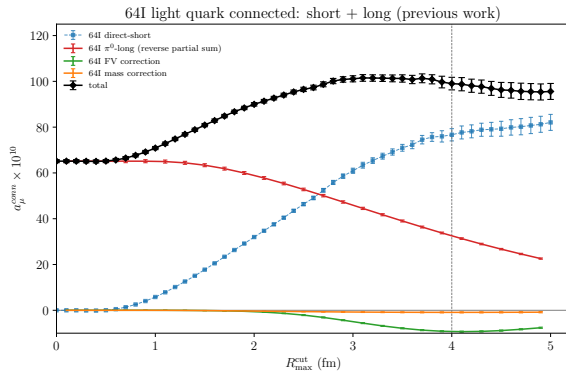
- Light quark contributions are evaluated with unitary $\pi^0 = 139$ MeV mass ensembles.
- The $R_{\text{max}}^{\text{cut}}$ in the direct, partial sum calculation is the same cutoff variable as in the reverse partial sum calculation.



64l total light quark connected - $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ (2023)

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

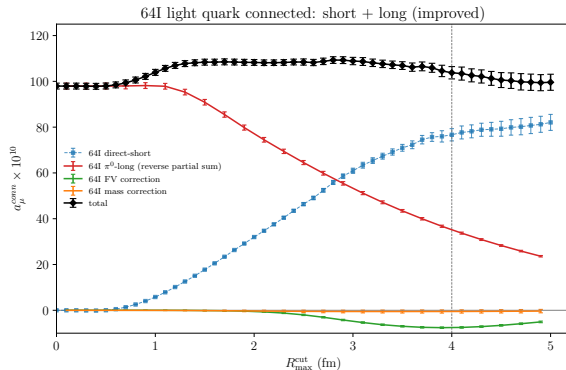
- Light quark contributions are evaluated with unitary $\pi^0 = 139$ MeV mass ensembles.
- Displayed curves are partial sums with respect to $R_{\max}^{\text{cut}}$, except for 64l long distance, which is a reverse partial sum.
- In this plot, the long distance calculation is performed using RBC/UKQCD-23 formula for $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$.



64l total light quark connected - $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ (improved)

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

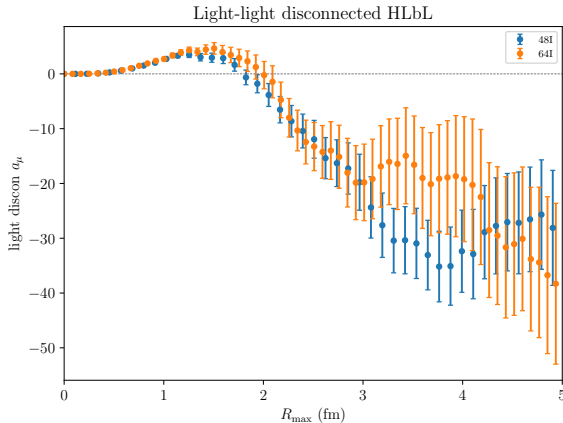
- Compared to $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ (2023), the total plateaus at earlier at $R_{\max}^{\text{cut}} \sim 1.5$ fm.
- $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ (improved) has less systematic uncertainty compared to $\mathcal{H}^{\pi^0}$ (2023), due to the former using fewer derivative approximations.
- Earlier plateau allows us to consider lower $R_{\max}^{\text{cut}}$ cutoffs to reduce statistical uncertainty



Light quark disconnected (unitary $\pi^0 = 139$ MeV mass ensembles)

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

- Large statistical error in the non-negligible long-distance tail of the light quark disconnected diagram.
- Instead of adding the noisy disconnected contribution at long-distance $R_{\text{max}}^{\text{cut}}$, we use the hybrid approach.



Results: hybrid approach

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

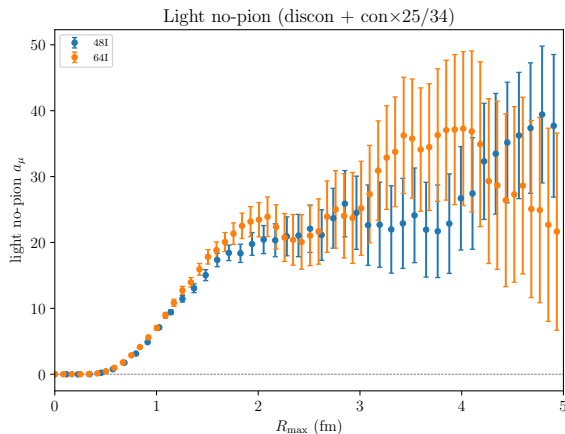
- Long-distance discon/con ratio [Bijnens and Relefors, 2016]:

$$\lim_{R \rightarrow \infty} \frac{a_{\mu}^{\text{discon}}(R_{\text{max}} > R)}{a_{\mu}^{\text{con}}(R_{\text{max}} > R)} = -\frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{(e_u^2 + e_d^2)^2}{e_u^4 + e_d^4} = -\frac{25}{34}$$

- Hybrid approach:

$$a_{\mu}^{\text{no-pion}} = a_{\mu}^{\text{discon}} + \frac{25}{34} a_{\mu}^{\text{con}},$$
$$a_{\mu}^{\text{total}} = a_{\mu}^{\text{no-pion}} + \frac{9}{34} a_{\mu}^{\text{con}}.$$

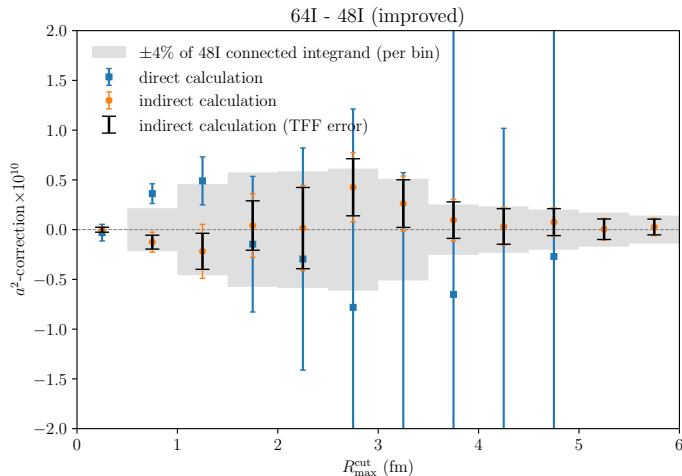
- In our previous work we truncated $a_{\mu}^{\text{no-pion}}$ at an earlier plateau value, ~ 2.5 fm, and add it to less noisy connected contributions at larger $R_{\text{max}}^{\text{cut}}$



Light quark connected: lattice-spacing effects

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

- The plot compares binned a^2 -correction between direct and π^0 -long distance calculations.
- Recall that we estimated $\pm 8\%$ systematic error in our previous work. [Blum et al., 2023].
- 8% correction to 48l corresponds to 4% difference between 48l and 64l
- Shaded error-band is $\pm 4\%$ of the 48l connected integrant.

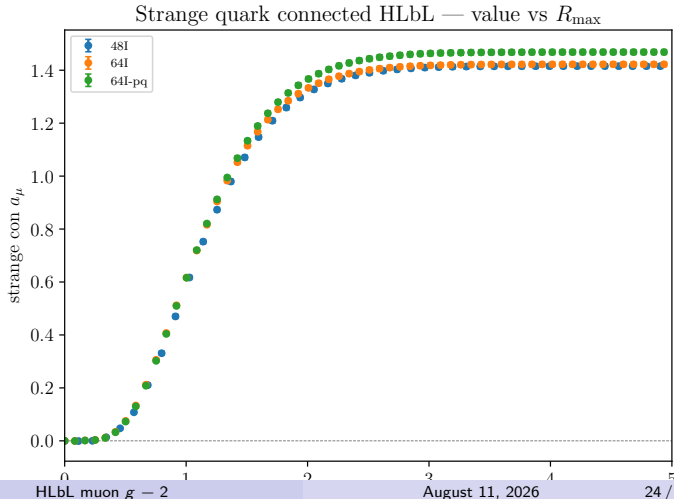


Strange quark connected

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

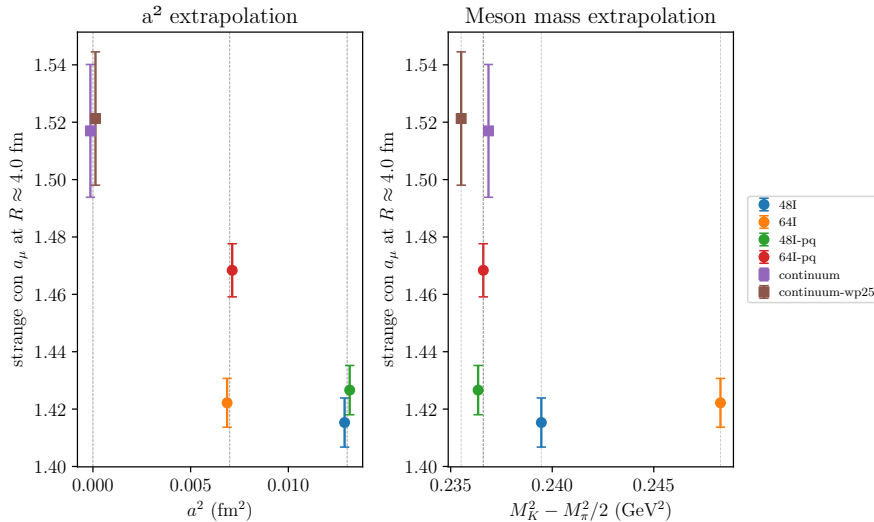
- The direct calculation of the strange quark connected contribution for the 48l, 64l and 64l-pq ensembles.
- Pion and kaon masses of the plotted ensembles:

	m_{π^0} (MeV)	m_K (MeV)
48l	139	499
64l	139	508
64l-pq	135	496



Strange quark connected: continuum limit

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results



Summary

Significant sources of systematic uncertainty come from a^2 -correction and π^0 -exchange contribution [Blum et al., 2023]

48l light π^0 -exchange ($R_{\text{max}} > 4 \text{ fm}$)	$2.00 (0.11)_{\text{stat}}(0.28)_{\text{syst}} [0.30]$
this talk:	Improved long distance formula ✓
48l light a^2 -correction	$0.00 (0.83)_{\text{syst}}$
this talk:	New calculation on 64l ✓

Future directions:

- Evaluate the charged pion contribution to HLbL to help improve the long distance calculation.
- Perform continuum limit extrapolation for the direct calculation; finalize estimates for π^0 mass and FV corrections; unblind the results.

Thank you!

References I

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References II



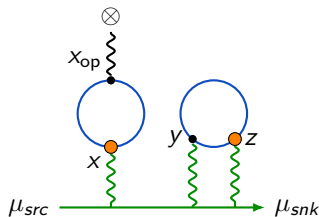
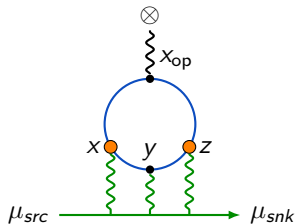
Chao, En-Hung et al. [2021]. “Hadronic light-by-light contribution to $(g - 2)_\mu$ from lattice QCD: a complete calculation”. In: *Eur. Phys. J. C* 81.7, p. 651. DOI: 10.1140/epjc/s10052-021-09455-4. arXiv: 2104.02632 [hep-lat].

Short-distance calculations

$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\text{con-no-perm}}(x_{\text{op}}, x, y, z) = -6 \left\langle \text{Re} \sum_{q=u,d,s} e_q^4 \text{Tr} [\gamma_k S_q(x_{\text{op}}, x) \gamma_\rho S_q(x, z) \gamma_\lambda S_q(z, y) \gamma_\sigma S_q(y, x_{\text{op}})] \right\rangle$$

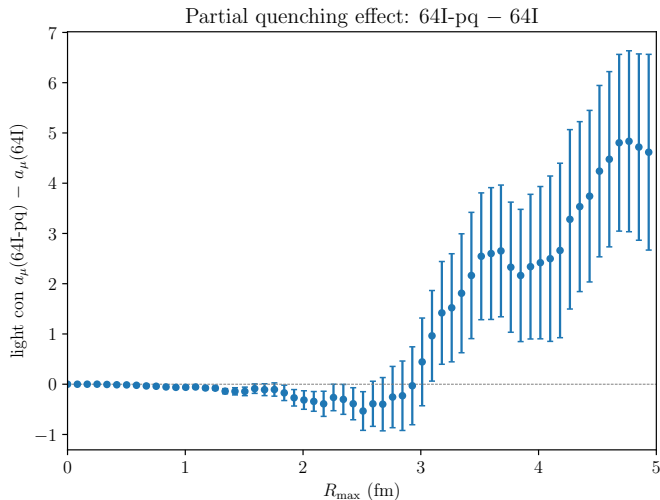
$$(6e^4) \mathcal{H}_{k\rho\sigma\lambda}^{\text{discon-no-perm}}(x_{\text{op}}, x, y, z) = 3 \left\langle \Pi_{k\rho}(x_{\text{op}}, x) (\Pi_{\lambda\sigma}(z, y) - \langle \Pi_{\lambda\sigma}(z, y) \rangle) \right\rangle$$

$$\Pi_{\rho\sigma}(x, y) \equiv \sum_q e_q^2 \text{Tr} [\gamma_\rho S_q(x, y) \gamma_\sigma S_q(y, x)]$$



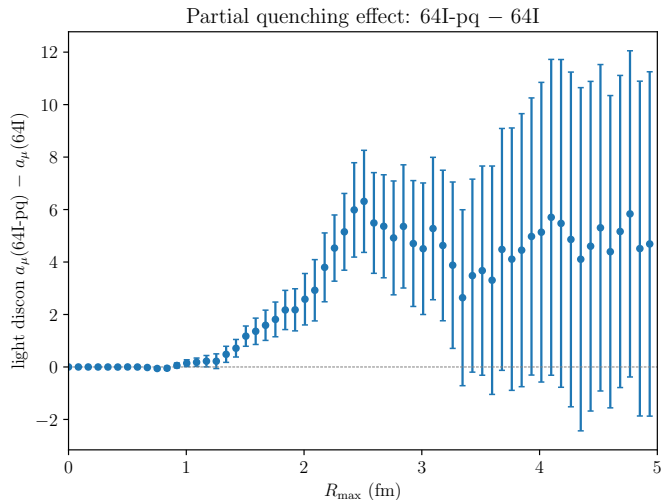
Light quark connected: π^0 mass correction

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results



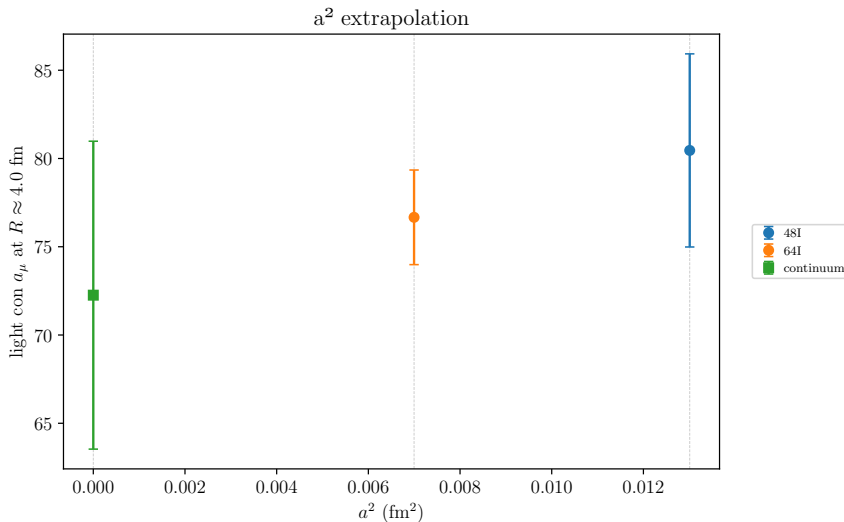
Light quark disconnected: π^0 mass correction

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results



Light quark connected: continuum limit

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results



Light quark disconnected: continuum limit

BLINDED, PRELIMINARY results

