



ICHEP 2026
NATAL | BRAZIL

BSM Phenomenology in the $t\bar{t}hh$ channel

Ricardo D'Elia Matheus

RDM, Oscar J.P. Éboli, Rafiqul Rahaman and Aurore Savoy Navarro
Exploring Higgs EFT in $t\bar{t}hh$ at high luminosity LHC
JHEP 07 (2026) 156 [arXiv: 2602.03842]



IFT - UNESP
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$t\bar{t}hh$ the forgotten channel

“Early” (2014) works^[1,2,3]:

$$\sigma(pp \rightarrow hh) = 34.8 \text{ fb} @14\text{TeV}^{[2]}$$

$$\sigma(pp \rightarrow t\bar{t}hh) = 0.981 \text{ fb} @14\text{TeV}^{[2]}$$

λh^3

$$\lambda \gtrsim \lambda_{SM}$$

$$\sigma(pp \rightarrow hh) < \sigma_{SM}(pp \rightarrow hh)$$

$$\sigma(pp \rightarrow t\bar{t}hh) > \sigma_{SM}(pp \rightarrow t\bar{t}hh)$$

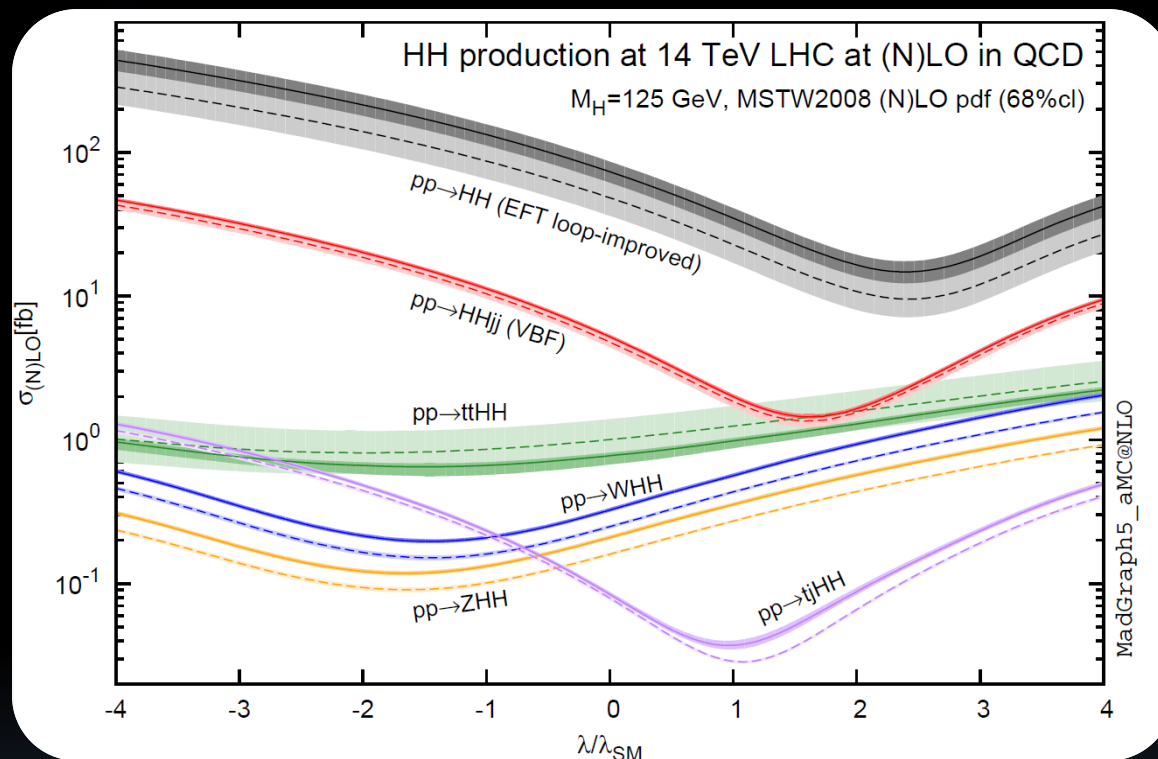
[1] C. Englert, F. Krauss, M. Spannowsky and J. Thompson, *Di-Higgs phenomenology in $t\bar{t}hh$: The forgotten channel*, *Phys. Lett. B* 743 (2015) 93

[2] R. Frederix et al., *Higgs pair production at the LHC with NLO and parton-shower effects*, *Phys. Lett. B* 732 (2014) 142 [arXiv:1401.7340]

[3] T. Liu and H. Zhang, *Measuring Di-Higgs Physics via the $t\bar{t}hh \rightarrow t\bar{t}bbbb$ Channel*, arXiv:1410.1855

$t\bar{t}hh$ the forgotten channel

“Early” (2014) works^[1,2,3]:



[2]

LO $\leftrightarrow$ Lighter, dashed

NLO $\leftrightarrow$ Darker, continuous

Initial impression: Considering cleaner backgrounds, $t\bar{t}hh$ could be competitive with hh in determining λ ! (Specially for $\lambda > \lambda_{SM}$)^[1,3]

Caveat: reducible backgrounds underestimated! (Specifically: $t\bar{t}+jets$ and $t\bar{t}2b+jets$)

[1] C. Englert, F. Krauss, M. Spannowsky and J. Thompson, *Di-Higgs phenomenology in $t\bar{t}hh$: The forgotten channel*, Phys. Lett. B 743 (2015) 93

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$t\bar{t}hh$ the forgotten channel

Recent studies^[4,5]: prospects for HL-LHC, @14 TeV @3000 fb⁻¹

CMS^[4]: $\mu_{t\bar{t}hh} < 3.14^{+1.27}_{-0.9}$ @95% C.L. (roughly: $S/\sqrt{B} = 0.6\sigma$)

ATLAS^[5]: $S/\sqrt{B} = 0.35\sigma$

To be contrasted with hh production^[6]: $S/\sqrt{B} = 4.5\sigma$ (per collaboration, similar conditions as above)

$0.6 \lesssim \kappa_\lambda \lesssim 1.5$ (much stronger than the constraints from $t\bar{t}hh$, as I'll show later)

Caveat: much more attention given to hh , improvements in $t\bar{t}hh$ possible (reducible backgrounds!)

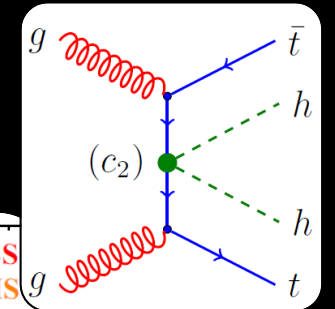
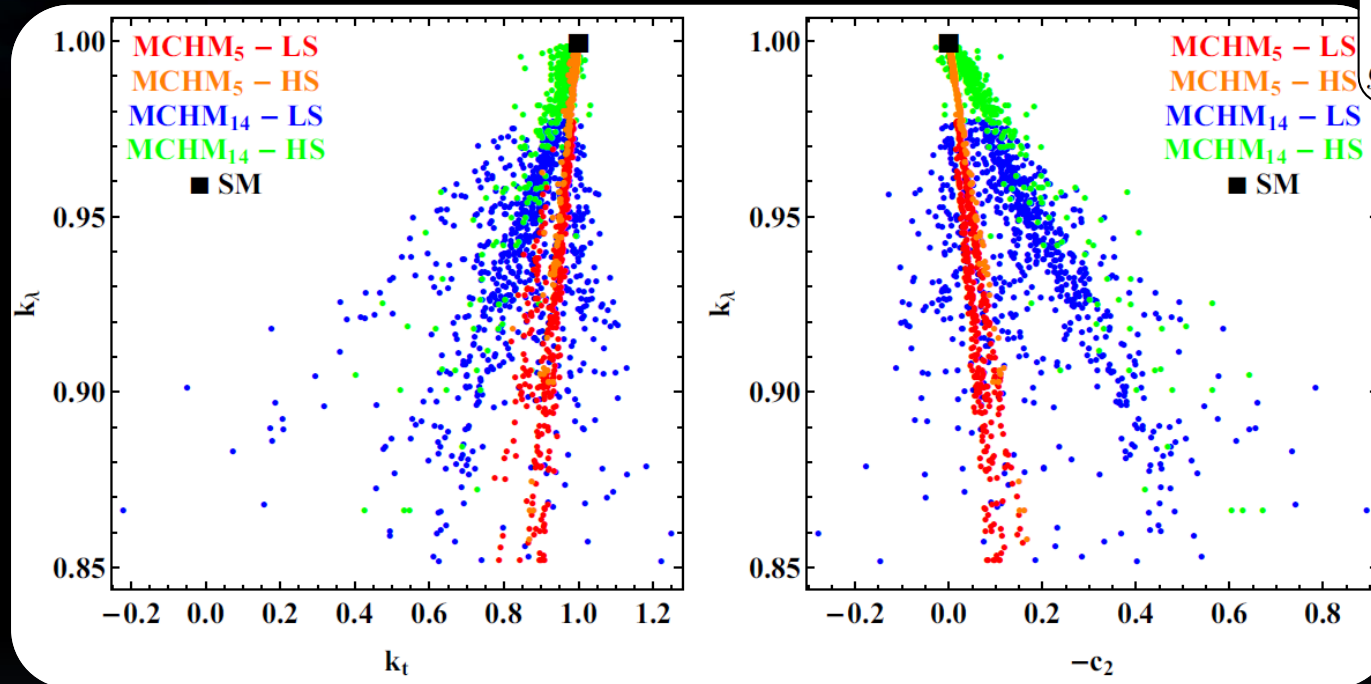
[4] CMS collaboration, Search for the nonresonant $t\bar{t}HH$ production in the semileptonic decay of the top pair and the Higgs pair decay into b quarks at the HL-LHC, CMS-PAS-FTR-21-010 (2022)

[5] ATLAS collaboration, Prospects for Observing $t\bar{t}HH$ Production with the ATLAS Experiment at the HL-LHC, ATL-PHYS-PUB-2016-023 (2016)

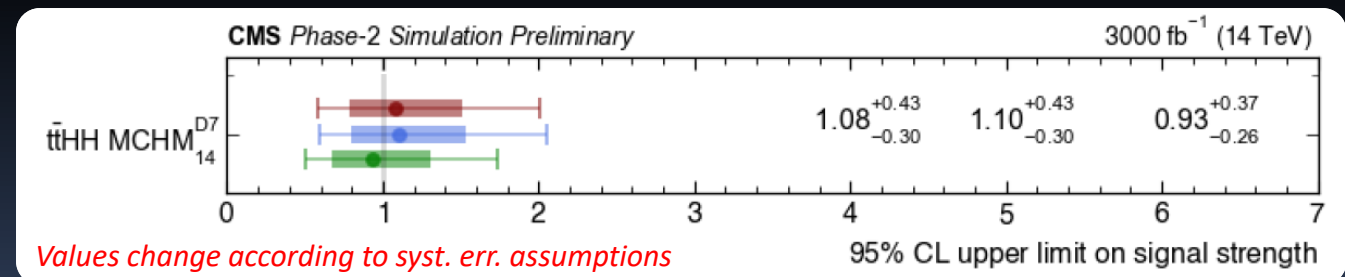
[6] ATLAS and CMS Collaborations, Highlights of the HL-LHC physics projections by ATLAS and CMS, ATL-PHYS-PUB-2025-018, CMS-HIG-25-002, arXiv:2504.00672

Complementarity of Signals

Non resonant regime of the MCHM (SMEFT) [7]:



Benchmark proposed in [7] (MCHM₁₄) was used in [4] and shown to be in reach of the HL-LHC (non-resonantly):



[4] CMS collaboration, Search for the nonresonant ttHH production in the semileptonic decay of the top pair and the Higgs pair decay into b quarks at the HL-LHC, CMS-PAS-FTR-21-010 (2022)

[7] C. Bautista, L. de Lima, R. D. M., E. Pontón, L. A. F. do Prado, A. Savoy-Navarro, Probing the top-Higgs sector with composite Higgs models at present and future hadron colliders, JHEP 03 (2021) 049

SMEFT vs HEFT

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{HEFT}} = -m_t \left(c_t \frac{h}{v} + c_{tt} \frac{h^2}{v^2} \right) \bar{t} t - c_{hhh} \frac{m_h^2}{2v} h^3 + \frac{\alpha_s}{8\pi} \left(c_{ggh} \frac{h}{v} + c_{gghh} \frac{h^2}{v^2} \right) G_{\mu\nu}^a G^{a,\mu\nu}.$$

Related in SMEFT:

- ggh & $gghh$
- tth & $tthh$
- hhh & $hhhh$

HEFT	Warsaw
c_{hhh}	$1 - 2 \frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} \frac{v^2}{m_h^2} C_H + 3 \frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} C_{H,\text{kin}}$
c_t	$1 + \frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} C_{H,\text{kin}} - \frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} \frac{v}{\sqrt{2}m_t} C_{uH}$
c_{tt}	$-\frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} \frac{3v}{2\sqrt{2}m_t} C_{uH} + \frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} C_{H,\text{kin}}$
c_{ggh}	$\frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} \frac{8\pi}{\alpha_s} C_{HG}$
c_{gghh}	$\frac{v^2}{\Lambda^2} \frac{4\pi}{\alpha_s} C_{HG}$

Multiple channels needed to break blind directions and **test the SMEFT** hypothesis!

Extended HEFT Space

$t\bar{t}hh$ - Relevant part of the HEFT Lagrangian:

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{L}_{\text{heft}} = & \frac{1}{2}\partial_\mu h \partial^\mu h - \frac{1}{2}m_h^2 h^2 - (1 + \delta\kappa_\lambda)\lambda_{SM}vh^3 - \frac{m_t}{v} \left((1 + \delta\kappa_t)h + \frac{c_2}{v}hh \right) (\bar{t}_L t_R + \text{h.c.}) \\ & + \frac{\alpha_s}{12\pi v} \left(c_g h - \frac{c_{2g}}{2v}hh \right) G_{\mu\nu}^a G^{a\mu\nu} + \left\{ i\frac{g_s}{v^2} (\bar{t}\sigma^{\mu\nu}T^a t_R) G_{\mu\nu}^a h + \text{h.c.} \right\} c_{tg} \\ & + \left\{ i\frac{g_s}{v^3} (\bar{t}\sigma^{\mu\nu}T^a t_R) G_{\mu\nu}^a hh + \text{h.c.} \right\} c_{tg2}\end{aligned}$$

- In this parametrization $\delta\kappa = c = 0$ is the SM.

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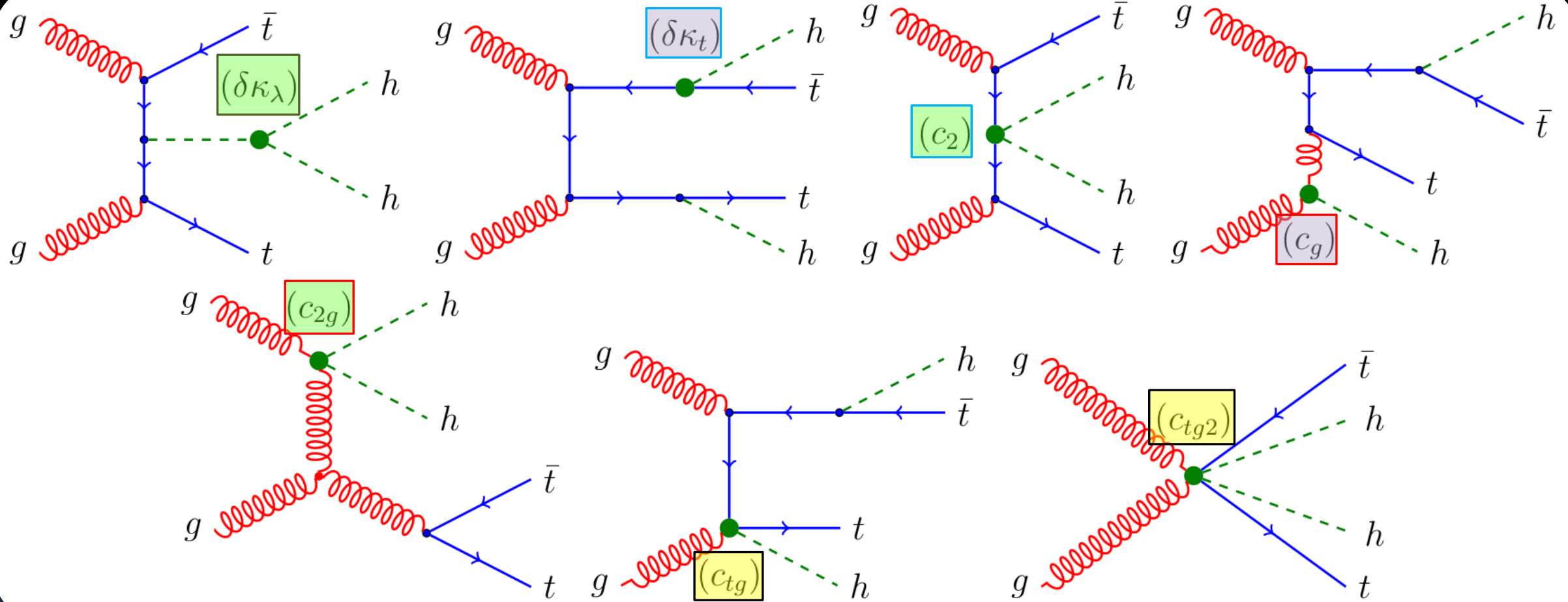
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- In this parametrization $\delta\kappa = c = 0$ is the SM.
- $\delta\kappa_\lambda$, $\delta\kappa_t$, c_2 , c_g and c_{2g} get limits from other channels (notably hh and $t\bar{t}h$). We disregard variations in c_g and $\delta\kappa_t$

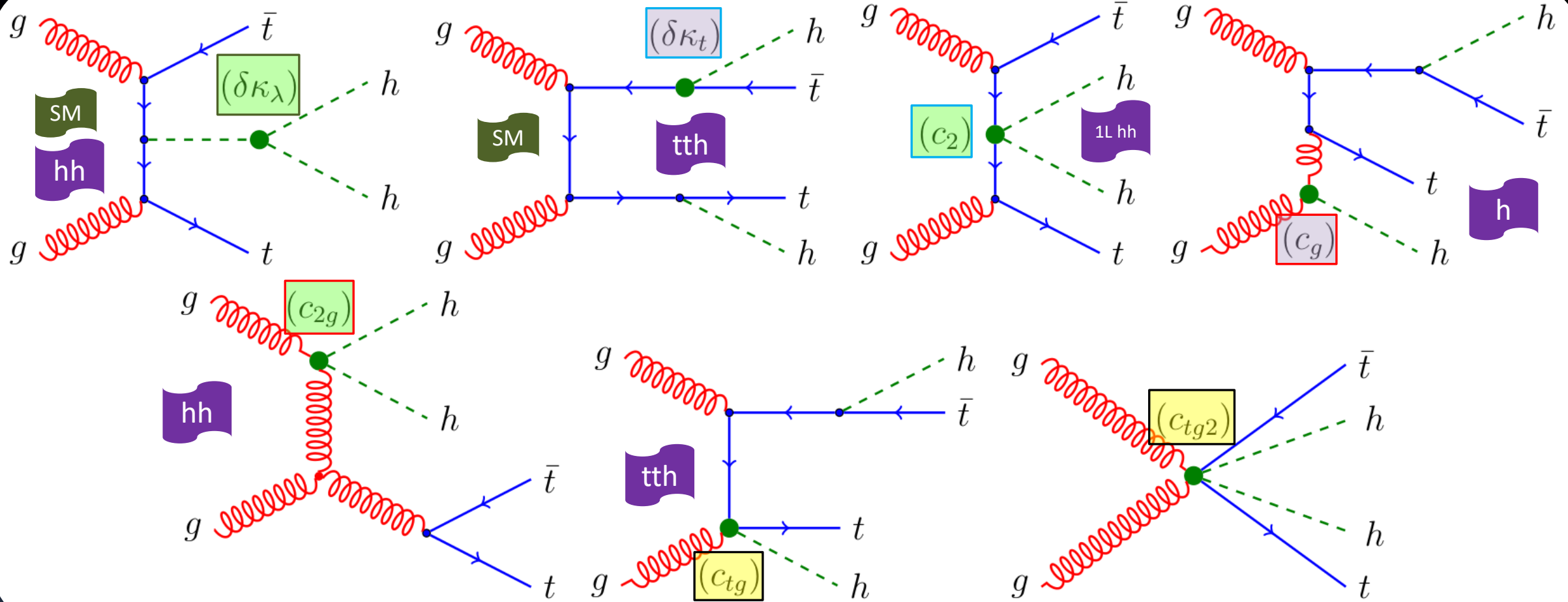
[8] $\delta\kappa_t \in [-0.23, 0.03]$
 $c_g \in [-0.08, 0.15]$

- We explored $\delta\kappa_\lambda$, c_2 , c_{2g} , c_{tg} and c_{tg2} in the $t\bar{t}hh$ and $t\bar{t}h$ channel.

HEFT couplings in the $t\bar{t}hh$ channel



HEFT couplings in the $t\bar{t}hh$ channel



Including
Br[h → bb]
Br[Z → bb]

$t\bar{t}hh$ in the Standard Model

Process	σ [fb]	4J3B (basic-selection)		5J4B		6J5B	
		SL	DL	SL	DL	SL	DL
$t\bar{t}hh$ (<i>S</i>)	0.33	1.54×10^2	1.5×10^1	8.7×10^1	7	3.2×10^1	2
$t\bar{t}h$	287.9	7.33×10^4	5×10^3	1.99×10^4	9.34×10^2	2.63×10^3	8.1×10^1
$t\bar{t}hZ$	0.14	6.4×10^1	6	3.5×10^1	3	1.3×10^1	1
$t\bar{t}Z$	106.6	2.3×10^4	1.85×10^3	5.93×10^3	3.44×10^2	7.35×10^2	2.7×10^1
$t\bar{t}VV$	10.38	1.15×10^3	1.67×10^2	1.98×10^2	2×10^1	2.5×10^1	2
$t\bar{t}t\bar{t}$	11.83	5.7×10^3	1.08×10^3	2.32×10^3	3.89×10^2	5.86×10^2	7.9×10^1
$t\bar{t} + 4b$	373.3	6.83×10^4	5.44×10^3	2.1×10^4	1.45×10^3	4.51×10^3	2.58×10^2
$t\bar{t} + 2b2c$	105.5	1.9×10^4	1.66×10^3	5.49×10^3	4.09×10^2	1.07×10^3	6.6×10^1
$t\bar{t}V + 2b$	8.22	1.94×10^3	1.86×10^2	6.76×10^2	5.3×10^1	1.64×10^2	1.1×10^1
$t\bar{t}h + 2b$	9.38	3.35×10^3	3.1×10^2	1.48×10^3	1.14×10^2	4.35×10^2	2.7×10^1
$t\bar{t} + 4c$	7.81	1.07×10^3	9.3×10^1	2.54×10^2	1.9×10^1	4×10^1	2
$t\bar{t} + 2b$	1.67×10^4	1.68×10^6	1.18×10^5	3.22×10^5	1.77×10^4	3.93×10^4	1.8×10^3
$t\bar{t} + \text{jets}$	6.11×10^5	1.2×10^7	4.66×10^5	8.68×10^5	2.87×10^4	6.02×10^4	1.7×10^3
Tot. BKG (<i>B</i>)	6.29×10^5	1.4×10^7	5.99×10^5	1.25×10^6	5.01×10^4	1.1×10^5	4.06×10^3

MG/ME > Pythia
> Delphes

@14 TeV
@3000 fb⁻¹

Including
Br[h → bb]
Br[Z → bb]

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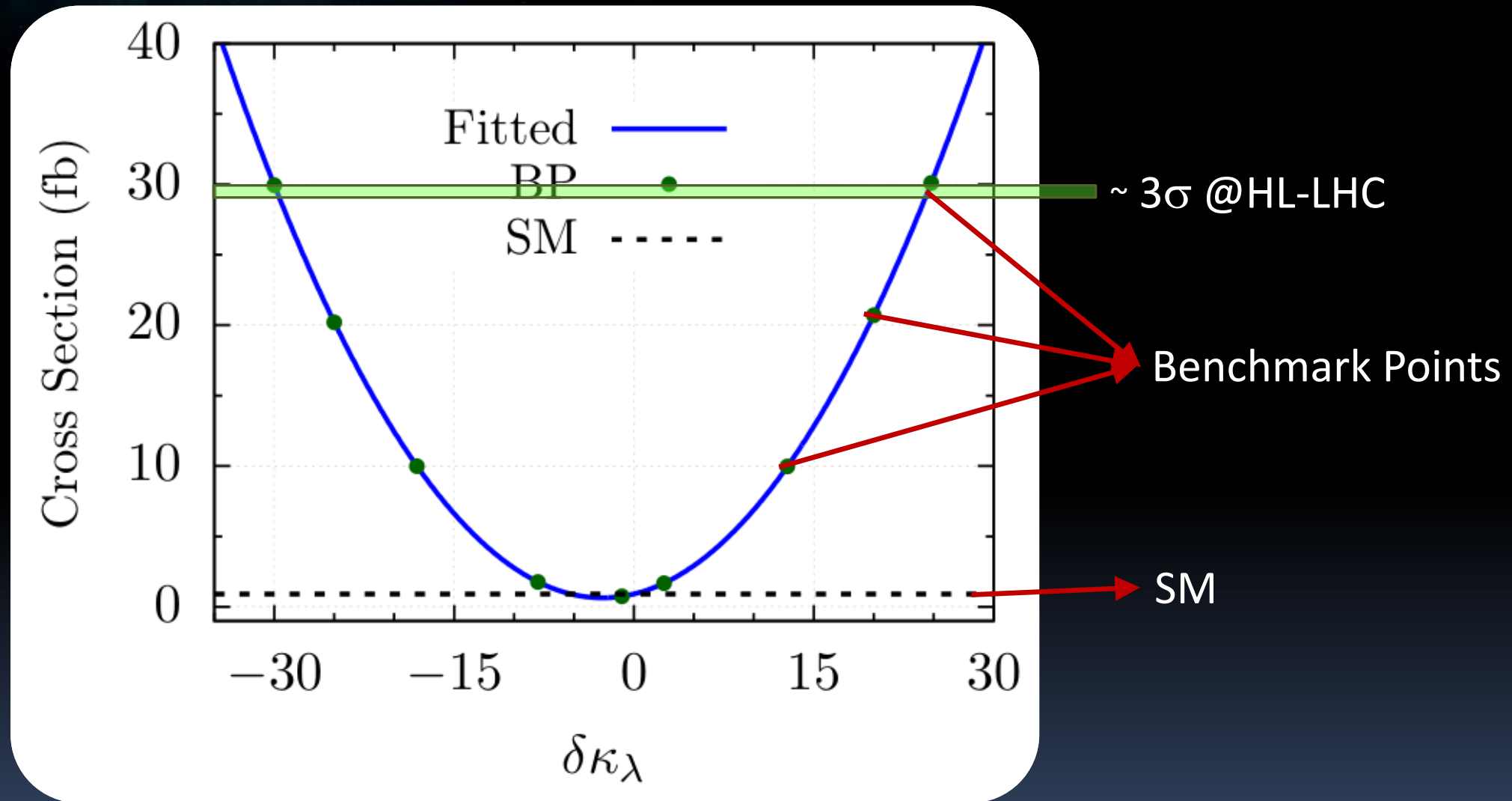
MG/ME > Pythia
> Delphes

@14 TeV
@3000 fb⁻¹

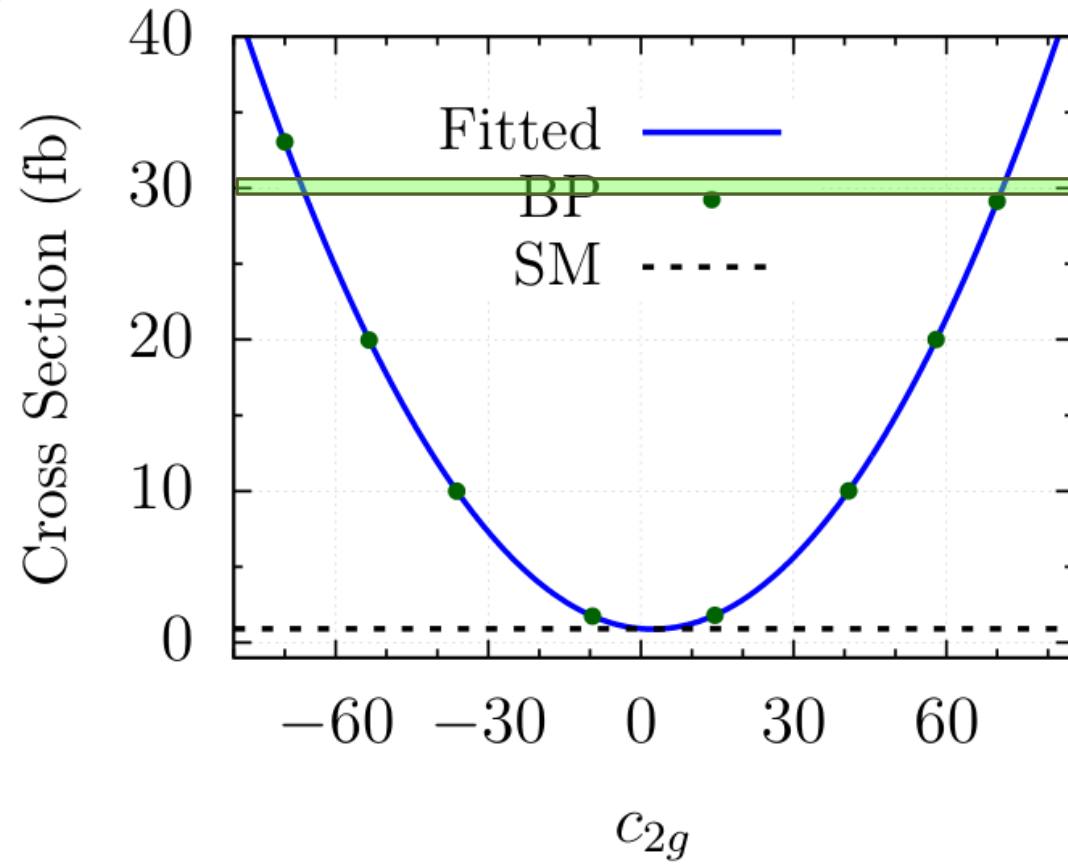
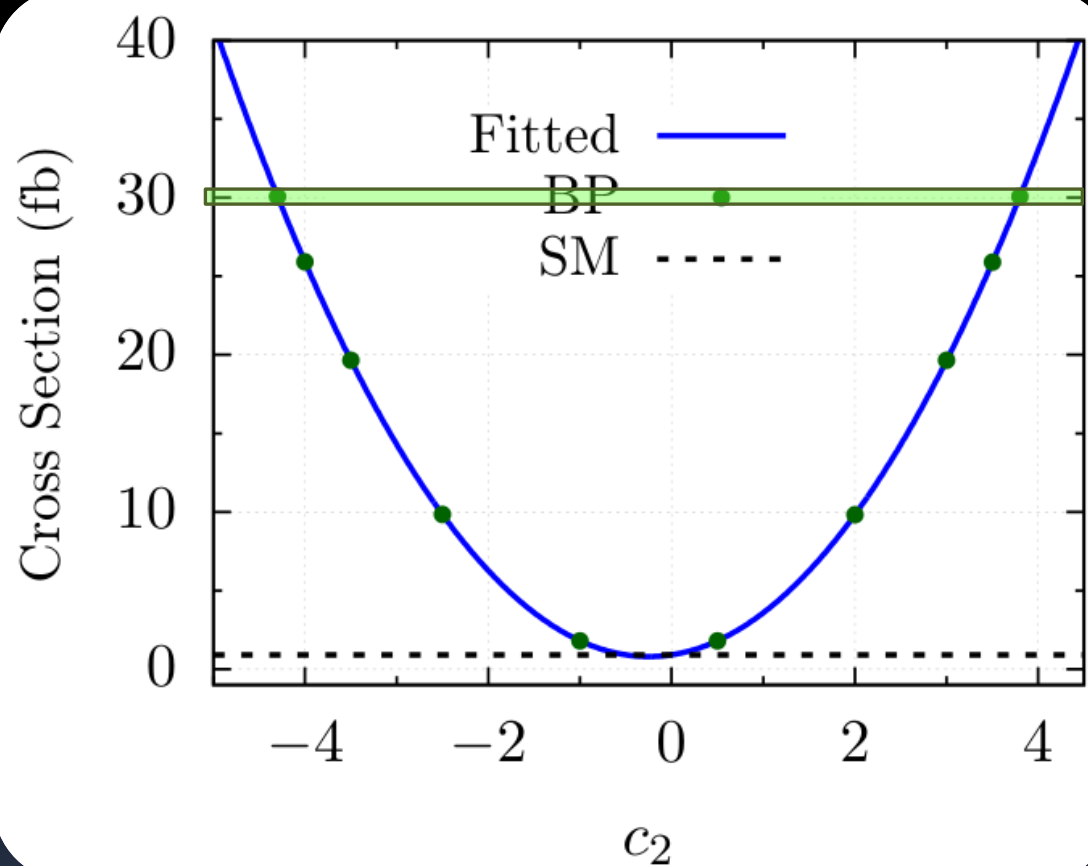
$$S/\sqrt{B} \simeq 0.01\sigma \sim 0.1\sigma$$

Resistant even to
many b requirement

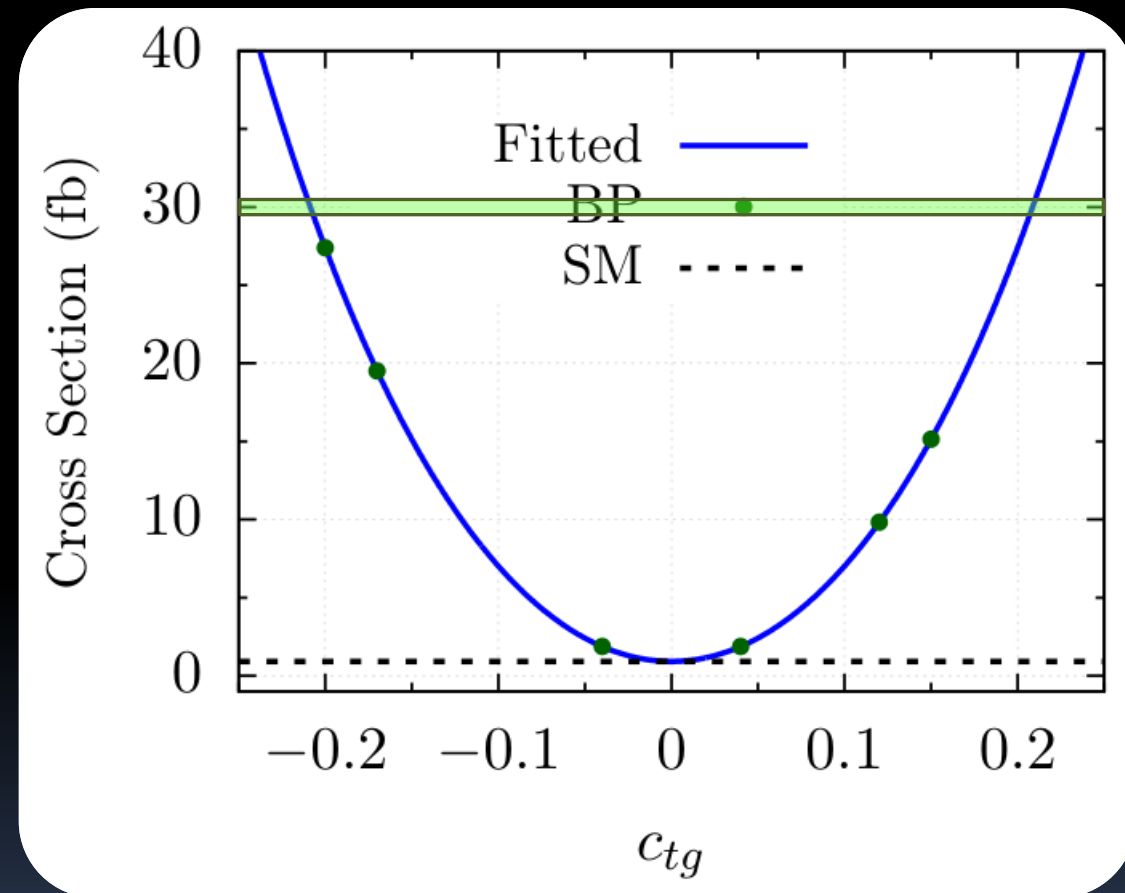
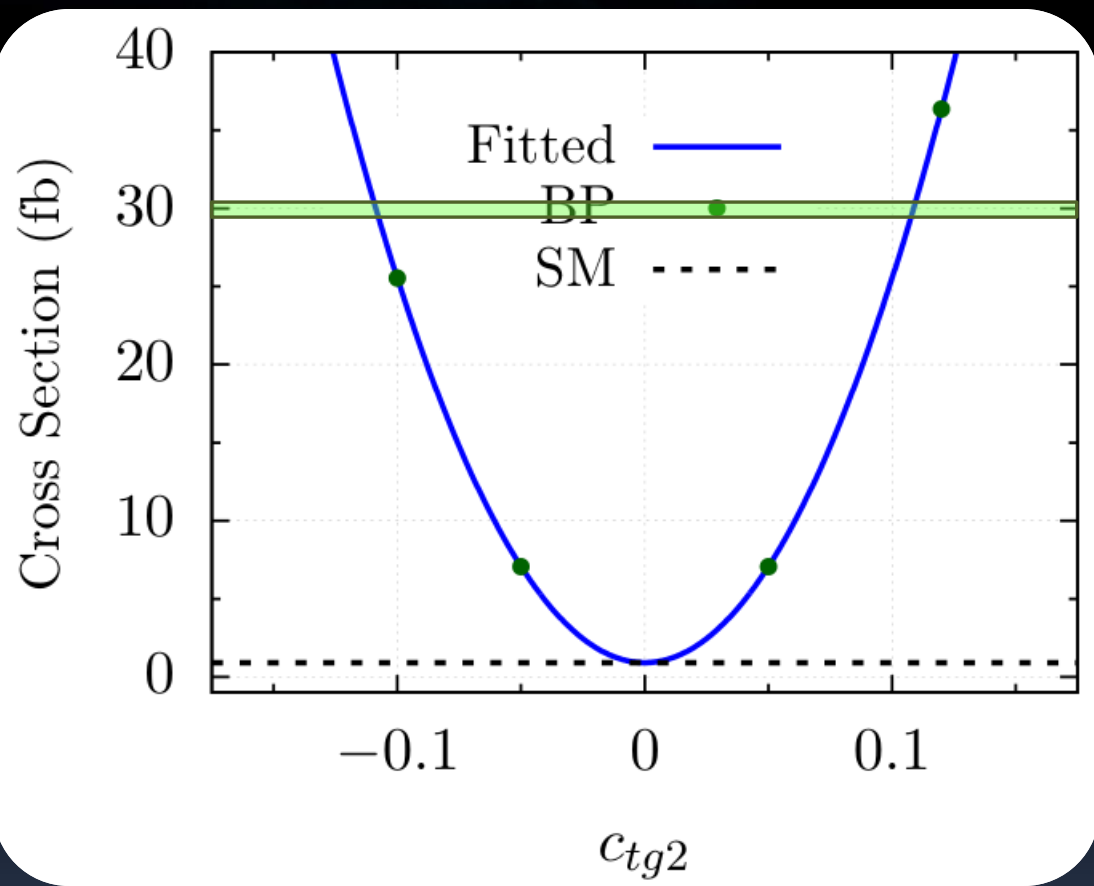
$t\bar{t}hh$ signal boosted by HEFT



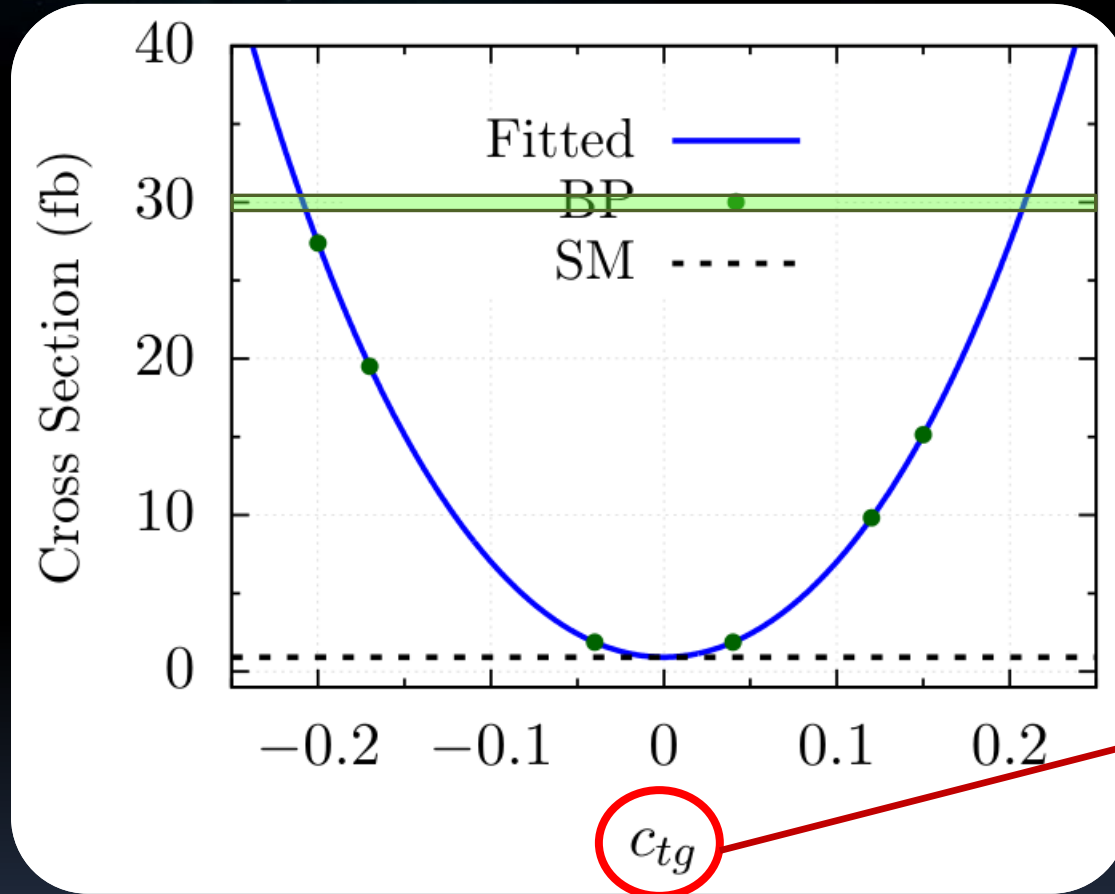
$t\bar{t}hh$ signal boosted by HEFT



$t\bar{t}hh$ signal boosted by HEFT



$t\bar{t}hh$ signal boosted by HEFT



$$\sigma_{t\bar{t}h}(c_{tg}) = \underbrace{480}_{\text{SM}} - 0.962 \times c_{tg} + 3.96 \times 10^4 \times c_{tg}^2 \quad \text{fb}$$

Will also contribute to the same search through increased $t\bar{t}h$

INCLUDED in the limits I'll show

Cut-based analysis

Common Criteria	
Number of jets	≥ 4
Number of b -jets	≥ 3
p_T of all jets	≥ 30 GeV
$ \eta $ of all jets	≤ 3.0
$ \eta $ of leptons	≤ 3.0

SL	
Number of leptons (N_ℓ)	1
Lepton p_T	≥ 25 GeV
Second lepton p_T	< 15 GeV
MET	≥ 20 GeV

DL	
Number of leptons (N_ℓ)	2 ($\ell^+ \ell^-$)
Leading lepton p_T	≥ 25 GeV
Second lepton p_T	≥ 15 GeV
MET	≥ 40 GeV
$\Delta R(\ell^+, \ell^-)$	≥ 0.2

Cut-based analysis

$$N_j \geq 6$$

$$N_b \geq 5$$

SL

Variable	Cuts
Leading jet p_T	$p_T(j_1) \geq 100 \text{ GeV}$
Second leading jet p_T	$p_T(j_2) \geq 50 \text{ GeV}$
Scalar p_T sum of jets	$H_T \geq 400 \text{ GeV}$
Scalar p_T sum of b-tagged jets	$H_{Tb} \geq 300 \text{ GeV}$
Invariant mass of jets	$m_{\text{jets}} \geq 400 \text{ GeV}$
Minimized- χ^2 for $t\bar{t}hh$ topology	Min : $\chi_{hh}^2 < 2$
p_T of leading reconstructed Higgs for $t\bar{t}hh$ topology	$p_T(h_1)^{hh} > 250 \text{ GeV}$
Sphericity, Aplanarity, C , D	$\geq 0.1, \geq 0.02, \geq 0.5, \geq 0.1$
H_T -bin edges	400 - 600 - 800 - 900 - 1000 - 1200 - 1600 - 2000 - ∞

χ^2

H_T -bin edges

400 - 600 - 800 - 900 - 1000 - 1200 - 1600 - 2000 - ∞

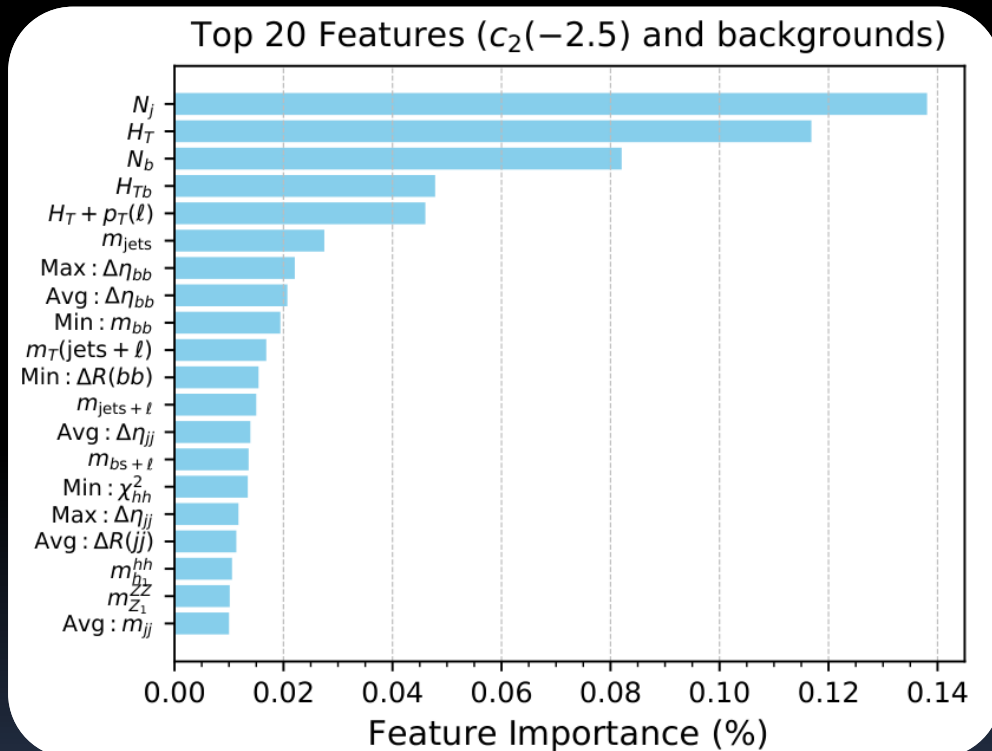
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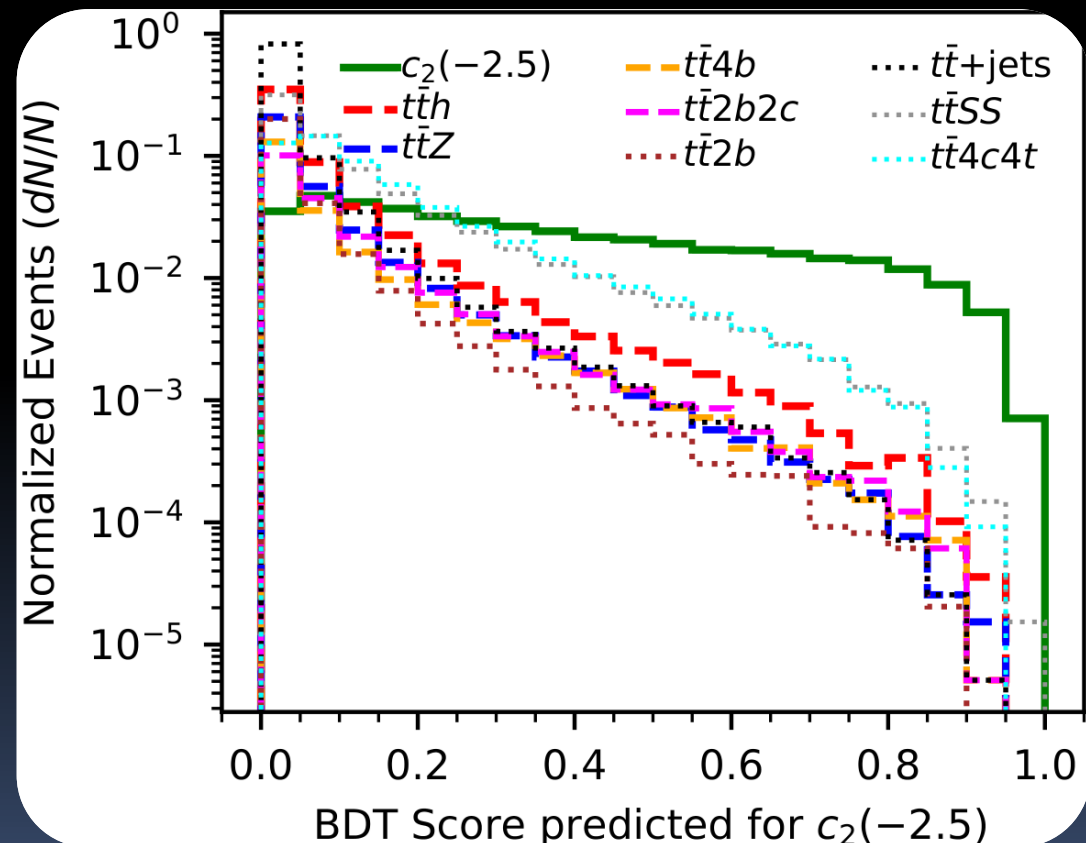
Parametric BDT

Boosted Decision Tree (XGBoost) with the HEFT couplings δK_λ , c_2 , c_{2g} , c_{tg} and c_{tg2} as input nodes, even for backgrounds (values taken from the BP)

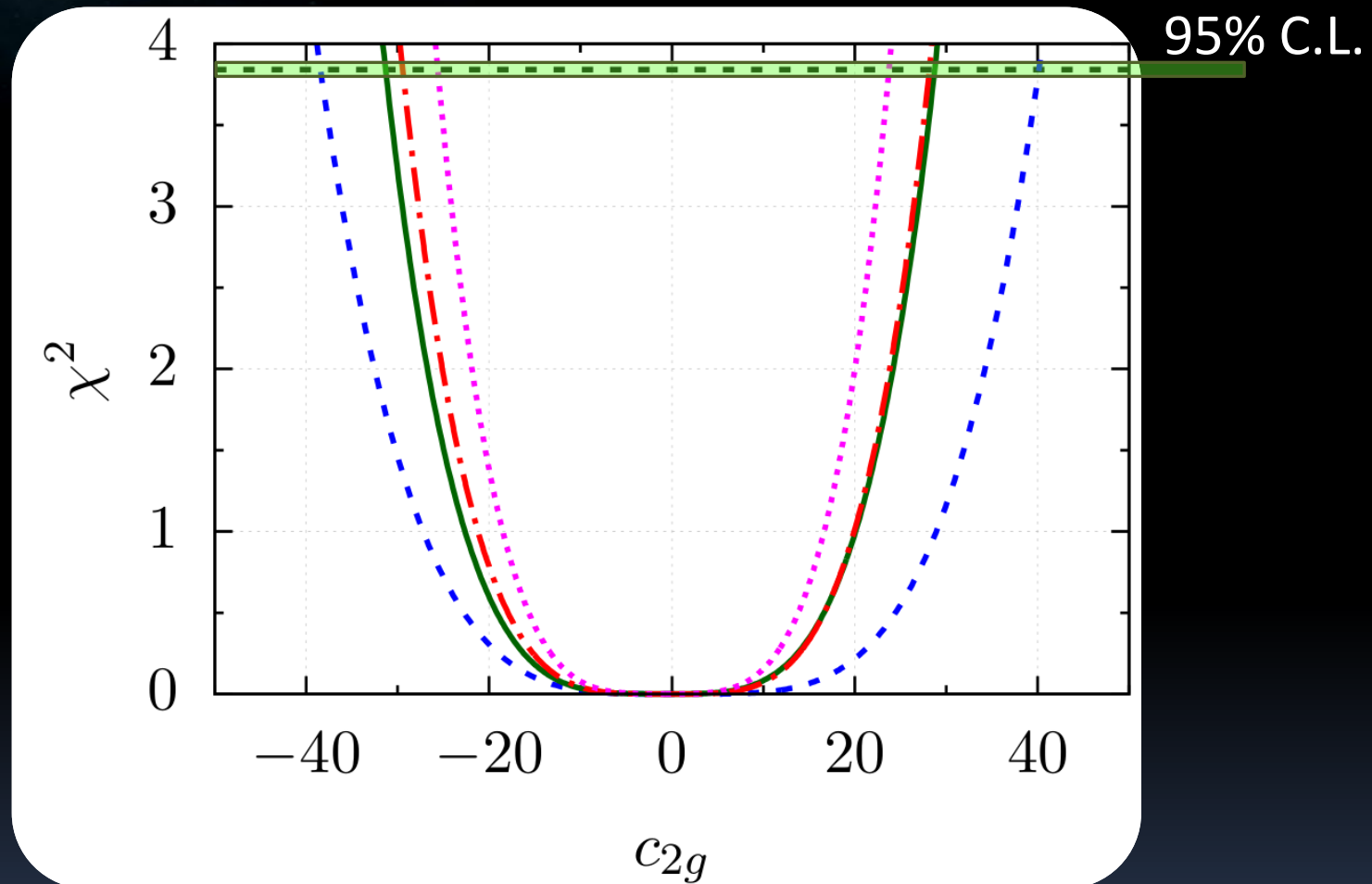
e.g.:



BDT score used for hypothesis test (χ^2)



Results



Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - -

PM:BDT (SL) —

PM:BDT (DL) - · -

PM:BDT (SL+DL) ···

Results

Couplings	Cut: H_T -bin (SL)	PM:BDT (SL)	PM:BDT (DL)	PM:BDT (SL+DL)
$\delta\kappa_\lambda$	[-32.4, + 26.8]	[-19.6, + 14.4]	[-19.0, + 17.4]	[-16.5, + 12.9]
c_2	[-2.95, + 2.65]	[-1.68, + 1.95]	[-1.9, + 2.02]	[-1.47, + 1.68]
c_{2g}	[-38.4, + 40.1]	[-31.3, + 28.7]	[-29.4, + 28.2]	[-25.6, + 23.7]
c_{tg}	[-0.042, + 0.039]	[-0.02, + 0.019]	[-0.035, + 0.028]	[-0.019, + 0.018]
c_{tg2}	[-0.053, + 0.053]	[-0.041, + 0.042]	[-0.078, + 0.072]	[-0.040, + 0.041]

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c_{tg2}	[-0.053, + 0.053]	[-0.041, + 0.042]	[-0.078, + 0.072]	[-0.040, + 0.041]

To be compared with (**caveat: multi channel analyses!**):

hh

[9] $\delta\kappa_\lambda \in [-2.6, 5.6]$

[10] $c_2 \in [-0.19, 0.7]$

[11] $c_2 \in [-0.28, 0.59]$

[10] $c_{2g} \in [-1.47, 1.14]$

$t\bar{t}hh$

[12] $c_2 \in [-3.9, 3.3]$

[13] $c_2 \in [-6.6, 6.4]$

NEW!

[9] ATLAS collaboration, Study of Higgs boson pair production in the $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ final state with 308 fb⁻¹ of data collected at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV and 13.6 TeV by the ATLAS experiment, Phys. Lett. B 876 (2026) 140280

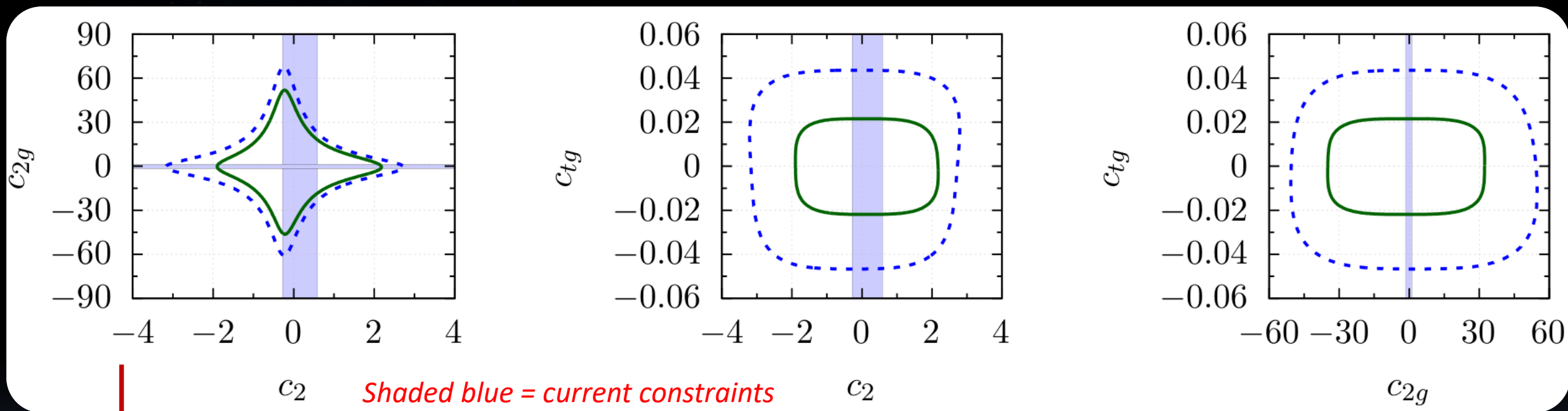
[10] ATLAS collaboration, Combination of Searches for Higgs Boson Pair Production in pp Collisions at $\sqrt{s}=13$ TeV with the ATLAS Detector, Phys. Rev. Lett. 133 (2024) 101801

[11] CMS collaboration, Combination of searches for nonresonant Higgs boson pair production in proton-proton collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV, arXiv:2510.07527

[12] ATLAS collab., Search for Higgs boson pair production in association with top-quark pairs using 196 fb⁻¹ of proton-proton collision data at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ and 13.6 TeV with the ATLAS detector, arXiv:2603.13113

[13] Filip Bilandzija talk yesterday, Di-Higgs searches at CMS, <https://indico.cern.ch/event/1522800/contributions/6987287/>,

Results

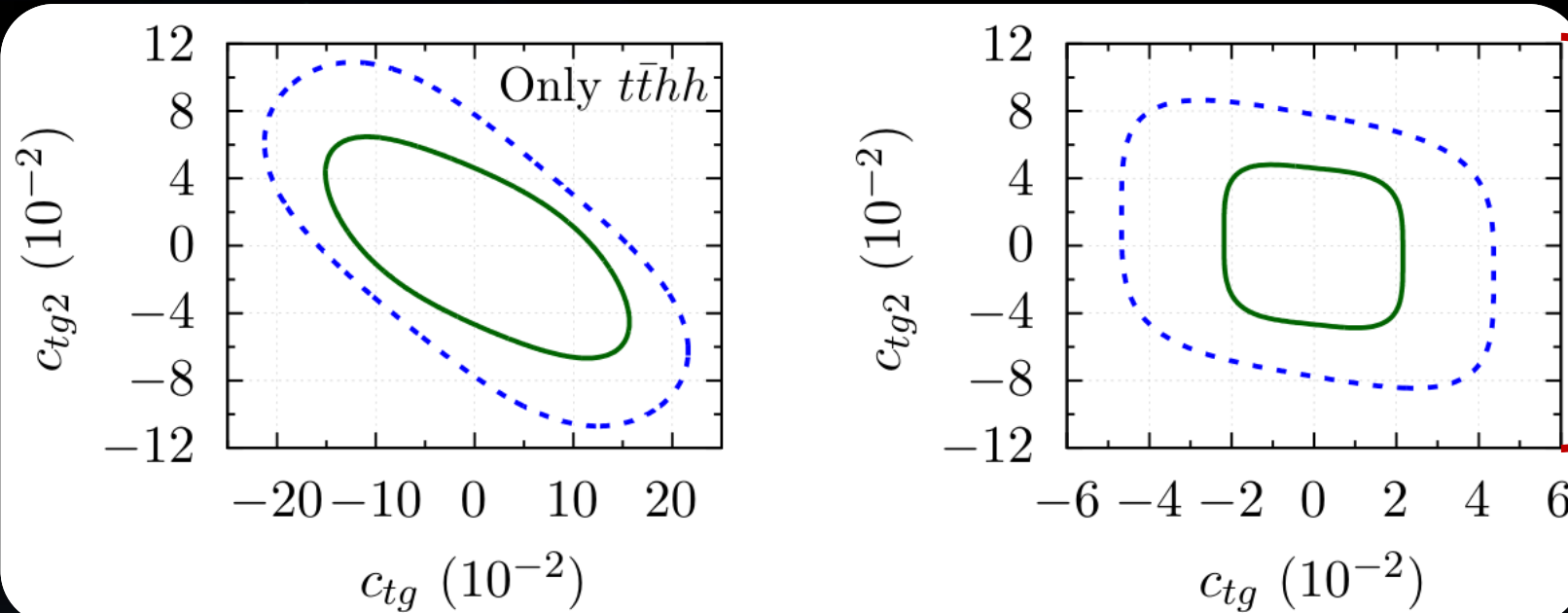


Interesting interplay between couplings (it would be nice to have the same from hh)

Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - - - -

PM:BDT (SL) ———

Results



Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - - - -

PM:BDT (SL) ———

Take-home messages

- Rare channels can provide cross-check and complementary information, breaking blind directions and allowing to differentiate UV completions.
- $t\bar{t}hh_{\text{BSM}}$ is within reach and this channel can provide constraints, but hard work is still needed
- Chromo-magnetic-like operators still largely unexplored:
 - c_{tg} can be constrained by $t\bar{t}h$
 - $c_{\text{tg}2}$ only accessible through $t\bar{t}hh$

Thank you for the attention!



Extras

HEFT Cross Section

Each coupling is expanded up to the power that it appears at tree level in the cross section of the $t\bar{t}hh$ channel, couplings fitted **one** at a time.

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma_{t\bar{t}hh}(c_{\text{HEFT}}) = & \underbrace{0.914}_{\text{SM}} - 0.207 \times \delta\kappa_\lambda + 0.0391 \times \delta\kappa_\lambda^2 \\ & - 0.891 \times c_2 + 1.79 \times c_2^2 \\ & + 0.0281 \times c_{2g} + 0.0062 \times c_{2g}^2 \\ & - 0.0052 \times c_{tg} + 590 \times c_{tg}^2 + 0.0833 \times c_{tg}^3 + 1781 \times c_{tg}^4 \\ & + 0.0212 \times c_{tg2} + 2462 \times c_{tg2}^2 \quad \text{fb},\end{aligned}$$

HEFT Cross Section

Each coupling is expanded up to the power that it appears at tree level in the cross section of the $t\bar{t}hh$ channel, couplings fitted **two** at a time.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \sigma_{t\bar{t}hh}(c_i, c_j) = & 0.384 \times \delta\kappa_\lambda \times c_2 \\
 & + 0.0321 \times \delta\kappa_\lambda \times c_{2g} - 3.19 \times 10^{-3} \times \delta\kappa_\lambda \times c_{2g}^2 + 4.93 \times 10^{-4} \times \delta\kappa_\lambda^2 \times c_{2g}^2 \\
 & + 8.16 \times 10^{-3} \times \delta\kappa_\lambda \times c_{tg} - 6.49 \times 10^{-4} \times \delta\kappa_\lambda^2 \times c_{tg} + 1.83 \times 10^2 \times \delta\kappa_\lambda \times c_{tg}^2 + 25.6 \times \delta\kappa_\lambda^2 \times c_{tg}^2 \\
 & + 0.0396 \times c_2 \times c_{2g} + 0.0135 \times c_2^2 \times c_{2g} + 9.97 \times 10^{-3} \times c_2 \times c_{2g}^2 + 0.0163 \times c_2^2 \times c_{2g}^2 \\
 & - 6.57 \times 10^{-3} \times c_2 \times c_{tg} + 11.9 \times c_2 \times c_{tg}^2 \\
 & + 1.83 \times 10^{-3} \times c_{2g} \times c_{tg} - 0.0249 \times c_{2g} \times c_{tg}^2 \\
 & + 1848 \times c_{tg} \times c_{tg}^2 - 0.973 \times c_{tg}^2 \times c_{tg}^2.
 \end{aligned} \tag{A.1}$$

$$+ 1848 \times c_{tg} \times c_{tg}^2 - 0.973 \times c_{tg}^2 \times c_{tg}^2.$$

BDT Details

Classes:

- HEFT – tthh,
- tth,
- ttZ,
- tt + 4b,
- tt + 2b2c,
- tt + 2b,
- tt + jets,
- ttSS,
- tt4c4t

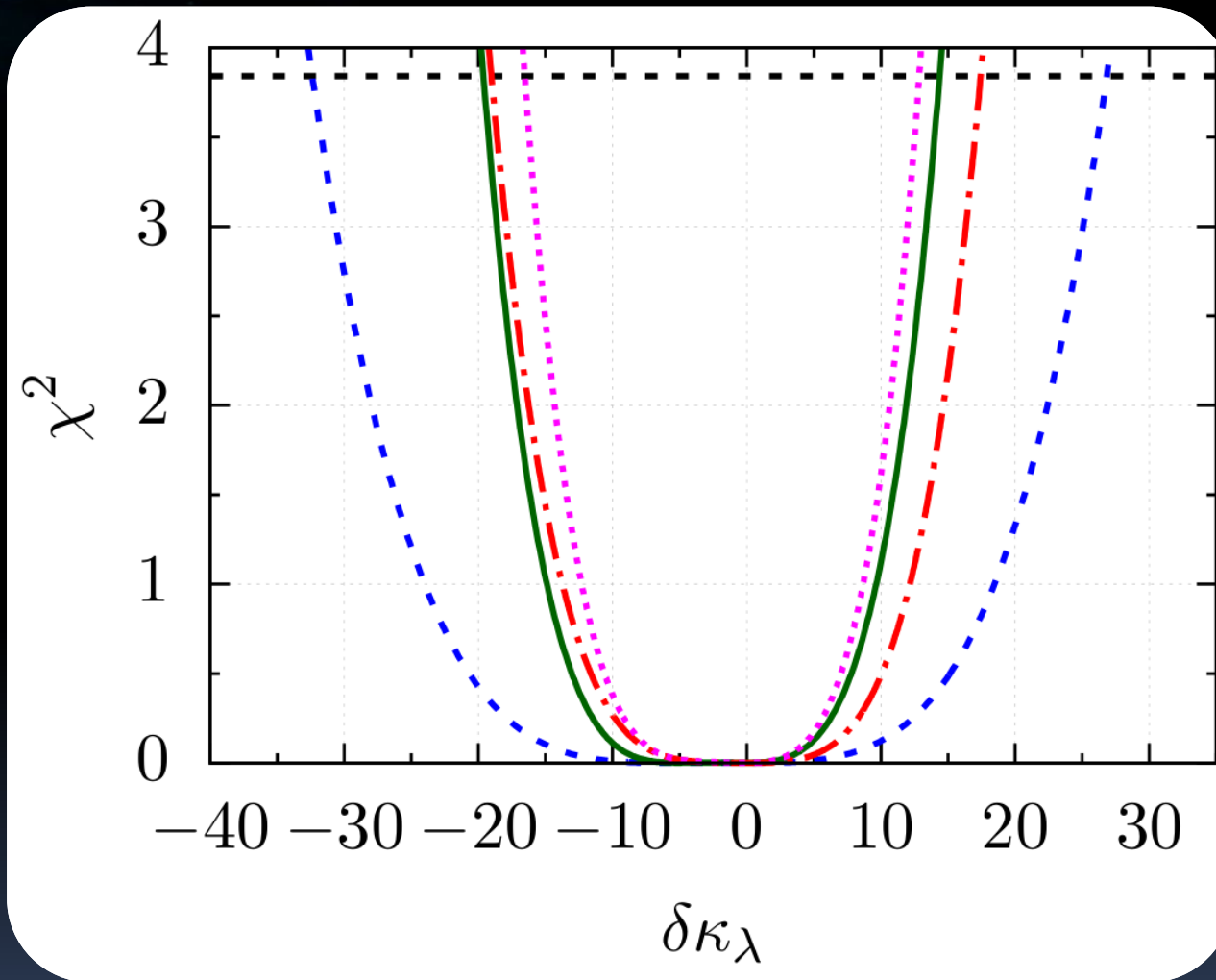
ttSS: {ttZh, ttVV, ttV + 2b, tth + 2b}

tt4c4t: {tttt, tt + 4c}

BDT Details

Group	Variables
Object multiplicity	$N_j, N_b,$
Transverse momenta	$p_T(\ell), p_T(j_1), p_T(j_2), p_T(j_3), p_T(j_4),$
Pseudo-rapidity	$\eta(\ell), \eta(j_1), \eta(j_2), \eta(j_3), \eta(j_4),$
Missing energy and Hadronic p_T ,	$MET, H_T, H_{Tb}, H_T + p_T(\ell),$
Invariant masses	$m_{\text{jets}}, m_{\text{jets}+\ell}, m_T(\text{jets} + \ell), m_T(MET + \text{jets} + \ell), m_{bs}, m_{bs+\ell},$
Conic separation	$\Delta R(\ell, j_1), \Delta R(\ell, j_2), \Delta R(\ell, j_3), \Delta R(\ell, j_4),$
Azimuthal separation	$\Delta\phi(\ell, j_1), \Delta\phi(\ell, j_2), \Delta\phi(\ell, j_3), \Delta\phi(\ell, j_4), \Delta\phi(\ell^+, \ell^-) - \text{DL},$ $\Delta\phi(MET, \ell), \Delta\phi(MET, j_1), \Delta\phi(MET, j_2),$ $\Delta\phi(MET, j_3), \Delta\phi(MET, j_4),$
Min, Max, average mass	Min : m_{bb} , Max : m_{bb} , Avg : m_{bb} , Min : m_{jj} , Max : m_{jj} , Avg : m_{jj} ,
Min, Max, average rapidity gap	Min : $\Delta\eta_{bb}$, Max : $\Delta\eta_{bb}$, Avg : $\Delta\eta_{bb}$, Min : $\Delta\eta_{jj}$, Max : $\Delta\eta_{jj}$, Avg : $\Delta\eta_{jj}$,
Min, Max, average conic separation	Min : $\Delta R(bb)$, Max : $\Delta R(bb)$, Avg : $\Delta R(bb)$, Min : $\Delta R(jj)$, Max : $\Delta R(jj)$, Avg : $\Delta R(jj)$,
Minimized χ^2 for hh, hZ, ZZ topology	Min : χ_{hh}^2 , Min : χ_{hZ}^2 , Min : χ_{ZZ}^2 ,
Reconstructed variables	$m_{h_1}^{hh}, p_T(h_1)^{hh}, m_{h_2}^{hh}, p_T(h_2)^{hh},$ $m_h^{hZ}, p_T(h)^{hZ}, m_Z^{hZ}, p_T(Z)^{hZ},$ $m_{Z_1}^{ZZ}, p_T(Z_1)^{ZZ}, m_{Z_2}^{ZZ}, p_T(Z_2)^{ZZ},$ $\Delta\phi(\ell, h_1), \Delta\phi(\ell, h_2), \Delta\phi(h_1, h_2),$
Event shape variables	Sphericity, Aplanarity, $C, D.$

Single Parameter χ^2



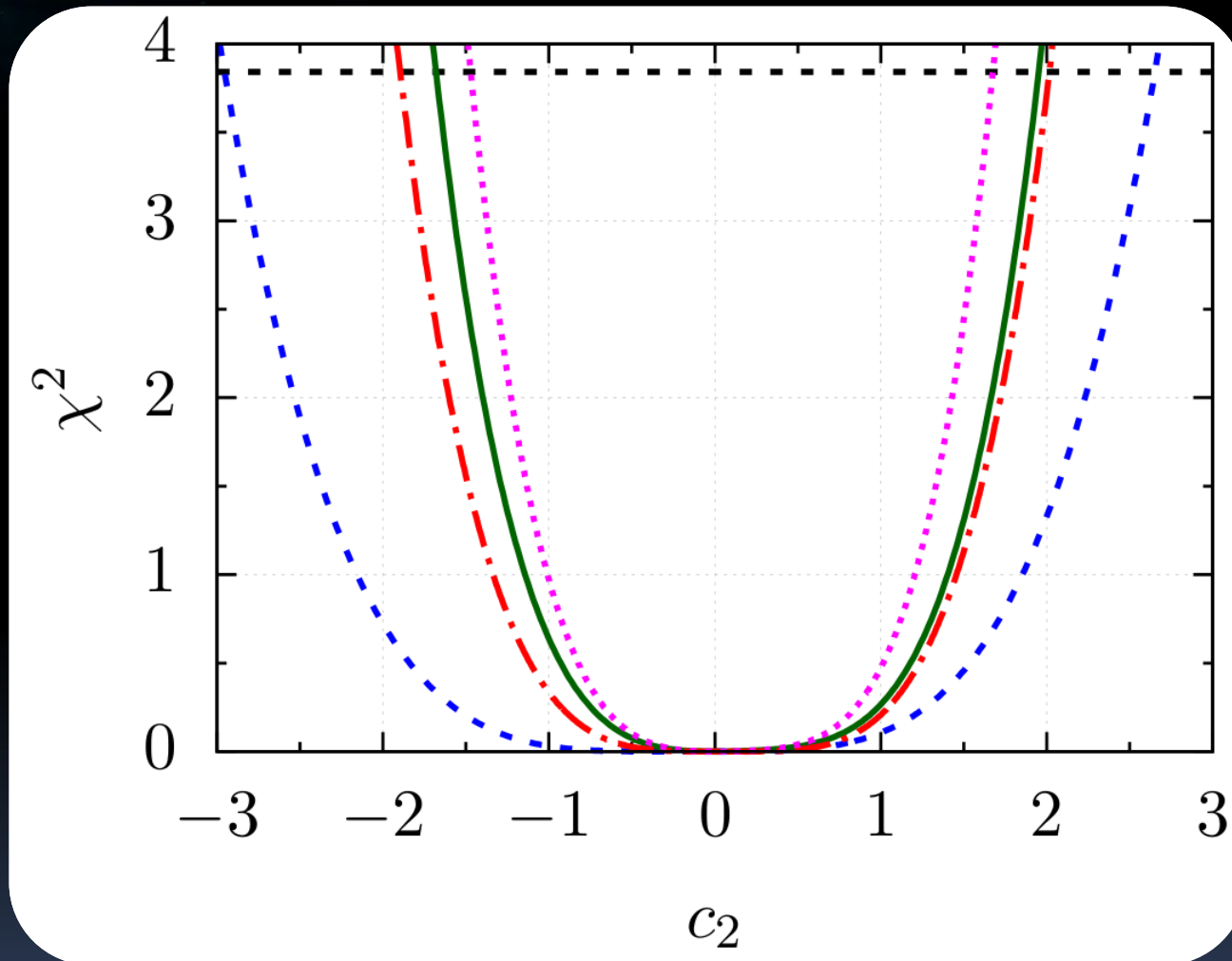
Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - -

PM:BDT (SL) —

PM:BDT (DL) - . -

PM:BDT (SL+DL) . . .

Single Parameter χ^2



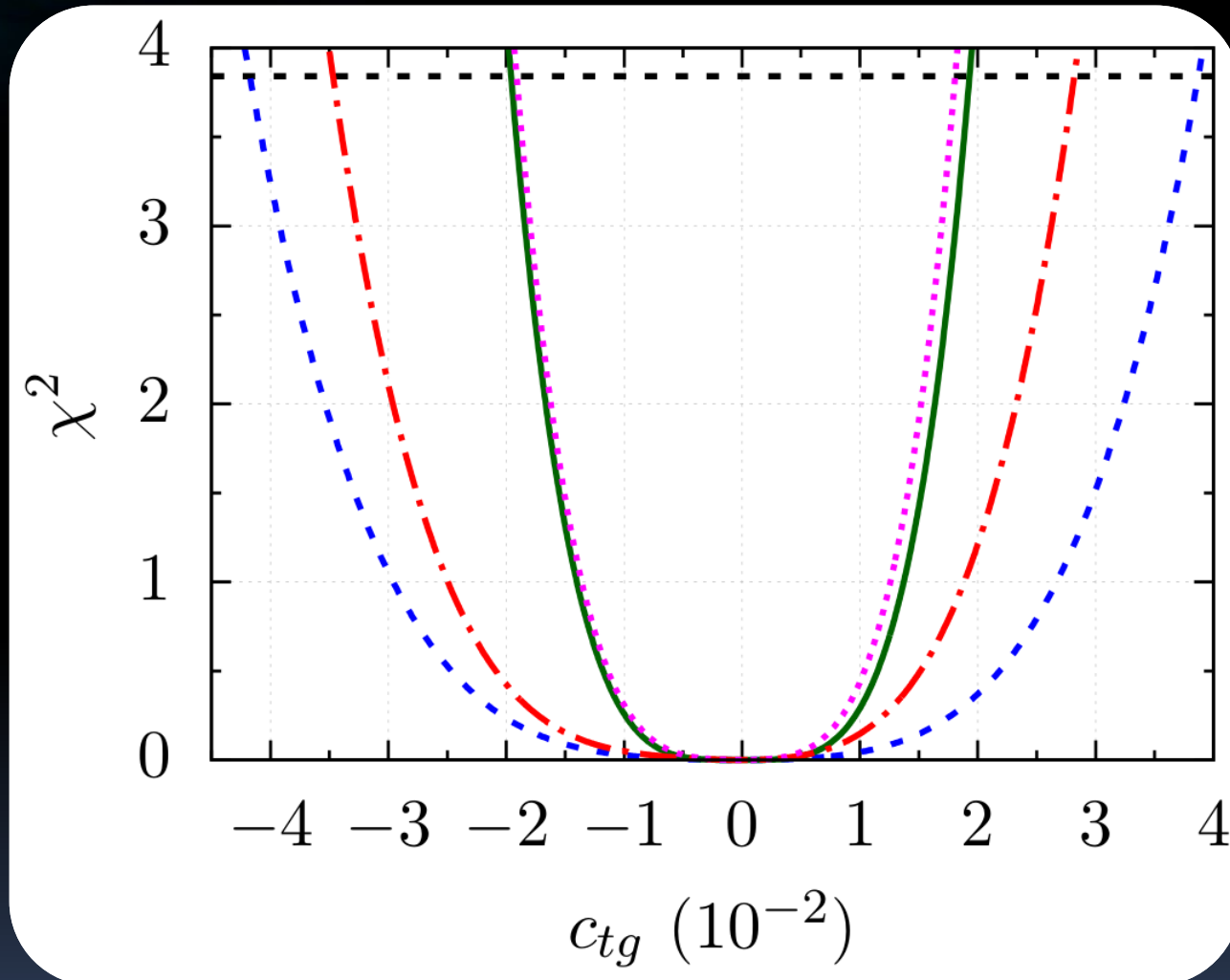
Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - -

PM:BDT (SL) —

PM:BDT (DL) - · -

PM:BDT (SL+DL) ···

Single Parameter χ^2



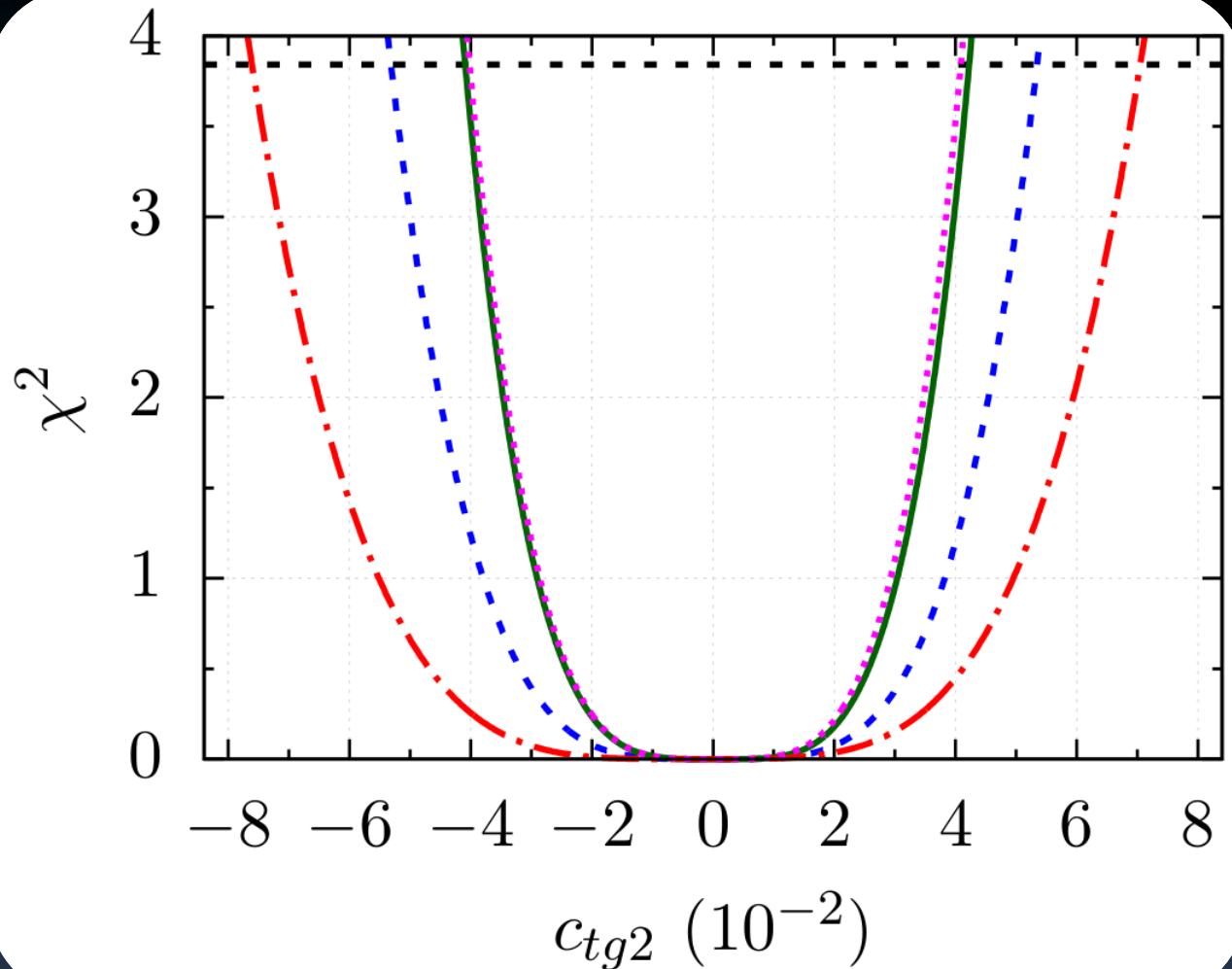
Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - -

PM:BDT (SL) —

PM:BDT (DL) - . -

PM:BDT (SL+DL) . . .

Single Parameter χ^2



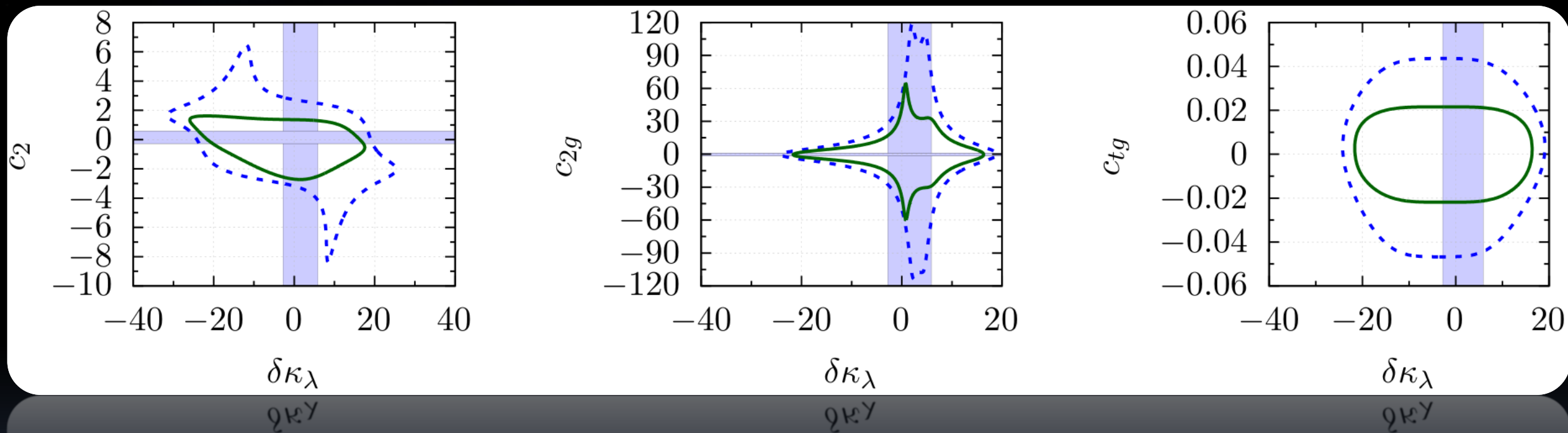
Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - -

PM:BDT (SL) —

PM:BDT (DL) - . -

PM:BDT (SL+DL) . . .

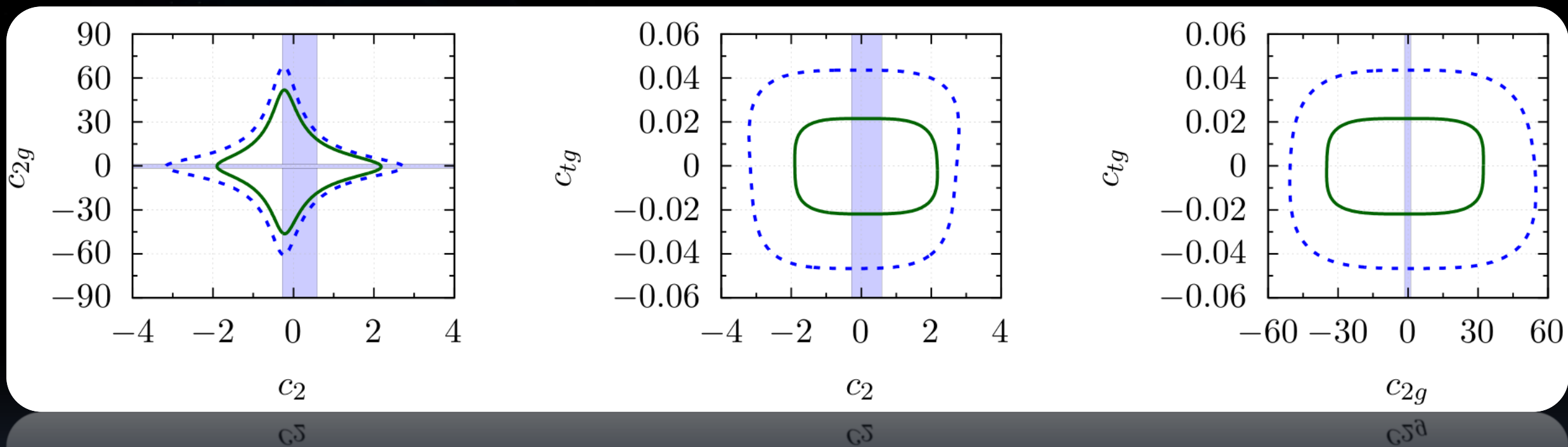
Two Parameter χ^2 contours



Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - - - -

PM:BDT (SL) ———

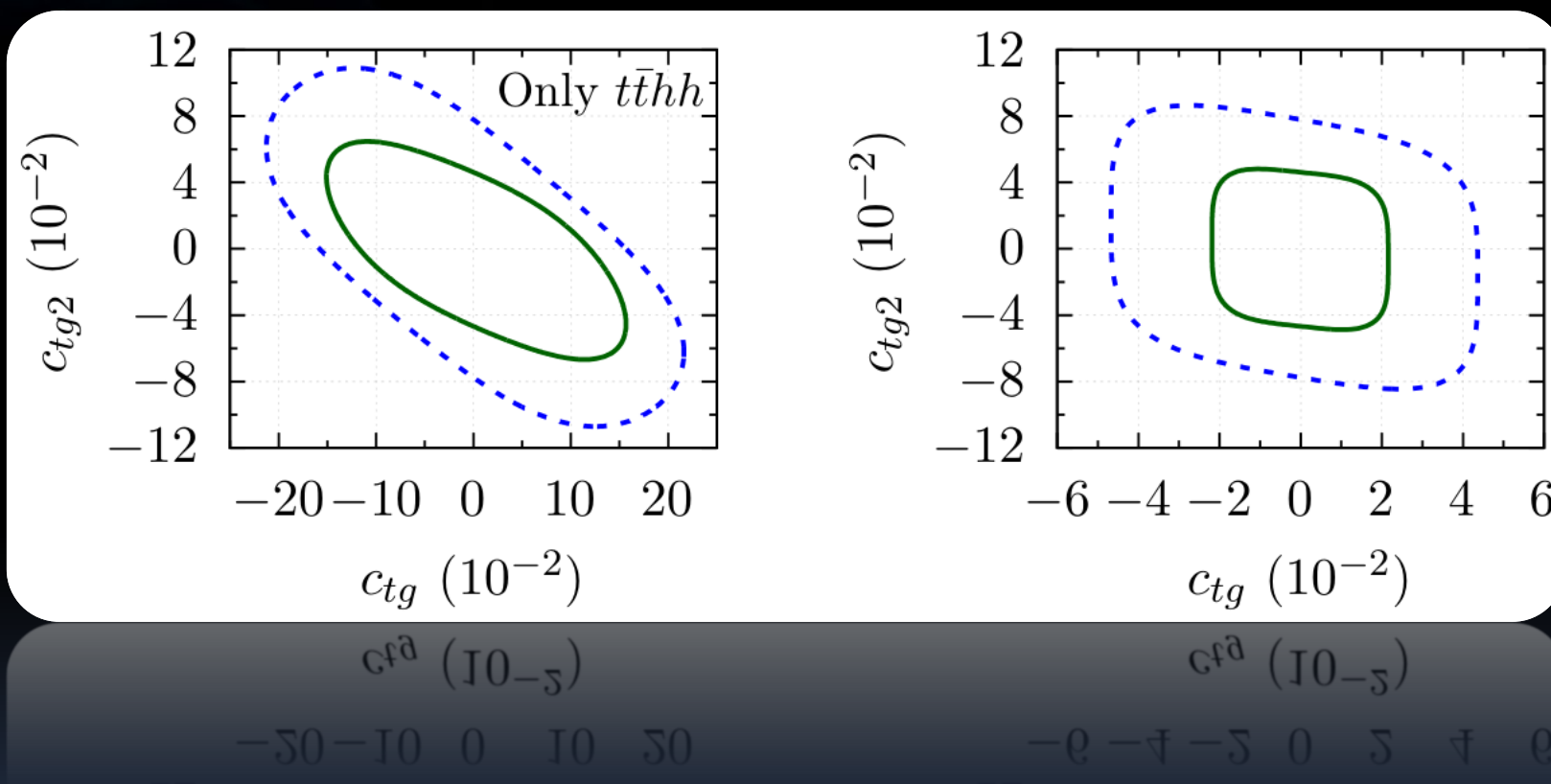
Two Parameter χ^2 contours



Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - - - -

PM:BDT (SL) ———

Two Parameter χ^2 contours



Cut: H_T -bin (SL) - - - - -

PM:BDT (SL) ———