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A NuMAD Model of the Sandia BSDS Blade

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Abstract

This report provides basic documentation of information used to create a BSDS finite element model using NuMAD. The model is intended for use as a structural model. Use of this model for aerodynamic analyses is to be performed with caution. The BSDS project successfully demonstrated the design and manufacturing of a wind turbine blade integrating several innovations including flatback airfoils on inboard blade stations, a carbon fiber spar cap and an iterative blade design process. Refer to the References at the end of this report for full and in-depth information on the BSDS blade project.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Acknowledgement of the teams who executed the Sandia blade programs of the early 2000's is needed. These are the experts who were involved in the design, manufacture, test and documentation of the CX-100, TX-100 and BSDS blade programs: Derek Berry and Steve Nolet of TPI Composites; Dayton Griffin of DNV; Mike Zuteck of MDZ Consulting; Case van Dam of UC-Davis; Kevin Jackson of Dynamic Design; Tom Ashwill, Dale Berg, Henry Dodd, Mark Rumsey, Herb Sutherland, Paul Veers, Jose Zayas of Sandia National Laboratories.

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NOMENCLATURE

APDL	Ansys Parametric Dynamic Language
BPE	Beam Property Extraction tool
c	chord length
$c_{\max}$	maximum blade chord
FE	Finite Element
HP	High Pressure
L	blade Length
l/L	fractional spanwise location
LE	Leading Edge
LP	Low Pressure
NuMAD	Numerical Manufacturing and Design tool
TE	Trailing Edge
x/c	distance along airfoil chord

MODELING APPROACH

NuMAD¹ is a MATLAB²-based tool developed at Sandia to provide an intuitive interface for defining the outer geometry, shear web locations, materials and stacks, and stack placement in wind turbine blades. The output from NuMAD is a sequence of ANSYS³ APDL commands used to create the finite element model in ANSYS. Once the model is created, various analyses are used to understand the strength and response of the blade to given loads.

The BSDS project successfully demonstrated the design and manufacturing of a wind turbine blade integrating several innovations including flatback airfoils on inboard blade stations, a carbon fiber spar cap and an iterative blade design process. Refer to References [4,5] for detailed information on the BSDS blade project.

The BSDS model is based primarily on the intended design of the blade. Layup drawings are included as Appendices in this report. Some material locations were obtained more accurately by actual measurements of a manufactured blade. Material properties used in the model are the same that were used in the design process.

This model has not been calibrated to match blade test data. Due to possible small discrepancies in design versus manufacture, the model represents the intended blade design, but not necessarily the manufactured blade. For example, the computed weight of the blade model is lower than the actual blade weights.

The model described by this report is meant as a starting point for a validation project or as a tool that can be used for research and engineering studies of blades.

Blade Geometry

Length of the BSDS blade is 8.325 meters. The blade features a flatback airfoil for half of the blade until developing into a typical airfoil trailing edge. Flatback airfoils differ from truncated airfoils and offer the structural benefits of thicker sections without large aerodynamic losses. See References [6,7,8,9,10] for information on aerodynamics of flatback airfoils.

Figure 1: Original Airfoil Sections - Root View (Reference 4, Figure 17)

Table 1: SolidWorks Model Geometry Details with Twist (Reference 4, Figure 23)

BSDS Phase II - Blade Geometry Details - Rev C							
		Span Length (with Hub):		9,000	mm		
		Blade Root Location:		7.50%	span		
		Blade Root Location:		675	mm		
		Blade Length:		8,325	mm		
		Root Diameter (7.5% and 10% span):		20.425	inches		
		Root Diameter (7.5% and 10% span):		518.795	mm		
Hub Span (%)	Span Location (mm)	Blade Station (mm)	Chord Length (mm)	Axis Location (% c)	Axis Location (mm LE)	Twist (degrees)	Flatback Thickness (% c)
7.5	675	0	518.795	50.00%	259.4	12.0	N/A
10	900	225	518.795	50.00%	259.4	12.0	N/A
15	1,350	675	609.601	42.98%	262.0	12.0	36.0%
20	1,800	1,125	754.382	35.50%	267.8	12.0	20.0%
25	2,250	1,575	792.482	35.50%	281.3	11.9	12.0%
35	3,150	2,475	764.034	35.50%	271.2	9.0	6.0%
45	4,050	3,375	656.083	35.50%	232.9	6.4	4.0%
55	4,950	4,275	521.463	35.50%	185.1	4.3	2.3%
65	5,850	5,175	414.021	37.50%	155.3	2.6	1.0%
75	6,750	6,075	311.913	40.00%	124.8	1.3	1.0%
85	7,650	6,975	230.124	42.50%	97.8	0.5	1.0%
95	8,550	7,875	146.812	45.00%	66.1	0.1	1.0%
100	9,000	8,325	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0	1.0%

Figure 2: SolidWorks blade model (Reference 4, Figure 30)

Aerodynamic Center

Aerodynamic center at each station is assumed to be located at $x/c=0.25$ and 0.50 for airfoil shapes and for circular shapes, respectively. These are only assumed values. A more accurate representation for aerodynamic center locations is obtained through an in-depth analysis of the airfoil performance data.

Normalized X-Offset

Normalized x-offset at each station varies depending on span location according to Table 2

Table 2: X-offset keypoints

Span location (m)	x-offset (x/c)
0	0.5
0.238	0.5
1.2	0.355
4.2	0.355
7.875	0.45
8.325	0.45

Model Images

Figure 3: BSDS model as viewed in NuMAD v2.0.

Figure 4: BSDS blade model in ANSYS.

MATERIALS

Table 2 lists the properties of common materials used in the BSDS model.

Table 3: Summary of Material Properties

Property	C260	Seartax_ Carbon_ triax	DBM 1208	DBM 1708	Balsa	Gel Coat	075oz_ Mat	6oz_ Woven_ Rug
E_x (GPa)	37.30	73.85	9.58	9.58	0.120	3.44	7.58	9.58
E_y (GPa)	7.60	6.82	9.58	9.58	0.120	3.44	7.58	9.58
G_{xy} (GPa)	6.890	3.320	6.89	6.89	0.020	1.38	4.00	6.89
ν_{xy}	0.31	0.25	0.39	0.39	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.39
ρ(g/cm³)	1.874	1.685	1.814	1.814	0.23	1.23	1.687	1.814
Layer thickness (mm)	2.4 or 1.4	3.4	0.620	0.737	6.4	0.508	0.305	1.1

Measured Material Properties

Mechanical tests were performed in order to determine the as-built mechanical material properties for the blade materials. The test-derived values have not been included in the model here, but the results of those tests are included in the TX-100 report¹¹ as Appendix A.

Material Layup

Drawings for manufacture of this blade are included in the Appendices of this report.

The model is based primarily on these drawings but is supplemented with actual measurements of a manufactured blade.

Blade Root Hardware

Blade root hardware is not included in this model of the BSDS blade. Steel is included in the base of the root to help account for the weight of the hardware.

Leading Edge Alterations

The leading edge has some alterations to the material to avoid shell element errors in ANSYS while using 8-noded shells (i.e. SHELL281). Leading edge material composites were renamed with a modifying tag: “_x10”. The modification indicates that a material in composite was made ten times as strong, stiff, and dense, and one-tenth the thickness. This modification has been performed in small areas along leading edge.

Sharp Element Alterations

Because of errors in ANSYS due to excessively sharp elements, some of the material layup has been slightly modified to have blunt edges. This creates a solvable ANSYS model at the price of minor inaccuracies. These changes have been deemed negligible because of their extremely small size, and because of the inherent imperfections of the built blade due to manufacturing.

BLADE MODEL ARCHIVE FILES

NuMAD Project Files

The following files are located in the BSDS blade model folder, *BSDS_v1.0*:

BSDS_v1.0.nmd

The NuMAD blade model data file. This file is for use with NuMAD v2.0.

MatDBsi.txt

The NuMAD material data file.

shell7.src

Output from NuMAD. This file contains the APDL commands that are used directly in ANSYS to create the BSDS shell element model using the command string “/INPUT,shell7,src” at the ANSYS command input.

zAirfoil.mac, zFlatback.mac, zSmoother.mac

These are ANSYS macro files that are required to execute the commands found in the *shell7.src* file. These macros must remain in the same folder as the shell7 file when the ANSYS input execution is performed.

‘Airfoils’ Folder

Following is a list of the airfoil shape files found in the BSDS *airfoils* folder:

BSDS_0000.txt	BSDS_1370.txt
BSDS_0089.txt	BSDS_1575.txt
BSDS_0238.txt	BSDS_1775.txt
BSDS_0350.txt	BSDS_1985.txt
BSDS_0394.txt	BSDS_2175.txt
BSDS_0550.txt	BSDS_2475.txt
BSDS_0550f.txt	BSDS_2700.txt
BSDS_0675.txt	BSDS_3100.txt
BSDS_0675f.txt	BSDS_3575.txt
BSDS_0730.txt	BSDS_4200.txt
BSDS_0760.txt	BSDS_4815s.txt
BSDS_0800.txt	BSDS_5150s.txt
BSDS_0830.txt	BSDS_5625.txt
BSDS_0860.txt	BSDS_6715.txt
BSDS_1055.txt	BSDS_7350.txt
BSDS_1075.txt	BSDS_7455.txt
BSDS_1178.txt	BSDS_7875.txt
BSDS_1200.txt	BSDS_8325.txt

EXAMPLE ANALYSES

Following are results from basic analyses. These results can be used as a baseline for comparison if the user needs to check the validity of their model against the original archive files.

Mesh Size

The global element size (AESIZE setting in ANSYS) is set to 0.04 meters.

Model Mass

The overall model mass is 101.626 kg, as calculated by ANSYS. The spanwise location of the blade center of mass is at 1.9726 meters.

Based on measurements of the production blades⁴, the weight of the average as-built CX-100 blade is 131.0 kg and the spanwise location of the blade center of mass is at 2.201 meters.

Modal Analysis

A cantilevered modal analysis of the BSDS ANSYS model is performed. The Block Lanczos solver is used to find six modes.

Table 4: Results from an ANSYS modal analysis.

Mode	Frequency (Hz)	Shape
1	4.0692	1 st flapwise bending
2	6.8840	1 st edgewise bending
3	9.0599	2 nd flapwise bending
4	17.273	3 rd flapwise bending
5	18.835	2 nd edgewise bending
6	29.142	4 th flapwise bending

Static Analysis

A cantilevered static analysis was performed on the BSDS ANSYS model, using a flapwise (t-direction) 1000 N pull on the tip of the blade. Results were processed using the material coordinate system (RSYS,SOLU) and mid-thickness results (SHELL, MIDDLE). Shown is the elastic strain in the material x-direction, or blade spanwise direction. Maximum tip displacement computed with this analysis is 1.77076 meters.

Figure 5: A plot of the composite material x-direction strain resulting from a static analysis of the BSDS blade; view of HP surface is shown.

PreComp Analysis

NuMAD v2.0 provides the capability to use PreComp¹² to compute sectional properties of the blade based on the information contained in the NuMAD blade model. Following are the results of those analyses:

Figure 6: Equivalent section properties computed using PreComp; parameters definitions are consistent with FAST blade input file inputs.

BPE Analysis

BPE is an approach used to compute equivalent section properties of the three-dimensional blade model using an inverse approach¹³. This blade can be analyzed using BPE, however, there are some caveats discussed below. Following are the blade cross section property distributions computed using BPE.

Figure 7: Chosen edges for elements in the BPE analysis.

Figure 8: Equivalent section properties computed using BPE; parameters definitions are consistent with FAST blade input file inputs.

The inboard region of this blade is quite stiff. The stiffness causes numerical issues when the inverse approach for finding effective blade properties is used. Current capabilities of the BPE algorithm require that the BPE elements for the inboard portion of the blade be much longer than what would be ideal. See Figure 7 for the BPE element edge indications. Even with this selection of segments, segment #3 is a singular element. BPE attempts to deal with singular elements by automatically expanding the length of the element. This approach is not ideal in that it may contaminate the accuracy of the equivalent properties for adjacent elements, i.e. element #4. Additionally, in this blade model we see issues with computation of certain parameters, especially EAS_{tff} , in the vicinity of 75% span.

The development of the BPE algorithm is still an area of active research and development. Future work will seek to improve our understanding of these blade property computation issues.

ADDITIONAL BSDS BLADE RESOURCES

Paquette, J. A. and P. S. Veers. "Increased Strength in Wind Turbine Blades Through Innovative Structural Design." AWEA Windpower Conference, 2008.

<http://windpower.sandia.gov/other/AWEA2008-Paquette.pdf>

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<http://windpower.sandia.gov/asme/AIAA-2007-Testing9m.pdf>

D.D. Chao, C.P. van Dam, D.E. Berg "CFD Analysis of Rotating Two-Bladed Flatback Wind Turbine Rotor" Sandia National Laboratories Report, SAND08-1688, 2008.

<http://windpower.sandia.gov/other/084648.pdf>

CITED REFERENCES

¹ Jonathan C. Berg and Brian R. Resor, "Numerical Manufacturing And Design Tool (NuMAD v2.0) for Wind Turbine Blades: User's Guide." Sandia National Laboratories SAND Report SAND2012-7028. http://energy.sandia.gov/?page_id=2238

² Mathworks Matlab. Natick, Massachusetts. <https://www.mathworks.com/>

³ ANSYS Inc., Canonsburg, PA 15317, <http://www.ansys.com>

⁴ D.S. Berry, D.E. Berg "Blade System Design Studies Phase II: Final Project Report." SAND08-4648. Printed July 2008. <http://windpower.sandia.gov/other/084648.pdf>

⁵ D. Griffin, T.D. Ashwill "System Design Studies Phase II: Final Project Report (GEC)." SAND09-0686. Printed May 2009. <http://windpower.sandia.gov/other/090686.pdf>

⁶ C.P. van Dam, D.L. Kahn, D.E. Berg "Trailing Edge Modifications for Flatback Airfoils" SAND08-1781. <http://prod.sandia.gov/techlib/access-control.cgi/2008/081781.pdf>

⁷ C.P. van Dam, E.A. Mayda, D.D. Chao, D.E. Berg "Computational Design and Analysis of Flatback Airfoil Wind Tunnel Experiment" SAND08-1782. <http://prod.sandia.gov/techlib/access-control.cgi/2008/081782.pdf>

⁸ J.P. Baker, C.P. van Dam, B.L. Gilbert, and D.E. Berg "Flatback Airfoil Wind Tunnel Experiment." SAND08-2008. <http://prod.sandia.gov/techlib/access-control.cgi/2008/082008.pdf>

⁹ D.E. Berg, M. Barone "Aerodynamic and Aeroacoustic Properties of a Flatback Airfoil (Will it Rumble or Whisper?)" Windpower 2008, Houston, TX, June 2008. <http://windpower.sandia.gov/other/AWEA-06-08-Berg.pdf>

¹⁰ D.E. Berg, J.R. Zayas "Aerodynamic and Aeroacoustic Properties of Flatback Airfoils" 46th AIAA Aerospace Sciences Meeting and Exhibit (27th ASME Wind Energy Symposium), Reno, Nevada, January 2008. <http://windpower.sandia.gov/asme/AIAA-2008-1455.pdf>

¹¹ B. Resor and J. Paquette. "A NuMAD Model of the Sandia TX-100 Blade." Sandia National Laboratories Report SAND2012-9274.

¹² NWTC Design Codes (PreComp by Rick Damiani). <http://wind.nrel.gov/designcodes/preprocessors/precomp/>. Last modified 28-June-2012; accessed 28-June-2012.

¹³ Malcolm, D. J. & Laird, D. L. Extraction of Equivalent Beam Properties from Blade Models. *Wind Energy*, 2007, 10, 135-137.

APPENDIX A: BSDS LAYUP DRAWINGS – HP/LP SKINS

APPENDIX C: BSDS LAYUP DRAWINGS -- SHEAR WEB

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