

# Embeddings of canonical Kirkman packing designs

DAMENG DENG\*

*Department of Mathematics  
Shanghai Jiao Tong University  
Shanghai, 200240  
China*

RENWANG SU

*College of Statistics and Mathematics  
Zhejiang Gongshang University  
Hangzhou 31005, Zhejiang  
China*

## Abstract

For a given positive integer  $v$  with  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $v > 4$ , let CKPD( $v$ ) denote a canonical Kirkman packing design of order  $v$ . It is proved in this paper that any CKPD( $v$ ) can be embedded in a CKPD( $u$ ) if  $u \equiv v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ ,  $v \geq 82$  and  $u \geq 3.5v$ .

## 1 Introduction

A packing of order  $v$  is a pair  $(X, \mathbf{A})$  where  $X$  is a  $v$ -set and  $\mathbf{A}$  is a collection of subsets(called blocks) of  $X$  such that each 2-subset of  $X$  is contained in at most one block of  $\mathbf{A}$ . The leave of  $(X, \mathbf{A})$  is a graph  $(X, \mathbf{E})$  where  $\{x, y\} \in \mathbf{E}$  if and only if  $\{x, y\}$  is not contained in any block of  $\mathbf{A}$ . A packing is called resolvable if its block set  $\mathbf{A}$  admits a partition into parallel classes, each parallel class being a partition of the  $v$ -set  $X$ .

Let  $v \equiv 3 \pmod{6}$ ; then the maximum possible number of parallel classes in a resolvable packing of a  $v$ -set by triples cannot exceed  $(v - 1)/2$ . A resolvable packing of a  $v$ -set by triples that achieves this bound is called a Kirkman triple system, and is denoted by  $KTS(v)$ . It is well known that a  $KTS(v)$  exists if and only if  $v \equiv 3 \pmod{6}$ .

---

\* Research supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China under grant No. 10601032

Similarly, if  $v \equiv 3 \pmod{6}$ , then a resolvable packing of a  $v$ -set by triples with  $v/2-1$  parallel classes is called a nearly Kirkman triple system, denoted by NKTS( $v$ ). It is also well known that an NKTS( $v$ ) exists if and only if  $v \equiv 0 \pmod{6}$  and  $v \geq 18$ , and the leave of an NKTS( $v$ ) is a one-factor.

For a given  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $v > 4$ , following [2], we define a canonical Kirkman packing design of order  $v$ , denoted by CKPD( $v$ ), to be a resolvable packing with  $(v-4)/2$  parallel classes such that:

- (i) each parallel class consists of a  $K_4$  and  $(v-4)/3$  triples;
- (ii) the leave consists of the vertex-disjoint union of a  $K_4$  and  $(v-4)/2$  edges.

The existence of canonical Kirkman packing designs has been completely determined:

**Theorem 1.1** [2,3,10] *Let  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ . Then there exists a CKPD( $v$ ) if and only if  $v \geq 22$ .*

For given positive integers  $u$  and  $v$  with  $u \equiv v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ , let  $(X, \mathbf{A})$  be a CKPD( $v$ ) and  $(Y, \mathbf{B})$  be a CKPD( $u$ ). If  $X \subset Y$ ,  $\mathbf{A} \subseteq \mathbf{B}$ , each parallel class of  $(X, \mathbf{A})$  is a part of some parallel class of  $\mathbf{B}$ , and the leave of  $(X, \mathbf{A})$  is a subgraph of the leave of  $(Y, \mathbf{B})$ , then  $(X, \mathbf{A})$  is said to be embedded in  $(Y, \mathbf{B})$ , or  $(X, \mathbf{A})$  is a subsystem of  $(Y, \mathbf{B})$ . Removing all the blocks of  $\mathbf{A}$  from  $\mathbf{B}$  gives an incomplete canonical Kirkman packing design. Formally, we give the following definition:

Let  $u \equiv v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ . An incomplete canonical Kirkman packing design of order  $u$  with a hole of size  $v$ , denoted by ICKPD( $u, v$ ), is a triple  $(X, Y, \mathbf{B})$  where  $X$  is a point set of  $u$  elements,  $Y$  (called hole) is a  $v$ -subset of  $X$ , and  $\mathbf{B}$  is a collection of subsets (blocks) of  $X$  such that:

- (i)  $|B \cap Y| \leq 1$  for each  $B \in \mathbf{B}$ ;
- (ii) any pair of distinct elements in  $X$  occurs together in  $Y$  or in at most one block;
- (iii)  $\mathbf{B}$  admits a partition into  $(u-v)/2$  parallel classes on  $X$ , each of which contains one block of size 4 and  $(v-4)/3$  triples, and a further  $(v-4)/2$  holey parallel classes of triples on  $X \setminus Y$ ;
- (iv) each element of  $X \setminus Y$  is contained in exactly two blocks of size 4.

The embedding problem for various kinds of resolvable designs has been studied extensively (see, e.g. [1] and [4]) and completely solved for Kirkman triple systems [11, 12] and nearly Kirkman triple systems [5–7].

In this paper, we study the embedding problem for canonical Kirkman packing designs CKPD( $v$ )s with  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ . It is easy to prove the following necessary condition:

**Lemma 1.2** *Let  $u \equiv v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ . If a CKPD( $v$ ) can be embedded in a CKPD( $u$ ), then  $u \geq 3v + 4$ .*

Our main purpose in this paper is to prove that for  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $v \geq 82$ , any CKPD( $v$ ) can be embedded in a CKPD( $u$ ) if  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $u \geq 3.5v$ .

## 2 The existence of an ICKPD( $u, v$ ) for $v \in \{4, 10\}$

In this section, we will mainly use Kirkman frames to construct ICKPD( $u, v$ )s for  $v \in \{4, 10\}$ . First, since a CKPD( $u$ ) is equivalent to an ICKPD( $u, 4$ ), we have the following theorem:

**Theorem 2.1** *Let  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ . Then there exists an ICKPD( $u, 4$ ) if and only if  $u \geq 22$ .*

In order to deal with the case  $v = 10$ , we need some definitions.

A group divisible design (GDD) is a triple  $(X, \mathbf{G}, \mathbf{B})$  where  $X$  is a set of points,  $\mathbf{G}$  is a partition of  $X$  into groups, and  $\mathbf{B}$  is a collection of subsets (blocks) of  $X$  so that any pair of distinct points occurs together in either one group or exactly one block, but not both. A  $K$ -GDD  $(X, \mathbf{G}, \mathbf{B})$  of type  $g_1^{t_1} g_2^{t_2} \cdots g_s^{t_s}$  has  $t_i$  groups of size  $g_i$ ,  $i = 1, 2, \dots, s$ , and  $|B| \in K$  for every  $B \in \mathbf{B}$ . It is also sometimes called a  $K$ -GDD of type  $T$  where  $T = \{|G| \mid G \in \mathbf{G}\}$ . If  $K = \{k\}$ , and  $|G| = m$  for every  $G \in \mathbf{G}$ , then this  $K$ -GDD is called uniform and denoted by GDD( $k, m; v$ ). A GDD( $k, m; v$ ) with  $v = km$  is called a transversal design and denoted by TD( $k, m$ ). It is well known that the existence of a TD( $k, m$ ) is equivalent to the existence of  $k - 2$  mutually orthogonal latin squares of order  $m$ .

A GDD( $X, \mathbf{G}, \mathbf{B}$ ) is called frame resolvable if its block set  $\mathbf{B}$  admits a partition into holey parallel classes, each holey parallel class being a partition of  $X - G$  for some  $G \in \mathbf{G}$ . A kirkman frame is a frame resolvable GDD in which all the blocks have size three. The groups in a Kirkman frame are often referred as holes. Kirkman frames were formally introduced by Stinson [12], who established their spectrum in the case where all the holes have the same size.

**Theorem 2.2** [13] *There exists a Kirkman frame of type  $t^u$  if and only if  $t \equiv 0 \pmod{2}$ ,  $u \geq 4$  and  $t(u - 1) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ .*

The following theorem gives a powerful construction for Kirkman frames from group divisible designs.

**Theorem 2.3** [12] *Let  $(X, \mathbf{G}, \mathbf{B})$  be a group divisible design. Let  $w : X \rightarrow Z^+ \cup \{0\}$  be a weight function on  $X$ . Suppose that for each block  $B \in \mathbf{B}$ , there exists a Kirkman frame of type  $\{w(x) : x \in B\}$ . Then there is a Kirkman frame of type  $\{\sum_{x \in G} w(x) : G \in \mathbf{G}\}$ .*

The following “filling in holes” construction is analogous to [13, Theorem 1]. It provides a powerful tool for the existence of incomplete canonical Kirkman packing designs:

**Theorem 2.4** *Suppose there is a Kirkman frame of type  $T$  on  $v$  points. If, for some  $a$ , there exists an ICKPD( $t + a, a$ ) for all  $t \in T$ , then there is an ICKPD( $v + a, a$ ) and an ICKPD( $v + a, t + a$ ) for every  $t \in T$ .*

**Lemma 2.5** [3, 10] *There exists an ICKPD( $u, 10$ ) for each  $u \in \{34, 40\}$*

**Lemma 2.6** *There exists an ICKPD( $u, 10$ ) for each  $u \in \{46, 52, 58, 64, 70, 76, 88, 94, 100, 112, 118\}$ .*

**Proof:** For each  $u \in \{46, 52, 58, 64, 70, 76, 88, 94, 100, 112, 118\}$ , we will construct an ICKPD( $u, 10$ ) $(X, Y, \mathbf{B})$  directly, where  $X \setminus Y = Z_{(u-10)/2} \times \{1, 2\}$ ;  $Y = \{\infty_1, \infty_2, \dots, \infty_{10}\}$  if  $u \in \{46, 64, 70, 88, 94, 112, 118\}$ , otherwise,  $Y = \{a_0, a_1, a_2\} \cup \{\infty_1, \infty_2, \dots, \infty_7\}$ ; three holey parallel classes are obtained by developing  $0_1 4_1 5_1$  and  $0_2 4_2 5_2$  mod( $u/2, -$ );  $(u-10)/2$  parallel classes are obtained by developing a base parallel class mod( $u/2, -$ ); subscripts on  $a$  are evaluated mod 3; and the leave on  $X \setminus Y$  (a one-factor) is generated by the pure differences  $u/4$  on orbits 1 and 2 if  $u/2 \equiv 0$  (mod 2).

(1) ICKPD(46, 10)

A base parallel class:

$0_1 2_1 3_2 9_2, 1_1 7_1 5_2, 3_1 0_2 2_2, 5_1 8_1 15_1, 12_2 15_2 4_2, 6_1 6_2 \infty_1, 9_1 11_2 \infty_2, 12_1 17_2 \infty_3,$

$10_1 16_2 \infty_4, 11_1 1_2 \infty_5, 4_1 14_2 \infty_6, 14_1 7_2 \infty_7, 16_1 10_2 \infty_8, 13_1 8_2 \infty_9, 17_1 13_2 \infty_{10}$

(2) ICKPD(52, 10)

Leave:  $0_1 6_2$  mod  $(21, -)$

A base parallel class:

$0_1 6_1 0_2 9_2, 2_1 9_1 1_2, 1_1 10_1 20_2, 12_1 13_2 19_2, 13_1 3_2 17_2, 4_1 14_1 17_1, 5_2 15_2 18_2, 3_1 5_1 a_0,$

$8_1 10_2 a_1, 4_2 6_2 a_2, 15_1 2_2 \infty_1, 19_1 14_2 \infty_2, 7_1 12_2 \infty_3, 16_1 7_2 \infty_4, 20_1 16_2 \infty_5, 18_1 11_2 \infty_6,$

$11_1 8_2 \infty_7$

(3) ICKPD(58, 10)

A base parallel class:

$0_1 3_1 0_2 6_2, 5_1 12_1 13_2, 1_1 10_1 19_2, 6_1 17_1 4_2, 8_1 15_2 22_2, 13_1 17_2 21_2, 20_1 1_2 11_2, 9_1 15_1 23_1,$

$12_2 20_2 23_2, 2_1 4_1 a_0, 7_1 9_2 a_1, 3_2 5_2 a_2, 11_1 21_2 \infty_1, 19_1 18_2 \infty_2, 22_1 10_2 \infty_3, 18_1 14_2 \infty_4,$

$16_1 8_2 \infty_5, 21_1 16_2 \infty_6, 14_1 7_2 \infty_7$

(4) ICKPD(64, 10)

Leave:  $0_1 24_2$  mod  $(24, -)$

A base parallel class:

$0_1 3_1 4_2 10_2, 2_1 4_1 23_2, 1_1 10_1 0_2, 5_1 18_1 3_2, 6_1 8_2 15_2, 7_1 13_2 22_2, 11_1 19_2 22_2, 20_1 26_1 9_1,$

$8_1 15_1 23_1, 12_2 14_2 26_2, 6_2 9_2 17_2, 21_1 21_2 \infty_1, 22_1 18_2 \infty_2, 13_1 16_2 \infty_3, 25_1 20_2 \infty_4,$

$19_1 24_2 \infty_5, 14_1 7_2 \infty_6, 17_1 1_2 \infty_7, 16_1 5_2 \infty_8, 12_1 25_2 \infty_9, 24_1 11_2 \infty_{10}$

(5) ICKPD(70, 10)

A base parallel class:

$0_1 2_1 3_2 9_2, 1_1 4_1 0_2, 3_1 12_1 1_2, 5_1 15_1 21_2, 6_1 19_1 27_2, 7_1 7_2 20_2, 8_1 12_2 19_2, 9_1 14_2 23_2,$

$13_1 15_2 25_2, 14_1 22_1 28_1, 11_1 18_1 29_1, 24_2 26_2 8_2, 29_2 22_1 10_2, 24_1 4_2 \infty_1, 21_1 18_2 \infty_2, 20_1 5_2 \infty_3,$

$27_1 22_2 \infty_4, 26_1 13_2 \infty_5, 17_1 11_2 \infty_6, 10_1 28_2 \infty_7, 23_1 16_2 \infty_8, 16_1 6_2 \infty_9, 25_1 17_2 \infty_{10}$

(6) ICKPD(76, 10)

Leave:  $0_1 28_2 \text{ mod } (33, -)$

A base parallel class:

$0_1 3_1 7_2 13_2, 1_1 8_1 0_2, 6_1 15_1 4_2, 5_1 16_1 2_2, 12_1 26_1 8_2, 9_1 24_1 25_2, 21_1 24_2 27_2, 14_1 22_2 1_2,$   
 $31_1 10_2 21_2, 11_1 16_2 29_2, 20_1 31_2 14_2, 13_1 23_1 29_1, 10_1 22_1 30_1, 11_2 19_2 26_2, 20_2 30_2 6_2,$   
 $17_1 17_2 \infty_1, 25_1 18_2 \infty_2, 19_1 28_2 \infty_3, 32_1 23_2 \infty_4, 18_1 32_2 \infty_5, 27_1 15_2 \infty_6, 28_1 12_2 \infty_7,$   
 $2_1 4_1 a_0, 7_1 9_2 a_1, 3_2 5_2 a_2$

(7) ICKPD(88, 10)

A base parallel class:

$0_1 2_1 0_2 6_2, 3_1 15_1 2_2, 1_1 14_1 37_2, 5_1 19_1 1_2, 6_1 21_1 31_2, 4_1 20_1 36_2, 8_1 26_1 38_2, 7_1 8_2 22_2,$   
 $9_1 11_2 23_2, 11_1 14_2 24_2, 10_1 21_2 32_2, 13_1 20_2 33_2, 17_1 26_2 34_2, 24_1 27_1 33_1, 18_1 28_1 35_1,$   
 $12_1 23_1 31_1, 35_2 13_2 15_2, 28_2 4_2 7_2, 9_2 16_2 25_2, 22_1 27_2 \infty_1, 36_1 30_2 \infty_2, 34_1 3_2 \infty_3, 37_1 29_2 \infty_4,$   
 $38_1 17_2 \infty_5, 29_1 19_2 \infty_6, 32_1 12_2 \infty_7, 16_1 5_2 \infty_8, 25_1 10_2 \infty_9, 30_1 18_2 \infty_{10}$

(8) ICKPD(94, 10)

A base parallel class:

$0_1 2_1 0_2 7_2, 1_1 9_1 10_2, 3_1 13_1 2_2, 4_1 15_1 1_2, 5_1 17_1 40_2, 10_1 24_1 4_2, 6_1 21_1 25_2, 7_1 25_1 27_2,$   
 $8_1 18_2 33_2, 12_1 26_2 38_2, 11_1 14_2 22_2, 14_1 20_2 29_2, 16_1 24_2 34_2, 19_1 35_2 6_2, 18_1 31_1 3_2,$   
 $20_1 37_1 40_1, 22_1 28_1 41_1, 23_1 32_1 39_1, 17_2 19_2 37_2, 39_2 13_2 16_2, 36_2 5_2 11_2, 29_1 41_2 \infty_1,$   
 $36_1 32_2 \infty_2, 34_1 9_2 \infty_3, 35_1 30_2 \infty_4, 33_1 12_2 \infty_5, 31_1 23_2 \infty_6, 26_1 8_2 \infty_7, 30_1 21_2 \infty_8,$   
 $27_1 15_2 \infty_9, 38_1 28_2 \infty_{10}$

(9) ICKPD(100, 10)

Leave:  $0_1 30_2 \text{ mod } (45, -)$

A base parallel class:

$0_1 3_1 3_2 9_2, 2_1 13_1 1_2, 4_3 18_1 23_2, 7_1 19_1 5_2, 42_1 15_1 16_2, 10_1 23_1 7_2, 41_1 17_1 24_2, 6_1 20_1 44_2,$   
 $40_1 12_1 35_2, 5_1 15_2 18_2, 33_1 37_2 4_2, 9_1 17_2 31_2, 27_1 38_2 8_2, 22_1 40_2 11_2, 25_1 39_2 12_2, 39_1 14_2 33_2,$   
 $28_1 43_2 20_2, 8_1 14_1 30_1, 21_2 29_1 36_1, 16_1 26_1 35_1, 25_2 32_2 42_2, 21_2 30_2 41_2, 13_2 26_2 34_2,$   
 $44_1 11_1 a_0, 4_1 6_2 a_1, 0_2 2_2 a_2, 24_1 36_2 \infty_1, 38_1 29_2 \infty_2, 11_1 28_2 \infty_3, 32_1 22_2 \infty_4, 34_1 10_2 \infty_5,$   
 $31_1 27_2 \infty_6, 37_1 19_2 \infty_7$

(10) ICKPD(112, 10)

A base parallel class:

$0_1 2_1 0_2 6_2, 50_1 6_1 49_2, 4_1 12_1 1_2, 49_1 11_1 45_2, 1_1 15_1 36_2, 46_1 10_1 40_2, 5_1 22_1 42_2, 48_1 17_1 39_2,$   
 $7_1 30_1 46_2, 47_1 20_1 34_2, 45_1 4_2 12_2, 3_1 5_2 14_2, 40_1 41_2 2_2, 8_1 11_2 25_2, 36_1 44_2 8_2, 9_1 18_2 35_2,$   
 $41_1 48_2 15_2, 23_1 28_2 50_2, 25_1 37_2 10_2, 21_1 24_1 43_1, 19_1 31_1 37_1, 13_1 29_1 38_1, 18_1 28_1 39_1,$   
 $47_2 19_2 21_2, 13_2 29_2 32_2, 23_2 30_2 43_2, 17_2 27_2 38_2, 16_1 31_2 \infty_1, 33_1 26_2 \infty_2, 14_1 33_2 \infty_3,$   
 $32_1 22_2 \infty_4, 34_1 7_2 \infty_5, 27_1 9_2 \infty_6, 26_1 3_2 \infty_7, 35_1 16_2 \infty_8, 42_1 20_2 \infty_9, 44_1 24_2 \infty_{10}$

(11) ICKPD(118, 10)

A base parallel class:

$0_1 2_1 0_2 6_2, 53_1 7_1 52_2, 4_1 13_1 1_2, 52_1 9_1 48_2, 8_1 20_1 3_2, 51_1 10_1 45_2, 1_1 17_1 31_2, 50_1 14_1 15_2,$

$3_122_132_2, 48_115_130_2, 6_128_146_2, 47_150_24_2, 5_110_221_2, 44_153_211_2, 16_123_236_2, 45_147_18_2,$   
 $18_126_242_2, 30_143_27_2, 46_117_239_2, 25_137_212_2, 33_12_225_2, 11_134_137_1, 24_139_149_1,$   
 $21_227_141_1, 19_126_143_1, 33_25_235_2, 24_241_244_2, 13_227_234_2, 19_229_238_2, 29_151_2\infty_1,$   
 $38_128_2\infty_2, 23_149_2\infty_3, 31_120_2\infty_4, 36_19_2\infty_5, 32_116_2\infty_6, 12_140_2\infty_7, 42_122_2\infty_8,$   
 $40_118_2\infty_9, 35_114_2\infty_{10}$

**Lemma 2.7** [5, 8, 9] (i) There exist  $\{4\}$ -GDDs of types  $6^59^1, 6^69^1$ ;

(ii) There exists a  $\{4\}$ -GDD of type  $g^4m^1$  with  $m > 0$  if and only if  $g \equiv m \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  and  $0 < m \leq 3g/2$ .

**Theorem 2.8** Let  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ . Then there exists an  $\text{ICKPD}(u, 10)$  if and only if  $u \geq 34$ .

**Proof:** Let  $u = 6s + 10$ . By [10], there exists a GDD on  $s$  points with block sizes from the set  $\{k \in \mathbb{Z} : k \geq 4\}$  and group sizes from the set  $\{4, 5\}$  if  $s \geq 32, s \neq 36, 37, 38, 39, 46, 47$ . Apply weight 6 to the GDD. Using Theorems 2.2 and 2.3, we create a Kirkman frame with hole sizes in the set  $\{24, 30\}$ . Adjoin 10 ideal points and apply Theorem 2.4, filling in  $\text{ICKPD}(6m + 10, 10)$ s where  $m \in \{24, 30\}$ ; we then obtain an  $\text{ICKPD}(u, 10)$ .

If  $u \equiv 10 \pmod{24}$  and  $u \geq 106$ , then we take a Kirkman frame of type  $24^{(u-10)/24}$  and adjoin 10 ideal points, filling in an  $\text{ICKPD}(34, 10)$  on each hole together with the 10 ideal points. This yields an  $\text{ICKPD}(u, 10)$  where the hole of size 10 is formed on the ideal points.

By Lemmas 2.5 and 2.6, we have to construct an  $\text{ICKPD}(u, 10)$  for  $u \in \{82, 124, 136, 142, 148, 160, 166, 170, 184, 190, 196, 232, 238, 144, 286, 292\}$ . The process is as follows.

$u = 82$ : Take a  $\{4\}$ -GDD of type  $9^43^1$ , give all the points weight 2 to obtain a Kirkman frame of type  $18^46^1$ , adjoin 4 ideal points and fill in  $\text{ICKPD}(22, 4)$ s.

$u = 17, 196$ : Take a  $\{4\}$ -GDD of type  $15^421^1$  or  $18^421^1$ , give all the points weight 2 to obtain a Kirkman frame of type  $30^442^1$  or  $36^442^1$ , adjoin 10 ideal points, fill in  $\text{ICKPD}(40, 10)$ s, an  $\text{ICKPD}(46, 10)$  and an  $\text{ICKPD}(52, 10)$  to obtain an  $\text{ICKPD}(u, 10)$ . Similarly, for  $u \in \{124, 142, 166, 190\}$ , take a  $\text{TD}(4, 5)$  or a  $\{4\}$ -GDD of type  $6^s9^1$  for  $s \in \{4, 5, 6\}$ , give all the points of the TD or the GDD weight 6 or 4.

$u = 136$ : Take a  $\text{TD}(5, 5)$  with one parallel class, delete 4 points from the TD to obtain a  $\{4\}$ -GDD of type  $4^45^1$ , give all the points of the  $\{4\}$ -GDD weight 6, adjoin 10 ideal points and apply Theorem 2.4.

$u = 292, 286$ : Delete one or two points from a group of a  $\text{TD}(6, 8)$  to obtain a  $\{5, 6\}$ -GDD of type  $8^57^1$  or a  $\{5, 6\}$ -GDD of type  $8^56^1$ , give all points of the GDD weight 6, adjoin 10 ideal points and apply Theorem 2.4. Take a  $\text{TD}(6, 5)$  or  $\text{TD}(5, 8)$ ; we can deal with the cases  $u = 232, 238, 244$  in a similar way.

$u = 148, 160$ : Take a  $\{4, 5\}$ -GDD of type  $5^5$  and give all the points of the GDD weight 6, apply Theorem 2.4, adjoin 10 ideal points, and we then obtain an  $\text{ICKPD}(160, 10)$ . Take a  $\text{TD}(6, 5)$ , delete four points from one group and two points from another group

to obtain a  $\{4, 5, 6\}$ -GDD of type  $5^43^11^1$ , give all the points of the GDD weight 6 to obtain a Kirkman frame of type  $30^418^16^1$ , adjoin 4 ideal points and apply Theorem 2.4. The proof is complete. ■

### 3 Main results

For the existence of Kirkman frames, we require the following results:

**Lemma 3.1** [5, 6, 7]

- (i) There exist Kirkman frames of types  $6^512^1$ ,  $6^412^2$  and  $12^{12}18^124^1$ .
- (ii) If there exists a  $TD(6, m)$ , then there exists a Kirkman frame of type  $(6m)^4(12m - 6s)^1(6w)^1$  for  $0 \leq s \leq m$  and  $m \leq w \leq 2m$ .
- (iii) If  $v \in \{126, 174, 222, 270\}$ ,  $m = (v - 18)/12 + 2$  and  $0 \leq w \leq m$ , then there exists a Kirkman frame of type  $(6m)^4(12m - 12)^1(12m - 6w)^1$ .
- (iv) If  $m \in \{14, 18, 22\}$  and  $m \leq w \leq 2m$ , then there exists a Kirkman frame of type  $(6m)^4(12m)^1(6w)^1$ .

**Lemma 3.2** If there exists a  $TD(6, m)$ , then for  $m \leq w \leq 2m$  and  $t = 4$  or  $10$  there exists an  $ICKPD(36m + 6w + t, 12m + t)$ .

**Proof:** Take the Kirkman frame in Lemma 3.1(2)(setting  $s = 0$ ) and adjoin  $t$  ideal points. ■

Let  $T_6 = \{n | n \geq 5, n \in \mathbb{Z}\} \setminus \{6, 10, 14, 18, 22\}$ ; then for each  $n \in T_6$ , there exists a  $TD(6, n)$ . By Lemmas 3.1 and 3.2, we have the following lemma:

**Lemma 3.3** (1) If  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{12}$ ,  $v \geq 64$ ,  $v \neq 76, 124, 172, 220, 268$ ,  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $3.5v - 10 \leq u \leq 4v - 12$ , then there exists an  $ICKPD(u, v)$ .

(2) If  $v \equiv 10 \pmod{12}$ ,  $v \geq 70$ ,  $v \neq 82, 130, 178, 226, 274$ ,  $u \equiv 0 \pmod{6}$  and  $3.5v - 25 \leq u \leq 4v - 30$ , then there exists an  $ICKPD(u, v)$

**Lemma 3.4** There exists an  $ICKPD(u, 16)$  for  $u \in \{70, 118, 124\}$ .

**Proof:** (i)  $u = 70$ , see [3].

(ii)  $u = 118$

We present an  $ICKPD(118, 16)$  as follows.

Point set:  $Z_{51} \times \{1, 2\} \cup \{a_0, a_1, a_2\} \cup \{\infty_1, \infty_2, \dots, \infty_{13}\}$

Leave:  $0_147_2 \pmod{(51, -)}$

Parallel classes: develop the following base parallel class mod  $(51, -)$ , where subscripts on  $a$  are evaluated mod 3.

$0_111_10_225_2, 49_110_148_2, 3_116_11_2, 50_113_147_2, 9_125_14_2, 48_115_141_2, 2_121_131_2, 45_114_126_2,$

$5_1 26_1 33_2, 43_1 44_2 5_2, 7_1 10_2 23_2, 46_1 50_2 13_2, 12_1 17_2 32_2, 40_1 46_2 12_2, 18_1 27_2 45_2, 32_1 3_2 22_2, 35_1 43_2 15_2, 6_1 28_1 31_1, 20_1 29_1 44_1, 19_1 36_1 42_1, 18_2 29_2 38_2, 16_2 37_2 40_2, 49_2 14_2 20_2, 1_1 8_1 a_0, 4_1 6_2 a_1, 2_2 9_2 a_2, 23_1 34_2 \infty_1, 30_1 24_2 \infty_2, 27_1 42_2 \infty_3, 38_1 30_2 \infty_4, 22_1 39_2 \infty_5, 37_1 28_2 \infty_6, 17_1 36_2 \infty_7, 47_1 35_2 \infty_8, 41_1 11_2 \infty_9, 33_1 19_2 \infty_{10}, 34_1 7_2 \infty_{11}, 24_1 8_2 \infty_{12}, 39_1 21_2 \infty_{13}$

Holey parallel classes:

Develop the triples  $0_1 4_1 5_1, 0_2 4_2 5_2, 0_1 2_1 10_1$  and  $0_2 2_2 10_2$  mod  $(51, -)$ .

(iii)  $u = 124$

We present an ICKPD(124, 16) as follows.

Point set:  $Z_{54} \times \{1, 2\} \cup \{a_0, a_1, a_2\} \cup \{\infty_1, \infty_2, \dots, \infty_{13}\}$

Leave:  $0_1 27_1, 0_2 27_2$  mod  $(54, -)$

Parallel classes: develop the following base parallel class mod  $(51, -)$ , where subscripts on  $a$  are evaluated mod 3.

$0_1 20_1 0_2 26_2, 53_1 11_1 51_2, 2_1 13_1 1_2, 51_1 10_1 48_2, 3_1 17_1 53_2, 52_1 14_1 47_2, 9_1 26_1 3_2, 48_1 12_1 41_2, 6_1 27_1 52_2, 47_1 15_1 38_2, 49_1 50_2 7_2, 5_1 8_2 20_2, 29_1 33_2 46_2, 22_1 27_2 42_2, 21_1 29_2 45_2, 7_1 17_2 34_2, 37_1 39_2 4_2, 28_1 44_2 11_2, 45_1 10_2 30_2, 16_1 39_1 42_1, 19_1 34_1 43_1, 25_1 31_1 50_1, 14_2 28_2 37_2, 18_2 21_2 43_2, 25_2 31_2 49_2, 33_1 40_2 \infty_1, 32_1 22_2 \infty_2, 24_1 35_2 \infty_3, 35_1 24_2 \infty_4, 23_1 36_2 \infty_5, 36_1 23_2 \infty_6, 18_1 32_2 \infty_7, 38_1 19_2 \infty_8, 41_1 5_2 \infty_9, 37_1 15_2 \infty_{10}, 46_1 13_2 \infty_{11}, 40_1 16_2 \infty_{12}, 44_1 12_2 \infty_{13}, 1_1 8_1 a_0, 4_1 6_2 a_1, 2_2 9_2 a_2$

Holey parallel classes:

Develop the triples  $0_1 4_1 5_1, 0_2 4_2 5_2, 0_1 2_1 10_1$  and  $0_2 2_2 10_2$  mod  $(54, -)$ .

**Lemma 3.5** If  $v \in \{124, 172, 220, 268\}$ ,  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $3.5v \leq u \leq 4v + 24$ , then there exists an ICKPD( $u, v$ ).

**Proof:** Let  $v = 12m - 8$ , Take a Kirkman frame of Lemma 3.1(3) and adjoin 4 ideal points. This gives an ICKPD( $u, v$ ) for  $3.5v + 20 \leq u \leq 4v + 24$ .

For  $v \in \{172, 220, 268\}$ ,  $3.5v \leq u < 3.5v + 20$  and  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ , take a Kirkman frame in Lemma 3.1(iv) and adjoin 4 ideal points. For  $v = 124$  and  $u \in \{436, 442\}$ , take a TD(6, 9) and give all the points of in four the groups weight 6, give all the points of in the fifth group weight 12 and give either 7 or 8 points in the sixth group weight 12 and all the remaining points weight 6 and adjoin 16 points (Note that an ICKPD(112, 16) can be obtained by giving all the points in a  $\{4\} - GDD$  of type  $12^4 6^1$  weight 2 and adjoin 4 ideal points.) For  $(u, v) = (448, 124)$ , take a Kirkman frame of type  $108^4$  and adjoin 16 ideal points. The proof is complete. ■

**Lemma 3.6** If  $v \in \{82, 130, 178, 226, 274\}$ ,  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $3.5v \leq u \leq 4v + 6$ , then there exists an ICKPD( $u, v$ ).

**Proof:** Let  $m = (v - 10)/12 + 1$ , then  $m \in \{7, 11, 15, 19, 23\}$ . Take a TD(6,  $m$ ) and give all the points in four of the groups weight 6, give just one point in the fifth group weight 6 and all the remaining points weight 12, assign weight 6 or 12 to each

point in the sixth group, and adjoin 6 ideal points, this gives an  $\text{ICKPD}(u, v)$ , where  $v = 12m - 2$  and  $42m - 4 \leq u \leq 48m - 4$ , i.e.  $3.5v \leq u \leq 4v + 6$ . The proof is complete. ■

**Lemma 3.7** *If  $v \equiv 10 \pmod{12}$ ,  $v \geq 70$  and  $u = 4v - 24, 4v - 18$  or  $4v - 12$ , then there exists an  $\text{ICKPD}(u, v)$ .*

**Proof:** If  $v \notin \{118, 166, 214, 262\}$ , let  $m = (v + 2)/12$ . Take a  $\text{TD}(6, m)$  and give all the points in four of the groups weight 6, give just one point in the fifth group weight 6 and all the remaining points weight 12, assign either 5 or 4 or 3 points weight 6 in the sixth group and all the remaining points weight 12, adjoin 4 ideal points. For  $v \in \{118, 166, 214, 262\}$ , write  $m = (v - 22)/12 + 3$ , then  $m \in \{11, 15, 19, 23\}$ . Take a  $\text{TD}(6, m)$ , give all the points in four of the groups weight 6, give three points in the fifth group weight 6 and all the remaining points weight 12, either 9 or 10 or 11 points in the sixth group weight 6 and all the remaining points weight 12, adjoin 4 ideal points. The proof is complete. ■

**Lemma 3.8** (1) *Suppose there exists a  $\text{TD}(k, t)$ ,  $k \geq 4$ . Then there exists an  $\text{ICKPD}(6s + 4, 6t + 4)$  if  $4t \leq s \leq kt$  and  $s \neq 4t + 1, 4t + 2$ .*

(2) *Suppose there exists a  $\text{TD}(k, n)$ ,  $k \geq 5$  and  $3 \leq t \leq n$ . Then there exists an  $\text{ICKPD}(6s + 4, 6t + 4)$  if  $4n + t \leq s \leq (k - 1)n + t$  and  $s \neq 4n + t + 1, 4n + t + 2$ .*

**Proof:** We only prove (1), (2) can be dealt with in a similar way. We can write  $s - 4t = m(5) + m(6) + \dots + m(k)$  such that  $m(i) = 0$  or  $23 \leq m(i) \leq t$  for each  $5 \leq i \leq k$ , delete  $t - m(i)$  points in the  $i$ -th group of the  $\text{TD}$  for each  $5 \leq i \leq k$ , then we obtain a  $\text{GDD}(K, M; s)$  such that  $m \geq 3$  for each  $k \in K$ , give all the points of the  $\text{GDD}$  weight 6 and adjoin 4 ideal points. ■

The following lemma can be easily checked:

**Lemma 3.9** *Let  $n \in T_6$  and  $n \geq 7$ . There exists a positive integer  $n_1$  such that  $n_1 > n$ ,  $n_1 \in T_6$  and  $4n_1 < 5n - 1$ .*

By Lemmas 3.8 and 3.9, we have the following:

**Lemma 3.10** (i) *Let  $t \geq 3$ ,  $n \in T_6$  and  $n \geq \max\{7, t\}$ . Then there exists an  $\text{ICKPD}(6s + 4, 6t + 4)$  if  $s \geq 4n + t$  and  $s \neq 4n + t + 1, 4n + t + 2$ .*

(ii) *Let  $s \geq 7$  and  $t \in T_6$ . Then there exists an  $\text{ICKPD}(6s + 4, 6t + 4)$  if  $s \geq 4t$  and  $s \neq 4t + 1, 4t + 2$ .*

**Lemma 3.11** *Let  $r = 1, 2, 3, 5, 6$  and  $t \geq 6$ . Then there exists an  $\text{ICKPD}(6(5t + r) + 4, 6t + 4)$  if there exists a  $\text{TD}(6, t + 1)$ .*

**Proof:** For  $r = 1, 2$  or  $3$ , delete  $4 - r$  points in one group of a  $TD(5, t + 1)$ , delete one point  $x$  in another group of the  $TD$ , take all the blocks and the group containing  $x$  as new groups to obtain a  $GDD(\{4, 5, t + r - 3, t + 1\}, \{3, 4, t\}; 5t + r)$ . Give all the points of the  $GDD$  weight 6 and adjoin 4 ideal points. For  $r = 5, 6$ , delete all the points of some block  $B$  of a  $TD(6, t + 1)$ , delete  $t - r$  points in a group  $G$  of the  $TD$ , take all the blocks containing  $x$  for some  $x \in B \setminus G$  and  $G'$  as new groups, where  $G' = G_x \setminus \{x\}$  and  $G_x$  is the group of the  $TD$  containing  $x$ , to obtain a  $GDD(\{4, 5, 6, t, r\}, \{4, 5, t\}; 5t + r)$ . Give all the points of the  $GDD$  weight 6 and adjoin 4 ideal points. The proof is complete. ■

**Lemma 3.12** *For  $s = 4t+1$  or  $4t+2$  and  $t \geq 5$ , there exists an  $ICKPD(6s+4, 6t+4)$ .*

**Proof:** Take a  $\{4\}$ -GDD of type  $(3t-3)^4 12^1$  or a  $\{4\}$ -GDD of type  $(3t-3)^4 15^1$ , give all the points of the  $GDD$  weight 2, we obtain a Kirkman frame of type of  $(6t-6)^4 24^1$  or a Kirkman frame of type of  $(6t-6)^4 30^1$ , adjoin 10 ideal points, fill in  $ICKPD(6t+4, 10)s$  and an  $ICKPD(34, 10)$  or an  $ICKPD(40, 10)$ . The proof is complete. ■

**Lemma 3.13** *For  $t = 10, 14, 18, 22$ ,  $4t \leq s \leq 5t$  and  $s \neq 4t+1, 4t+2$ , there is an  $ICKPD(6s+4, 6t+4)$ .*

**Proof:** Take a  $TD(5, t/2)$ , give all the points in four groups of the  $TD$  weight 12, give points in the fifth group weight 0, 6 or 12, obtain a Kirkman frame of type  $(6t)^4 (6(s-4t))^1$ , adjoin 4 ideal points. The proof is complete. ■

**Lemma 3.14** *If  $t \geq 7$  and  $s \geq 4t$ , then there is an  $ICKPD(6s+4, 6t+4)$ .*

**Proof:** If  $t \geq 7$  and  $t \in T_6$ , apply Lemma 3.10(ii) and Lemma 3.12. If  $t \geq 7$  and  $t \notin T_6$ , then the procedure is as follows: Take  $n = t + 1$  in Lemma 3.10(i), this covers  $s \geq 5t + 4$  and  $s \neq 5t + 5, 5t + 6$ . For  $s \in \{5t + 1, 5t + 2, 5t + 3, 5t + 5, 5t + 6\}$ , apply Lemma 3.11. For  $4t \leq s \leq 5t$ , apply Lemmas 3.12-3.13. The proof is complete. ■

**Lemma 3.15** *If  $u \equiv v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$ ,  $v \geq 82$  and  $u \geq 3.5v$ , then there is an  $ICKPD(u, v)$ .*

**Proof:** Write  $v = 6t + 4$  and  $u = 6s + 4$ , then  $t \geq 13$ . If  $3.5v \geq u \geq 4v - 12$ , the conclusion then follows from Lemmas 3.3, 3.5-3.7. If  $u \geq 4v - 18$ , then  $s \geq 4t$  and the conclusion follows from Lemma 3.13. The proof is complete. ■

Since a  $CKPD(v)$  exists if  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $v \neq 10, 16$ , the following theorem can be easily derived from Theorem 3.15.

**Theorem 3.16** *Let  $v \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $v \geq 82$ , then any  $CKPD(v)$  can be embedded in a  $CKPD(u)$  if  $u \equiv 4 \pmod{6}$  and  $u \geq 3.5v$ .*

## References

- [1] C.J. Colbourn and J.H. Dinitz (eds.), *Handbook of Combinatorial Designs*, CRC Press, Boca Raton, Florida 1996.
- [2] A. Černý, P. Horák and W.D. Wallis, Kirkman's school project, *Discrete Math.* 167/168 (1997), 189–196.
- [3] C.J. Colbourn and A.C.H. Ling, Kirkman school project designs, *Discrete Math.* 203 (1999), 49–60.
- [4] C.J. Colbourn and A. Rosa, *Triple systems*, Oxford Mathematical Monographs. The Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999.
- [5] D. Deng, R. Rees and H. Shen, On the existence and application of nearly Kirkman systems with a hole of size 6 or 12, *Discrete Math.* 261 (2003), 209–233.
- [6] D. Deng, R. Rees and H. Shen, Further results on the embedding problem for nearly Kirkman triple systems, *Discrete Math.* 270 (2003), 99–114.
- [7] D. Deng, R. Rees and H. Shen, On the existence of nearly Kirkman triple systems with subsystems, *Discrete Math.* (to appear).
- [8] G. Ge and R. Rees, On group-divisible designs with block size four and group-type  $g^u m^1$ , *Designs, Codes and Cryptography* 29 (2002), 5–24.
- [9] G. Ge and R. Rees, On group-divisible designs with block size four and group-type  $6^u m^1$ , *Discrete Math.* 279 (2004), 247–265.
- [10] N.C.K. Phillips, W.D. Wallis and R. Rees, Kirkman packing and covering designs, *J. Combin. Math. Combin. Computing* 28 (1998), 299–325.
- [11] R. Rees and D.R. Stinson, On the existence of Kirkman triple systems containing Kirkman subsystems, *Ars Combin.* 26 (1988), 3–16.
- [12] D.R. Stinson, Frames for Kirkman triple systems, *Discrete Math.* 65 (1987), 289–300.
- [13] S. Tang and H. Shen, Embeddings of nearly Kirkman triple systems, *J. Stat. Plann. Inference* 94 (2001), 327–333.

(Received 18 Sep 2007)