SAND2011-3234C

Axial Crushing of Aluminum Tubes

Experimental Results and Finite Element Modeling

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Sandia National Laboratories
Albuquerque, NM

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Introduction

- **Many Sandia-designed systems may be subjected to severe mechanical environments. Performance issues require analysis of system response under these conditions.**
- **System and component level finite element models are widely used to perform a substantial part of the analysis and to guide testing.**
- **Validation of FE modeling capabilities by comparison to experiment is an essential part of the process.**

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Objectives

- **Demonstrate the performance of FE nonlinear structural models to simulate crushing and other large-deflection scenarios.**
- **Examples:**
  - **Crushing of tubular structures**
  - **Hydraulic collapse**
  - **Puncturing**
  - **Etc.**
- **This presentation addresses aluminum tubes crushed by quasi-static axial compression.**

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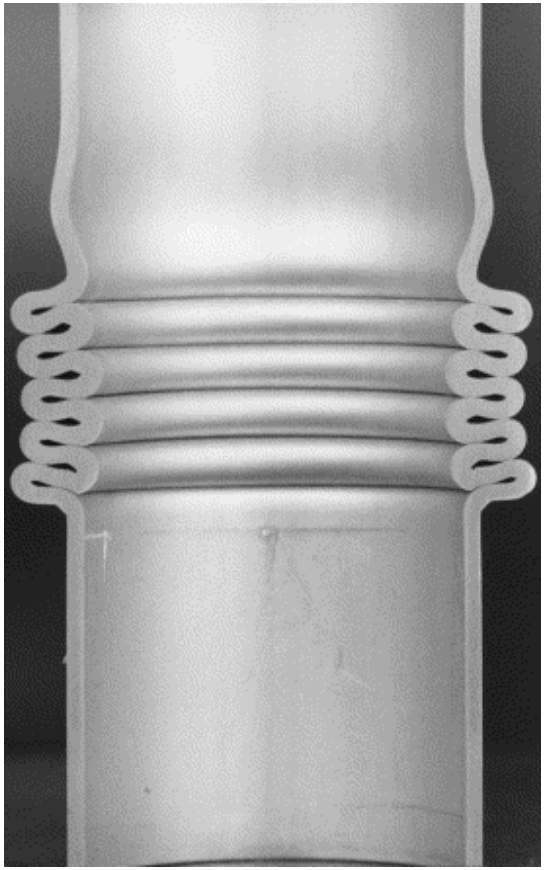
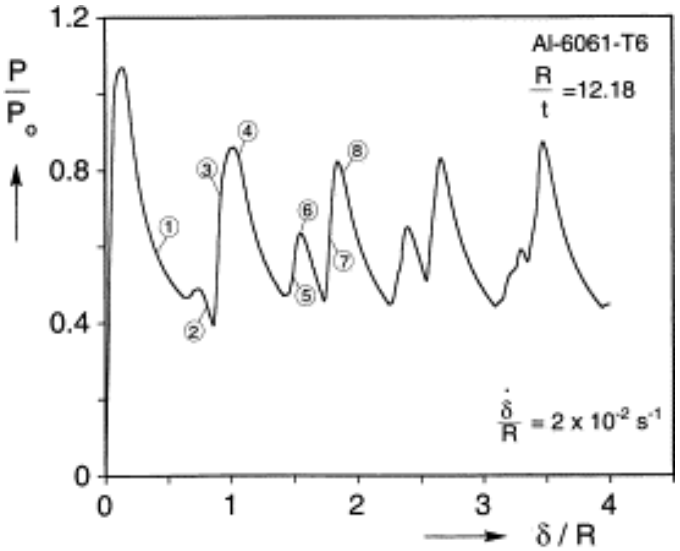
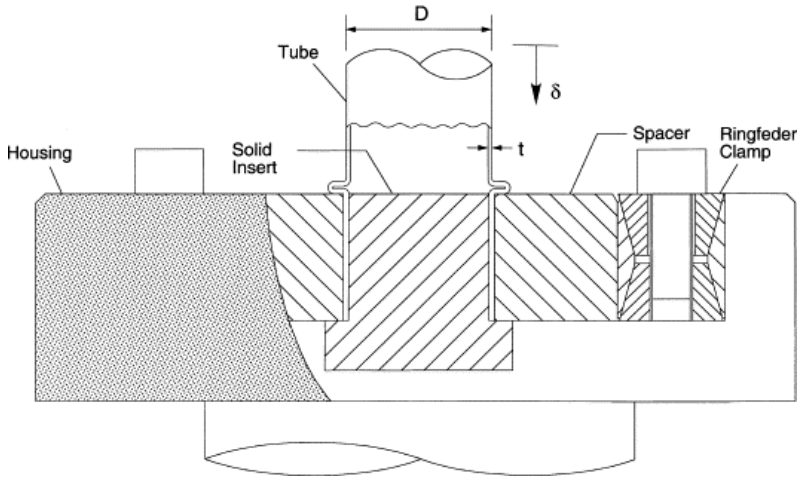
Axisymmetric Collapse (Bardi et al, 2003)







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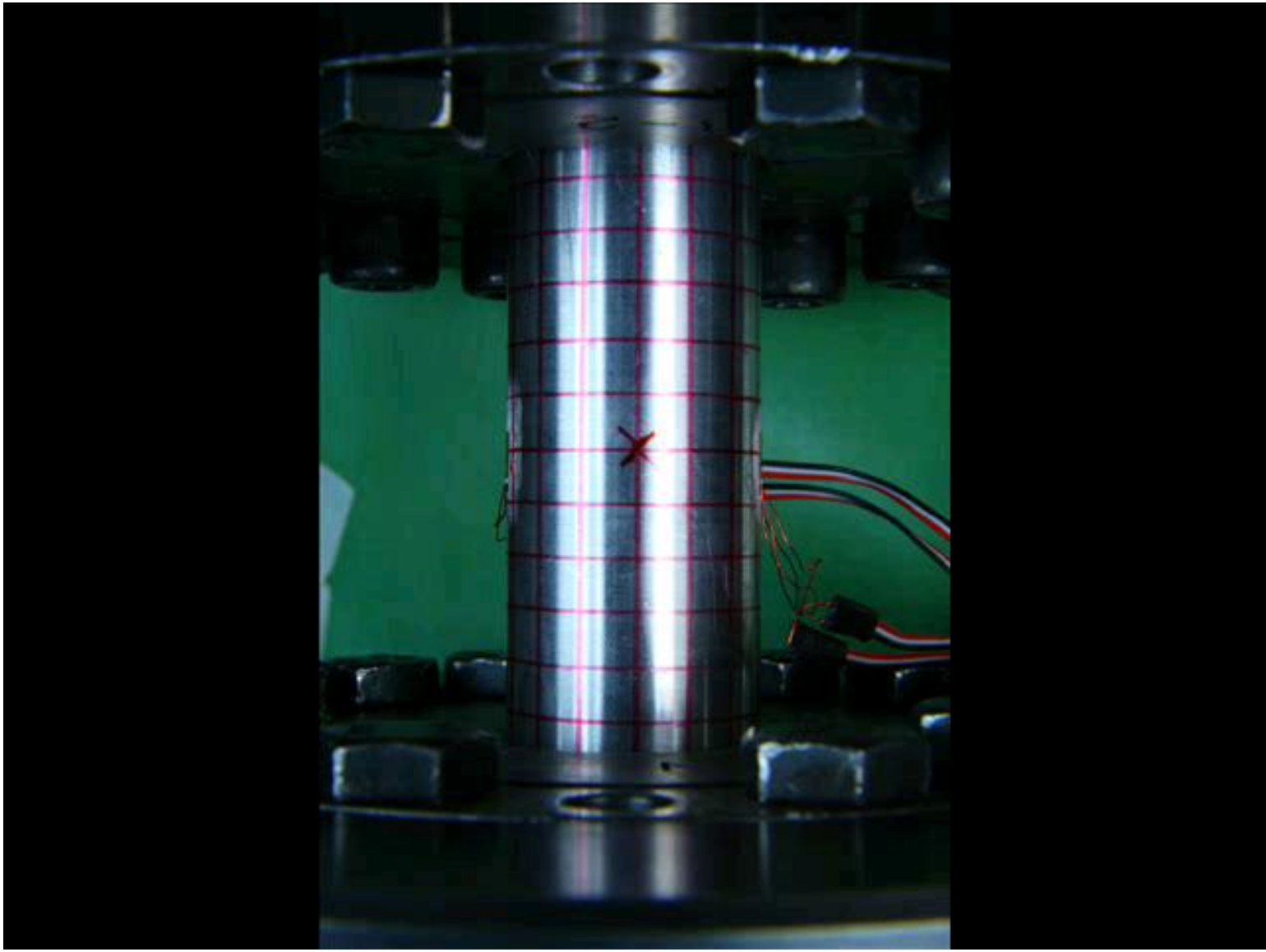
L/D = 2.2



Al 6061-T6
D/t = 25.5
L/D = 2.2

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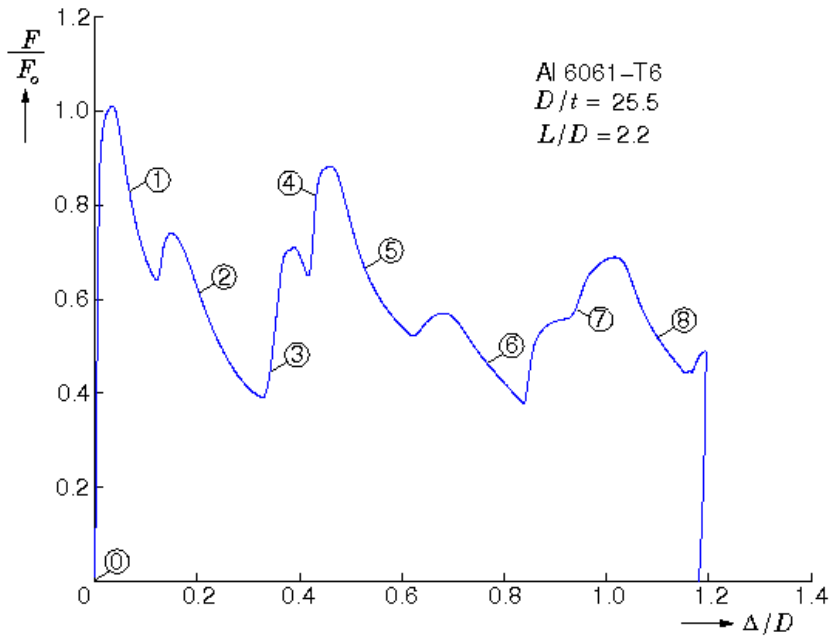
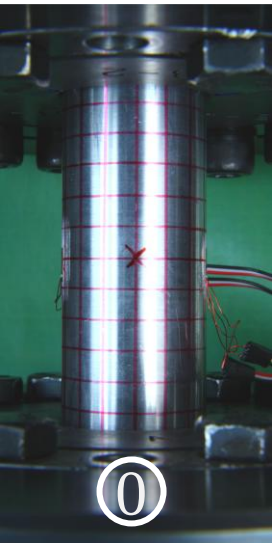
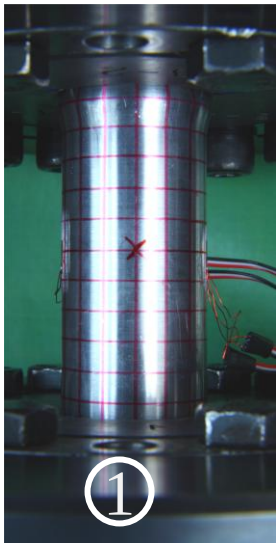
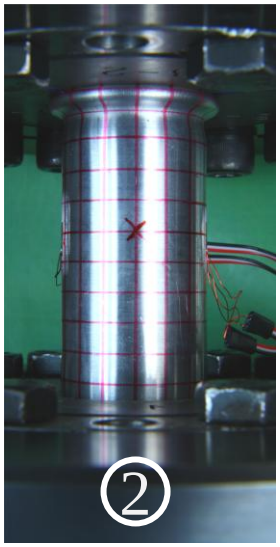
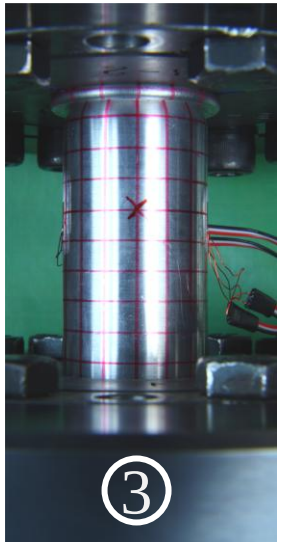
L/D = 2.2

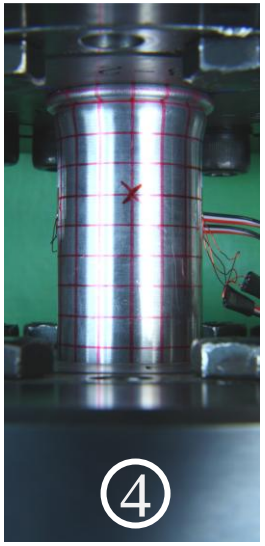


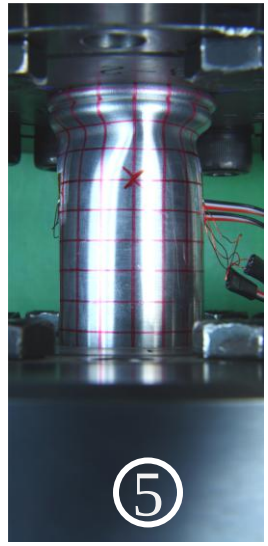


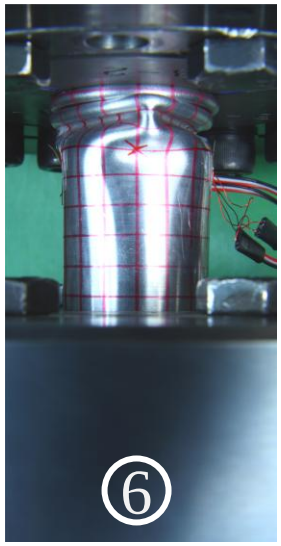












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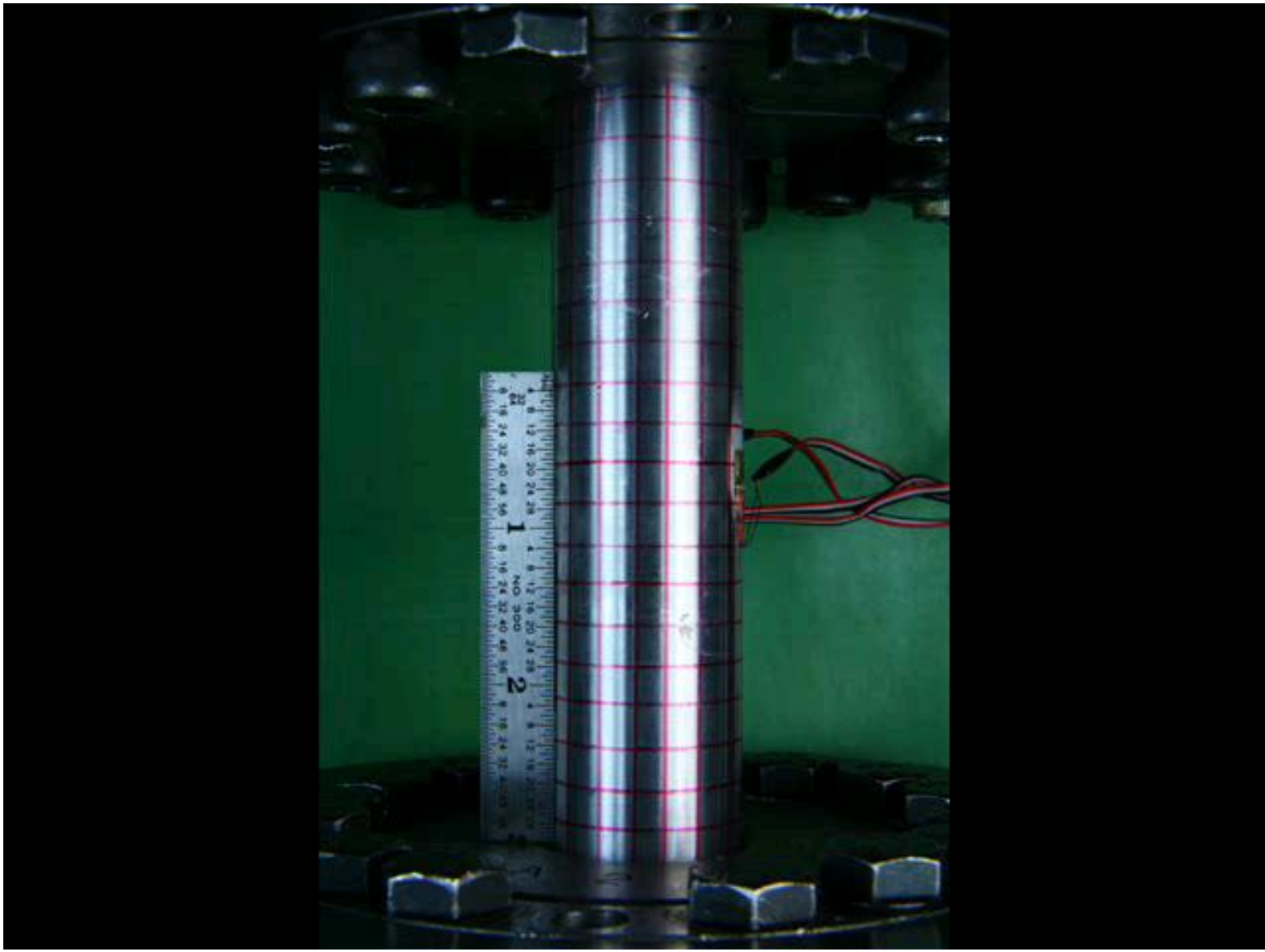
L/D = 3.8

Al 6061-T6
D/t = 25.5
L/D = 3.8



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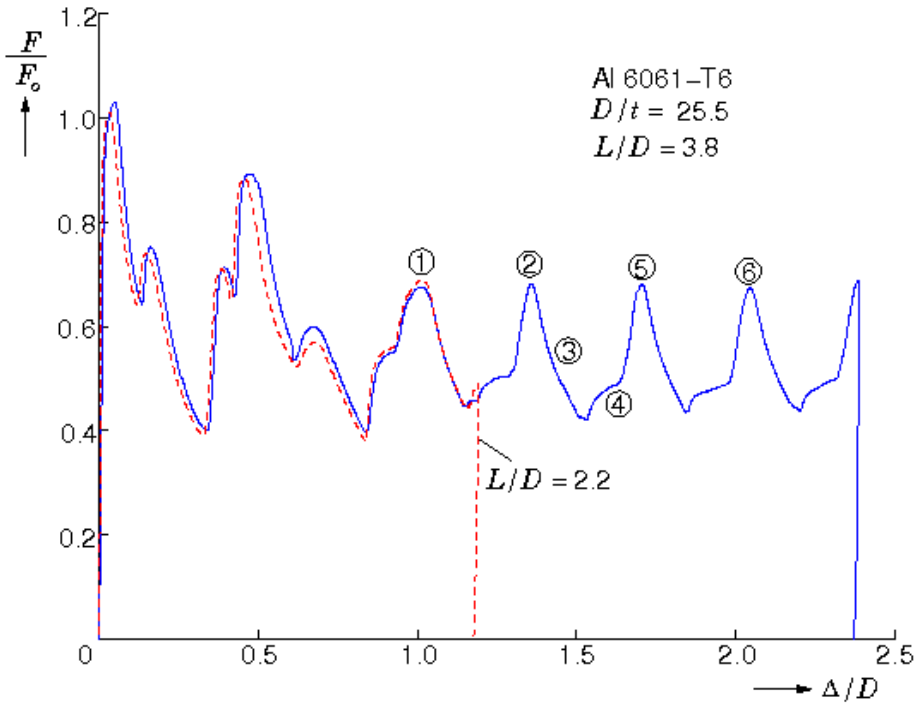

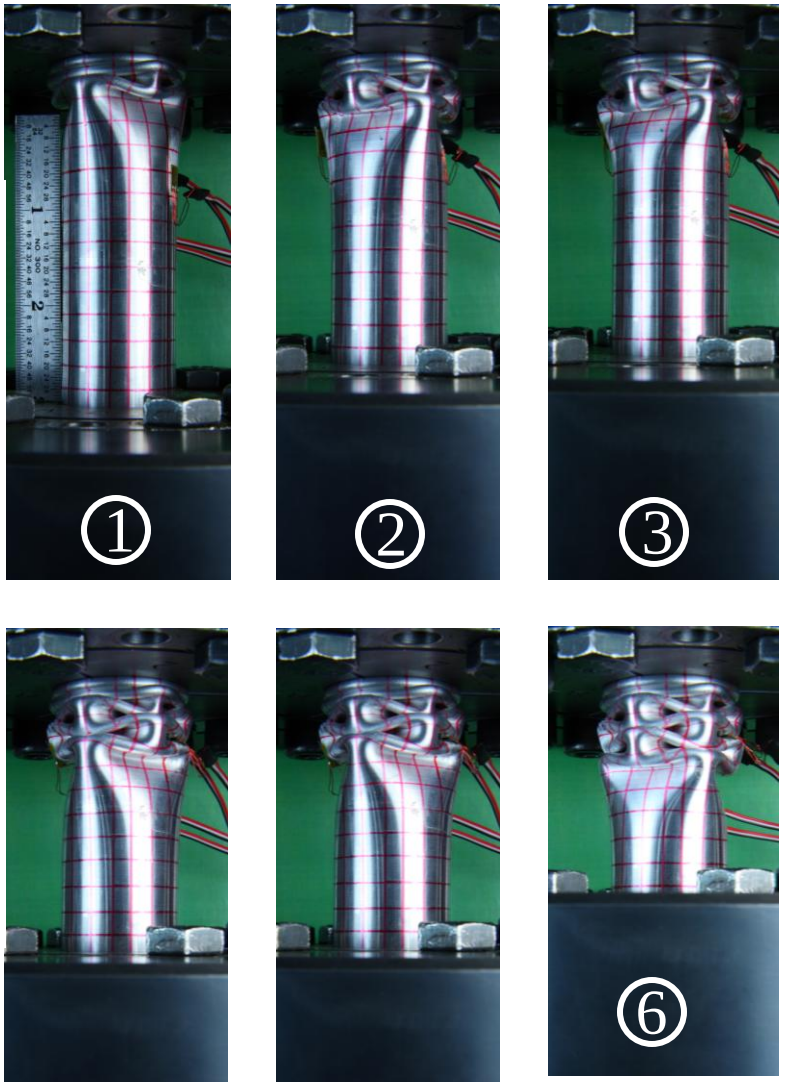

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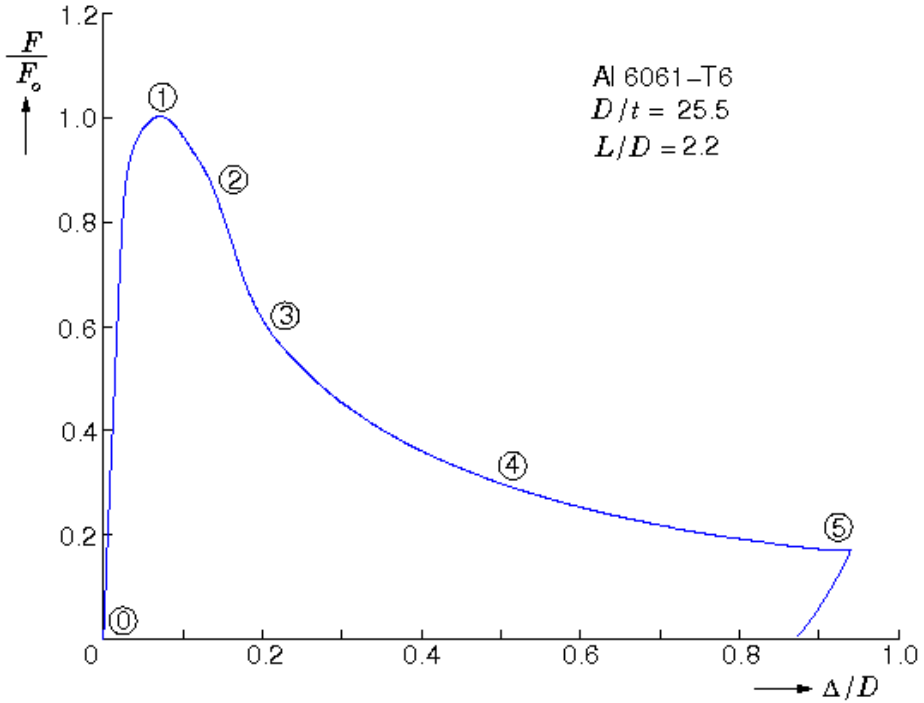
L/D = 7.0



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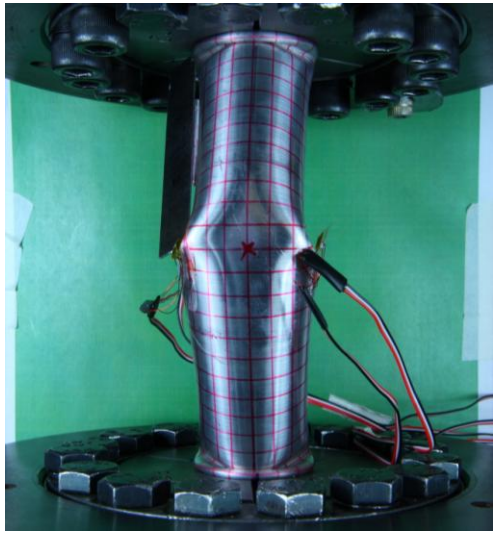
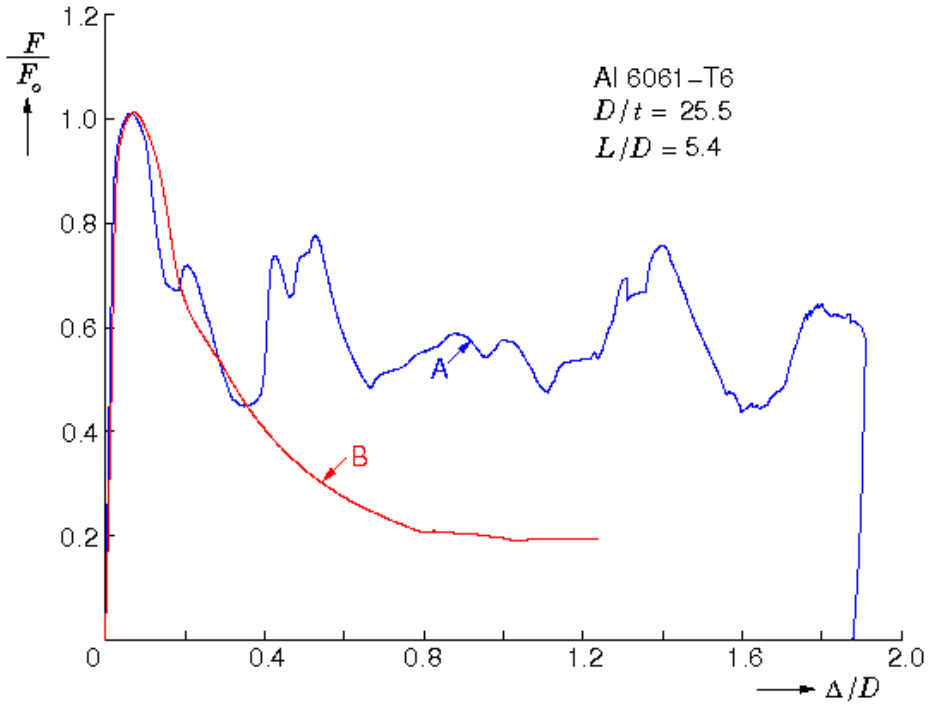


A

B



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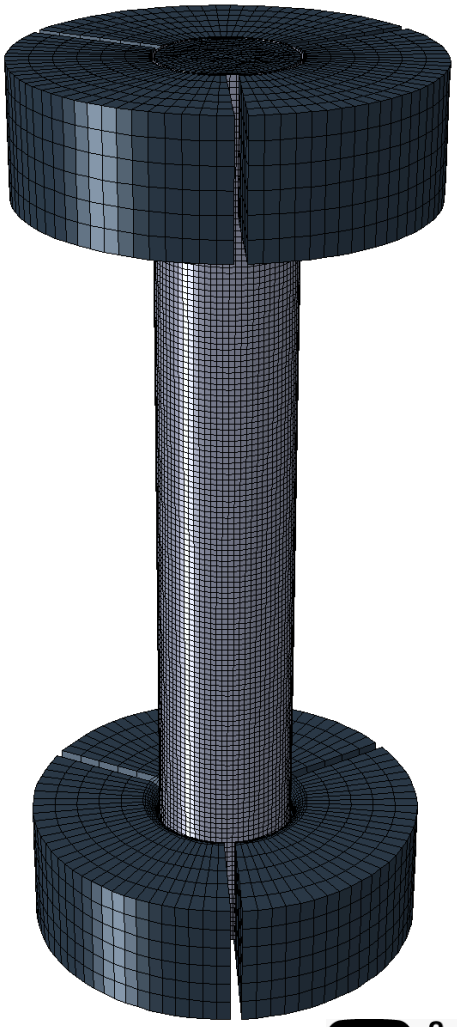
Modeling Overview

- Abaqus/Explict
- Shell Elements on Tube
  - Reduced Integration (S4R)
  - Relax Stiffness Hourglass Control
- Rigid Fixtures
- Two Step Procedure
  - Clamping Pressure on Fixtures
  - Displacement on End
- Shell Contact Thickness
  - Set by Contact Algorithm
  - <= 42% of Element Edge Length



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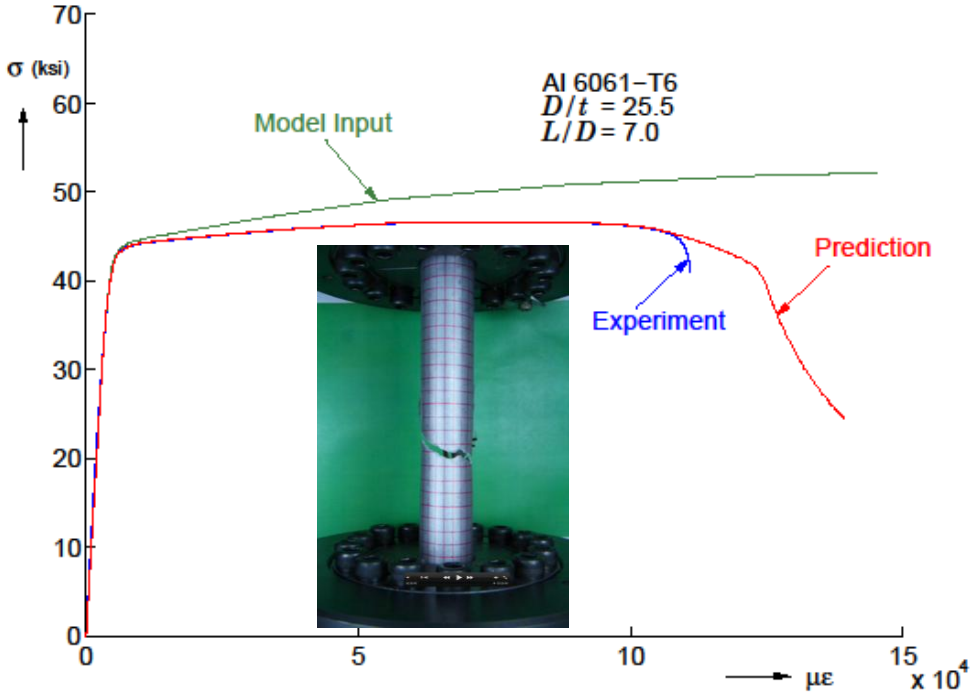
Material Properties

- **Tensile Test of Tube**
  - **Pulled a Section from Same Tube**
- **Material Model Input**
  - **Up to UTS from Test**
  - **Iteratively Determined from UTS till Near Failure**



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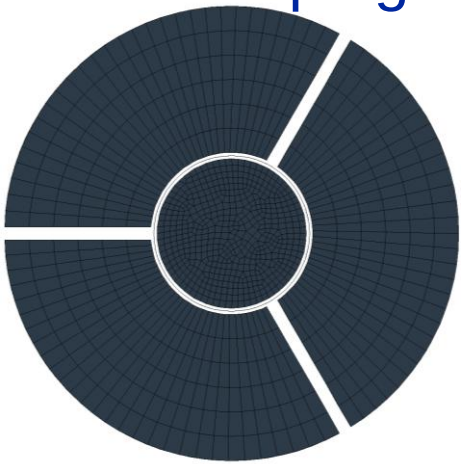
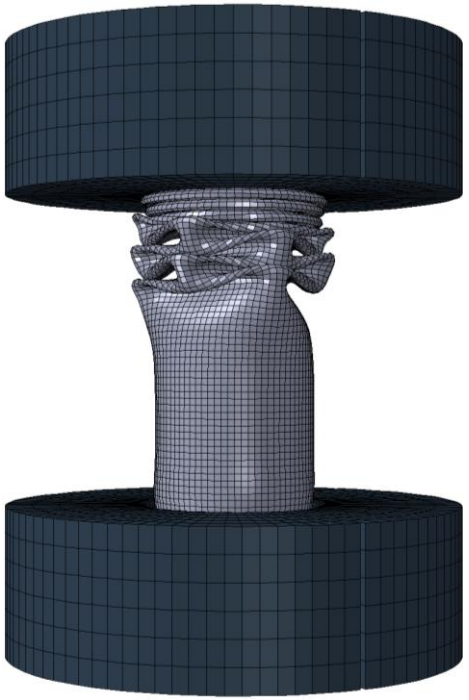
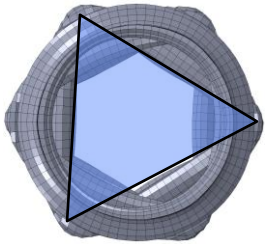
Crushing Pattern

3 Piece Fixture
w/ Clamping

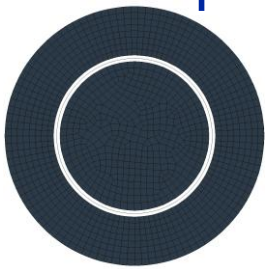


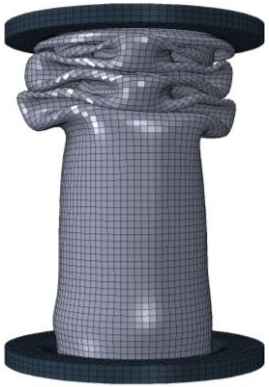


N=3

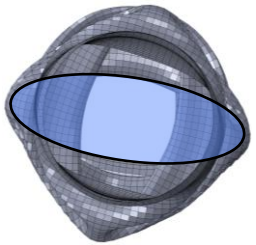


Continuous Fixture
No Clamping





N=2



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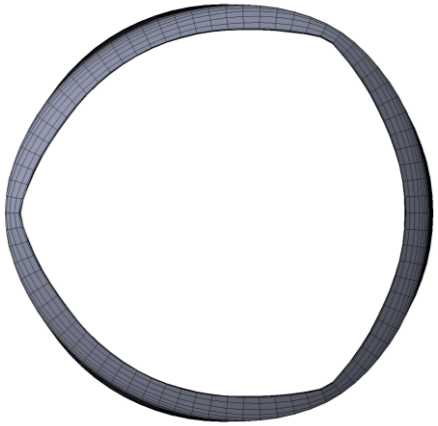
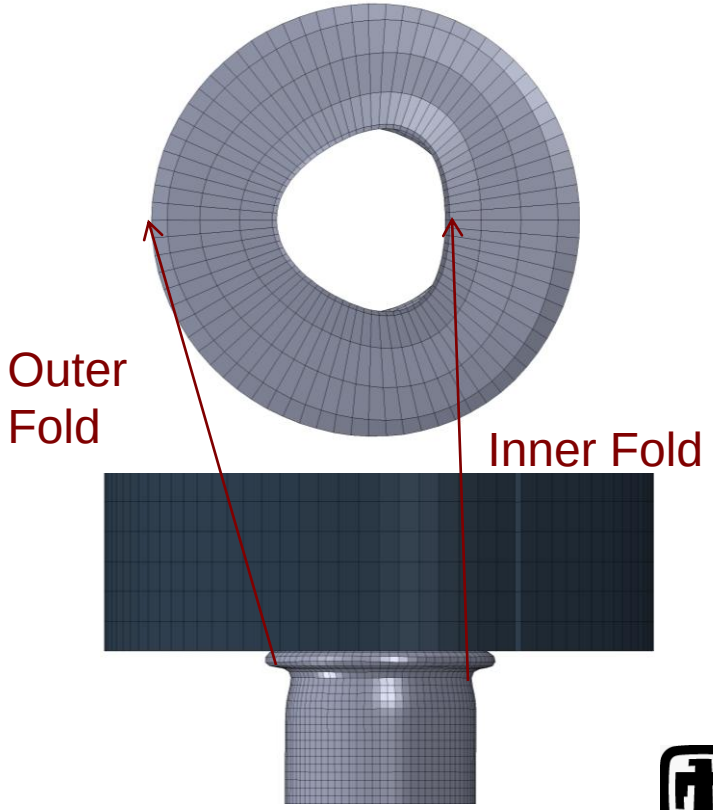
N = 3 Pattern

Tube End After Clamping
(5x Displacement)



X-Section at First Neck
(5x Displacement)



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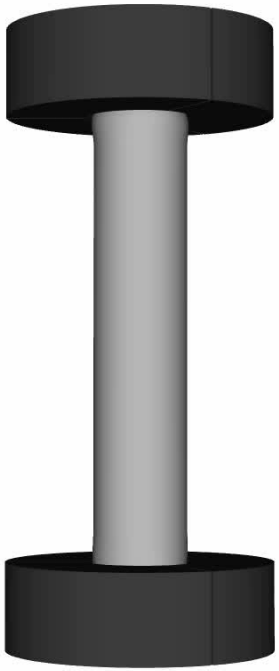
Crushing Prediction L/D=4.6



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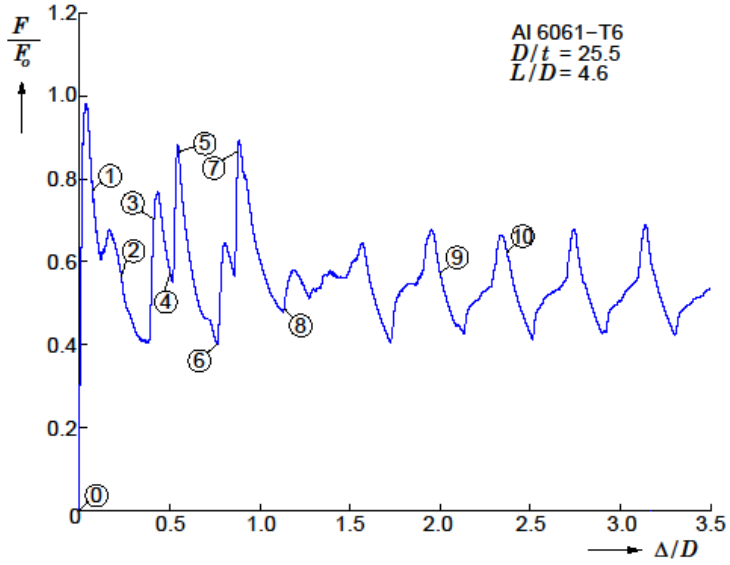
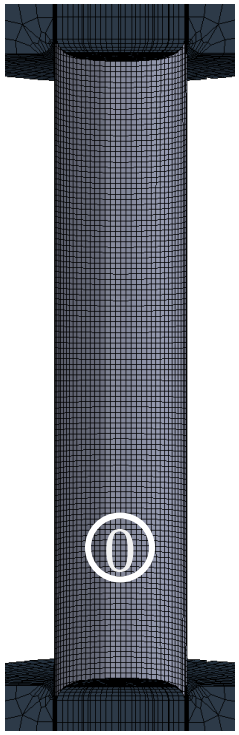
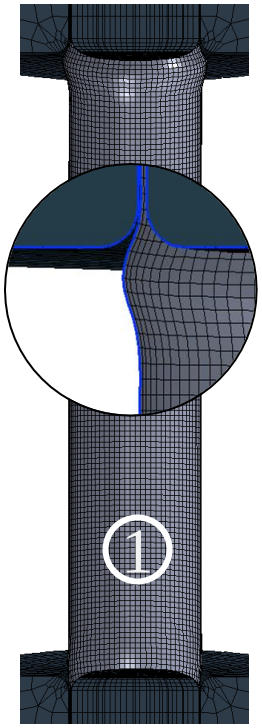
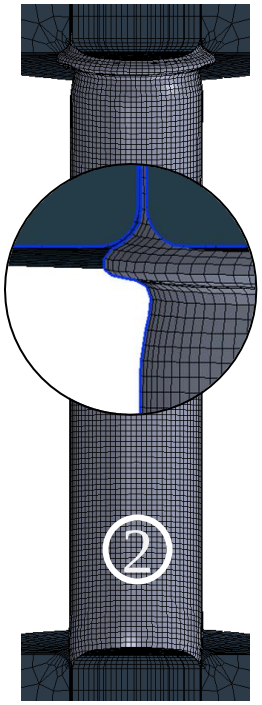
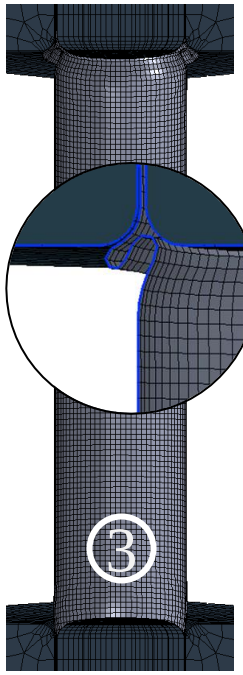
L/D = 4.6

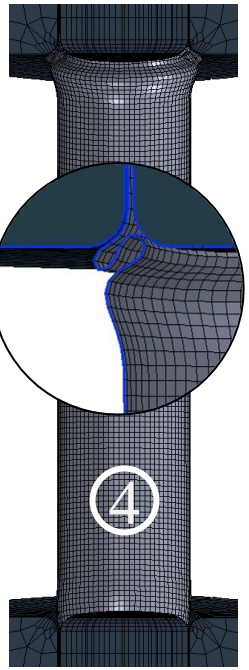


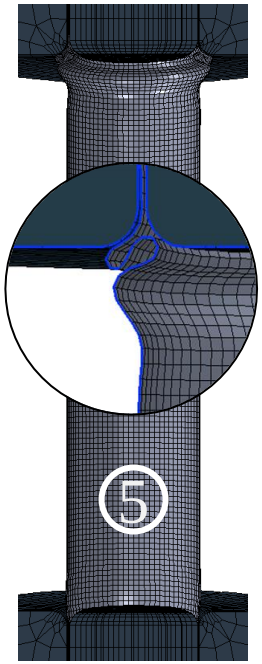


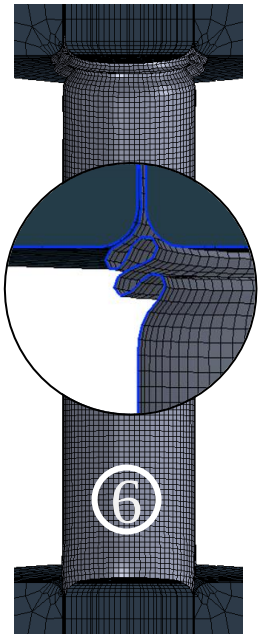


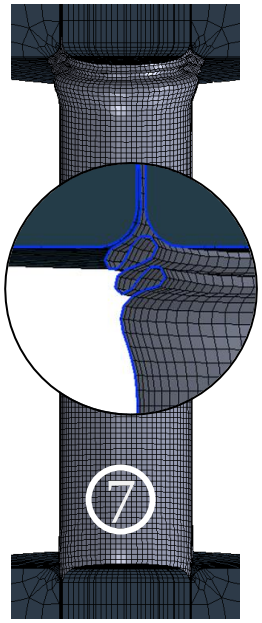


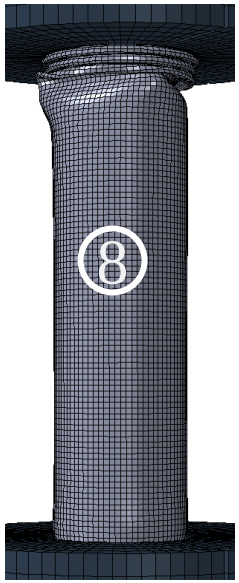


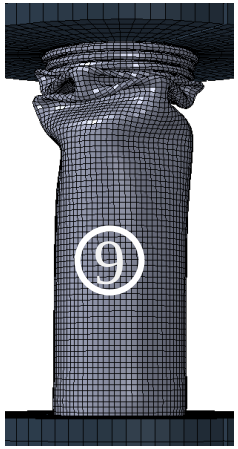












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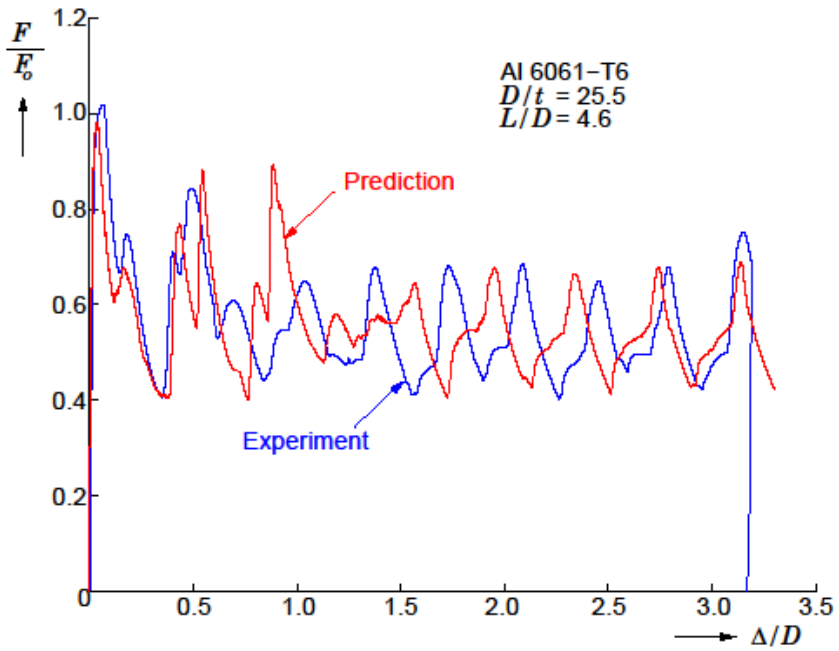
L/D = 4.6

Experiment

Prediction



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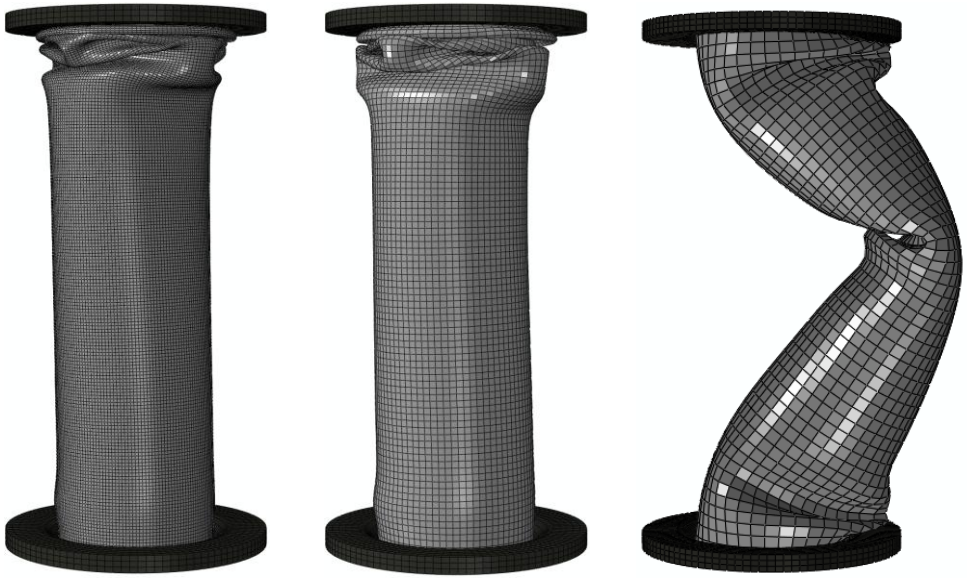
Sensitivity Investigations

- **Mesh Sensitivity**
  - **0.025, 0.05, 0.1 inch squares studied**
- **Other Studies**
  - **Clamping Pressure**
  - **Fixture Dimensions**
- **Future Studies**
  - **Hex-Based Meshes**



0.025” **0.05”** **0.1”**

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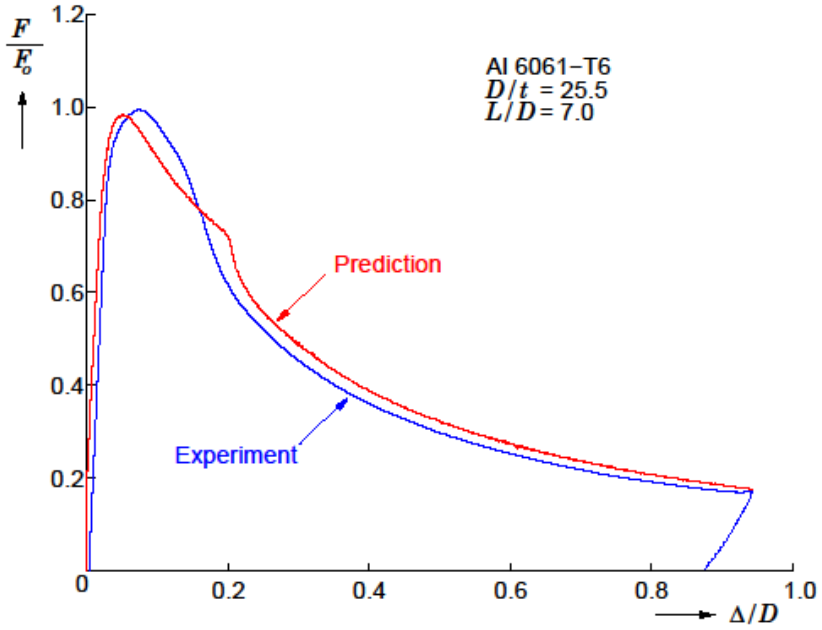
L/D = 7

Experiment

Prediction



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Summary of Results

L/D	Mode Experiment	Mode Prediction	λ (Δ/D) Experiment	λ (Δ/D) Prediction
2.2	N=3 / N=3	N=3	-	-
3.8	N=3 / N=2-3 (t)	N=3	0.352	0.388
4.6	N=3 / N=2-3 (t)	N=3	0.354	0.394
5.4	N=3 (t)/ Lateral	N=3	-	0.395
7.0	Lateral / Lateral	Lateral	-	-

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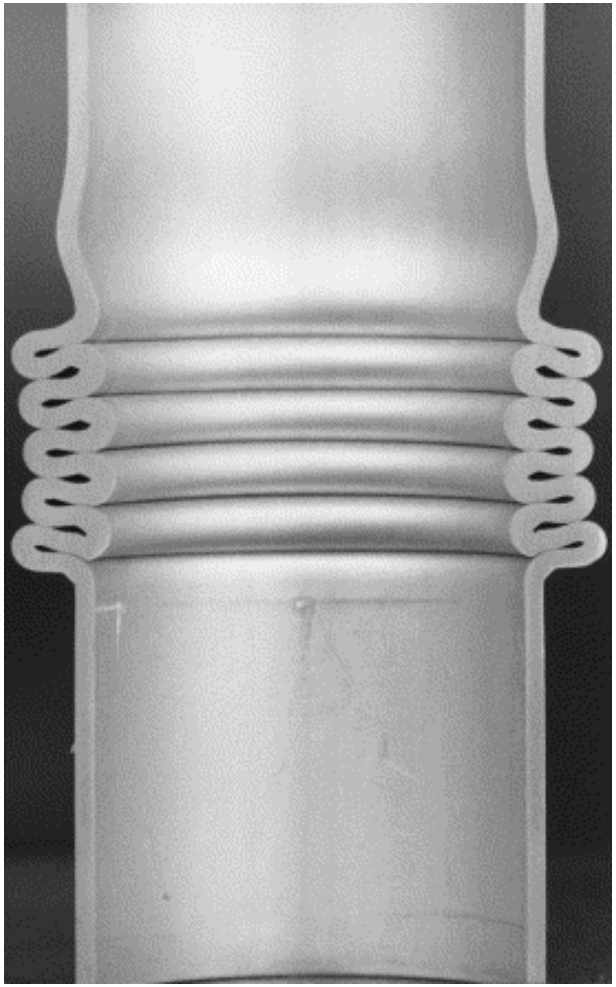
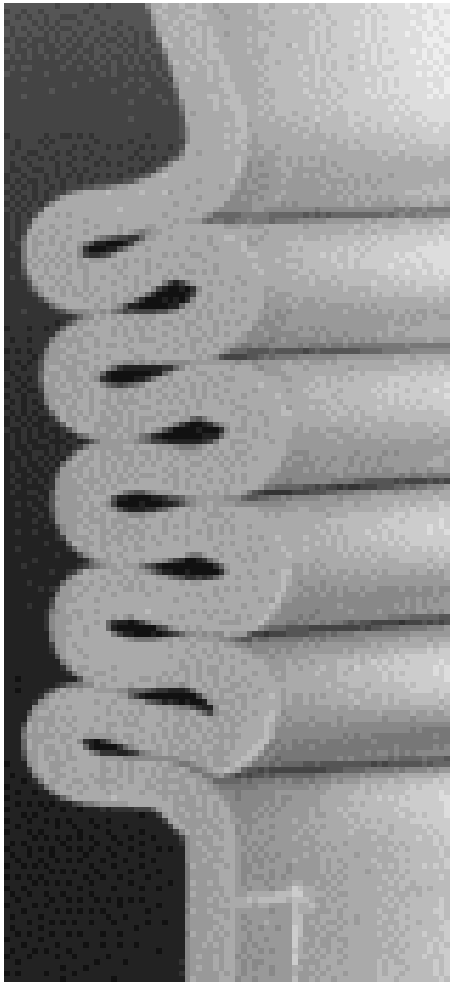
Axisymmetry?
Bardi et al





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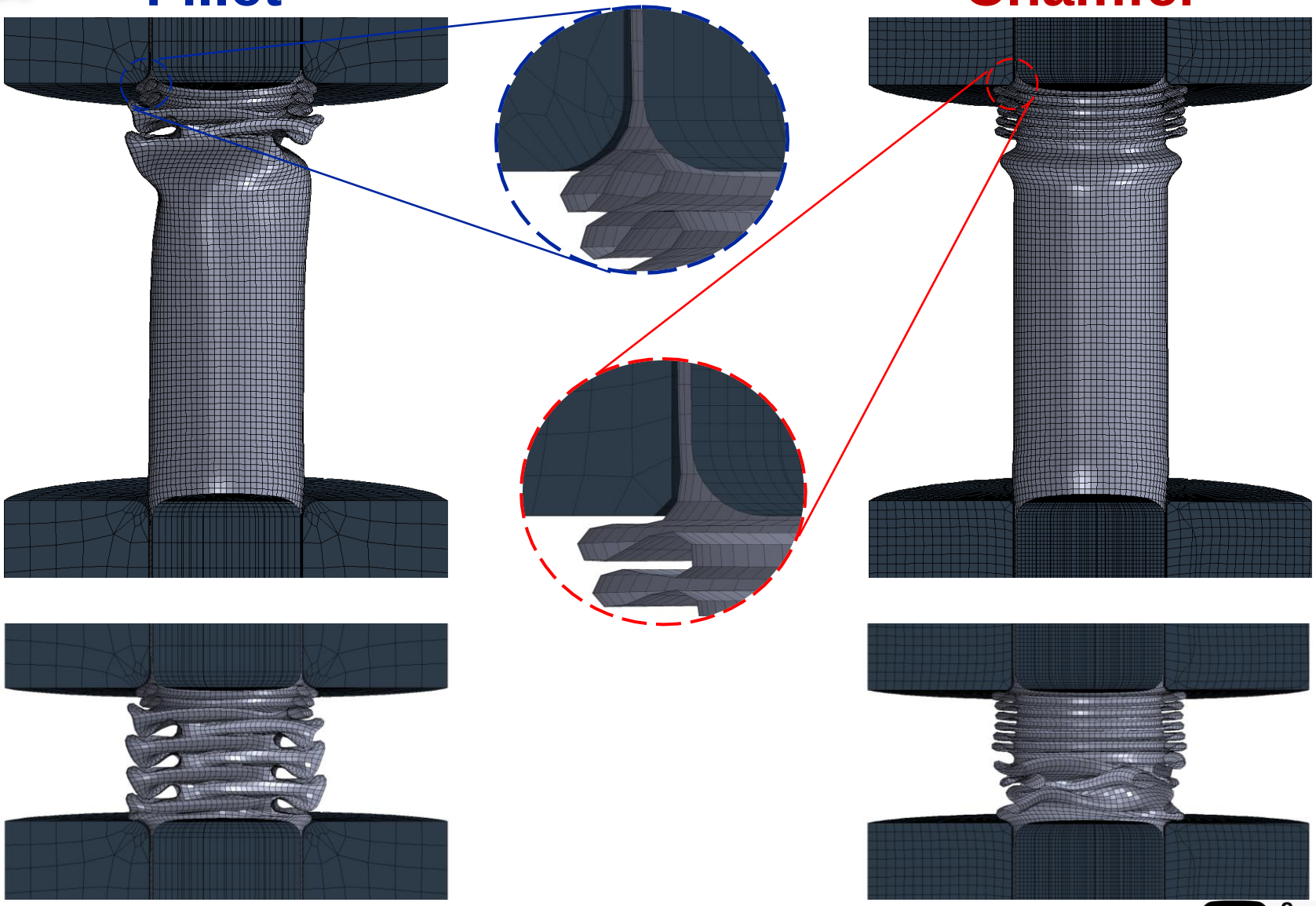
Boundary Effects

Fillet

Chamfer



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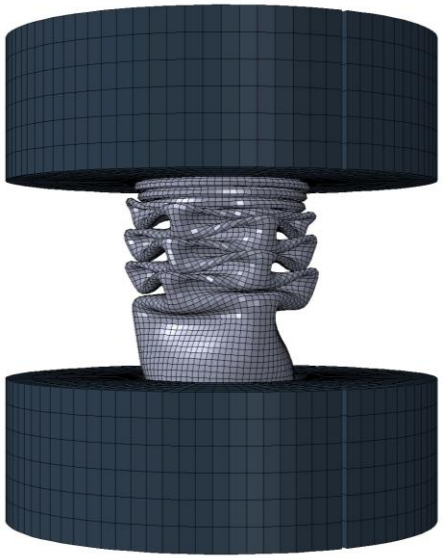
Boundary Effects



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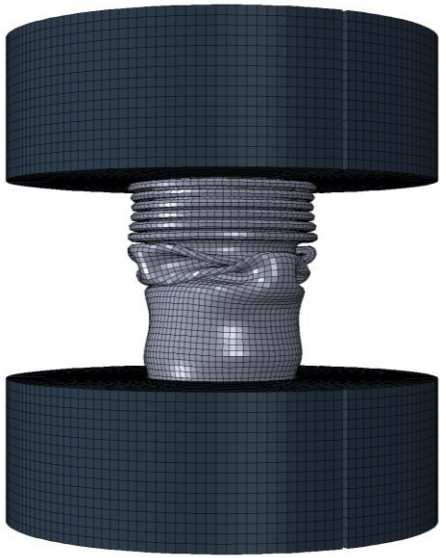
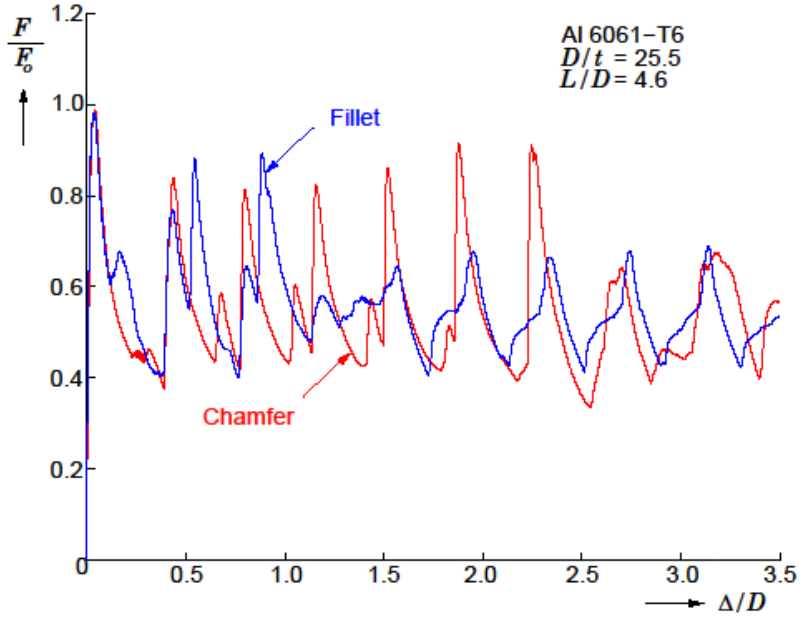
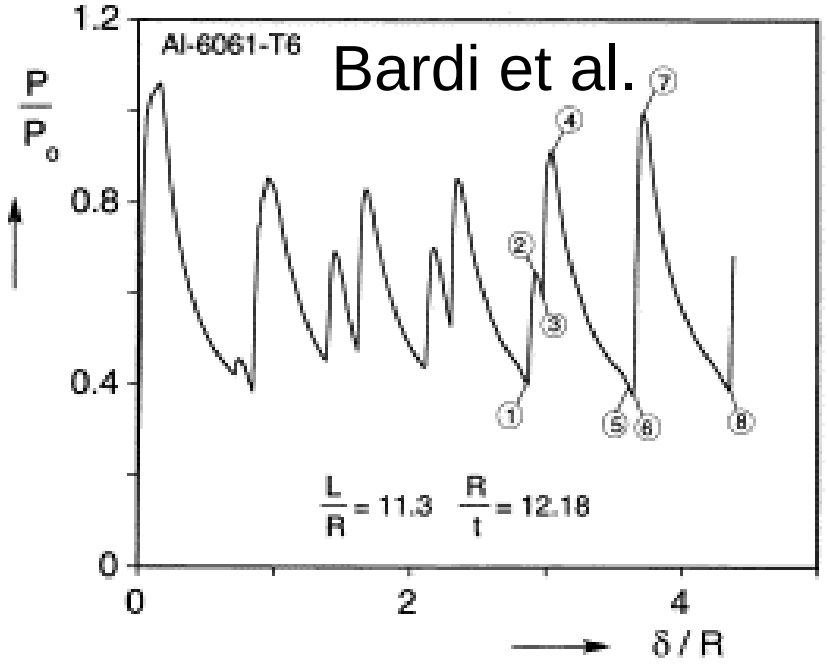


Chamfer





Conclusions

- **Shell model does a reasonable job in predicting the crushing response of the tubes.**
- **N=3 crushing mode seems to be a consequence of the three-segmented clamping fixture and of the applied clamping pressure.**
- **Shell contact thickness is a model feature that probably affects the numerical results.**
- **Crushing mode is influenced by the geometric details of the clamping fixture. Perhaps more generally, by the geometry of preceding folds.**

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Parametric Study

Clamping Pressure (PSI)	Plug Size (inches)	Mesh (inches)	Result
1250	1.15	0.05	N=3
1250	1.147	0.05	N=2
1250	1.15	0.025	N=2
2500	1.15	0.05	N=3
2500	1.147	0.05	N=3
12500	1.15	0.05	N=3
12500	1.15	0.025	N=3
12500	1.147	0.05	N=3
6250	1.15	0.025	N=3

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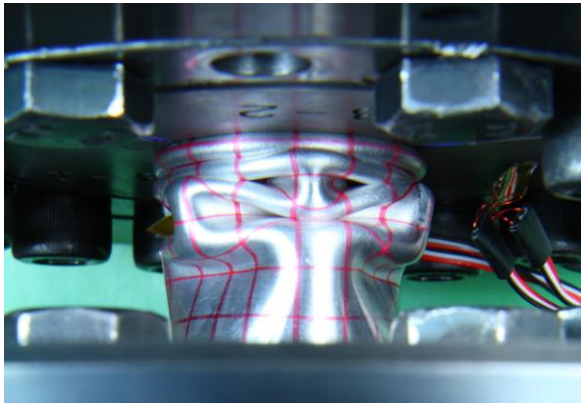
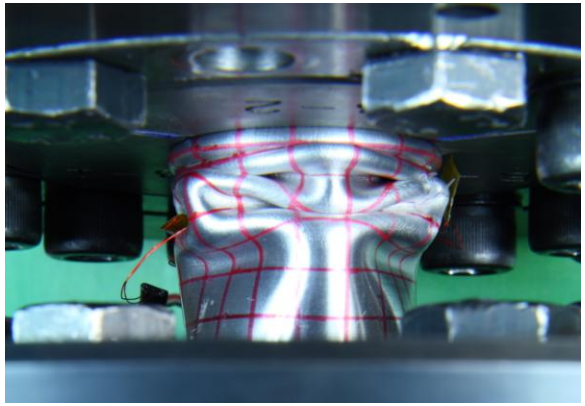
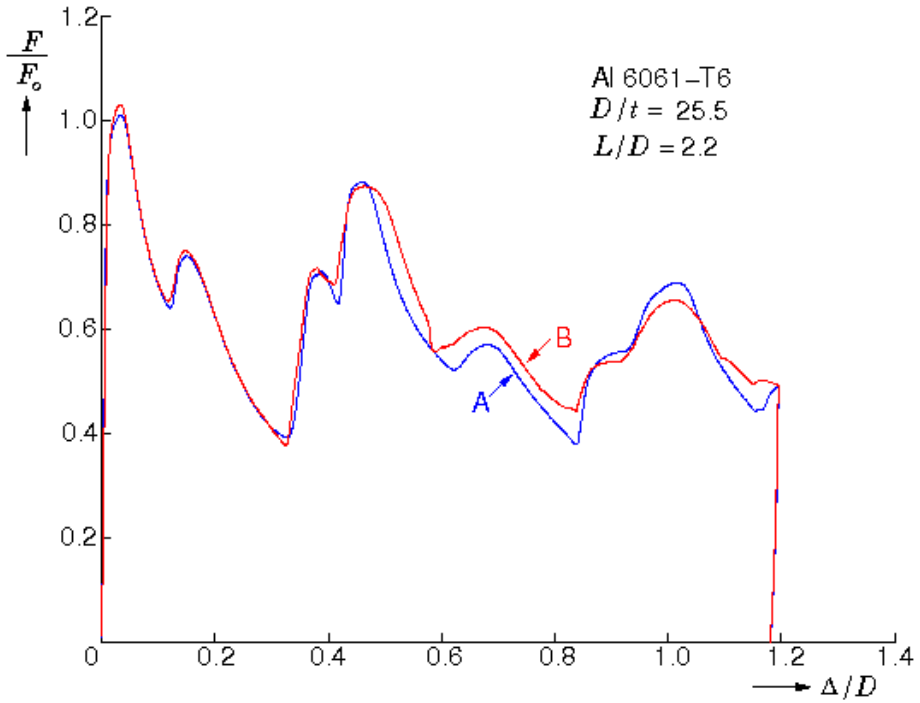
L/D = 2.2



A



B



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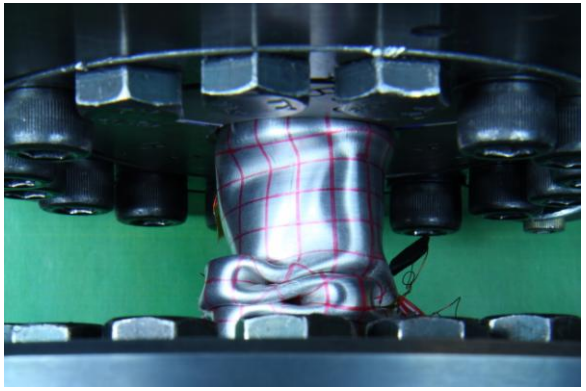
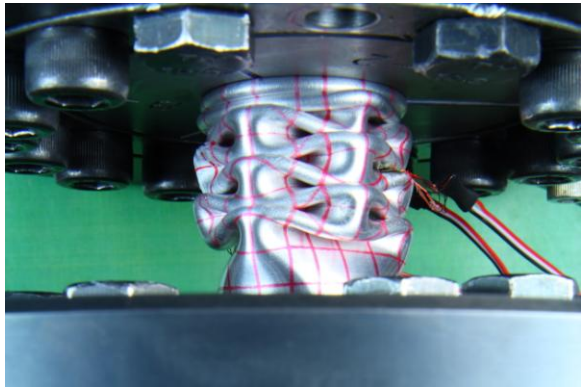
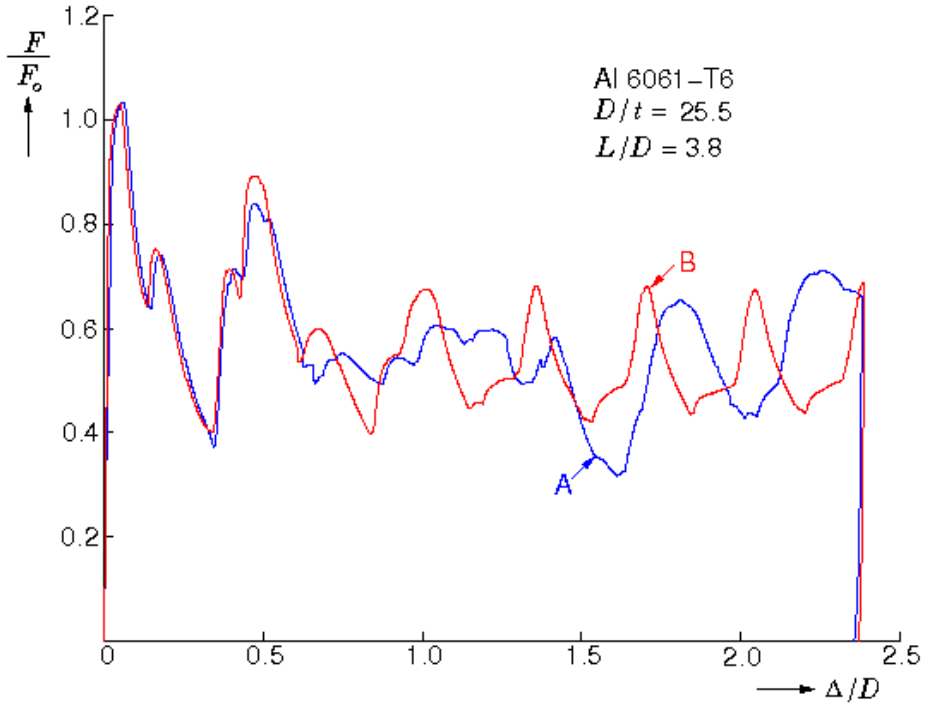
L/D = 3.8





A

B



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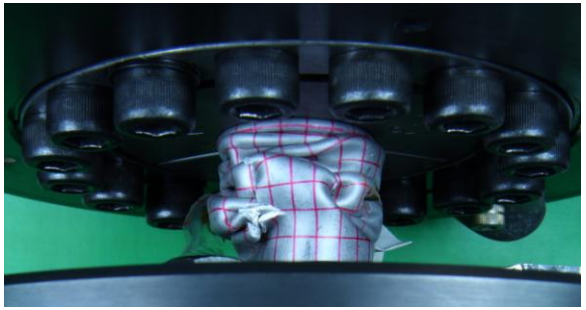
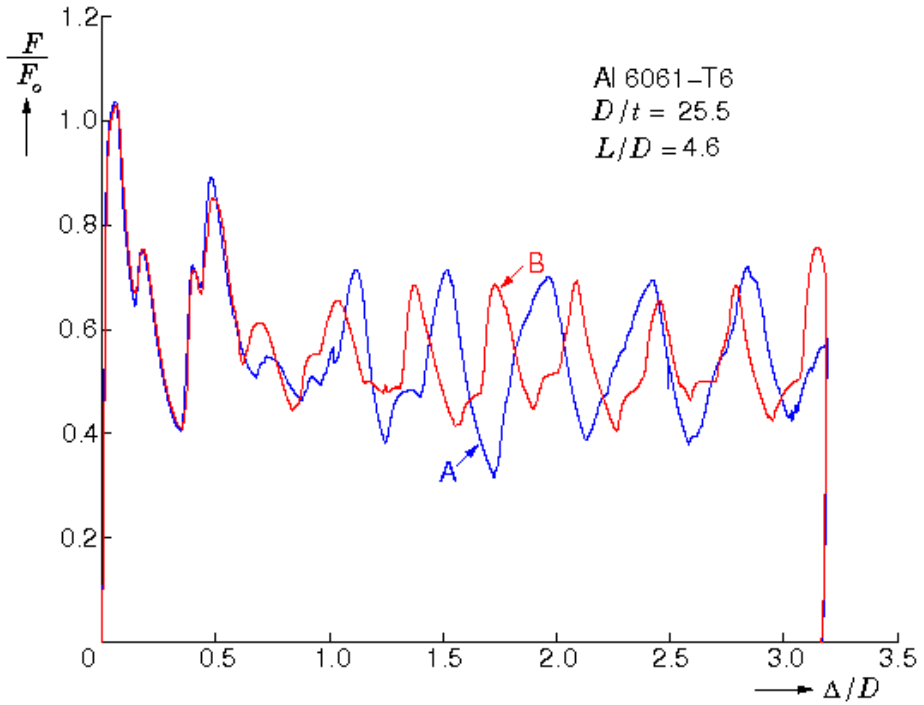
L/D = 4.6



A

B



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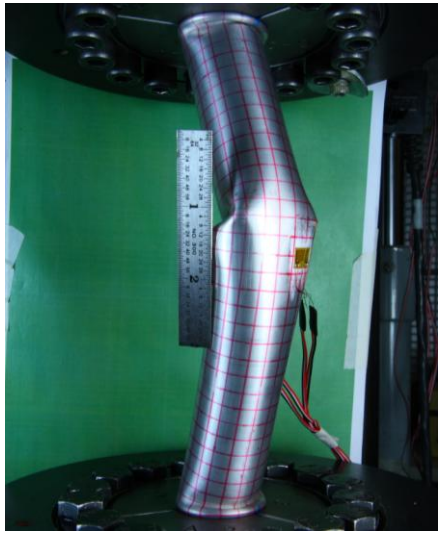
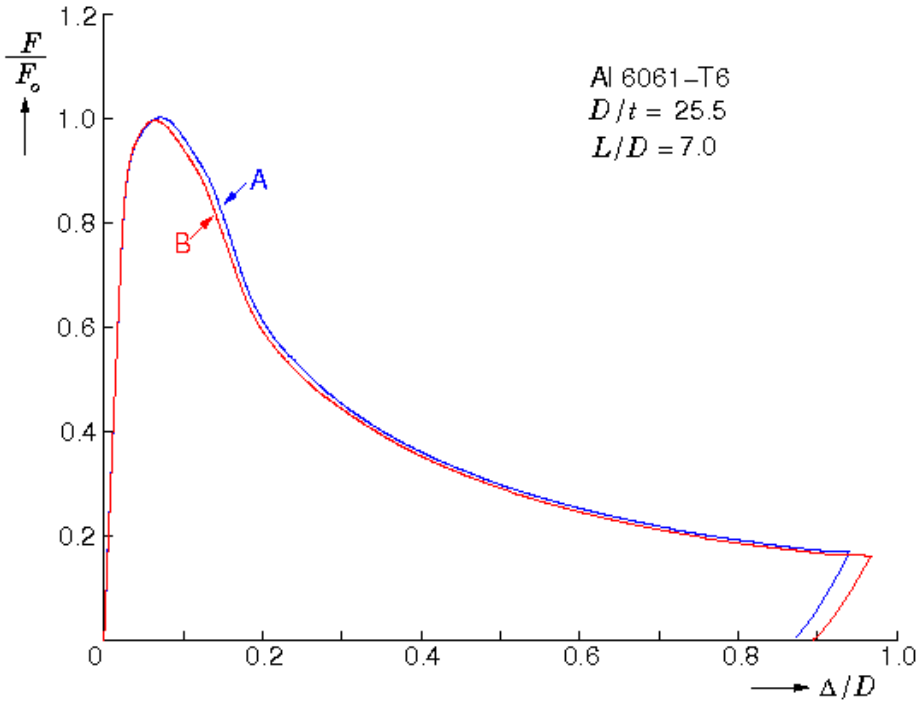
L/D = 7



A

B



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