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Extension of operational boundary of high-beta long-pulse operation at KSTAR

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For the realization of the fusion reactor, solving issues for high beta steady-state operation is one of the essential research topics for the present superconducting tokamaks and in this regard KSTAR has been focusing on maximizing performance and increasing pulse length addressing scientific and technical issues. Typically, previous study on high beta operation has been focusing on advanced scenario in relatively short pulse discharge at KSTAR and partial success has been reported[1]. However, it must be stressed that it is also essential to verify compatibility of developed high beta scenario to long-pulse and stable long-pulse operation is possible only with reduced level of performance compared with that of the short-pulse. In this work, the results of recent experimental approaches in long-pulse operation are presented focusing respectively on high beta_N, high beta_P and high li scenario. For high beta_N experiments, conditions of the maximum beta_N is investigated mainly by parametric scans of toroidal magnetic field (BT=1.4-2.0T) and neutral beam injection power (3-5MW). The achieved beta_N is close to 3 with I_p=0.4 MA, BT=1.4T and P_{ext} ~ 6MW and it is found to be limited by m/n=2/1 tearing mode and is sensitive on the internal inductance. For high beta_P experiments, conditions of the maximum beta_N is investigated mainly by parametric scans of plasma current (I_p=0.4-0.7 MA) and also neutral beam injection power (3-5MW). The achieved beta_P is also close to 3 with I_p=0.4 MA, BT=2.9T and P_{ext} ~ 6MW and it is found to be limited by heating power and without indication of MHD activities. In addition, high beta_P discharge is due to high bootstrap fraction, closed to the state of fully non-inductive current drive though pulse length is limited to 12 second by excessive heat-load on the protection limiters which is probably due to NBI prompt loss. Finally, attempt for high li will be addressed briefly on scenario development and transient results.

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