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SLIDING WEAR BEHAVIOR OF PROTECTIVE COATINGS FOR DIESEL ENGINE COMPONENTS

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### Author

Levy, A.

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FOR DIESEL ENGINE COMPONENTS

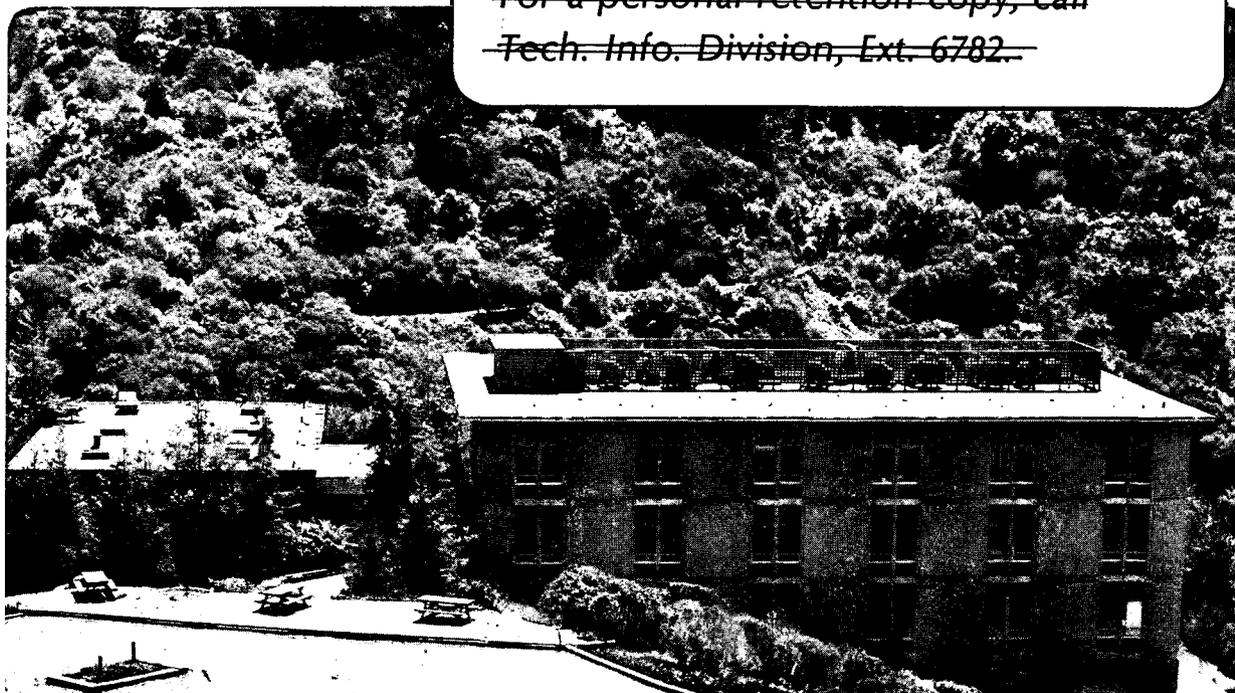
A. Levy, D. Boone, E. January, and A. Davis

April 1984

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**SLIDING WEAR BEHAVIOR OF PROTECTIVE COATINGS  
FOR DIESEL ENGINE COMPONENTS**

Alan Levy, Donald Boone, Eric January and Anthony Davis

Materials and Molecular Research Division  
Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory  
University of California  
Berkeley, California 94720

April 1984

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## ABSTRACT

The use of heat insulating coatings on the cylinder walls of diesel engines is currently being considered for certain advanced engine designs. Since a major consideration in such an application is the wear resistance of the coatings, a series of tests has been carried out to determine the sliding wear behavior of several pairs of candidate materials systems. The tests were performed using a washer on disc specimen configuration and an oscillatory rotation movement to simulate the motion of a piston ring on a cylinder wall. It was determined that each material tested had a different pattern of sliding wear behavior. Chromium impregnating plasma sprayed  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  with chromia markedly improved its wear resistance.

## INTRODUCTION

The use of protective coating systems on combustion chamber region components in advanced diesel engine designs is being contemplated for a number of reasons. They include permitting operation using degraded fuels, increasing durability and maintainability, increasing performance efficiency and reducing cooling requirements. The use of ceramic and hard metal coating systems on the cylinder walls and piston rings requires that detailed knowledge of the nature of the sliding wear behavior of potential pairs of materials be obtained.

The tests reported on herein were carried out on several of the more promising candidate materials systems for insulating the cylinder walls and for reducing friction and wear on the liners. The materials were tested against themselves in a washer and disc configuration and

against a chromium plated washer at room temperature.

The basic wear rates and mechanisms that were determined provide an understanding of the relative sliding wear behavior of the materials tested and the mechanisms of surface degradation that are occurring. Tests will be run at elevated temperatures under the types of loads that can be experienced in service to establish wear rates that can be directly used in component design.

### MATERIALS

The test coatings were obtained from suppliers who applied them on mild steel washers and discs for testing in a Falex 6 test device. Figure 1 is a drawing of the washer and disc. The contact surface area of the washer is 0.2 in<sup>2</sup>. The larger disc has an area of 0.9 in.<sup>2</sup> surface area. The coatings were applied at various thicknesses that were appropriate for each material system. All of the coatings were tested in the as-applied surface condition without any surface grinding prior to testing and without lubrication.

The materials pairs tested in this series are listed in Table 1 along with the resulting wear rates, which will be discussed later. The materials systems are experimental coatings that are proprietary to the suppliers, hence only rudimentary compositions are reported. The Y<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>-ZrO<sub>2</sub>, partially stabilized zirconia, ceramic thermal barrier coatings (CTBC) were all applied by plasma spraying. An MCrAlY bond coat was plasma sprayed on the solvent cleaned mild steel surfaces prior to deposition of the CTBC. Figure 2 are cross section micrographs at two magnifications of an unimpregnated Y<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>-ZrO<sub>2</sub> plasma sprayed coating, 0.28mm thick. Figure 3 are cross section micrographs

at two magnifications of the  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  coating, 0.56mm thick. The microstructure of the cast iron taken from a diesel engine cylinder wall is shown in Figure 4. The Cr plated steel washers had a standard chromium plating on them of the type used on piston rings in diesel engines.

#### TEST DESCRIPTION

Wear tests of the material pairs were conducted using the Falex-6 thrust washer testing machine. This device rotates or oscillates the surface of an upper rimmed washer against a stationary lower disc at a variety of speeds and contact pressures. The tests reported were conducted at 230 cycles per minute with the sliding direction reversed each  $90^\circ$  of rotation. Thus the rotation somewhat simulates the up and down motion of a piston ring on a cylinder wall.

A contact pressure is maintained between the specimens by means of a lever arm assembly which transfers a load of suspended weight to a static axial load action between the washer/disc pair. Three different contact pressures were used, 25, 50, and 100 psi. These pressures are lower than the peak contact pressures that occur in the piston ring-cylinder wall contacts in a diesel engine. The tests were carried out at room temperature with no lubrication. Each test was run for the number of minutes listed in Table 1. Periodically during the test the test was interrupted and the specimen was removed and weighed.

Preparation of the specimens for testing started with ultrasonic cleaning in a bath of ethanol for 5 minutes followed by thorough drying in forced hot air for 10 minutes. After each test increment, the

specimens were cleaned by dry brushing prior to taking weight measurements.

The wear rates calculated from these sliding wear tests are incremental rates. The specimens were tested at short successive time increments ranging from 1 to 16 minutes in length, rather than testing for one longer time duration per material pair. The weight loss was measured after each time increment and the incremental wear rate was calculated as weight loss during the increment divided by the increment duration. Also, an average wear rate was calculated over the entire test duration for each pair.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Each pair of materials tested had a distinct pattern of wear behavior. An analysis of Table 1 indicates several relationships among the materials tested:

1. When the coatings slide on themselves, the washer wears more than the disc.
2. A peak incremental wear rate occurs that is up to several times higher than the final wear rate.
3. The average incremental wear rate of the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  relates directly with the contact pressure, reducing in half with each reduction of the contact pressure by half.
4. When the  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  is impregnated with chromia the wear rate decreases by an order of magnitude compared to the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating. Also, the wear of the

coating is no longer a direct function of the contact pressure; the two higher pressures resulted in near the same amount of wear.

5. The chromium plating wears less than any of the other materials tested and its wear is independent of contact pressure.
6. When the washer is chromium plated, the pattern of wear of the  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coatings changes. Now the disc with the coating on it wears more than the Cr plated washer.
7. Both the unimpregnated and impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coatings wear the same amount when they are sliding against a Cr plated washer.
8. The cast iron has a low wear rate when it is paired against itself and a medium wear rate when paired against a Cr plated washer. It has better wear resistance than the impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating.

Curves of incremental wear rates for the materials tested show that at least three distinct curve shapes occurred. Analysis of these shapes indicates something about the mechanism of wear that is occurring. Further, detailed metallographic analysis and other refined testing is still required to verify the postulated reasons for the shapes of the curves. Such work is currently underway.

Figure 5 shows the incremental wear rate curve for the washer of

the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  pair sliding on itself at the three contact pressures. Note that there is a peak of wear that occurs at the higher two pressures and that a general trend exists (which is better defined in other wear pairs data) where the incremental wear starts at a higher level per increment of exposure and drops to a lower level at steady state conditions. The wear rate peak as well as the slope of the curve in the peak region decreases with a decrease in the contact pressure, essentially disappearing at the 25 psi pressure. For the two lower contact pressures the incremental wear rate reaches a steady state condition at 11 minutes of testing after which each time increment results in the same weight loss as the previous increment.

The reason for the higher initial wear rates can be seen in the photomicrographs in Figure 6 for the  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating tested at 50 psi contact pressure. Photo a shows the surface of the CTBC prior to testing. Photo b shows the worn surface after steady state wear was reached. It can be seen that the unworn, as deposited surface has many nodular protrusions that rise above the general surface plain. These protrusions are easier to remove than the material in the general plain of the surface and account for the higher initial incremental wear rate. Photo B shows the surface after steady state wear has been achieved. The much more planar surface wears at a lower rate.

The shape of the incremental wear curves are the same as those which were plotted for incremental erosion of  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  thermal barrier coatings in Reference 1. The reason established for the high initial incremental erosion rates in that study was the early removal of high protrusions of ceramic material that occur on the as-plasma sprayed

surface. The same mechanism accounts for the higher initial wear rates observed in Figure 5.

Figure 7 shows the disc wear curves for the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  pair. It can be seen that the wear that occurred on the wider surface disc was much lower than that which occurred on the narrow surface washer and it did not show a distinct wear peak as the washer did. The two lower contact pressures resulted in steady state wear rates essentially from the beginning of the test. The anomalous behavior of the 100 psi contact pressure curve is not explainable at this time.

Figure 8 shows the effect of the contact pressure on the wear rates of the washer and disc that were coated with unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$ .

The incremental wear rates of the  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  pair sliding on itself are shown in Figure 9. It can be seen that the wear rates are much higher during the early part of the test and drop to much lower steady state rates. Unlike the curves for the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  shown in Figure 5, the curves in Figure 9 show that the highest wear rate occurred on the washer that was tested at the lowest contact pressure, 25 psi. The two higher contact pressures resulted in the same, much lower incremental wear rates at steady state conditions. The direct effect of the lower contact pressures resulting in lower wear rates shown in Figure 5 can only be seen for the  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  at the beginning of the tests. The initial incremental wear rate for the 25 psi contact pressure is considerably lower than the rates for the higher pressure tests.

The reason for the lowest contact pressure having the highest wear rate is thought to be due to a mechanism where individual voids with  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  walls that are impregnated with  $Cr_2O_3$  break off near the beginning of each increment of the test and act as abrasive particles in a subsequent 3 body wear test mode. The 25 PSI is a low enough pressure to keep them from being crushed between the two sliding surfaces. Figure 10 shows these particles on the wear surface. Compare Figure 10 with Figure 6b. The voids seen in Figure 6b are filled in with the  $Cr_2O_3$  as shown in Figure 10.

At the 50 and 100 psi contact pressures, the  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated,  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  abrasive particles are crushed to a much smaller size as soon as they are broken off the wear surface, a size where they do not act as abrasive particles in a classic 3 body wear situation. In effect, they act as a solid lubricant, eliminating the effect of the contact pressure difference on the wear rate.

Figure 11 further substantiates the 3 body wear premise. It shows the disc wear of the  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating. The fact that the wear for the 25 psi contact pressure tests starts low and increases above the curves for the 50 and 100 psi contact pressure tests relates to the need to first break off the protruding particles on the more wear-prone washer surface as well as those on the lower wear rate disc before the system can wear in a 3 body abrasive wear mode. The lack of a steeply descending curve for the 25 psi test of the washer at the beginning of the test shown in Figure 9 correlates well with the slow start on the wear of the disc in the same test. The

wear peaks which occur for all contact pressures are not explainable at this time. The effect of the higher contact pressure causing more wear than the lower pressure, as was observed in Figure 5 for the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$ , can be seen by comparing the curves for the 50 and 100 psi pressures in Figure 11.

Figure 12 plots the wear rates as a function of contact pressure for the  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  at 33 minutes of wear and clearly shows the higher rate at the 25 psi contact pressure and the same, lower rate for the 50 and 100 psi tests. At shorter wear times, a difference existed between the wear rates of the disc at 50 and 100 psi contact pressure.

Figure 13 shows how the Cr plated steel affects the wear patterns of the unimpregnated and impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  at the 50 PSI contact pressure. The shapes of these incremental wear rate curves combines the high starting rate and the peak rate curve shapes seen in the previous figures. Both types of ceramic coated discs follow the same pattern throughout the test duration and wear at the same rate. The wear rate of the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  was reduced compared to its value when sliding on itself as shown in Figure 5. This indicates the detrimental effect that porosity has on sliding wear behavior. When one side of the pair is not porous, the wear potential of the pair is markedly reduced. The wear rate of the  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $ZrO_2$  disc at the 50 psi contact pressure is 6 times greater than it is when sliding on itself as shown in Figure 11. The Cr plated steel washers (lower curves) wear very little throughout the test.

The pairing of these materials against the Cr plated steel washer

had the effect of integrating the distinct wear pattern characteristics found when each material was paired against itself. The wear pattern observed combined the high initial rate with the mid-test peak rate and the corresponding wear rates fell somewhat in the mid-range between the higher wear rate of the unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  pair and the lower wear rate of the chromia impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  pair.

Figure 14 compares the higher wear rate  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating sliding on itself with the low rate cast iron against itself and against Cr plated steel. The cast iron washer sliding on itself has a comparative wear rate to the Cr plated washer sliding on the cast iron. The fact that the  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  wears at a rate only three times greater than the cast iron at steady state conditions indicates that it has considerable potential as a wear resistant coating as well as a thermal barrier coating.

Figure 15 shows a comparison between  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  wearing on itself and on Cr plated steel. The highest curve is the ceramic coated disc wearing on a Cr plated steel washer. The lowest curve is a Cr plated washer. The open circle curve of the disc of the pair where both surfaces are ceramic coated should be compared to the open triangle curve of the ceramic coated disc wearing on Cr plated steel. There is a large difference in the wear rates that results from the great increase in the wear resistance of the Cr plating on the washer.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Cr plated steel as is currently used in diesel engines was the most wear resistant material tested.
2.  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnating a plasma sprayed  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  CTBC reduced the sliding wear rate of the CTBC by an order of magnitude.
3. At the low contact pressure of 25 PSI the  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated voids in the  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  broke off the coating surface and acted as particles in a 3 body abrasive wear mode with a higher resultant wear rate.
4. The crushed,  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated voids of the  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  at the higher contact pressures acted as a solid film lubricant, eliminating the effect of contact pressure between 50 and 100 PSI.
5. When chromium plated washers were paired with ceramic coated discs, both the unimpregnated and  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  coatings wore at the same rate, compared to an order of magnitude difference when each is rubbed on itself.
6. Porosity is very detrimental to the wear resistance of a ceramic coating.

## REFERENCES

1. Levy, A., Boone, D., Davis, A. and Scholz, E., "The Erosion Protective Coatings", Proceedings 6th International Conference Erosion by Liquid and Solid Impact, Cambridge, England, September, 1983.

## FIGURES

1. Drawing of test washer and disc.
2. Cross section of unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating.
3. Cross section of  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating.
4. Cross section of cast iron cylinder wall.
5. Incremental wear rate of  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on 1018 steel.
6. Surface of unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  (a) before and (b) after testing.
7. Incremental wear rate of  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on disc of 1018 steel.
8. Incremental wear rate vs contact pressure for  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on 1018 steel.
9. Incremental wear rate of  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on washer of 1018 steel.
10. Tested surface of  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  tested at 25 psi contact pressure.
11. Incremental wear rate of  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on disc of 1018 steel.
12. Incremental wear rate vs contact pressure for  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC.
13. Incremental wear rates of Cr plated washers and  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  and  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  on discs of 1018 steel.
14. Incremental wear rates of cast iron and  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC.
15. Incremental wear rates of Cr plated 1018 steel and  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  on washers and  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  on discs of 1018 steel.

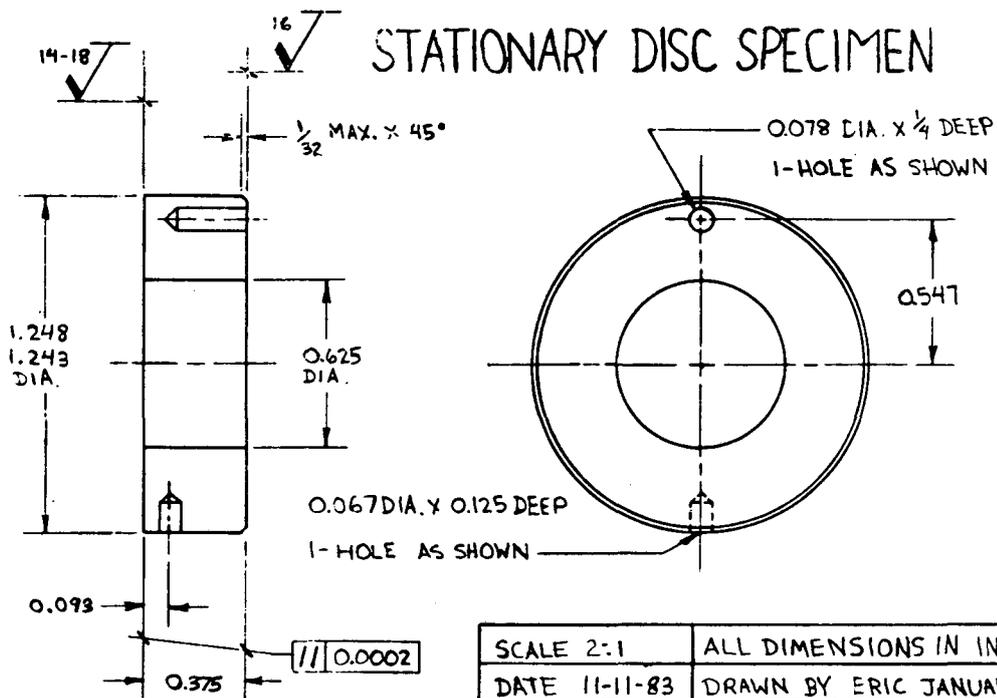
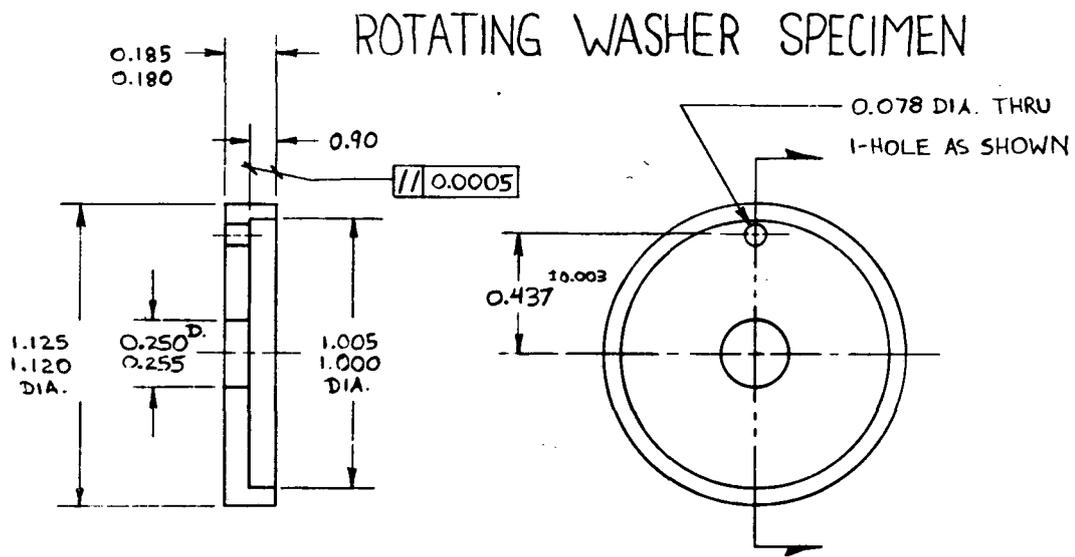
Table 1

Materials Pair	Peak Incremental Wear Rate [10 <sup>-4</sup> g/sec]			Final Incremental Wear Rate [10 <sup>-4</sup> g/sec]			Avg. Incremental Wear Rate [10 <sup>-4</sup> g/sec]			Test Duration (min)
	100psi	50psi	25psi	100psi	50psi	25psi	100psi	50psi	25psi	
1) Washer: PT013 Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> -ZrO <sub>2</sub> Disc: PT013 Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> -ZrO <sub>2</sub>	4.5	2.3	1.4	2.2*	1.6**	0.6	3.22	1.80	0.72	16
	1.8	0.85	0.5	1.8*	0.7**	0.25	1.40	0.66	0.33	16
2) Washer: Cr <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> impregnated Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> -ZrO <sub>2</sub> Disc: Cr <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> impregnated Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> -ZrO <sub>2</sub>	0.70	0.83	0.55	0.13	0.12	0.38	0.172	0.177	0.384	33
	0.33	0.20	0.28	0.03	0.05	0.16	0.106	0.071	0.179	33
3) Washer: Cr plated 1018 steel Disc: PT037 Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> -ZrO <sub>2</sub>	-	0.10	-	-	0.02	-	-	0.01	-	33
	-	1.00	-	-	0.35	-	-	0.42	-	33
4) Washer: Cr plated 1018 steel Disc: Cr <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> impregnated Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> -ZrO <sub>2</sub>	-	0.07	-	-	0.01	-	-	0.02	-	33
	-	1.03	-	-	0.30	-	-	0.39	-	33
5) Washer: Cr plated 1018 steel Disc: SiC particle impregnated 1018 steel	0.17	-	-	0.02 <sup>Δ</sup>	-	-	0.01	-	-	27
	0.46	-	-	0.03	-	-	0.11	-	-	27
6) Washer: SiC particle impregnated 1018 steel Disc: SiC particle impregnated 1018 steel	0.12	-	-	0.03	-	-	0.04	-	-	27
	0.12	-	-	0.06	-	-	0.05	-	-	27

\* Failed at 11 min.

\*\* Failed at 16 min.

Δ Disregarded last weight measurement.

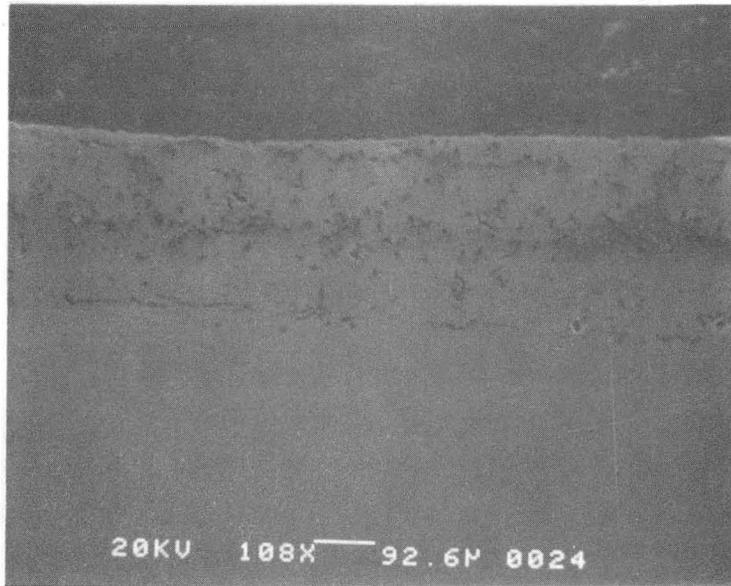


MATERIAL: 1018 STEEL Rc 20-24

SCALE 2:1	ALL DIMENSIONS IN INCHES
DATE 11-11-83	DRAWN BY ERIC JANUARY
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED: DECIMALS $\pm 0.005$ , FRACTIONS $\pm 1/64$ , CONCENTRICITY 0.005 TIR, NORMALITY AND PARALLELISM 0.002/IN, SURFACE FINISH 0.0005/0.010	

XBL 8311-4570

Fig. 1. Drawing of test washer and disc



95 μm

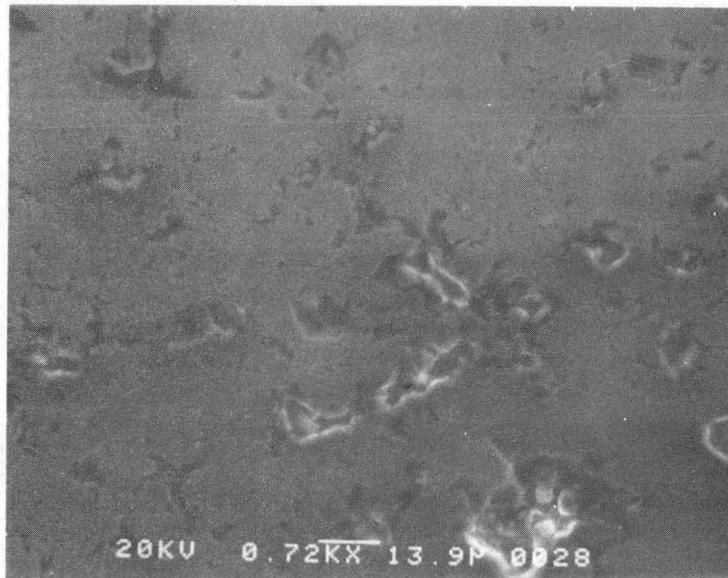
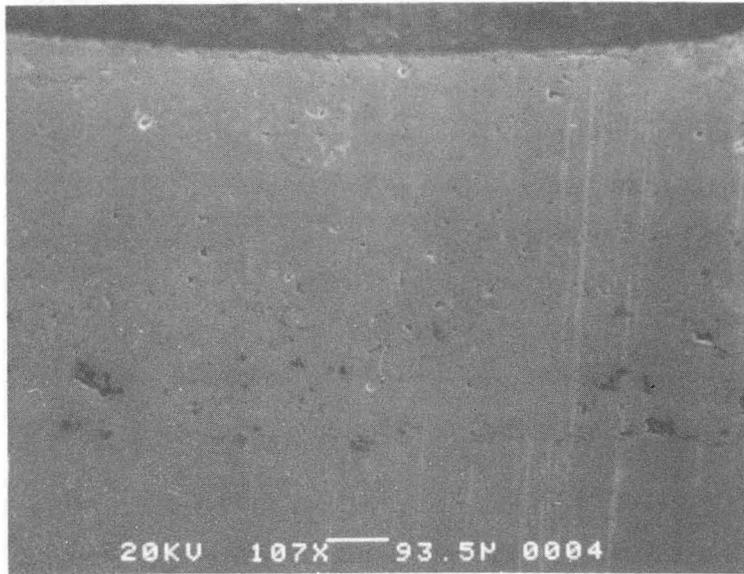


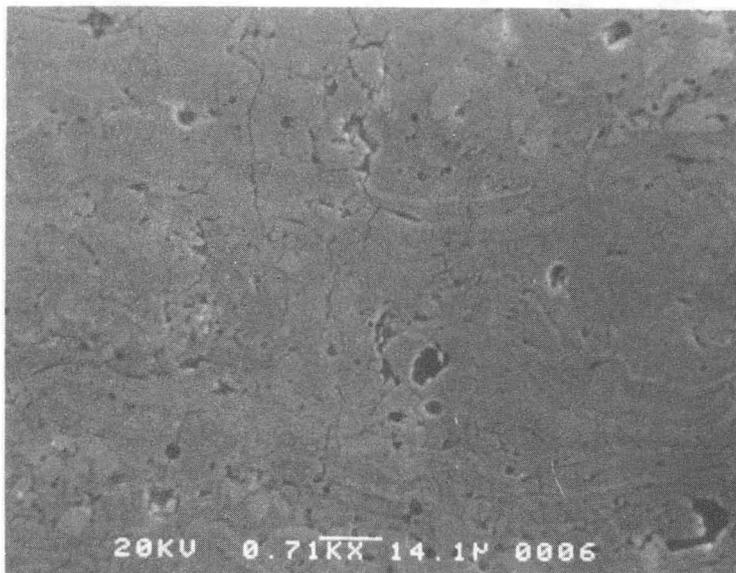
Fig. 2. Cross section of unimpregnated  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  coating

15 μm

XBB 841-473



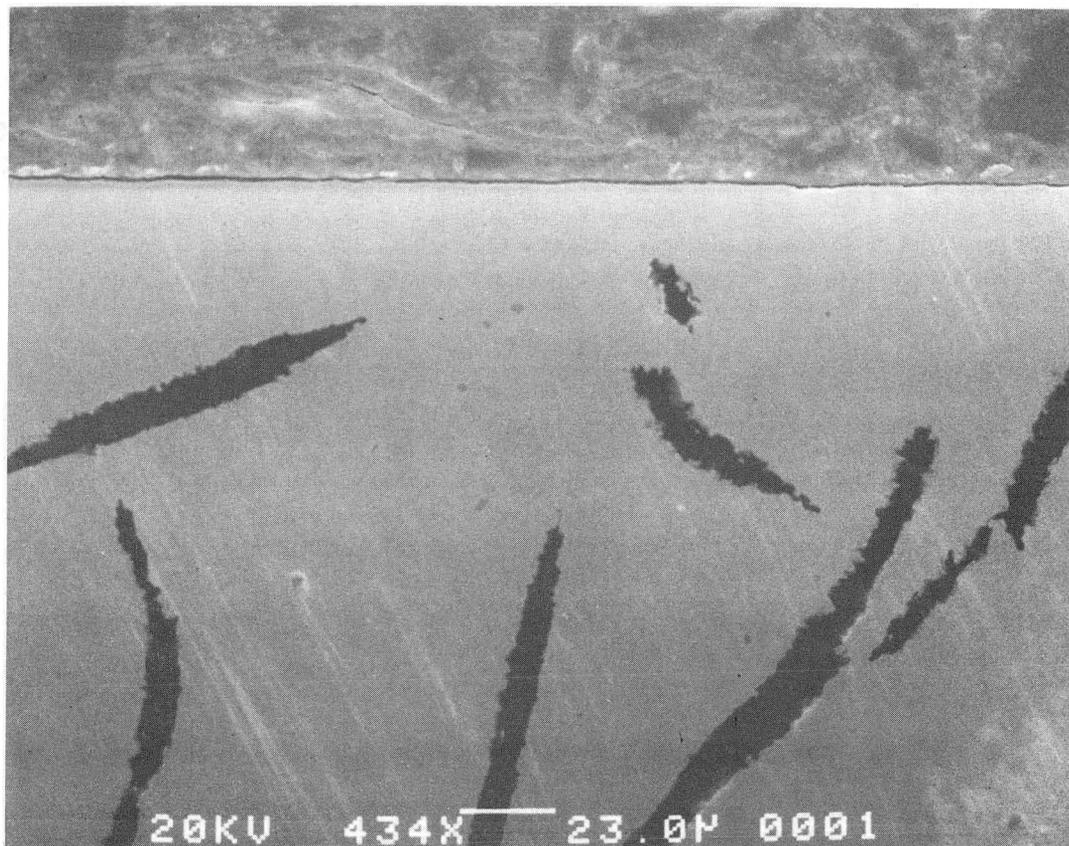
95  $\mu\text{m}$



15  $\mu\text{m}$

Fig. 3. Cross section of  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  coating

XBB 841-472



25  $\mu\text{m}$

Fig. 4. Cross section of cast iron cylinder wall

XBB 841-474

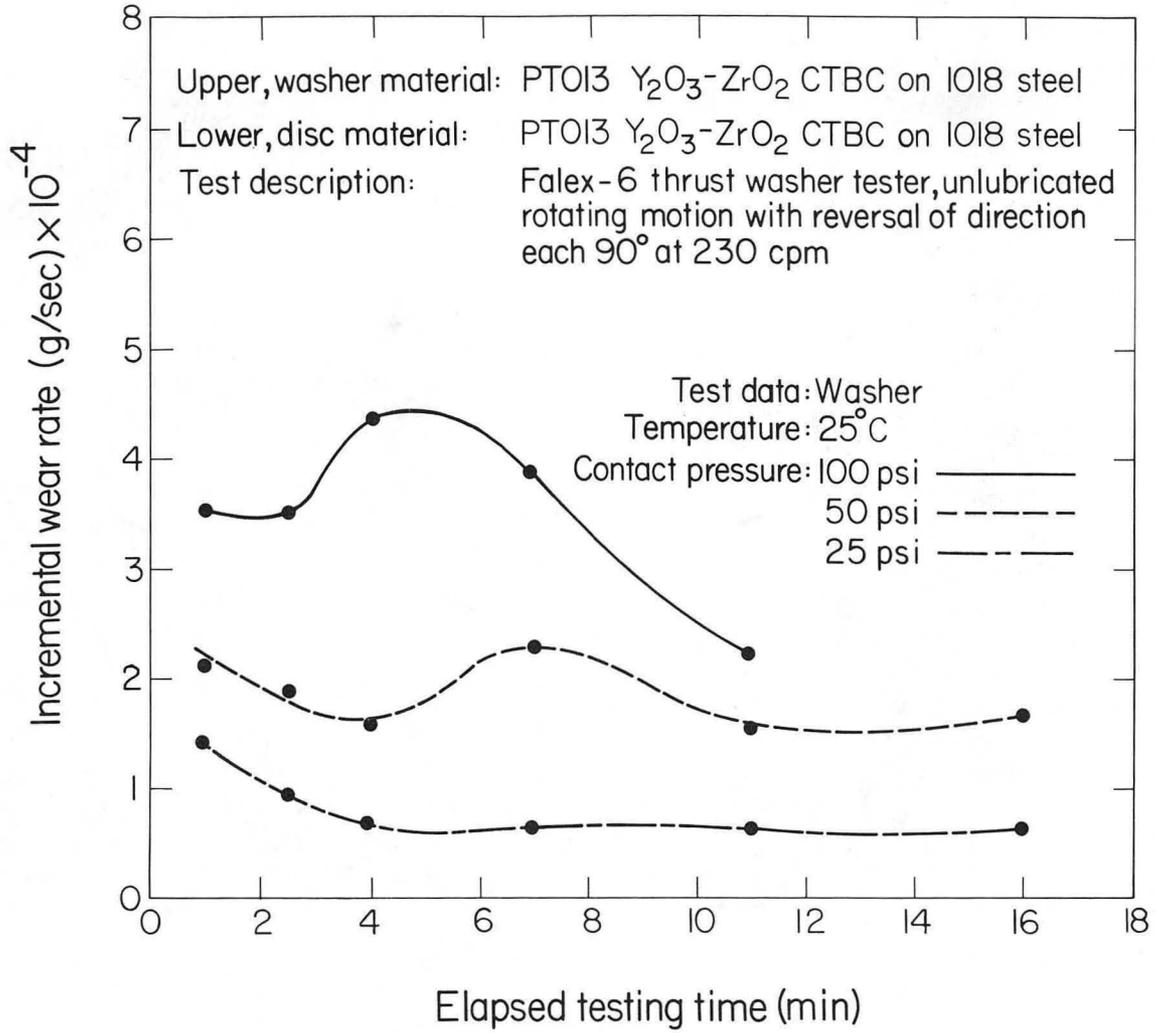
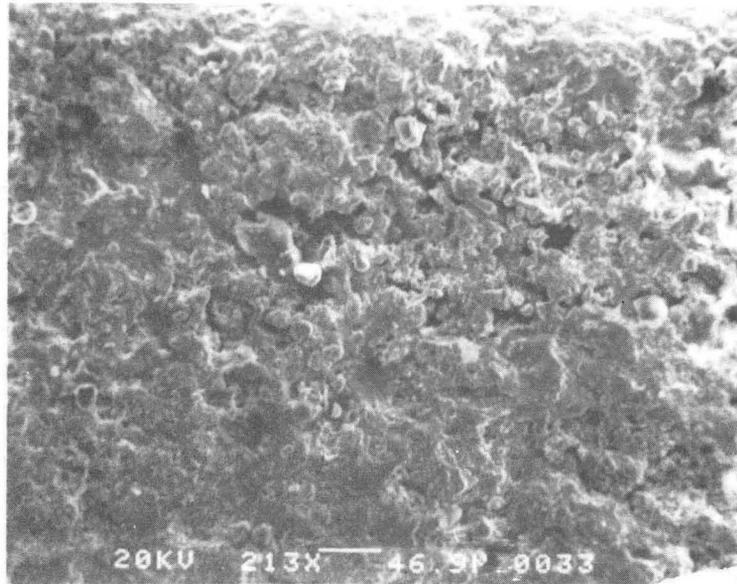
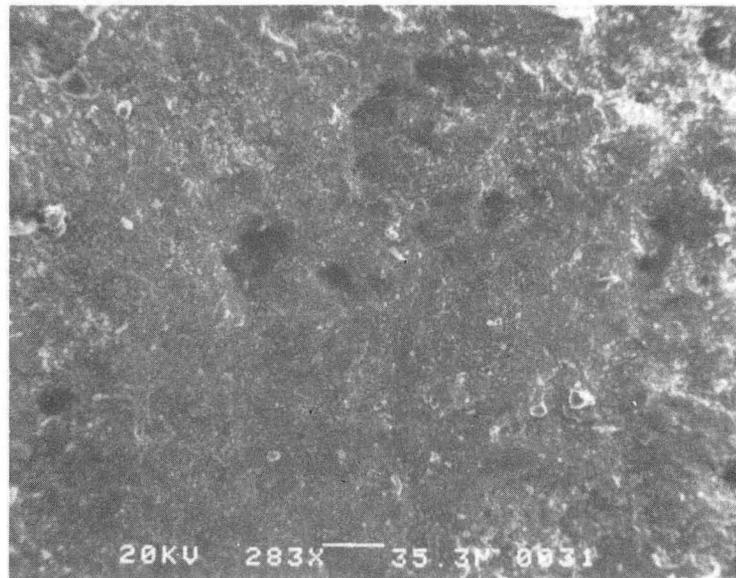


Fig. 5. Incremental wear rate of  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on washer of 1018 steel

XBL 839-11818A



50  $\mu\text{m}$



35  $\mu\text{m}$

Fig. 6. Surface of unimpregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$   
(a) before and (b) after testing<sup>2</sup>

XBB 841-475

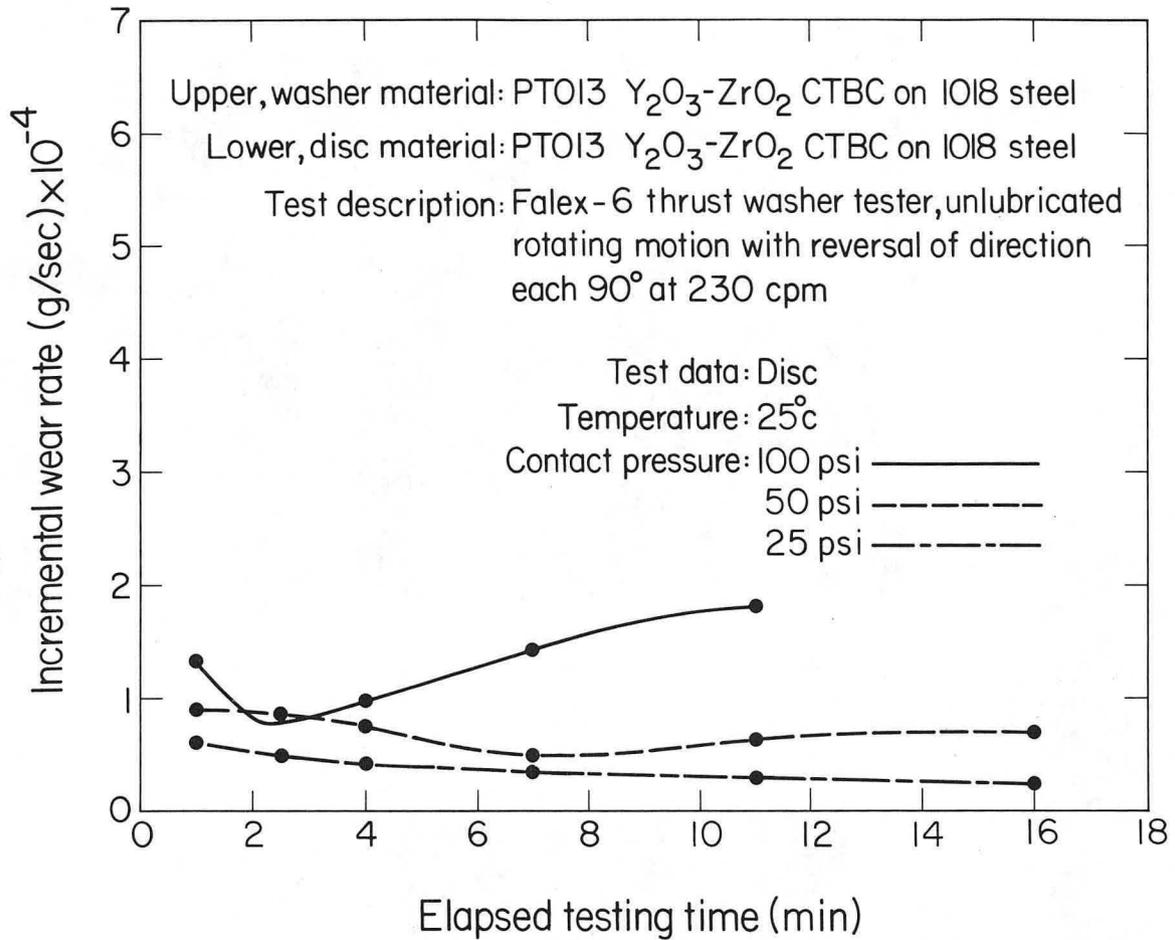


Fig. 7. Incremental wear rate of  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on disc of 1018 steel

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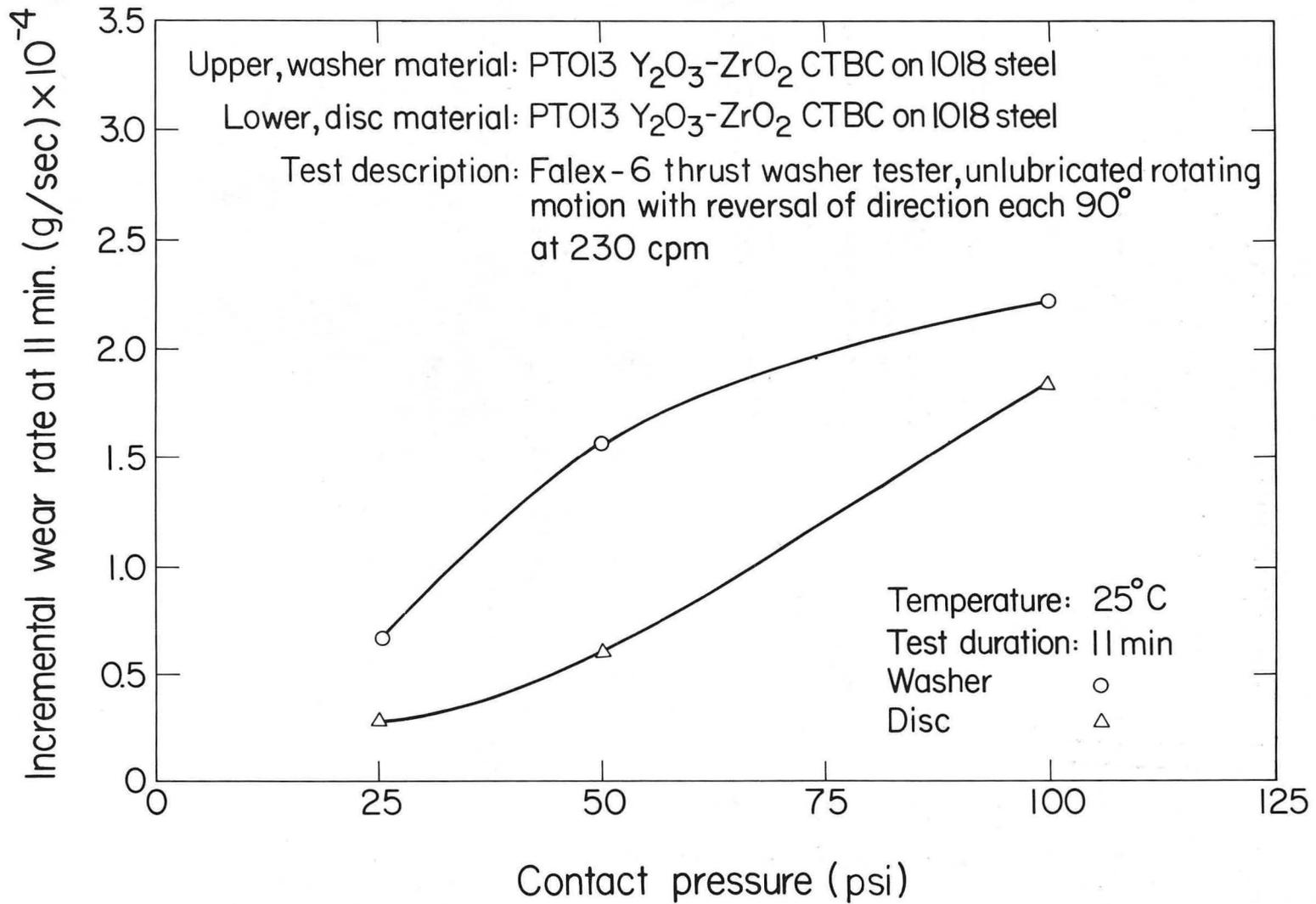


Fig. 8. Incremental wear rate vs contact pressure for  $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$  CTBC on 1018 steel

XBL 839-11823A

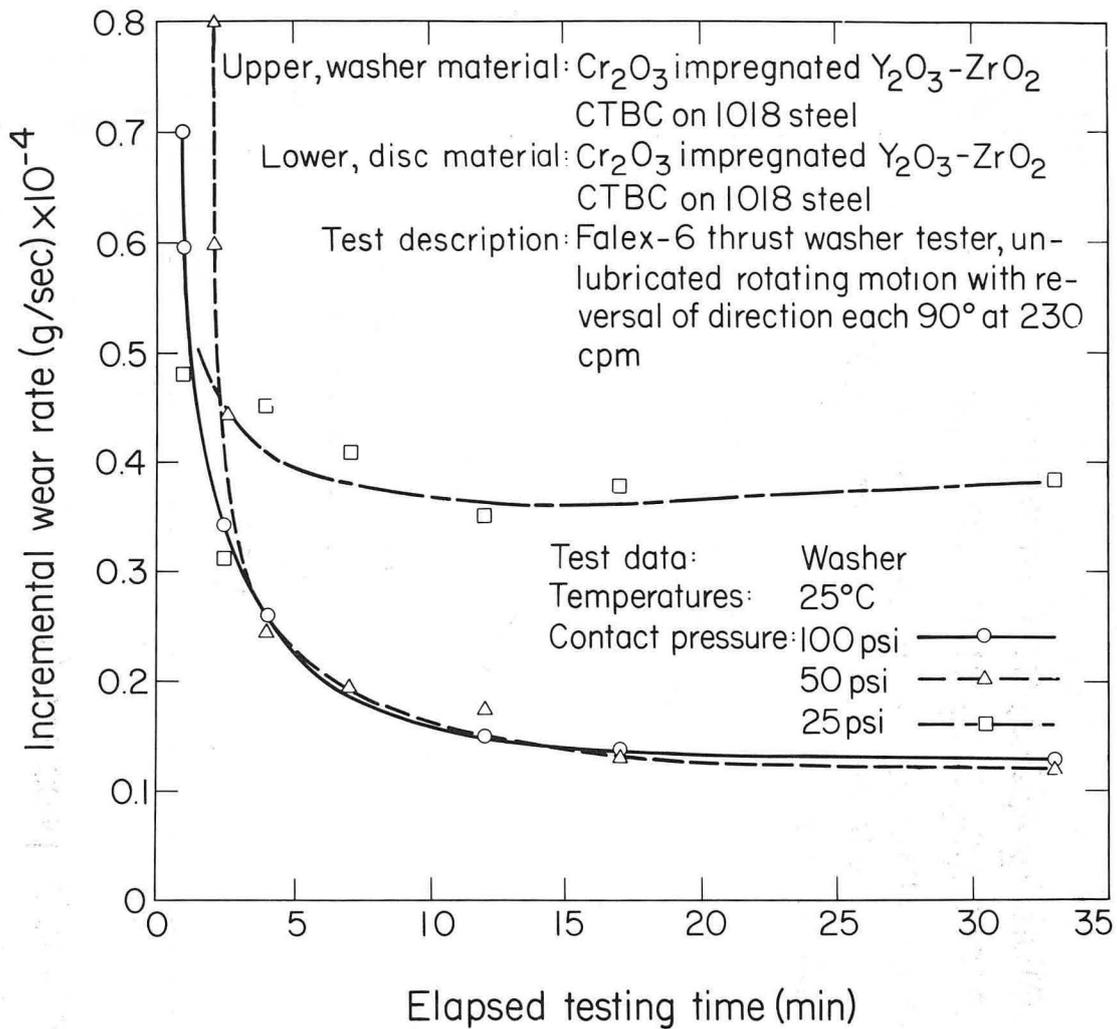
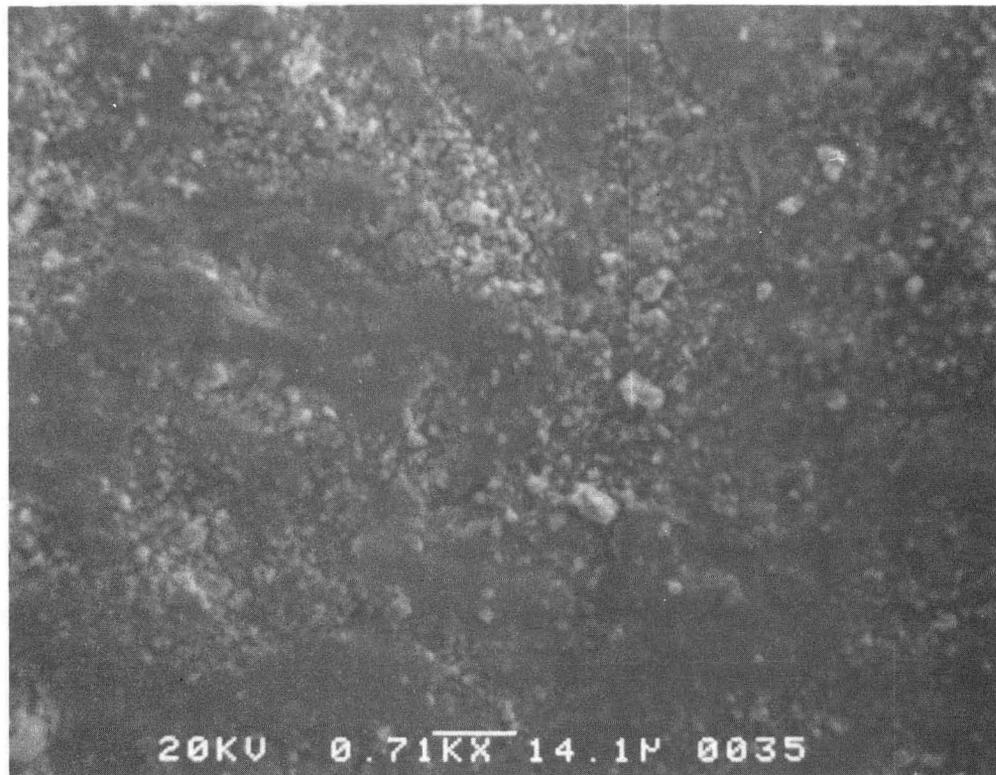


Fig. 9. Incremental wear rate of  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  CTBC on washer of 1018 steel

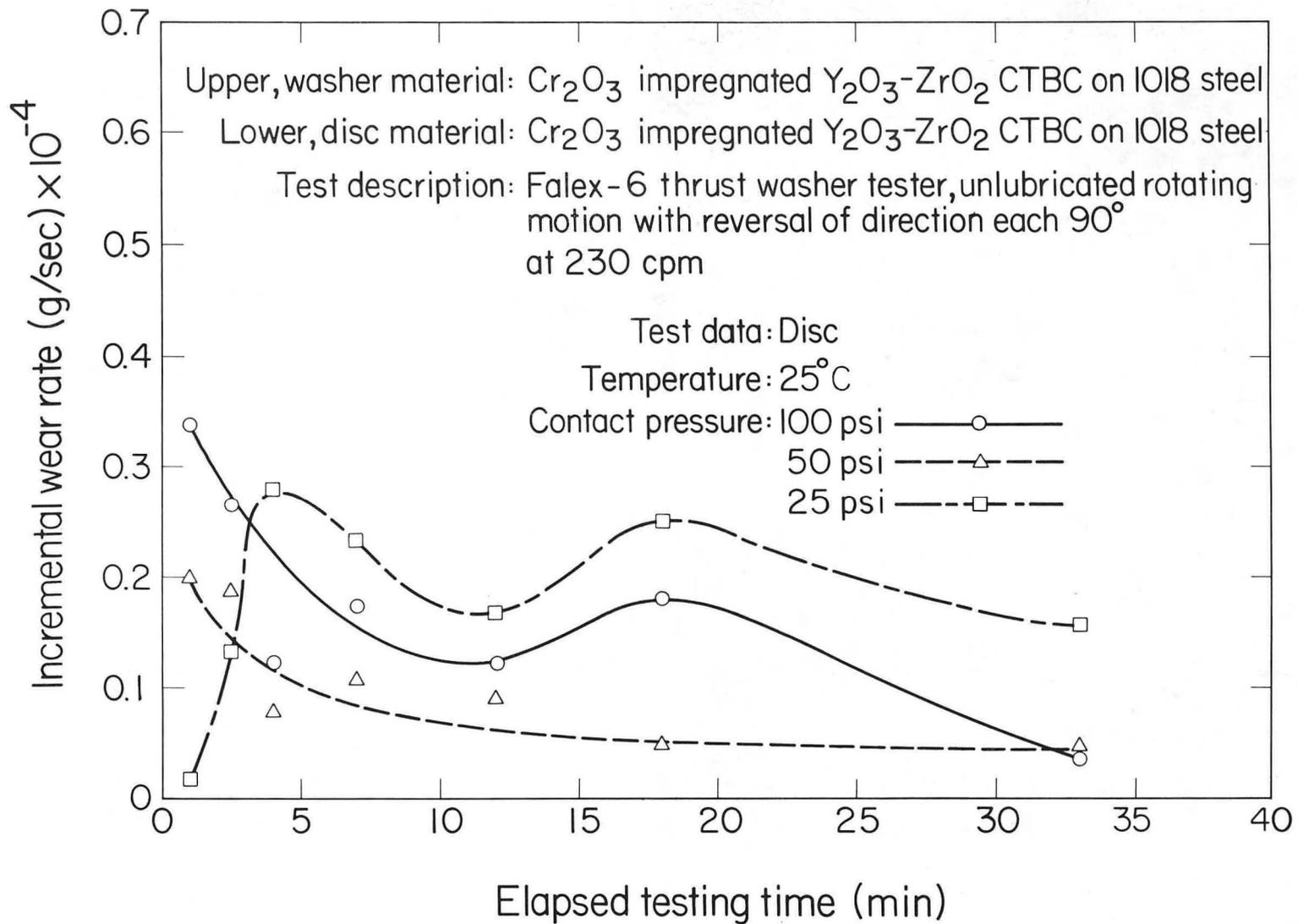
XBL 839-11814A



15  $\mu\text{m}$

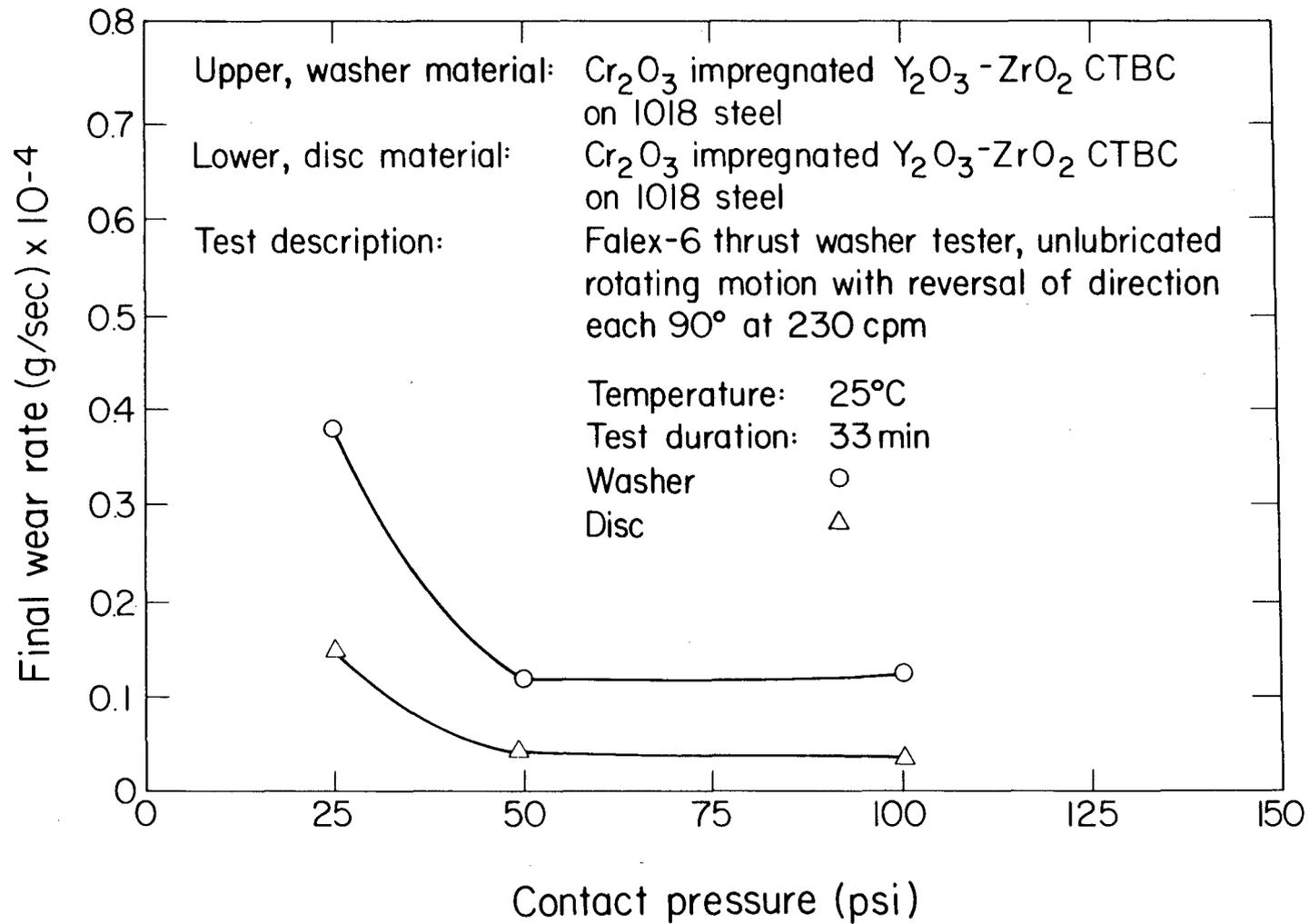
Fig. 10. Tested surface of  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  
 $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$ - $\text{ZrO}_2$  tested at 25 psi contact  
pressure

XBB 841-476



XBL 839-11821A

Fig. 11. Incremental wear rate of  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  CTBC on disc of 1018 steel



XBL 839-11819A

Fig. 12. Incremental wear rate vs contact pressure for  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$ - $\text{ZrO}_2$  CTBC on 1018 steel

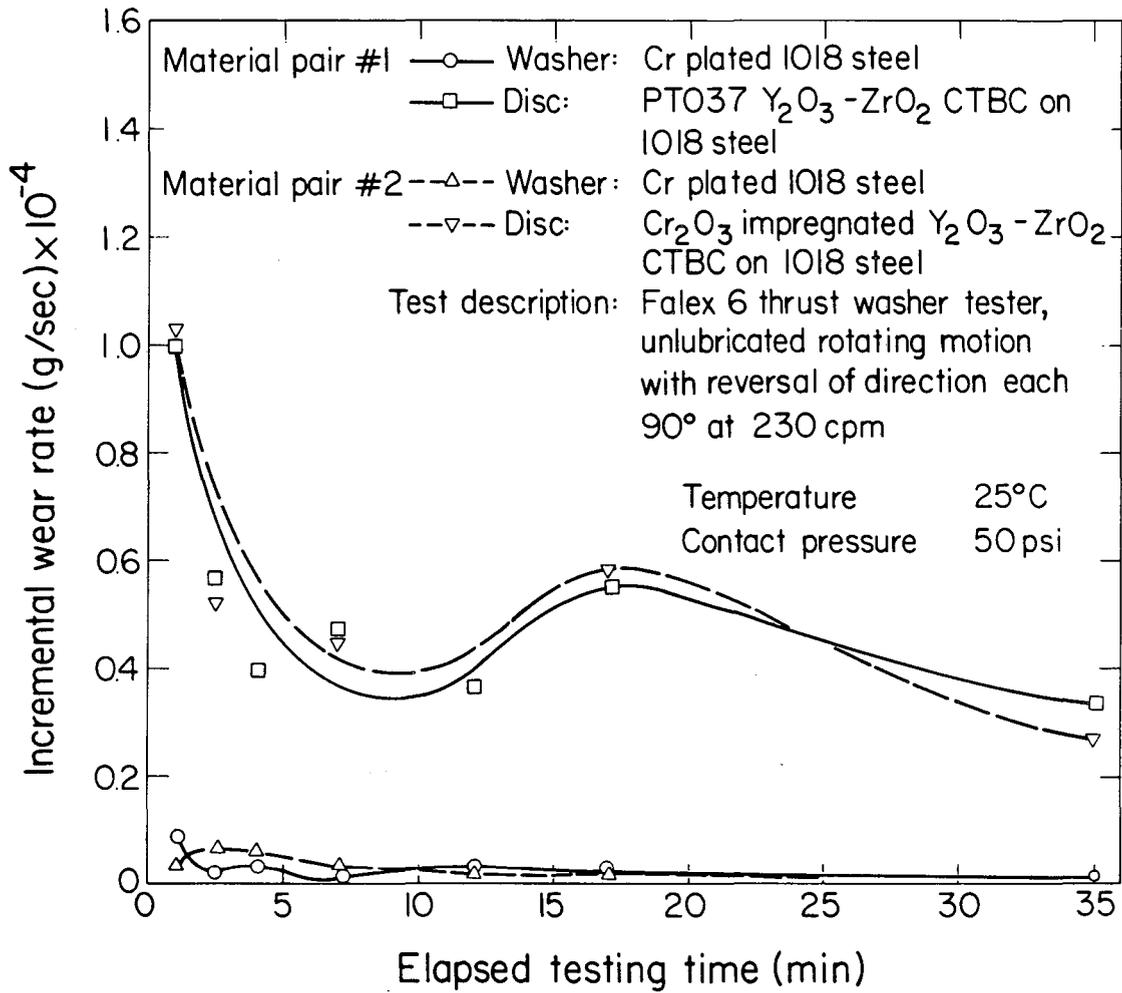
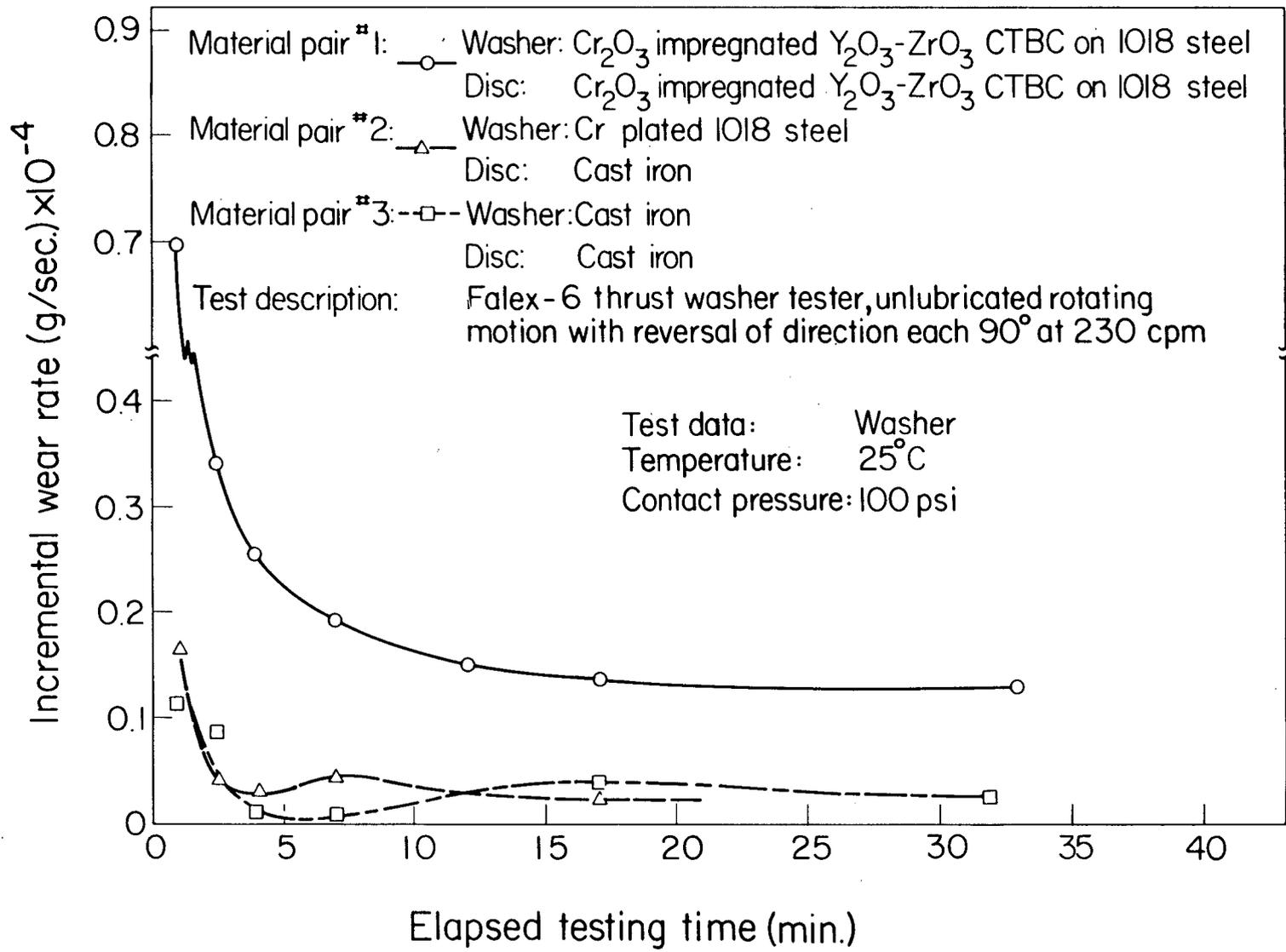


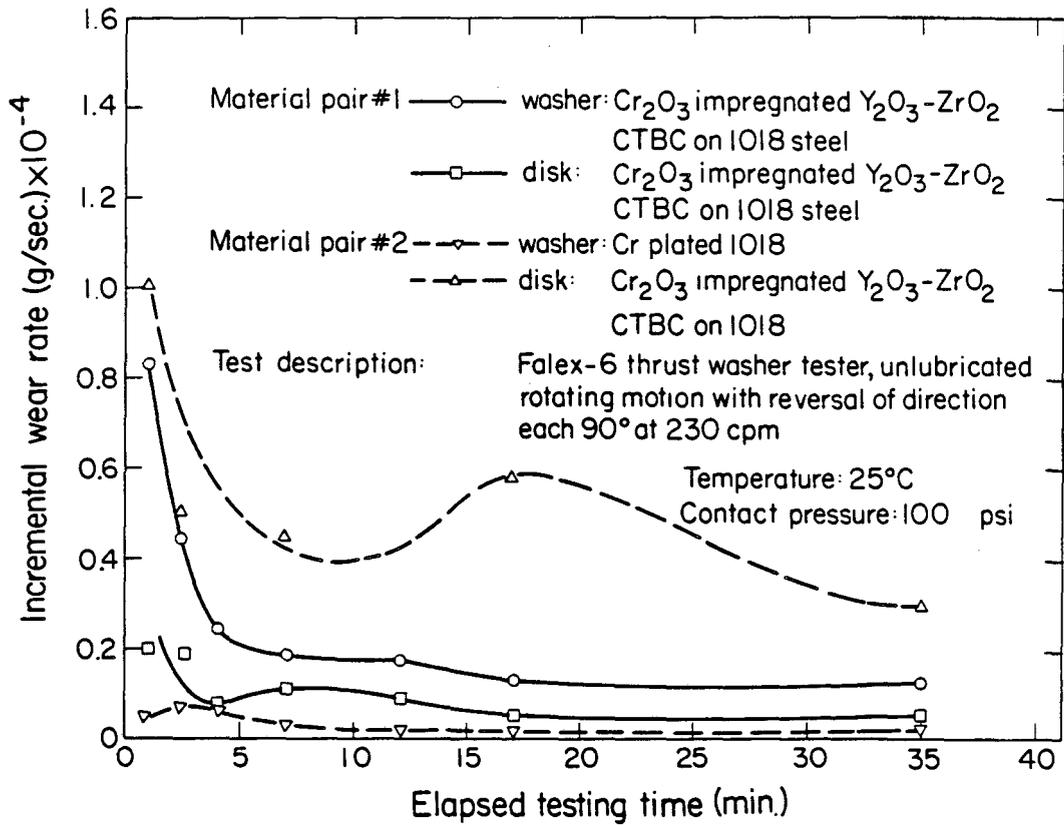
Fig. 13. Incremental wear rates of Cr plated washers and  $Y_2O_3$ - $ZrO_2$  and  $Cr_2O_3$  impregnated  $Y_2O_3$ - $ZrO_2$  on discs of 1018 steel

XBL 839-11822A



XBL 839-11820A

Fig. 14. Incremental wear rates of cast iron and  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$ - $\text{ZrO}_2$  CTBC



XBL 839-11817A

Fig. 15. Incremental wear rates of Cr plated 1018 steel and  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  on washers and  $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$  impregnated  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2$  on discs of 1018 steel

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