

1 **Preferential Summer Melt of Deeper Ridge Keels in the Central Arctic Ocean from**
2 **Multibeam Sonar Data**

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12 **Key Points:**

- 13 • Sea-ice ridges melt faster than level ice with total snow and ice melt of 1.0 m versus less
14 than 0.6 m respectively in June-July.
- 15 • Ridge bottom melt is 3–4 times higher than bottom melt of first-year level ice, while surface
16 melt is almost identical.
- 17 • Ridge melt correlates with draft, slope, and width with 57% total contribution, while level
18 ice melt was mostly correlated to its draft.

19

20 **Plain language summary**

21 The Arctic Ocean is covered by a thin layer of sea ice moved by winds and currents, it can break
22 up, forming piles of broken ice blocks or so-called ridges. Despite ridged ice covering more than
23 a third of the total ice-covered area, they are not as well understood as undeformed level ice, and
24 are not accurately represented in climate models. Sonars are frequently used to investigate
25 submerged objects. Here we measure ice thickness using a sonar attached to an underwater robot.
26 Using these rare measurements, we compare the reduction in ice thickness during summer melt in
27 the Arctic Ocean between deformed and undeformed ice. We show that thicker ridged ice melts
28 two times faster than thinner undeformed ice at both surface and bottom interfaces. We also study
29 how the shape of ridged ice influences how it melts, showing that deeper, steeper, and narrower
30 ridged ice melt the fastest. Additionally, we utilize repetitive temperature measurements to
31 distinguish melting at the boundary of the ice with the atmosphere and the ocean. Our
32 measurements show that deformed ice melts 3–4 times faster than undeformed ice at the bottom
33 ice-ocean boundary, while at the surface they melt at a similar rate.

34 **Abstract**

35 Sea-ice ridges constitute a large fraction of the total Arctic sea-ice volume (up to 40%);
36 nevertheless, they are the least studied part of the Arctic ice pack. Here we investigate sea-ice melt
37 rates using rare underwater multibeam data that cover a period of one month during the advanced
38 melt stage in the Arctic summer. We show that the degree of bottom melt increases with ice draft
39 for first-year and second-year level ice, and a first-year ice ridge keel, with an average of 0.45 m,
40 0.55 m, and 0.95 m of total snow and ice melt in the observation period, respectively. While bottom
41 melt rates of ridge keels are 3–4 times higher than first-year level ice, surface melt rates are almost
42 identical. Our estimate attributes 57% of the ridge keel melt variability to keel draft (36%), slope
43 (32%), and width (27%).

44 **1 Introduction**

45 According to the definition by the World Meteorological Organization, an ice ridge is a line or
46 wall of broken ice that is forced up by pressure (WMO, 2014). Ridges consist of a sail above and
47 a keel below the water level. The keel initially consists of rubble, randomly packed ice blocks
48 separated by water-filled voids, described by the ridge macroporosity (fraction of water-filled
49 voids in the rubble). The macroporosity of first-year ice ridges is in the range of 20% to 45%
50 (Bowen & Topham, 1996), with an average porosity of 30% (Timco & Burden, 1997). Some ridges
51 become fully consolidated (with near-zero macroporosity) during the melt season (Marchenko,
52 2022). Ridges that have survived summer melt often have lower macroporosity due to refreezing
53 of meltwater in the ridge keel. Ice ridges are key features in climate studies since they constitute
54 around 30% of the total Arctic sea-ice volume, a fraction which is possibly increasing (Rothrock
55 & Zhang, 2005), partly because they can melt differently in comparison to level ice (Amundrud et
56 al., 2004; Perovich et al., 2003). For example, Melling & Riedel (1996) observed an increase in
57 ridge areal fraction from 15% in autumn to 40–50% in spring based on subsea sonar ice draft
58 measurements in the Beaufort Sea during 1991–1992. Nonetheless, the proportion of ridges varies
59 depending on the region and how they are defined. Hansen et al. (2014) estimated the fraction of
60 thicker ice (predominantly deformed ice) of $37\pm 8\%$, using an evolving threshold relative to the

61 modal thickness using draft measurements from moored upward- looking sonars in Fram Strait
62 during 1990–2011. In those observations, the ridge fraction increased in 1990–2008 and decreased
63 thereafter, which was confirmed by Sumata et al. (2023) using extended data from the same
64 upward-looking sonars in Fram Strait for 1990 to 2020.

65 Sea-ice ridges can be formed from new, young, first-year, second-year, or multiyear level ice or
66 from a combination of ice types. Typically, ridges are made from relatively thin ice (Tucker et al.,
67 1984), which breaks as the weakest points during deformation events. Ridges themselves can also
68 be first-year, second-year, or multiyear, depending on how many seasons they have survived. The
69 main characteristics of the ridge morphology are usually correlated despite different mechanisms
70 controlling some of those characteristics. The maximum keel draft is limited by the ice strength
71 and is correlated with adjacent level ice draft (Amundrud et al., 2004). Once the keel has reached
72 its maximum possible draft, it thereafter only grows in width (Hopkins, 1998). In areas with thicker
73 level ice, ridges have higher areal fractions and deeper keels (Samardžija & Høyland, 2023).

74 Previous research has suggested that ridges impact the melt rates of the ice. For instance, Rigby
75 and Hanson (1976) showed enhanced bottom melt of a ridge keel in comparison to thinner ice,
76 although mechanical erosion could not be ruled out for this rather deep ridge (order of 10–12 m).
77 During the SHEBA expedition, Perovich et al. (2003) used data from ablation stakes, and measured
78 60% higher bottom melt for ridges than for level ice. Similarly, Skyllingstad et al. (2003) measured
79 enhanced vertical mixing and a five-fold increase in ocean heat flux for 10-m-deep ridges.
80 Amundrud et al. (2006) also estimated that ridge keels melt 5 times faster than level ice based on
81 the observations from ice-profiling sonars mounted on subsea moorings in the Beaufort Sea.
82 Furthermore, Shestov et al. (2018) observed ridge melt in summer during the N-ICE2015
83 expedition (Granskog et al., 2018) in the pack ice north of Svalbard. Here, the average ocean heat
84 flux under level ice was 63 W m^{-2} (Peterson et al., 2017), while a ridge keel melted by 1.5 m,
85 which translates into an equivalent ocean heat flux of 300 W m^{-2} (Shestov et al., 2018). Based on
86 the thermodynamic model by Amundrud et al. (2006), several parameters, such as keel width and
87 shape, may impact keel melt, with ridge porosity and block thickness being key factors.

88 The first direct measurements of under-ice topography were linear profiles from narrow-beam
89 upward-looking sonar (Lyon, 1961). However, Wadhams et al. (2006) were the first to use an
90 autonomous underwater vehicle instrumented with a multibeam sonar to study the three-
91 dimensional bottom topography of sea ice in Northeast Greenland. Using multibeam mapping by
92 a submarine, Wadhams & Toberg (2012) found a mean slope of first-year and multi-year ridges of
93 28° and 25° , respectively. Ekeberg et al. (2015) analyzed the shape of ridge keels using data from
94 upward-looking sonar (single beam) in Fram Strait and suggested that ridges typically have a
95 trapezoidal shape with the bottom width of the keel accounting for an average of 17% of the total
96 keel width.

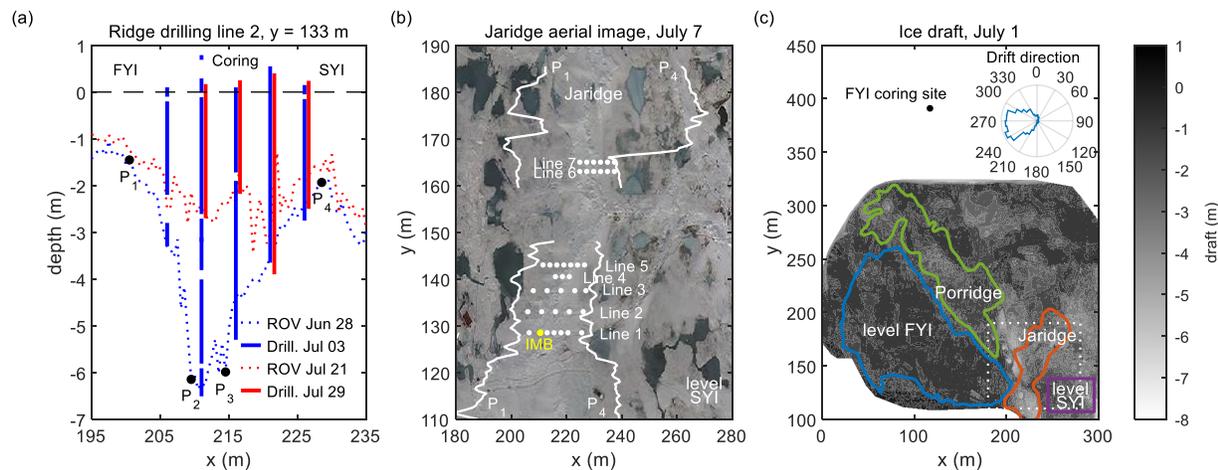
97 Although ridges play an important role in the evolution of the Arctic ice pack, ridges are still
98 relatively understudied compared to the level ice that is usually sampled. They have also been
99 identified as potential biological hotspots (Fernández-Méndez et al., 2018; Gradinger et al., 2010)
100 and influencing the light conditions beneath the ice (Katlein et al., 2021). In this study we use rare
101 multibeam ice draft measurements that follow the temporal and spatial evolution of a first-year
102 sea-ice ridge and adjacent level ice during summer melt. The measurements were collected in the
103 central Arctic Ocean during the Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of the Arctic

104 Climate (MOSAiC) expedition in summer 2020 (Nicolaus et al., 2022). Over a period of a month,
 105 we measured different ice draft changes and melt rates for first- and second-year level ice and a
 106 first-year ice ridge. Additionally, we identified key characteristics of ice bottom topography that
 107 affect the melt rates.

108 2 Materials and Methods

109 2.1 Ridge drilling

110 In this study, we focus primarily on the evolution of a ridge called ‘Jaridge’. Jaridge was formed
 111 between February 4–12, 2020 based on the visual inspection of sea-ice surface elevation models
 112 from a helicopter-borne laser scanner (Juttila et al., 2022). The ice blocks forming the ridge were
 113 0.2–0.4 m thick, the average sail height was 0.5 m, and the average draft was 3.8 m. We
 114 investigated ridge morphology using a 2-inch diameter ice auger (Kovacs Enterprise, USA). Ice
 115 drilling was organized along seven drilling transects perpendicular to the ridge crest orientation
 116 (Figure 1a). Each transect contained 3–7 drilling locations with measurements of ice draft,
 117 freeboard, depth of ridge voids, and snow thickness at a horizontal spacing of 2.5 or 5 m (Figure
 118 1b). The ridge was measured seven times (June 25 to July 29) during the summer melt season.
 119 Jaridge’s areal fraction was 12% of the four classified ice types (Figure 1c). Another shallower
 120 ridge, ‘Porridge’ was also located within the survey area but only mapped with the multibeam
 121 sonar (Figure 1c). The area at the top right quarter of sonar surveys was heavily covered with false
 122 bottoms (Salganik, Katlein, et al., in press) and was therefore excluded from our analysis.
 123 Temperature, salinity, and isotope compositions from Jaridge coring are presented in Lange et al.
 124 (in review).



125

126 Figure 1. Cross-section of ice draft in late June and late July 2020 along drilling line 2 (a), locations
 127 of ridge drillings, temperature buoy (IMB) and keel width interfaces of Jaridge on an aerial image
 128 from July 7 (b) and ice bottom topography on July 1, 2020, measured by remotely operated vehicle
 129 (ROV) multibeam sonar, showing location of first-year ice (FYI), second-year ice (SYI), Jaridge
 130 and Porridge (c) and location of (b) inside white dotted-line box. The polar histogram in (c) shows

131 frequency of ice drift direction in relation to the displayed ice floe orientation, with prevailing drift
132 in western direction.

133 To study the temporal evolution of the ridge interfaces, we used temperature measurements from
134 ice mass balance buoy 2020M26 (IMB, Bruncin d.o.o.). The IMB consisted of a 5-m-long chain
135 with a sensor spacing of 2 cm and provides temperature readings every 6 hours with an accuracy
136 of 0.1 °C. The IMB was installed on June 26, 2020 at the ridge drilling Line 1 (Figure 1b). At
137 deployment, the consolidated layer thickness was 1.9 m, keel depth was 4.0 m, and snow depth
138 was 0.6 m. To study the evolution of level ice draft, thickness, and interface evolution, we also
139 used data from the first-year ice (FYI) coring site located 70 m away from the ridge surveys (Figure
140 1c), further detailed in Salganik, Katlein, et al. (in press). These observations include a
141 combination of sea-ice coring conducted on a weekly basis and IMB temperature measurements.
142 Here we use measurements of FYI temperature, salinity, and density, as well as snow and sea ice
143 thickness and draft from 20–30 sea-ice cores per week.

144 2.2 Underwater multibeam sonar

145 We use measurements from a multibeam sonar (DT101, Imagenex, Canada) mounted on a
146 remotely operated vehicle (ROV, M500, Ocean Modules, Sweden, Katlein et al. (2017) to measure
147 the ice draft of an area of approximately 350 m by 200 m, with 0.05 m draft accuracy and horizontal
148 resolution of 0.5 m. Seven surveys at a depth of 20 m were performed during the melt season (June
149 24 to July 28), close to the floe edge of the Central Observatory of MOSAiC (Nicolaus et al.,
150 2022), covering an area with undeformed ice and several ice ridges including the Jaridge (Figure
151 1c). The modal draft of open water areas was used as a reference level for zero draft. For the
152 analysis of sea-ice melt evolution, we assume the ratio of ice draft and thickness of 0.9, supported
153 by in situ measurements.

154 2.3 Ridge morphology analysis

155 To quantify how ridge characteristics affect the melt rates, we divided our ridge draft multibeam
156 observations into 131 individual cross-sections which were nearly parallel to the direction of ice
157 drift during June–July. The distance between neighboring cross-sections was 0.5 m. We
158 determined the following characteristics for each cross-section: keel bottom width, draft, slope,
159 and distance from the ridge front line. To quantify these parameters with a single value, we
160 simplified each cross-section to a trapezoidal shape following Ekeberg et al. (2015). Four points
161 of these trapezoids (P_1 – P_4 , Figure 1a) coincide with the largest transition of the smoothed
162 inclination of ridge cross-sections, separating each cross-section into upstream, middle, and
163 downstream edges (locations of P_1 and P_4 are shown in Figure 1b). The upstream edge was facing
164 the ice drift direction, while the downstream edge was on the lee-side of the prevailing ocean
165 current relative to the ice (Figure 1c). The keel bottom width is equal to the horizontal projection
166 of the keel middle part (P_2 – P_3), while the keel draft equals to the average draft of the middle part.
167 The keel slope is defined as the angle between the upstream edge and the waterline. A tangent line,
168 “touching” the position of all P_2 points of cross-sections (upstream bottom corners), is the keel

169 edge (Figure 3c). The distance from P₂ of each cross-section to the keel edge was identified as the
170 primary factor for studying ridge melt rates.

171 **3 Results and discussion**

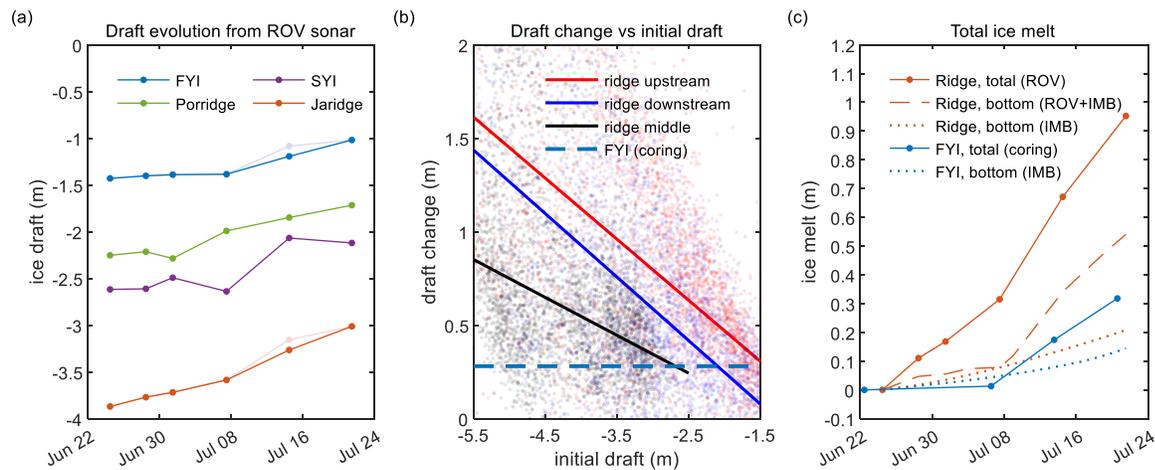
172 3.1 Level ice melt

173 In this study, we focus on the observed difference in sea-ice draft between the sonar surveys from
174 June 24 to July 21 due to large variability in melt rates. During this period, an area of undeformed
175 FYI (Figure 1c) with an initial draft of 1.4 ± 0.2 m experienced a 0.42 ± 0.26 m decrease in draft,
176 while an area of undeformed SYI with an initial draft of 2.6 ± 0.7 m decreased by 0.50 ± 0.31 m
177 (19% more than FYI). A shallow ridge ('Porridge') with an initial draft of 2.3 ± 0.8 m (similar to
178 SYI) experienced a 0.54 ± 0.61 m decrease in draft.

179 3.2 Ridge morphology and keel melt

180 Repeated ridge drilling showed that Jaridge keel melt was inhomogeneous (Figure S1). The
181 average ridge melt along ridge profiles 1–5 was 1.7 m, while ridge flanks melted up to 4.5 m. For
182 the ROV sonar surveys, the average draft change of the ridge area was 0.9 ± 1.0 m with an average
183 initial draft of 3.9 ± 1.1 m (Figure S2). The maximum ridge draft decreased from 8.2 m to 7.0 m,
184 while the largest observed ridge draft reduction was 6.1 m. The average keel slope was 14–15° for
185 both flanks, half of that reported by Wadhams & Toberg (2012), possibly because of larger 5 m
186 minimum draft ridge threshold and triangular ridge shape used in their study. The average fraction
187 of keel bottom width and keel width was 38%, twice as large as the 17% estimated by Ekeberg et
188 al. (2015), which may be related to the larger maximum keel draft (7.2 m in comparison to our
189 5.3 m). Co-location of ridge draft measurements from drilling and from sonar showed a good
190 agreement of the two draft measurement techniques ($R^2 = 0.8$) (Figure S3). According to the
191 individual observations of ice draft evolution from sonar, the melt of ridge flanks stronger (1.7
192 times larger regression slope) depends on ice draft in comparison to the middle part of the ridge
193 keel (Figure 2b). The average melt at the same depth was much higher for flanks than for middle
194 part. For example, for ice draft larger than 4 m, the average draft change for upstream, middle, and
195 downstream edges was 1.3 m, 1.0 m, and 1.4 m, respectively. Figure 2b can be used to predict the
196 ridge melt relative to level ice melt depending on ridge thickness distribution and idealized
197 trapezoidal geometry. On average, ridge flanks and middle parts were melting 1.7 and 2.0 times

198 faster than FYI at the coring site. Higher average melt rate for middle part was related to higher
 199 average initial draft for middle part (4.4 m) than for flanks (3.1 m).



200

201 Figure 2. Evolution of the average sea-ice draft measured by a ROV multibeam sonar for first-year
 202 ice (FYI), second-year ice (SYI), Porridge and Jaridge during June–July 2020 (a), draft change for
 203 single-point sonar measurements of ridge upstream, middle, and downstream edges, corresponding
 204 linear regression with solid lines, and average draft change for FYI coring site (b), total ice melt
 205 for ridge and FYI estimated from ROV multibeam sonar, ice mass balance buoy (IMB) and ice
 206 coring measurements (c). Shaded lines in (a) represent ice draft, not corrected for the melt pond
 207 drainage event.

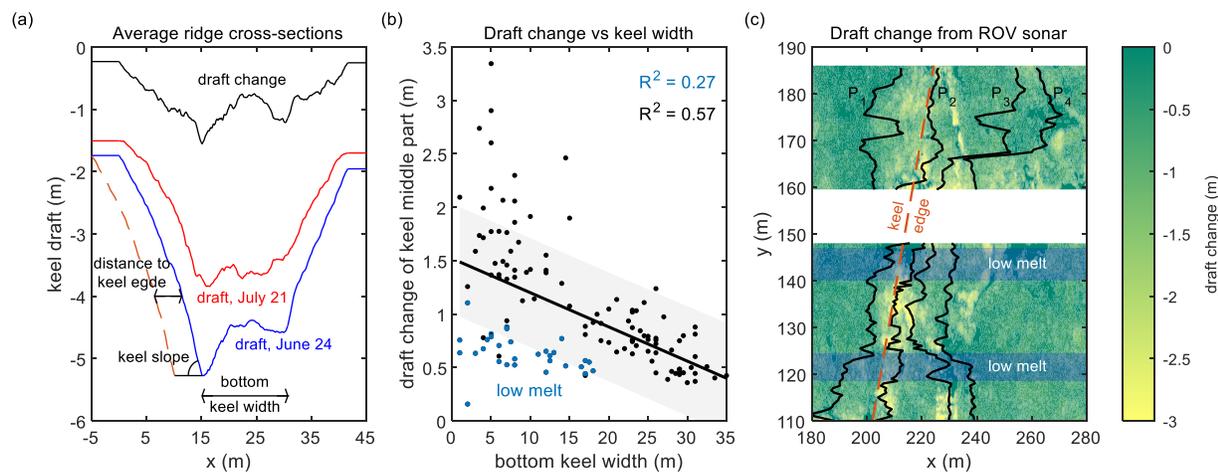
208 The relationship between sea-ice draft and thickness mainly depends on snow and sea-ice thickness
 209 and density. Macfarlane et al. (2021) present an average snow density of 420 kg/m^3 in June and
 210 July. Meanwhile, the snow at the FYI coring site melted entirely from an initial depth of 0.08 m.
 211 At the FYI coring site, the ratio of ice draft to thickness gradually decreased from 0.92 on June 22
 212 to 0.87 on July 29 (Figure S4). The corresponding estimate of sea-ice bulk density (assuming
 213 hydrostatic equilibrium) decreased from 910 kg/m^3 to 876 kg/m^3 , which agrees with a sea-ice
 214 density decrease from 914 kg/m^3 to 875 kg/m^3 estimated from temperature, density, and salinity
 215 measurements performed at the FYI coring site. In these estimates, the gas fraction was calculated
 216 from laboratory hydrostatic measurements of sea-ice density, while brine volume was calculated
 217 from in situ temperature and salinity measurements. The observed sea-ice density decrease is
 218 mainly caused by an increase in gas fraction from 2% to 6%. The ratio of draft to thickness for
 219 Jaridge was 0.89 ± 0.06 similar to FYI (Figure S1). The ridge bulk density estimated from
 220 laboratory density measurements from July 10 was 892 kg/m^3 , which is alike FYI values. These
 221 measurements support the 0.9 draft to thickness ratio for analysis of ROV sonar surveys. The
 222 average ridge macroporosity (void fraction) measured by drilling in June–July was $4 \pm 7\%$ for all

223 47 drilling sites (Figure S1). This shows that the ridge macroporosity has a minor effect on the
 224 estimate of the total volume of melted ice based on its draft measurements.

225 3.3 Ridge cross-sectional melt

226 Based on the results of multiple linear regression analysis, keel draft, keel slope, keel bottom-width
 227 and distance to the keel edge (Figure 3c) are responsible for 57% of keel melt variability with 37%
 228 correlation with keel draft, 32% correlation with keel slope, 27% correlation with keel bottom-
 229 width, and 11% correlation with distance from the keel edge. The large correlation of ridge melt
 230 with its mean draft may be explained by a combination of both higher ice melt and lower keel
 231 width for larger drafts. The negative correlation of keel width with the keel draft is related to the
 232 conservation of mass, as most ridge cross-sections were formed from approximately the same
 233 volume of ice blocks. Based on observations from Salganik, Lange, et al. (in review), the flanks
 234 of ridge keels are usually not consolidated, which may be coupled with higher ocean turbulence at
 235 the ridge flanks in comparison to the middle part.

236 The bottom-width of the keel ranged from 1 m to 35 m with an average of 13 ± 9 m, and the highest
 237 melt was observed around their left and right bottom corners (P_2 and P_3) within diameter of 10–12
 238 m. For wide profiles, it was possible to distinguish keel melt around two bottom corners and in the
 239 middle part between them. While areas within 10 m around upstream bottom corner (P_2) melted
 240 on average by 1.2 m, middle part without 10 m surroundings around both corners (P_2 and P_3)
 241 melted by 0.5 m (similar to level ice melt rates despite a much larger ice draft). We also found that
 242 all ridge cross-sections that had both narrow bottom-keel width and low keel melt were located
 243 within two areas (Figure 3c), and were characterized by large distance from the keel edge.
 244 Exclusion of profiles from these two areas increase correlation (R^2) between keel melt and keel
 245 bottom-width from 27% to 57% (Figure 3b). We suggest that these areas were protected by the
 246 keel front edge from the turbulent fluxes, which appear to occur in the vicinity of ridge keel corners
 247 (P_2 and P_3 in Figure 1a).



248

249 Figure 3. Average ridge cross-section of ice draft in late June and late July 2020 (a), melt of ridge
 250 middle part vs bottom keel width for each ridge cross-section (b), contour plot of ridge draft change

251 from June 24 to July 21 with locations of ridge vortexes (black lines), ridge front line (red line),
252 and cross-sections with low total melt and narrow keel width (blue shaded areas) (c).

253 3.4 Total, surface and bottom ice melt

254 In the previous sections we analyzed draft evolution of several sea-ice types. Under the assumption
255 of hydrostatic equilibrium, the sea-ice draft decrease equals the amount of surface and bottom melt
256 multiplied by snow and sea-ice density. Meanwhile, it is important to separate surface and bottom
257 melt to study thermodynamic coupling of sea ice, ocean and atmosphere. From June 22 to July 20,
258 unponded level ice at the FYI coring site experienced 0.21 m surface melt and 0.14 m bottom melt,
259 with nearly identical draft change (0.34 m) and total melt (0.32 m), suggesting a deviation from
260 one-dimensional hydrostatic equilibrium. Meanwhile, sonar measurements of the FYI give a larger
261 draft change (0.41 m), and hence provide a larger estimate of FYI bottom melt (0.25 m). During
262 the same period, the average snow depth above Jaridge decreased from 0.50 m to 0.12 m.
263 Temperature measurements from IMB042 indicate surface ridge sail melt of 0.24 m. Assuming
264 0.24 m of surface melt and 0.38 m of snowmelt for the whole ridge, using sonar measurements we
265 can estimate the average ridge bottom melt as 0.55 m or 60% of the mean ridge total melt of
266 0.93 m. This may explain why only 57% of the ridge total melt was related to characteristics of
267 the keel topography. The surface melt of level FYI and the ridge was similar, whereas the ridge
268 bottom melt estimates were 2.2–3.9 times larger than for level FYI. At the IMB location, the
269 measured ridge keel melt, however, was only 0.24 m (from both IMB and ice drilling
270 measurements). These observations do not include ridge internal melt, though, which can give
271 three times larger values of the total ice melt (Salganik, Lange, et al., in revision).

272 3.5 Effect of meltwater drainage on ice draft

273 There is a large difference of 0.11 m in estimates of the FYI total melt from coring (0.34 m) and
274 from sonar measurements (0.46 m). We suggest that this difference may be related to the drainage
275 of meltwater, which occurred from July 7 to July 14, and was accompanied with the formation of
276 an under-ice meltwater layer with 21% areal coverage and 0.46 m average thickness (Salganik,
277 Katlein, et al., in press). This coincides with the observed meltpond drainage from July 9 to July
278 13 (Webster et al., 2022). During this period, despite 0.16 m melt there was abnormal 0.08 m
279 increase of FYI freeboard at the coring site. This suggests that the large decrease in draft (0.30 m)
280 for FYI measured by sonar during July 7–14 was not purely due to ice melt, but rather includes
281 approximately 0.10–0.15 m lift (freeboard increase) related to drainage of meltwater. During that
282 period, independent measurements from FYI coring also showed a substantially larger draft
283 decrease (0.24 m in comparison to 0.08 m draft change during July 14–21). Meanwhile, the total
284 FYI melt from coring during these two weeks was 0.16 m and 0.14 m, respectively. Based on FYI
285 coring measurements, ice lift may lead to approximately 0.10–0.15 m overestimation of FYI melt
286 based on sea-ice draft measurements alone. Measurements from a helicopter-borne laser scanner
287 give 0.02 m increase of FYI freeboard during 4–17 July, which agrees with 0.01 m freeboard
288 increase from FYI coring during 6–20 July. This indicates that changes in ice draft and thickness
289 ratio presumably caused by meltwater drainage are reversible. A gradual increase of FYI freeboard
290 from June 22 to July 29 by 0.02 m despite a total FYI melt of 0.52 m, observed at FYI coring site

291 and mainly caused by the decrease of FYI density, may affect aerial and satellite altimetry
292 retrievals in Arctic summer.

293 Measurements of sea-ice bottom melt allow to estimate the ocean heat flux for different ice types
294 (Text S1). From June 24 to July 21, calculations based on temperature measurements from the FYI
295 IMB result in an average ocean heat flux of 17 Wm^{-2} , increasing from a minimum of 11 Wm^{-2} to
296 a maximum of 36 Wm^{-2} , with a corresponding FYI bottom melt of 0.14 m. A combination of sonar
297 and IMB measurements at the ridge result in an average ocean heat flux of 65 Wm^{-2} with an
298 average of 20 Wm^{-2} during June 24 – July 7 and an average of 107 Wm^{-2} during July 8 – July 21.
299 We suspect that the estimates of FYI bottom melt from sonar measurements may be overestimated
300 due to the complex relationship between FYI draft and thickness during surface melt pond
301 drainage. These processes may affect less the draft measurements of ridges, but could decrease the
302 estimate of the ridge bottom melt from 0.55 m to 0.40–0.45 m. This would result in 2.9–3.8 higher
303 bottom melt rates for the sea-ice ridge than for FYI. Meanwhile, the absence of ridge lift during
304 melt pond drainage is supported by sonar measurements with smaller draft change of FYI and SYI
305 (0.24–0.25 m) right next to the ridge in comparison to the average FYI and SYI draft change of
306 0.41–0.50 m away from the ridge.

307 **4 Conclusions**

308 We collected a rare dataset using a multibeam sonar mounted on an ROV that captured the three-
309 dimensional change of sea-ice draft over a period of one month during advanced summer melt in
310 the central Arctic Ocean. This revealed that an ice ridge with an average draft of 3.9 m melted
311 faster than adjacent level ice types. The total ridge melt was on average 0.95 m, compared to 0.55
312 m for level second-year ice and 0.46 m for level first-year ice. These observations can largely be
313 explained by the difference in initial average ice draft, of 1.4 m for first-year level ice, 2.6 m for
314 second-year level ice, and 3.9 m for the ridge keel.

315 Key factors that affect the melt rates of ridge keels, included the keel draft, slope, width, and
316 distance from the ridge front line. These factors can explain 57% of the total melt variability for
317 this particular ridge, with 36% of the melt variability explained by keel draft, 32% by keel slope,
318 27% by keel width, and 11% by a distance from the ridge keel edge. We observed a relationship
319 between the melt of ridge flanks with their draft, and amplification of keel melt within 10 m of its
320 bottom edges, while melt rates of the (more level) middle parts of ridge keels were comparable to
321 level ice melt. However, ice draft changes are not all due to ice melt, because the hydrostatic
322 balance of the ice needs to be considered, since, e.g., melt pond drainage and sea-ice density
323 evolution change ice draft. This needs to be taken into account when such measurements are used.
324 Such ice draft changes also affect the ice freeboard and can potentially affect satellite altimetry
325 retrievals in Arctic summer.

326 Since a large fraction of the Arctic ice pack is made up of deformed (ridged) ice, it is imperative
327 that we better understand the role of ridges in the Arctic sea-ice system. While ridge keels
328 contribute a significant amount of ice melt in summer (Perovich et al., 2021), they also provide a
329 sink for meltwater through refreezing in keel voids (Lange et al., in review; Salganik, Lange, et
330 al., in review). Ridge keels also shape the lateral distribution of under-ice meltwater layers
331 (Salganik et al., in press) and affects turbulent exchanges (Skylingstad et al., 2003), with
332 implications for ice-ocean exchange (Smith et al., in review). This work showcases areas that

333 warrant future observation-model development for improved representation of ridge related sea-
334 ice processes in models.

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359 Open Research

360 All scientific data used in this study is publicly available:

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