

# **Preservation of groove mark striae formed by armoured mud clasts: the role of armour sediment size and bed yield stress**

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# **The Depositional Record**

DOI: [10.1002/dep2.309](https://doi.org/10.1002/dep2.309)

Published: 01/09/2024

Peer reviewed version

[Cyswllt i'r cyhoeddiad / Link to publication](https://research.bangor.ac.uk/portal/en/researchoutputs/preservation-of-groove-mark-striae-formed-by-armoured-mud-clasts-the-role-of-armour-sediment-size-and-bed-yield-stress(4944d99f-3384-455f-b461-f726f0d248bc).html)

Dyfyniad o'r fersiwn a gyhoeddwyd / Citation for published version (APA): Lock, C., Reid, M[., Baas, J.](https://research.bangor.ac.uk/portal/en/researchers/jaco-baas(034f173b-6fd2-4960-9770-8c136feda547).html), & Peakall, J. (2024). [Preservation of groove mark striae formed by](https://research.bangor.ac.uk/portal/en/researchoutputs/preservation-of-groove-mark-striae-formed-by-armoured-mud-clasts-the-role-of-armour-sediment-size-and-bed-yield-stress(4944d99f-3384-455f-b461-f726f0d248bc).html) [armoured mud clasts: the role of armour sediment size and bed yield stress](https://research.bangor.ac.uk/portal/en/researchoutputs/preservation-of-groove-mark-striae-formed-by-armoured-mud-clasts-the-role-of-armour-sediment-size-and-bed-yield-stress(4944d99f-3384-455f-b461-f726f0d248bc).html). The Depositional Record, 10(4), 426-440. <https://doi.org/10.1002/dep2.309>

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The Depositional Record



# **Preservation of groove mark striae formed by armoured mud clasts: the role of armour sediment size and bed yield stress**



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# <sup>1</sup> **Preservation of groove mark striae formed by armoured**  <sup>2</sup> **mud clasts: the role of armour sediment size and bed**  <sup>3</sup> **yield stress**

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# 10 **Abstract**

4

In Sciences, Bangor University, Menai Bridge, LL5<br>
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Sarth and Environment, University of Leeds, Leed<br>
The Sarth and Environment and the base of sandstones<br>
physical-process 11 Striated grooves in tool marks are common at the base of sandstones, especially in deep-marine 12 successions, but their use in physical-process and environmental reconstruction is underdeveloped. To fill 13 this gap in knowledge, striations in the central groove of chevron marks and in chevron-less groove marks 14 were formed in the laboratory by dragging tools armoured with silt, sand or gravel across muddy 15 substrates. These experiments simulated the formation of striated grooves by armoured mud clasts 16 carried at the base of quasi-laminar and fully laminar debris flows, aiming to: (1) delineate the bed shear 17 strengths for the formation of striated grooves at different armour sediment sizes; (2) examine how the 18 preservation potential of striated grooves depends on clay bed rheology and size of armour sediment; 19 and (3) discuss how the pre-lithification clay bed consolidation state and size of armour sediment can be 20 reconstructed from striated grooves in the geological record. The experimental results revealed that tools 21 with small-diameter silt and sand armours dragged along soft beds lack striations or, at best, leave poorly 22 defined striations, whereas firm beds and gravel armours exhibit well-defined striations. The spacing of 23 striations formed by gravel clasts corresponds well with the clast diameter, implying that striation spacing 24 is a good proxy for the diameter of armoured gravel under natural conditions. In contrast, the spacing of 25 striae formed by sand armours is greater than the grain diameter, suggesting that the spacing of fine 26 striations can only be used to predict a maximum armour sand size. A comparison of different processes

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- 27 of formation of armoured mud clasts demonstrated that the armouring of mud clasts most probably
- 28 happens after incorporation of the clasts by erosion into the head of the debris flow and subsequent
- 29 movement across a loose sandy or gravelly bed surface.
- 30

### 31 **KEYWORDS**

- 32 armoured mud clast, bed yield stress, striae prominence, striated groove
- 33

#### 34 **1** | **INTRODUCTION**

at the base of sandstone beds havends and the transmit directions since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hall, 1843 rs, 1962; Peakall et al., 2020, 2024)), these structly resulting in flute marks (Crowell, 1955; Aller 84; Collinson et 35 Elongate sedimentary structures at the base of sandstone beds have been used routinely for 36 reconstructing palaeocurrent directions since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hall, 1843). Known generically as sole 37 marks ((Dżułyński & Sanders, 1962; Peakall et al., 2020, 2024)), these structures can be formed by: (a) 38 flow-induced scouring, mostly resulting in flute marks (Crowell, 1955; Allen, 1968; Dżułyński & Walton, 39 1965; Enos, 1969; Allen, 1984; Collinson et al., 2006); (b) flow-induced deformation of a soft substrate, 40 generating, for example, longitudinal ridges and furrows (Craig & Walton, 1962; Dżułyński & Walton, 1965; 41 Anketell et al., 1970) and 'dinosaur leather' structures (Chadwick, 1948); and (c) objects in the flow that 42 interact with the substrate, forming continuous tool marks, e.g., groove and chevron marks (Shrock, 1948; 43 Kuenen & Sanders, 1956; Dunbar & Rodgers, 1957; Kuenen, 1957; Dżułyński & Ślączka, 1958; Dżułyński & 44 Walton, 1963; Collinson et al., 2006), and discontinuous tool marks, e.g., skip, skim and prod marks 45 (Dżułyński & Ślączka, 1958; Wood & Smith, 1958; Dżułyński et al., 1959; Allen, 1984). Palaeocurrent 46 direction can be reconstructed from asymmetrically shaped sole marks; these include flutes, 'scaled' 47 longitudinal furrows (Craig & Walton, 1962; Dżułyński & Walton, 1965), chevron marks, and prod marks. 48 Sole marks that lack asymmetry, such as groove, skip and skim marks, allow quantification of the 49 orientation (i.e, two directions at 180° angles to each other) of the current that formed these structures.

50 In addition to their widespread use in palaeocurrent analysis, the type and shape of sole marks can also 51 be linked to the type of flow by which they formed and the rheology of the substrate. With increasing 52 flow cohesion and decreasing flow turbulence, sole marks change from flute marks via discontinuous tool 53 marks (skim to skip to prod mark) to chevron and groove marks, with the continuous tool marks typically 54 generated by quasi-laminar plug flows (*sensu* Baas et al., 2009) and fully laminar plug flows (*sensu* Peakall 55 et al., 2020). McGowan et al. (2024) found experimentally that continuous tool marks change with

56 increasing yield stress of a muddy substrate from cut chevron mark (with a narrow, central cut) via 57 interrupted chevron mark (with a wider, central groove and a progressively increasing angle between the 58 chevrons and the central groove) to chevron-less groove marks, thus uncovering a continuum between 59 chevrons and grooves not recognised previously (Figure 1).

ed mud clasts in the formative flows as well as t<br>ur (McGowan et al., 2024). The particle size of<br>s sediment if the sedimentary succession in which<br>of a similar size. In contrast, if the armour sedime<br>ud clasts are likely 60 Grooves in interrupted chevron marks and in chevron-less groove marks regularly contain striations 61 parallel to the long axis of the groove (Figure 2). These striations can be interpreted to have formed by 62 the asperities of irregularly shaped clasts, and by mud clasts armoured with gravel or sand particles, if the 63 parallel striae are abundant and closely spaced (Peakall et al., 2020; McGowan et al., 2024). The tools are 64 rarely present at the termination of tool marks, but the densely striated grooves provide indirect evidence 65 for the presence of armoured mud clasts in the formative flows as well as the upstream origin of these 66 mud clasts and their armour (McGowan et al., 2024). The particle size of the armour sediment may 67 indicate a local origin of this sediment if the sedimentary succession in which the striated groove occurs 68 contains sediment particles of a similar size. In contrast, if the armour sediment is coarser than the locally 69 deposited sediment, the mud clasts are likely to have picked up the armour from upstream locations with 70 coarser sediment. However, this reconstruction of the origin of the sediment armour from striations in 71 interrupted chevron marks and chevron-less groove marks (and possibly also prod and skim marks, which 72 can also be striated; Dżułyński et al., 1959; Allen, 1984; Peakall et al., 2020) is valid only if a predictable 73 relationship exists between the spacing of striae in striated grooves and the size of particles stuck to the 74 mud clasts. Moreover, the degree of preservation of striations in grooves, herein referred to as striation 75 prominence and continuity to define poorly and well-defined striations, as a function of armour sediment 76 size and bed rheology needs to be known. Prominence describes the abundance of striae — where poor 77 abundance includes isolated striae and small groups of striae — and their uniformity in spacing and depth. 78 Continuity is defined as the length of striae relative to the total length of the tool mark, where low-79 continuity striae are relatively short or exhibit interruptions along their length, which in turn reduces the 80 prominence. Herein, it is hypothesised that the striation prominence and continuity are higher for firmer 81 substrates and coarser sediment in the mud-clast armour, because the striae on firm beds are less likely 82 to be eroded by subsequent flows and coarser grains produce deeper and more widely spaced striations.

83 This hypothesis is tested by means of laboratory experiments in which tools armoured with sediment 84 particles of different diameter were dragged across muddy beds with different yield stresses. The main 85 aims of the research were: (1) to delimit the bed rheological properties for the generation of striated 86 groove marks at different armour sediment sizes; (2) to investigate the effect of clay bed rheology and

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87 size of armour sediment on the prominence and continuity of striated groove marks; and (3) to establish 88 how the experimental data can be used to assess the pre-lithification clay bed consolidation state (via bed 89 rheology) and size of armour sediment from striated groove marks in the geological record.

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in of clay-bed consolidation state and size<br>
ditions the spacing of striations is representative<br>
striations; (e) to describe how bed consolidatived<br>
thed from striae in natural interrupted chevron mand 90 Informed by these research aims, six objectives were defined: (a) to conduct tool-drag experiments across 91 water–kaolinite mixtures covering bed yield stresses at which interrupted chevron marks (relatively soft 92 beds) and chevron-less groove marks (relatively hard beds) form (McGowan et al., 2024), as a proxy for 93 the formation of striations by dense, laminar sediment gravity flows; (b) to find the lower yield stress limit 94 for the formation of identifiable striated grooves, assuming that striae do not form in mud that is too 95 water-rich and by sediment armour that is too fine-grained; (c) to compare the prominence and continuity 96 of the striations as a function of clay-bed consolidation state and size of armour sediment; (d) to 97 determine under which conditions the spacing of striations is representative of the size of the armour 98 sediment that produced the striations; (e) to describe how bed consolidation state and size of armour 99 sediment can be reconstructed from striae in natural interrupted chevron marks and chevron-less groove 100 marks; and (f) to discuss under which flow conditions armoured mud clasts are formed and how these 101 clasts then generate striated grooves.

102

#### 103 **2** | **METHODOLOGY**

104 The formation of striated chevron and groove marks by armoured mud clasts, as generated by quasi-105 laminar and fully laminar debris flows under natural conditions (Baas et al., 2009; Peakall et al., 2020), 106 was simulated in the Hydrodynamics Laboratory of the School of Ocean Sciences, Bangor University, by 107 dragging a spherical object covered in sand or gravel across a muddy bed in a rectangular tank. The tank 108 is 0.115 m wide, 0.674 m long and 0.153 m high (Figure 3), and it was filled to approximately one quarter 109 of its depth (*ca* 0.04 m) with a homogeneous mixture of kaolin clay (Whitchem China Clay Polwhite E 110 Powder; median grain size, D<sub>50</sub> = 0.009 mm; density,  $\rho_s$  = 2600 kg m<sup>-3</sup>) and natural seawater (density,  $\rho_w$  = 111 1027 kg m<sup>-3</sup>), sourced from the Menai Strait next to the laboratory and filtered before use. Subsequently, 112 the clay surface was flattened with a sharp-edged scraper that covered the width of the tank (without 113 changing the consolidation state of the bed) and, finally, seawater was added to a height of *ca* 0.14 m. 114 Fifteen experiments were conducted using three bed bulk densities: 1413.6 kg m<sup>-3</sup>, 1439.5 kg m<sup>-3</sup> and 115 1612.2 kg m<sup>-3</sup> (Table 1), equivalent to water contents of 75.4, 73.8 and 62.8%, and yield stresses,  $\tau_{y}$ , of 116 74.4, 91.3 and 274.7 N  $m^2$ , which characterise low-angle interrupted chevron marks, high-angle

117 interrupted chevron marks and chevron-less groove marks (McGowan *et al.*, 2024), respectively. The yield 118 stresses were calculated from the bed bulk densities using the rheological data of Baker et al. (2017; their 119 table 2). The object used in the experiments was a sphere filled with wet sand and a continuous layer of 120 sand or gravel was glued onto the sphere (Figure 4) to mimic an armoured mud clast. The sphere had a 121 mass of *ca* 0.15 kg and a diameter of 0.05 m. Four sizes of armour sediment were used: well sorted, silt 122 to very fine sand (S–VFS;  $D_{50} = 0.067$  mm), very well sorted, very fine to fine sand (VFS–FS;  $D_{50} = 0.123$ 123 mm), very well sorted, coarse sand (CS;  $D_{50} = 0.552$  mm), and well-sorted gravel ( $D_{50} = 4.16$  mm). A smooth 124 sphere without armour was used in a control experiment at  $\tau_y$  = 91.3 N m<sup>-2</sup>.

If then placed carefully on the bed, allowing it to<br>then placed carefully on the bed, allowing it to<br>a 8 seconds. This velocity guaranteed that the cla<br>experiment, the seawater was siphoned out of<br>bed disturbance. Thereaft 125 In each experiment, the armoured sphere was attached to a fishing reel by a thin wire attached to a 126 threaded bolt (Figure 3) and then placed carefully on the bed, allowing it to penetrate the mud under its 127 own weight. A near-constant dragging velocity across the muddy bed of  $74 \pm 22$  mm s<sup>-1</sup> was maintained, 128 so each experiment lasted *ca* 8 seconds. This velocity guaranteed that the clast stayed in contact with the 129 bed continually. After each experiment, the seawater was siphoned out of the tank at a rate that was 130 sufficiently low to prevent bed disturbance. Thereafter, the tool mark was documented using digital 131 photography and the LiDAR 3D scanning function on an iPhone 13 Pro, and a calliper gauge was used to 132 record a vertical profile of the tool mark perpendicular to the dragging direction at a horizontal and 133 vertical resolution of 5 and 0.5 mm, respectively.

134 The LiDAR function on an iPhone 13 Pro was used to form Digital Elevation Models (DEMs) of the striated 135 grooves produced by the armoured tools. Subsequently, Agisoft Metashape and Metashape Viewer 136 software, which allow three-dimensional visualisation and dimensional analysis of DEMs, were used to 137 measure the mean spacing of all striations in each groove (Table 1). High-resolution digital photographs 138 of the striations were used to validate the DEM-derived spacing measurements.

139 The striae prominence was represented quantitatively by standard deviation of the mean of the striation 140 spacing. The striae continuity was subdivided into longitudinal continuity and transverse coverage. The 141 longitudinal continuity was expressed as the mean length,  $\overline{C_L}$ , of all striations in a groove mark over a 142 groove-parallel distance,  $d_L$ , of 0.1 m, converted to percentage of maximum striation length:

143 
$$
\overline{C_L} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{i=n} 100 \frac{C_{L,i}}{d_L}
$$
 (1)

144 where *n* is the number of striations and *CL,i* is the length of striation *i* (Table 1). Equation 1 shows that 145 grooves with fully continuous striations have a longitudinal continuity of 100%, and the presence of

146 discontinuous striations reduces  $C_L$  to below 100%. The transverse coverage,  $C_T$ , was estimated by 147 determining the percentage of the groove width covered by striations, with 100% denoting a groove fully 148 occupied by striae (Table 1).

149

150 **3** | **RESULTS**

#### 151 **3.1** | **Visual description of tool marks and striae**

152 The experimental data reveal significant differences in the preservation of striae in the continuous tool 153 marks as a function of armour sediment size and bed yield stress (Figure 5). In the control run, a well-154 defined groove without striae was produced upon dragging the smooth tool through the bed at  $\tau_y$  = 93.1 155  $N \, \text{m}^{-2}$ .

156 Striated grooves at  $\tau_y$  = 74.4 N m<sup>-2</sup>

but seument size and bed yield sitess (rigure 5<br>ae was produced upon dragging the smooth tool<br>ith  $\tau_y$  = 74.4 N m<sup>2</sup>, all armoured tools produced lo<br>et al., 2024) with well-defined, 7–10 mm deep<br>with the gravel-armoured 157 At the lowest bed density, with  $\tau_y$  = 74.4 N m<sup>-2</sup>, all armoured tools produced low-angle interrupted chevron 158 marks (Figure 1; McGowan et al., 2024) with well-defined, 7–10 mm deep, central grooves. However, 159 except for the experiment with the gravel-armoured tool, the walls of the grooves were more prone to 160 collapse than in the experiments conducted at the same bed density by McGowan et al. (2024), 161 exemplified by the presence of soft mud clasts in the grooves made by the S–VFS and CS-armoured tools 162 in Figure 5. The S–VFS-armoured tool did not produce any visible striae. In the groove created by the 163 VFS–FS-armoured tool, only some striae were visible. The CS-armoured tool produced more pronounced 164 striae that were more continuous and more often occurred in groups than for the VFS–FS-armoured tool. 165 The groove formed by the gravel-armoured tool contained clear striae that were further apart than those 166 generated by the CS-armoured tool (Figure 5).

167 Striated grooves at  $\tau_y$  = 93.1 N m<sup>-2</sup>

168 The armoured tools produced high-angle interrupted chevron marks (Figure 1; McGowan et al., 2024) 169 with up to 14 mm deep grooves and well-defined lateral ridges at  $\tau_y$  = 93.1 N m<sup>-2</sup>, and the striae in the 170 grooves were more prominent than at  $\tau_y$  = 74.4 N m<sup>-2</sup>. The striae associated with the gravel and CS armours 171 were markedly deep and evenly grouped (Figure 5), compared to the striae at  $\tau_y$  = 74.4 N m<sup>-2</sup>. The striae 172 created by the VFS–FS-armoured tool were less obvious, *i.e.*, discontinuous and covering only part of the 173 width of the groove. The S–VFS-armoured tool produces some striations at this bed yield stress, but these 174 were irregular and poorly developed (Figure 5).

175 Striated grooves at  $\tau_y$  = 274.7 N m<sup>-2</sup>

176 The bed was firm at  $\tau_y$  = 274.7 N m<sup>-2</sup>, leading to the formation of shallow (up to 3 mm deep) and narrow 177 chevron-less groove marks (Figure 1; McGowan et al., 2024). As at  $\tau_y$  = 93.1 N m<sup>-2</sup>, the S–VFS-armoured 178 tool created discontinuous, poorly developed striae. The striae formed by the VFS–FS-armoured tool were 179 clearer, but the visually most conspicuous striae were present in the grooves produced by the CS and 180 gravel-armoured tools, albeit slightly less well-developed than at  $\tau_y$  = 93.1 N m<sup>-2</sup> for the gravel-armoured 181 tool (Figure 5).

#### 182 **3.2** | **Trends in striae preservation**

triae preservation as a function of median size of<br>alitatively in 'no striations', 'poorly defined striat<br>d striations'. Grooves with poorly defined striat<br>nuous and poorly grouped, with a maximum lon<br>50% (Table 1). The 'm 183 Figure 6 shows degree of striae preservation as a function of median size of armour sediment and bed 184 yield stress, subdivided qualitatively in 'no striations', 'poorly defined striations', 'medium-well defined 185 striations' and 'well-defined striations'. Grooves with poorly defined striations include all cases where 186 striations are rare, discontinuous and poorly grouped, with a maximum longitudinal continuity,  $\overline{C_L}$ , and 187 transverse coverage, *CT*, of 50% (Table 1). The 'medium-well defined' category comprises striations that 188 cover most of the width of the grooves, but not all striae can be traced along the full length of the grooves, 189 with  $\overline{C_L}$  and  $C_T$  ranging from 50 to 90% (Table 1). Well-defined striations are classified as continuous, and, 190 with few exceptions, they extend across the entire width of the groove, with  $\overline{C_L}$  > 90% and  $C_T$  > 90% (Table 191 1).

192 For all bed yield stresses, the striae preservation increased, as the median size of the armour sediment 193 was increased (Figure 6). The gravel and CS armours produced mainly well-defined striations, whereas the 194 VFS–FS and S–VFS armours were dominated by medium-well defined and poorly defined striations, 195 respectively. This is supported quantitatively by a sharp decrease in the longitudinal continuity (from 95– 196 99% to <10%) and transverse coverage (from 100% to <10%) of the striae, as the armour sediment size 197 was decreased (Table 1). The striae formed by the CS and VFS–FS armours became better-defined rapidly 198 from  $\tau_y$  = 74.4 N m<sup>-2</sup> (low-angle interrupted chevron marks) to  $\tau_y$  = 274.7 N m<sup>-2</sup> (chevron-less groove 199 marks), partly because the grooves were less prone to collapse at 91.3 N  $m<sup>-2</sup>$  and 274.7 N  $m<sup>-2</sup>$  (cf., 200 McGowan et al., 2024). In quantitative terms, the longitudinal continuity and transverse coverage of the 201 striations formed by the CS increased from 73 to 98% and from 80 to 100%, respectively (Table 1). 202 Corresponding increases for the VFS–FS armour were from <10 to 89% and from 50 to 60–90%. All 203 striations formed by the gravel armour were well-defined, with 100% transverse coverage and up to 99% 204 longitudinal continuity (Table 1). However, a small decrease in longitudinal continuity from 99 to 95% was

205 measured between  $\tau_y$  = 91.3 N m<sup>-2</sup> and  $\tau_y$  = 274.7 N m<sup>-2</sup>, after the bed was changed from soft to firm, 206 shown in Figure 6 by a small shift in the striae definition boundaries to coarser armour sediment.

207

#### 208 **3.3** | **Striae spacing**

m, with standard deviations of between 0.10 and<br>vacings are larger than 0.552 mm, the median graved medium-well defined striae with spacings of<br>or  $\tau_y = 274.7$  N m<sup>-2</sup>, with these standard deviatio<br>s for CS, the mean spac 209 The mean spacing of the well-developed striations produced by the gravel armour was between 3.84 and 210 4.49 mm (Table 1), which is of the same order of magnitude as 4.16 mm, the median diameter of the 211 gravel clasts. Standard deviations of the mean striae spacing for the gravel armour ranged from 0.57 to 212 1.64 mm (equivalent to 13–42% of the mean). The mean spacing of the striae formed by the CS armour 213 ranged from 0.65 to 0.83 mm, with standard deviations of between 0.10 and 0.20 mm (equivalent to 15– 214 55% of the mean). These spacings are larger than 0.552 mm, the median grain diameter of the CS (Table 215 1). The VFS-FS armour produced medium-well defined striae with spacings of 0.59  $\pm$  0.20 mm for  $\tau_y$  = 91.3 216 N m<sup>-2</sup> and 0.61  $\pm$  0.11 mm for  $\tau_y$  = 274.7 N m<sup>-2</sup>, with these standard deviations equivalent to 34 and 18% 217 of the mean, respectively. As for CS, the mean spacing is larger than 0.123 mm, the median grain diameter 218 of the VFS–FS armour. The spacing of poorly defined striae made by the VFS–FS armour in the softest bed, 219 and the S–VFS armours in all beds could not be measured with sufficient accuracy.

220

#### 221 **4** | **DISCUSSION**

#### 222 **4.1** | **Process interpretations**

223 The experimental data support McGowan et al. (2024) in that striated grooves are produced by clasts with 224 asperities, but the present study builds upon these findings by revealing novel relationships between the 225 preservation potential and spacing of striations and the rheology of the bed and the size of the sediment 226 particles attached to mud clasts (cf., Peakall et al., 2020). In general, tools with small-diameter silt and 227 sand armours dragged along soft beds lack striations or, at best, leave poorly defined striations, whereas 228 firm beds and gravel armours exhibit well-defined striations (Figure 5). In terms of continuous tool-mark 229 type, it is therefore inferred that low-angle interrupted chevron marks are less likely to exhibit 230 longitudinally continuous striations with full transverse coverage than high-angle interrupted chevron 231 marks and chevron-less groove marks (Figure 6; Table 1). Moreover, the spacing of striations formed by 232 gravel armours corresponds more closely to the diameter of the gravel clasts than those formed by coarse 233 and fine sand armours (Table 1). Soft, water-rich clay beds, here with  $\tau_y$  = 74.4 N m<sup>-2</sup>, apparently need

234 deep and widely spaced striations formed by tools with coarse sediment armour, here CS to gravel, to 235 prevent the substrate from partially or fully restoring a smooth groove by infilling of the striae behind the 236 moving tool. This process involves shear-induced breaking of the bonds between the kaolinite particles, 237 thus a decrease in the viscosity of the substrate, in turn facilitating flow of the shear-thinning kaolinite– 238 water mixture (cf., Philippe et al., 2011; McGowan et al., 2024). On a larger scale, this process promotes 239 failure of the wall of the grooves of low-angle interrupted chevron marks, leading to partial coverage of 240 the striations by mud clasts (cf., McGowan et al., 2024). Moreover, the surface of tools covered in silt to 241 fine sand is inferred to be too smooth to fully preserve striations in chevron and groove marks (Figure 5). 242 For tools with a coarse sediment armour dragged along firm beds, here with  $\tau_y$  = 274.7 N m<sup>-2</sup>, the striations 243 in chevron-less groove marks may also not be fully developed (Figure 6). The high yield stress and high 244 viscosity of the bed may prevent the particles from penetrating far enough into the bed to produce well-245 defined striations. This matches the shallow depth and small width, compared to the tool diameter, of the 246 grooves in these substrates (Figures 5 and 6).

247

248 **4.2** | **Striation preservation and spacing as a proxy for substrate yield stress and armour sediment**  249 **size**

ks may also not be fully developed (Figure 6). The<br>vent the particles from penetrating far enough is<br>thes the shallow depth and small width, compare<br>(Figures 5 and 6).<br><br>ion and spacing as a proxy for substrate yield :<br>wed 250 McGowan et al. (2024) showed experimentally that the type of continuous tool mark is a proxy for bed 251 rheology, which the present study expands on by incorporating the preservation potential of striations 252 within grooves. Low-angle interrupted chevron marks, formed at  $\tau_y$  = 71.6–82.8 N m<sup>-2</sup>, have long chevrons 253 that are oriented at a sharp angle to the groove (Figure 1), but any striations in the groove are expected 254 to be predominantly longitudinally and transversally discontinuous (Table 1). If present, full preservation 255 of striations in low-angle interrupted chevron marks is most likely indicative of mud clasts armoured with 256 gravel clasts. On the other hand, the presence of longitudinally and transversally discontinuous striations 257 in the grooves of high-angle interrupted chevron marks, exhibiting short chevrons at a wide angle to the 258 groove and formed at  $\tau_y$  = 82.8–158 N m<sup>-2</sup> (Figure 1), and in chevron-less groove marks, formed at  $\tau_y$  > 259 158 N m<sup>-2</sup> (Figure 1), suggests that these striations were formed by mud clasts with a relatively fine-sandy 260 armour (Table 1). Fully preserved striations in these tool mark types are most likely produced by mud 261 clasts with a relatively coarse-sandy or gravelly armour.

262 McGowan et al. (2024) also found that the width of grooves in interrupted chevron marks and chevron-263 less groove marks is a poor indicator of the size of the tools that produced the grooves, because the depth

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is would have required a hard mud, following th<br>in turn needing an unrealistically long period of c<br>f years to centuries (van Rijn, 1993). It is theref-<br>najor role in controlling striation spacing, and tha<br>in contact with 264 of penetration of tools depends on the bed rheology and the submerged mass of the tool. This raises the 265 question if a similar limitation exists for the sediment armour surrounding mud clasts. Intuitively, the 266 depth of penetration of sediment particles in the armour decreases as the firmness of the clay substrate, 267 and thus the time of bed consolidation, increases. Moreover, coarse particles should penetrate less far 268 into firm substrates than fine particles. Figure 7 shows conceptually that a shallower depth of penetration 269 causes more widely spaced striations. The influence of substrate firmness on bed penetration explains the 270 small increase in mean striation spacing formed by the gravel armour dragged through the firm substrate, 271 compared to the softer substrates (Run 14 in Table 1) and the lack of such a trend for the sand armours. 272 It is possible that the bed yield stresses used in the experiments were too low to significantly reduce the 273 depth of penetration, but this would have required a hard mud, following the clay-bed type classification 274 scheme of van Rijn (1993), in turn needing an unrealistically long period of continuous bed consolidation 275 under natural conditions of years to centuries (van Rijn, 1993). It is therefore concluded that depth of 276 penetration did not play a major role in controlling striation spacing, and that mostly the entire surface of 277 the sediment armours was in contact with the bed whilst the tools moved through the tank in most 278 experiments.

279

#### 280 **4.3** | **Effect of packing properties of sediment armour particles on striation spacing**

281 The experiments showed that the mean spacing of the striations formed by the gravel armour is similar 282 to the median diameter of the gravel clasts. In contrast, the mean striation spacing of the sand armours 283 is larger than the median diameter of the sand grains, with this difference increasing from CS to VFS–FS 284 (Table 1). As mentioned above, this may be caused by the difference in preservation potential between 285 striations formed by gravel and sand. Implicit in this interpretation is that there is a perfect match between 286 particle size and striation spacing under full striation preservation. This assumption is not necessarily valid, 287 because this relationship depends on the packing properties of the particles at the edge of the armour. 288 These properties include the packing density and lattice deficiencies that cause certain particles to extend 289 further from the tool than other particles (Figure 7). Random packing densities are more likely than 290 regular, e.g. cubic and tetrahedral, packing densities under natural conditions. Further analysis of the 291 effect of packing properties on striation spacing is therefore confined to random packing.

292 The influence of the packing of sediment armour particles on striation spacing was investigated 293 experimentally by emptying a bag of spheres, each 0.05 m in diameter, in a cylindrical container, 0.3 m in

294 diameter. This resulted in a loose-randomly packed volume of spheres with an irregular upper surface 295 (Figure 8A). In a second experiment, the container was gently shaken afterwards to obtain a denser 296 random packing of spheres. In both experiments, photographs were then taken at 12 different angles in 297 a plane parallel to the upper surface of the sphere-filled container to record 12 curves of maximum sphere 298 extension (black lines in Figure 8B). Subsequently, these curves were used to artificially produce striated 299 grooves by 'dragging' the curves towards the photographer (Figure 8C). The next steps involved measuring 300 the spacing of the striations and calculating the mean spacing for each viewing angle. Finally, the 12 301 spacings were averaged (and the standard deviation of mean spacing calculated) and then divided by the 302 diameter of the spheres,  $D_s$ , to derive a measure for the theoretical striation preservation factor,  $S_t$ :

$$
S_t = \frac{\overline{w}}{D_S} \tag{2}
$$

304 where  $\overline{W}$  is the mean striation spacing for both random-packing experiments (Figure 8). These 305 experiments showed similar values for  $S_t$  for the loose and dense-random packing runs,  $S_t$  = 0.89  $\pm$  0.15 306 and  $S_t$  = 0.88  $\pm$  0.18, respectively, suggesting that the density of random packing does not have a significant 307 influence on the striation preservation factor.

 $S_t = \frac{\overline{W}}{D_S}$ <br>
criation spacing for both random-packing exp<br>
r values for  $S_t$  for the loose and dense-random p<br>
ively, suggesting that the density of random packing<br>
reservation factor.<br>
1.16 was used to determine th 308 A mean  $S_t$ -value of 0.89  $\pm$  0.16 was used to determine the expected mean striation spacing,  $\overline{W}_t$ , in the 309 bool-mark experiments, resulting in  $\overline{W}_t$  = 3.70 mm for the gravel armour,  $\overline{W}_t$  = 0.491 mm for the CS 310 armour,  $\overline{W}_t$  = 0.109 mm for the VFS–FS armour, and  $\overline{W}_t$  = 0.059 mm for the S–VFS armour. Subsequently, 311 the measured striation preservation factor, *Sm*, was calculated for each experimental run, using the 312 an measured mean spacing of the striations,  $\overline{W}_m$ , and  $\overline{W}_t$ :

$$
S_m = \frac{\overline{W}_t}{\overline{W}_m}
$$
 (3)

314 and plotted as a function of armour sediment size in Figure 9.

315 Figure 9 shows a rapid decrease in *Sm*, as the armour sediment size is reduced from gravel to very fine 316 sand, limited by  $S_m \approx 0.9$ , i.e., a good match between armour sediment size and mean striation spacing, 317 for gravel armours and  $S_m \approx 0$ , i.e., no preservation of striations, for very-fine sand armours. This confirms 318 the earlier inference that striation spacing is a good measure for the size of sediment armour only for 319 gravel-sized clasts, and that sandy armours produce striations that are significantly further apart than the 320 size of the sand grains. Because mean striation spacing is unlikely to be smaller than the diameter of the 321 particles in the armour,  $\overline{W}_m$ -values smaller than 2 mm, the boundary between sand and gravel, can be 322 used only to determine the maximum size of the sandy armour of mud clasts. This analysis also showed

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323 that bed yield stress had no predictable influence on S<sub>m</sub>, and therefore on  $\overline{W}_m$  (Table 1), for each armour 324 sediment size.

325 The relative standard deviation of mean striation spacing lies within a similar range for all armours: 13– 326 42% for gravel, 15–55% for CS and 18–34% for VFS–FS. Interestingly, the lower end of these ranges agrees 327 well with the relative standard deviation of  $W_t$  of 18%. There is a tendency for these low relative standard 328 deviations to occur on firmer beds (Table 1), which confirms that on softer beds most of the variance in 329 the striation spacings is caused by a poorer preservation of individual striae.

330

## 331 **4.4** | **Interpreting bed rheology and armour size**

eology and armour size<br>
study can be used to aid the interpretation of str<br>
e marks in terms of bed rheology and armou<br>
with well-developed striae in the central groove a<br>
with a gravel armour along a soft substrate, ur<br>
b 332 The results of the present study can be used to aid the interpretation of striated grooves in interrupted 333 chevron marks and groove marks in terms of bed rheology and armour sediment size. Low-angle 334 interrupted chevron marks with well-developed striae in the central groove are most likely formed by the 335 movement of mud clasts with a gravel armour along a soft substrate, unless the striation spacing is 336 significantly less than 2 mm, but such striations are expected to have smaller longitudinal continuity and 337 transverse coverage. Figure 2E shows an example of a low-angle interrupted chevron mark with a 338 pronounced striated central groove from the Aberarth section of the Silurian deep-marine Aberystwyth 339 Grits Group in west Wales, United Kingdom (Baas et al., 2021). The striations have a spacing of *ca* 0.02 m, 340 thus within the size range of pebbles. The Aberarth section contains a prominent submarine channel fill 341 with various sandy and gravelly facies (Baas et al., 2021; their figure 11B) and abundant mud clasts in 342 hybrid event beds formed in a channel–lobe transition zone (Baas et al., 2021; their figure 10A). The mud 343 clasts armoured with pebbles that formed the striations may therefore have had a local origin. Figure 2E 344 also shows that the striations do not vary considerably in spacing. This suggests that the pebbles were of 345 uniform size and covered the entire surface of the mud clast that was in contact with the low-yield stress 346 substrate.

347 The spacing of striations in the central groove of high-angle interrupted chevron marks and chevron-less 348 groove marks should be a good indicator of a firm substrate, the presence of gravel in the armour of the 349 mud clast, and the median size of the gravel, if the mean striation spacing is larger than 2 mm. Figure 2B 350 shows an example of a chevron-less groove mark with pronounced striations from Lower Carboniferous 351 turbidites in the Braciszów quarry near the Czech border in southern Poland. These striations are spaced 352 at *ca* 0.01 m on average, suggesting that these were formed by mud clasts with a pebble armour dragged

353 along a firm bed. In contrast to the continuous tool mark in Figure 2E, pebbles are rare in the quarry, 354 indicating that these gravel-armoured mud clasts were derived from an updip location and the debris 355 flows that carried these clasts largely bypassed this depositional site. The striations in the hand specimen 356 shown in Figure 2A, from the Oligocene Podhale flysch, Bialy Dunajex, southern Poland, have a mean 357 spacing of 0.01 m. It is therefore likely that these striations were formed by a mud clast — or several mud 358 clasts, given that the surface is completely covered with striations — with a pebbly armour.

gure 2D from the Oligocene Cergowa beds, Koma<br>
apart (yet, showing a few striations up to 2.5<br>
e striations in this specimen, in addition to the<br>
heir inferred formation by a relatively fine sandy<br>
ipecimen shown in Figure 359 For striations less than 2 mm apart in high-angle interrupted chevron marks and chevron-less groove 360 marks, the sediment armour may have consisted of relatively coarse sand (possibly in the range from fine 361 to very coarse sand), and the mean spacing provides an upper boundary for the median size of this 362 armour. The striations in Figure 2D from the Oligocene Cergowa beds, Komancza, south-eastern Poland, 363 are mostly less than 1 mm apart (yet, showing a few striations up to 2.5 mm apart). The incomplete 364 transverse coverage of fine striations in this specimen, in addition to the relatively large variation in 365 striation spacing, matches their inferred formation by a relatively fine sandy armour, but it may also point 366 to a softer bed than in the specimen shown in Figure 2A.

367

#### 368 **4.5** | **Prevalence of armoured mud clasts in deep-sea deposits**

369 Although armoured mud clasts have been recognised in both modern (Gutmacher & Normark, 1993; 370 Stevenson et al., 2018) and ancient (Stanley, 1964; Mutti & Normark, 1987; Felix et al., 2009; Dodd et al., 371 2019; Privat et al., 2021, 2024; Jones et al., 2022; Scarselli, 2024) deep-water sediment, examples are rare 372 compared to striated grooves. This common occurrence of striated grooves in deep-marine deposits has 373 been used to suggest that armoured mud clasts are more prevalent in these settings than previously 374 thought (McGowan et al., 2024). The present work demonstrates that soft substrates and finer-grained 375 armoured clasts leave no trace of striations or, at best, poorly preserved striations. Consequently, this 376 suggests that armoured mud clasts, and particularly those coated in sand, may even be more prevalent 377 than postulated by McGowan et al. (2024).

378

#### 379 **4.6** | **Models for striated groove formation**

380 Striated grooves represent an erosional phase prior to sediment deposition. Furthermore, as argued by 381 Peakall et al. (2020), grooves are formed by clasts being dragged through a substrate whilst held in place

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382 by a flow with considerable matrix strength. Thus, grooves represent the product of quasi-laminar plug 383 flow or laminar plug flow (*sensu* Baas et al., 2009; Peakall et al., 2020), equivalent to the intermediate and 384 high-strength debris flows of Talling (2013). The mud clasts in the debris flows must be armoured to 385 produce striated grooves, but how does this process occur? Here, three potential mechanisms are 386 described.

#### 387 *Long-travelled debris flows*

388 A debris flow might incorporate armoured mud clasts from previous events, as suggested by coatings that 389 incorporate fossiliferous material from shallow water (Privat et al., 2021), and transport these clasts long 390 distances prior to generating the striated grooves. However, relatively few debris flows traverse entire 391 deep-marine systems, with most transforming to more fluidal flows (Felix & Peakall, 2006; Felix et al., 392 2009; Spychala et al., 2017), and exotic clasts are unusual coatings of armoured mud clasts in deep-sea 393 sediments.

# 394 *Erosion, generation and incorporation of armoured mud clasts into a flow*

ng the striated grooves. However, relatively few<br>most transforming to more fluidal flows (Felix<br>), and exotic clasts are unusual coatings of armo<br>orporation of armoured mud clasts into a flow<br>ly occurs at the head of a sed 395 Mud-clast erosion most likely occurs at the head of a sediment gravity flow, where bed shear stresses are 396 greatest (Necker et al., 2002; Baas et al., 2021). The clasts may then roll across a sand or gravel bed as 397 bedload and become armoured, before being incorporated into a debritic flow component. Physical 398 experiments have shown that the armouring process can be rapid (10 minutes or less: Hizzett et al., 2020) 399 so armouring could happen quickly after the generation of the mud clasts. This armouring process might 400 be close to the location where striated grooves are formed or occur updip where the armour grain size is 401 greater than that in the sediment surrounding the striated grooves, as discussed above. Bedload-transport 402 velocity decreases with increasing clast diameter (Bridge & Dominic, 1984) and is lower than the 403 suspended-load velocity (Baas et al., 2021), suggesting that armoured mud clasts move backward relative 404 to the flow front. Consequently, in order to act as cutting agents for grooves the armoured clasts would 405 need to be incorporated into the debritic flow component quickly. The paradox here is that there is a need 406 for both an erosive front to generate the clasts, and a particulate (sand or gravel) bed for the clasts to roll 407 over. Erosion and associated scouring would need to be initially localised, at or near to the flow front, 408 generating the mud clasts that then become armoured as they travel over uneroded parts of a bed 409 covered in sand or gravel. With increased erosion, the flow front would increase in concentration and 410 cohesion transforming into a debritic head, as argued by Baas et al. (2021), analogous to the high-411 concentration flow cell observed at the front of the head in modern sediment gravity flows (Azpiroz412 Zabala et al., 2017; Pope et al., 2022). This debritic head could then incorporate the armoured mud clasts.

413 This debritic flow component might either rapidly cut the striated grooves or transport the armoured

414 clasts considerable distances prior to striated-groove formation.

415 *Armouring of mud clasts after incorporation of clasts into a debris flow*

Id clasts protrude from the base of the plug in<br>
nar fluidal layer, of the order of 10–100 mm thick<br>
2024). If the debris flow travels across a sand or<br>
noured mud clasts would only have armour on t<br>
te, but these are the 416 As described above, the head of a flow may become debritic as a result of rapid erosion and incorporation 417 of both mud clasts and disassociated mud (Baas et al., 2021; Peakall et al., 2024). In many cases, there 418 may be no sand or gravel bed for clasts to roll over, and, as the head becomes more cohesive, clasts may 419 be eroded and incorporated directly into the flow without undergoing bedload transport and thus without 420 undergoing armouring. Mud clasts protrude from the base of the plug in quasi-laminar debris flows 421 downward into a basal laminar fluidal layer, of the order of 10–100 mm thick (Baas et al., 2009; Peakall et 422 al., 2020; McGowan et al., 2024). If the debris flow travels across a sand or gravel bed, these mud clasts 423 may become armoured through incorporation of sediment grains as they are dragged across the 424 substrate. The resulting armoured mud clasts would only have armour on those parts of the clasts that 425 interacted with the substrate, but these are the areas that would act as cutting surfaces if the clasts were 426 subsequently dragged across a mud bed. As the debris flow later traverses cohesive mud beds, the 427 armoured clasts then cut striated grooves. Sediment armouring has been shown to increase the abrasion 428 resistance of mud clasts by up to a factor of four over identical unarmoured clasts (Hizzett et al., 2020). 429 However, given that grain coatings are typically between one and three grain diameters in thickness (Chun 430 et al., 2002), abrasion may partially or completely remove the armour layer, leaving either sparsely 431 armoured clasts or unarmoured clasts prior to the clasts being uplifted into the flow as is known to occur 432 in subaerial debris flows (Johnson et al., 2012; Peakall et al., 2020). The dominant record of these 433 armoured clasts may thus be the striated grooves, without the presence of the clasts themselves.

#### 434 *Summary: Formative mechanisms*

435 All three mechanisms probably form striated grooves. However, long-travelled debris flows with exotic 436 coated mud clasts are rare in deep-marine systems, and thus are unlikely to be a key mechanism for 437 forming striated grooves. Similarly, direct incorporation of armoured mud clasts into a debritic flow 438 component may be relatively infrequent, given the requirements for erosion of mud clasts, bedload 439 transport across a sand or gravel bed, and rapid incorporation of the clasts into the head of the debris 440 flow. Consequently, armouring of mud clasts that are already in a debritic flow front may be the most 441 frequent mechanism.

442

#### 443 **4.7** | **Opportunities for future research**

ularity of mud clasts. Poorly sorted sediment and thus complicate the reconstruction of it is hypothesised that the effect of sediment sort are well-sorted and well-graded turbidites ofterefore require special conditions, 444 The present experimental study was conducted with well-sorted and very well-sorted sediment armours 445 that covered the entire surface of a spherical tool. Whilst providing novel information on the use of sole 446 marks in the reconstruction of sedimentary process and bed rheology, this experimental design can be 447 regarded as a simplification of the conditions responsible for forming striated grooves in nature. There 448 are therefore opportunities for future research into, for example, the influence on striation properties of: 449 i) the degree of sorting of sediment that armours mud clasts; ii) incomplete armours around mud clasts; 450 and iii) the shape and angularity of mud clasts. Poorly sorted sediment armours would increase the 451 variance of striation spacing, and thus complicate the reconstruction of armour sediment size from 452 striation spacing. However, it is hypothesised that the effect of sediment sorting is relatively small in deep-453 marine environments, where well-sorted and well-graded turbidites often dominate. Poorly sorted 454 sediment armours would therefore require special conditions, e.g., pick up of sediment by soft mud clasts 455 from the top of poorly sorted debris flow deposits or adhesion of sand and gravel to mud clasts within 456 poorly sorted debris flows. Incomplete surficial armours would also complicate the reconstruction of 457 armour sediment size from striation spacing, but this would increase the exposure of mud clasts to more 458 rapid disintegration (Kuenen, 1957; Smith, 1972; Hizzett et al., 2020), thus potentially confining 459 incompletely armoured mud clasts to a local origin. Armoured mud clasts need to be soft and cohesive to 460 facilitate the development of a surficial armour. Such clasts are hypothesised to be more prone to 461 abrasion, and thus have a smoother, more rounded, surface, than firmer, less cohesive mud clasts. The 462 formation of striations by sediment armour and asperities on the same mud clast is therefore less likely 463 than the formation by either process acting alone.

464

#### 465 **5** | **CONCLUSIONS**

466 The present laboratory study reveals novel relationships between the preservation potential and spacing 467 of striations and the rheology of the bed and the size of the sediment particles attached to mud clasts. 468 For all bed yield stresses, the striae preservation increases with increasing median size of the armour 469 sediment. Gravel and coarse-sand armours produce mainly well-defined striations, whereas very-fine 470 sand to fine-sand and silt to very-fine sand armours are dominated by medium-well defined and poorly 471 defined striations, respectively. Striations are also better defined on firm beds than soft beds (*sensu* van

472 Rijn, 1993). Low-angle interrupted chevron marks are therefore less likely to exhibit longitudinally 473 continuous striations with full transverse coverage than high-angle interrupted chevron marks and 474 chevron-less groove marks. Accounting for the grain packing density, the mean spacing of the striations 475 formed by gravel armours is similar to the median diameter of the gravel clasts, but the mean striation 476 spacing of sand armours is larger than the median grain size, with this difference increasing with 477 decreasing grain diameter. Striations more than 2 mm apart are therefore better suited for determining 478 the origin — local or more proximal — of the gravel clasts that form these striations than narrower 479 striations formed by sand armours. Finally, the armouring of mud clasts most likely takes place after bed 480 erosion and entrainment of the clasts into the head of the debris flow, followed by flow across a loose 481 sandy or gravelly bed surface.

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483

#### 484 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

For Review of Bangor Williams and the paper were collected by Carys Lock<br>thip Scheme of Bangor University, Wales/Cymru<br>by a research grant from Equinor, Norway, and the Carlos Zavala, an anonymous reviewer, and juthat help 485 The experimental data presented in this paper were collected by Carys Lock and Miranda Reid as part of 486 the Undergraduate Internship Scheme of Bangor University, Wales/Cymru. The laboratory setup and 487 consumables were funded by a research grant from Equinor, Norway, and the setup was kindly built by 488 Rob Evans. We thank reviewer Carlos Zavala, an anonymous reviewer, and journal editor Peter Swart for 489 their perceptive comments that helped improve this manuscript.

490

#### 491 **DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT**

492 The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon 493 reasonable request.

494

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612

For Review Only

#### 613 **TABLE AND FIGURE CAPTIONS**

614 TABLE 1 Summary of experimental data.

615 FIGURE 1 Principal types of chevron and groove marks and their relationship with bed rheology. After 616 McGowan et al. (2024).

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iferous turbidites, Braciszów quarry, Poland. Yell<br>
groove. Middle Ordovician Cloridorme Formatio<br>
77 mm in diameter. (D) Narrow striations. Oligoce<br>
llection of the Nat 617 FIGURE 2 Examples of tool marks with striations. (A) Dense group of striated grooves. Oligocene Podhale 618 flysch, Bialy Dunajex, Poland. Sample from the collection of the Natural Sciences Education Centre at the 619 Jagiellonian University, Kraków. Yellow scale bar is 100 mm long. (B) Widely spaced striations in sand-filled 620 groove mark. Lower Carboniferous turbidites, Braciszów quarry, Poland. Yellow scale bar is 100 mm long. 621 (C) Striations in sand-filled groove. Middle Ordovician Cloridorme Formation, Gaspé peninsula, Quebec, 622 Canada. Lens cap for scale, 77 mm in diameter. (D) Narrow striations. Oligocene Cergowa beds, Komancza, 623 Poland. Sample from the collection of the Natural Sciences Education Centre at the Jagiellonian University, 624 Kraków. Yellow scale bar is 100 mm long. (E) 'Rope'-like low-angle interrupted chevron mark with 625 pronounced widely spaced striations. Silurian Aberystwyth Grits Group, west Wales, United Kingdom. 626 Groove mark is *ca* 0.1 m wide.

627 FIGURE 3 Schematic drawing of the experimental setup as seen in planform. The tool was dragged from 628 right to left.

629 FIGURE 4 Examples of spherical tools with sediment armour used in the experiments. The diameter of 630 each sphere is 0.05 m. From left to right: tool with silt to very fine sand armour, tool with coarse sand 631 armour and tool with gravel (pebble) armour.

632 FIGURE 5 Photographic images of continuous tool marks subdivided according to armour sediment size 633 and tool mark type. Note that bed yield stress increased from low-angle interrupted chevron marks to

634 chevron-less groove marks. Colours behind pictures indicate nominal differences in striae prominence,

635 which decreased as armour sediment size and bed yield stress were decreased.

636 FIGURE 6 Median size of sediment armour against bed yield stress, showing that the most prominent 637 striated grooves form in gravel and coarse sand and for bed yield stresses between *ca* 100 and 300 Nm-2 . 638 LAICM/HAICM = low/high-angle interrupted chevron mark; CLGM = chevron-less groove mark; CCM = cut 639 chevron mark.

640 FIGURE 7 Schematic representation of (A) full and (B) particle penetration into the bed of an armoured 641 mud clast. When dragged along the surface (perpendicular to the drawings), the mean striation spacing 642 for full bed penetration is smaller, and closer to the particle size of the sediment armour, than for partial 643 bed penetration, as more particles are in contact with the bed. In (B), the red particles do not form 644 striations.

resentation of (A) full and (B) particle penetration<br>long the surface (perpendicular to the drawings<br>maller, and closer to the particle size of the sedin<br>particles are in contact with the bed. In (B), th<br>methodology for de 645 FIGURE 8 Summary of methodology for determining the theoretical relationship between armour 646 sediment size and striation spacing. (A) Loose-randomly packed volume of spheres. Arrows show 12 647 positions of camera for taking side-view photographs of surface of stack of spheres. Green and red arrows 648 correspond to positions of camera in (B). (B) Shows outline of surface of stacked spheres (black lines) and 649 the positions of maximum extension of spheres (black arrows). (C) Artificial groove for photograph 650 outlined in green in (B), with black arrows showing troughs of striations.  $S_t$  = theoretical striation 651 preservation depth;  $\overline{W}$  = mean striation spacing;  $D_s$  = sphere diameter = 0.05 m.

652 FIGURE 9 Measured striation preservation potential against armour sediment size. Peb = pebbles; Gran 653 = granules; VCS = very coarse sand; CS = coarse sand; MS = medium sand; FS = fine sand; VFS = very fine 654 sand.



FIGURE 1 Principal types of chevron and groove mark and their relationship with bed rheology. After McGowan et al. (2024).

269x188mm (300 x 300 DPI)



FIGURE 2 Examples of tool marks with striations. (A) Dense group of striated grooves. Oligocene Podhale flysch, Bialy Dunajex, Poland. Sample from the collection of the Natural Sciences Education Centre at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków. Yellow scale bar is 100 mm long. (B) Widely spaced striations in sand-filled groove mark. Lower Carboniferous turbidites, Braciszów quarry, Poland. Yellow scale bar is 100 mm long. (C) Striations in sand-filled groove. Middle Ordovician Cloridorme Formation, Gaspé peninsula, Quebec, Canada. Lens cap for scale, 77 mm in diameter. (D) Narrow striations. Oligocene Cergowa beds, Komancza, Poland. Sample from the collection of the Natural Sciences Education Centre at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków. Yellow scale bar is 100 mm long. (E) 'Rope'-like low-angle interrupted chevron mark with pronounced widely spaced striations. Silurian Aberystwyth Grits Group, west Wales, United Kingdom. Groove mark is c. 0.1 m wide.

243x160mm (330 x 330 DPI)



Tool properties: diameter = 0.05 m; mass = 0.15 kg

FIGURE 3 Schematic drawing of the experimental setup as seen in planform. The tool was dragged from right to left.<br>180x67mm (300 x 300 DPI)<br> $\frac{1}{2}$ right to left.

180x67mm (300 x 300 DPI)



FIGURE 4 Examples of spherical tools with sediment armour used in the experiments. The diameter of each sphere is 0.05 m. From left to right: tool with silt to very fine sand armour, tool with coarse sand armour and tool each sphere is 0.05 m. From left to right: tool with silt to very fine sand armour, tool with coarse sand armour and tool with gravel (pebble) armour.

231x90mm (330 x 330 DPI)



FIGURE 5 Photographic images of continuous tool marks subdivided according to armour sediment size and tool mark type. Note that bed yield stress increased from low-angle interrupted chevron marks to chevron-less groove marks. Colours behind pictures indicate nominal differences in striae prominence, which decreased as armour sediment size and bed yield stress were decreased.

254x226mm (300 x 300 DPI)



FIGURE 6 Median size of sediment armour against bed yield stress, showing that the most prominent striated grooves form in gravel and coarse sand and for bed yield stresses between c. 100 and 300 Nm-2. LAICM/HAICM = low/high-angle interrupted chevron mark; CLGM = chevron-less groove mark; CCM = cut chevron mark.

158x101mm (300 x 300 DPI)



FIGURE 7 Schematic representation of (A) full and (B) particle penetration into the bed of an armoured mud clast. When dragged along the surface (perpendicular to the drawings), the mean striation spacing for full bed penetration is smaller, and closer to the particle size of the sediment armour, than for partial bed penetration, as more particles are in contact with the bed. In (B), the red particles do not form striations.

106x66mm (300 x 300 DPI)



of methodology for determining the theoretical relation spacing. (A) Loose-randomly packed volume of stylengies ing side-view photographs of surface of stack of sp<br>amera in (B). (B) shows outline of surface of stack of sp FIGURE 8 Summary of methodology for determining the theoretical relationship between armour sediment size and striation spacing. (A) Loose-randomly packed volume of spheres. Arrows show twelve positions of camera for taking side-view photographs of surface of stack of spheres. Green and red arrows correspond to positions of camera in (B). (B) shows outline of surface of stacked spheres (black lines) and the positions of maximum extension of spheres (black arrows). (C) Artificial groove for photograph outlined in green in  $(B)$ , with black arrows showing troughs of striations. St = theoretical striation preservation depth;  $W =$  mean striation spacing; Ds = sphere diameter = 0.05 m.

272x125mm (330 x 330 DPI)



FIGURE 9 Measured striation preservation potential against armour sediment size. Peb = pebbles; Gran  $=$  granules; VCS = very coarse sand; CS = coarse sand; MS = medium sand; FS = fine sand; VFS = very fine sand.

149x124mm (330 x 330 DPI)

**Table 1.** Experimental parameters. LAICM/HAICM = low/high-angle interrupted chevron mark; CLGM = chevronless groove mark; stdev = standard deviation.

