



High Performance Conditional Push Pull Pulsed Latches Using Dual Stack Approach

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ABSTRACT: Latches and flip-flops are fundamental blocks for sequential circuits. New type of pulsed latches is introduced. Conditional push–pull pulsed latch is based on a push– pull final stage driven by two split paths with a conditional pulse generator. Two circuit implementations are discussed; the main difference in these two circuits is pulse generator, which can be either shared (CSP³L) or not (CP³L). Also the power consumption of these CP³L and CSP³L latches is further reduced by using the dual stack approach and delay will be approximately same. The performance for proposed topology is very fast, and outperforms the well-known transmission gate pulsed latch (TGPL) and TGPL is taken as reference circuit. Hence the proposed pulsed latch has the highest performance ever reported. Accordingly, the proposed class of pulsed latches goes beyond the current state of the art and it is well suited for VLSI systems that require high performance. The designs are simulated in tanner tools with a supply voltage of 1.8v at 180nm technology.

KEYWORDS Clocking, energy efficiency, flip-flops, high speed, low power, pulsed latches, VLSI

I. INTRODUCTION

Flip Flops (FFs) and latches are responsible for a large fraction of the power budget in VLSI systems. Typically, they dissipate 80% of the total clock power, and 30% of the overall power budget. Now a days to get high performance using FFs and latches is more critical than in past, considering speed can only increase through improvements in performance, since VLSI systems are power limited. Therefore, the novel topology with a targeted speed under relatively low power consumption is crucial. Among latches and flip-flops, pulsed latches exhibit the best energy efficiency from moderate to high performance design targets, among the existing classes of FFs. The transmission gate pulsed latch (TGPL) (see Fig. 1) used in various Intel microprocessors is the most energy-efficient. Some other flip-flops such as STFF, TGFF gives low performance and low speed compared to TGPL. The TGPL will be taken as a reference circuit for high-speed and high performance designs. When slower design targets are considered, master-slave FFs exhibit better energy efficiency. The traditional TGFF has better performance with more delay.

A new class of pulsed latches (conditional push–pull pulsed latch) is introduced to increase speed and performance. Two versions are presented, respectively, without (CP³L) and with (CSP³L) shareable conditional pulse generator.

II. PREVIOUS WORK

The existing work of this paper includes description of previous structure Transmission gate Pulsed Latch. The structure of Transmission Gate Pulsed Latch is shown in below figure.

CONDITIONAL PUSH–PULL PULSED LATCH: MAIN IDEAS AND OPERATION.

In most existing technologies the pulsed latches shown in Fig. 2, a push–pull output stage is adopted (M7–M8) as opposed to the traditional output inverter stage. This technique reduces the driving circuitry load, thereby it provides faster and high performance. It allows M7–M8 transistors in Fig. 2 to be up-sized, and it provides a faster output stage. The output stage in Fig. 2 is driven by two split paths which generates the pulsed signals active-high R (active-low set S_{bar}), and resets (sets) the output when active.

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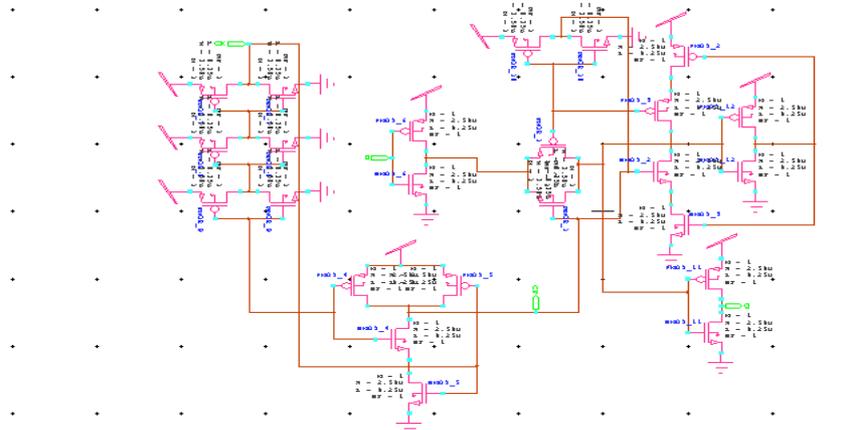


Fig.1: Schematic of TGPL

R and Sbar pulses are alternatively generated for fall/rise transition and at the falling clock edge by using the conditional pulse generator these pulses are generated. These outputs are transferred to the next stage by using half latch M1–M3 or M4–M6, depending on input *D*, low or high. The half latches in the first stage contains the *D–Q* critical path have less parasitic compared to clocked inverters or inverters with cascaded transmission gate (see M1–M4 in Fig. 2). It has two different paths which is driven by input *D* using NMOS (*M5*) and a PMOS (*M2*) transistor in Fig 6, and it is equivalent to the load of an input inverter stage (see M1–M2 in TGPL in Fig. 1).

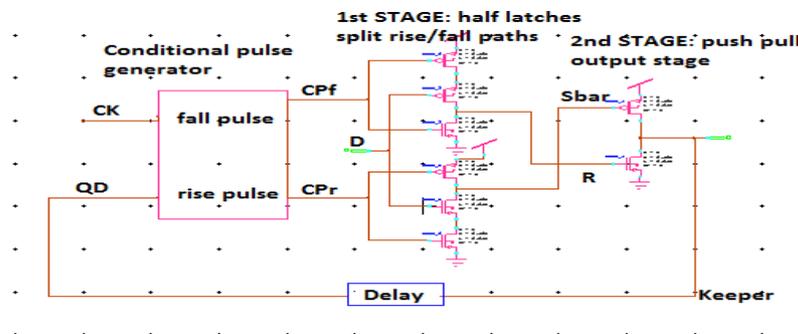


Fig.2: Block diagram of the proposed class of pulsed latches.

The operation in Fig. 2 is explained in Fig. 3, the internal signals are also added in the main waveform. If previous output *QD* is high or low will be checked by using pulse generator after the falling clock edge. The next output *Q* can stay at the same value or make a falling transition (cycle 1 in fig 3) if previous output *QD*=1, and it generates a pulse in the fall path in Fig. 2 through the *CPf*, otherwise nothing changes in the rise path (*CPr* is kept low, thus latch M4–M6 transistors keeps *Sbar* high and M8 OFF). If input *D*=1 stays at the previous value, the latch M1–M3 is OFF; and *R* should be kept at the previous value *R* = 0. If input changes to *D* = 0, the latch M1–M3 is ON and a high pulse in *R* is determined by *CPf*, and M7 transistor is ON and brings the output *Q* to low. Afterwards, the *QD* experiences same transition as *Q* but with some delay.

A pulse is generated in the rise path through the *CPr* (cycle 2 in Fig. 3) based on previous output *QD*=0 after the falling clock edge (nothing changes in the fall path). If input *D* = 0 stays at the previous value, the latch M4–M6 is disabled and *Sbar* is high, and there is no change in the rise path. If input changes to *D* = 1, the latch M4–M6 is ON and the pulse *CPr* pulls down *Sbar*, and M8 turns ON which brings *Q* to high. The *QD* experiences same transition as *Q* but with some delay.

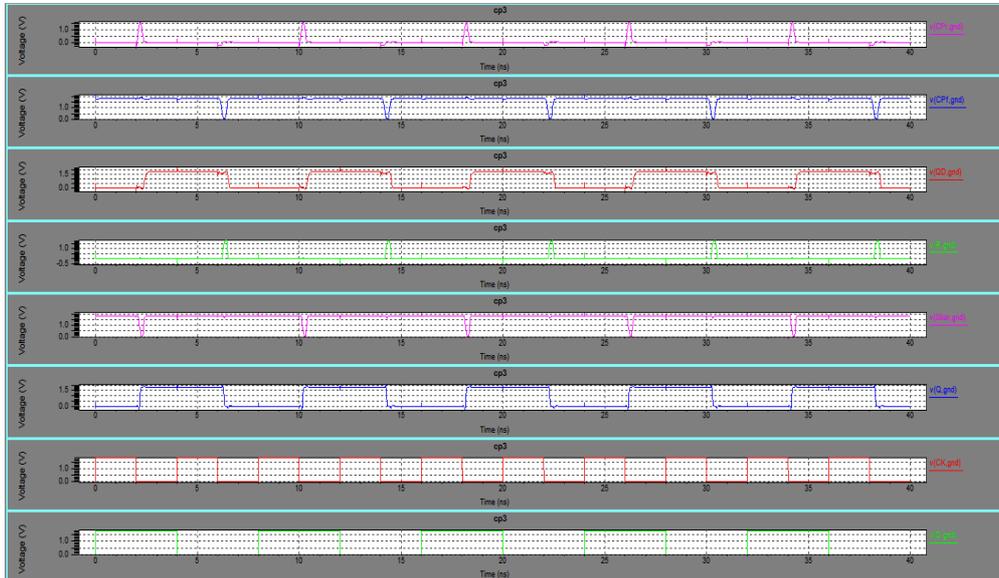


Fig.3: Waveforms of internal signals of the general scheme in Fig. 2

The output is maintained at the desired value by the keeper by turning of the M7-M8 transistors at the steady state, R (S_{bar}) in Fig. 2 is set to 0 (1). The keeper which is the memory element in Fig. 2 is placed at the output node because in first stage the half latch need to drive only single transistor, but in other topologies it is placed before the outputstage and we can observe in TGPL. These permits to move the parasitic associated with the memoryelement to the output node, thereby making the output stage lightly loaded and hence faster and moreenergy efficient.

III.IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED TOPOLOGIES

As we discussed above pulsed latch in Fig. 3 have lightly loaded $D-Q$ critical path, and it makes potentially fast and energy-efficient. These features can be implemented in different ways. In the following two versions are presented without (Section III-A) and with (Section III-B) shareable pulse generator.

A.CONDITIONAL PUSH-PULL PULSED LATCH

The CP3L schematic is shown in Fig. 5. The output Q is driven by the keeper and it contains cross coupled inverter pair, and the forward inverter is used to avoid current contention. Output stage in the pull-down network is ON and pull-up network of keeper is OFF if $R = 1$. Analogously, the output stage of the pull-up is ON and pull-down of keeper is OFF if $S_{bar} = 0$

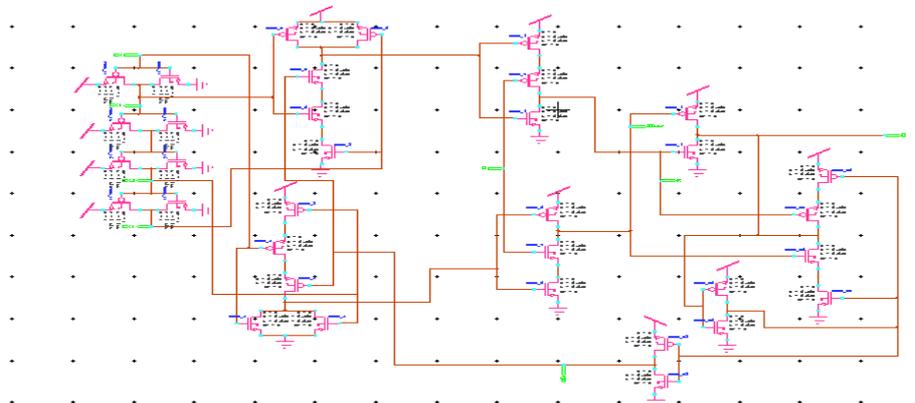


Fig.4:CP³L topology

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The R and Sbar pulses are alternatively generated, through M10 or M11 in the keeper is actually subject to transitions of the gate terminal in a given cycle. In contrast, the first stage must drive two transistors associated with the keeper, and both of them are subject to transitions (see transistors M11–M12 in Fig. 1, which load transistors M3–M4 lying in the critical path). This reduces the parasitic load in the first stage of CP³L and reduces activity at the keeper capacitances, thereby making the first stage faster.

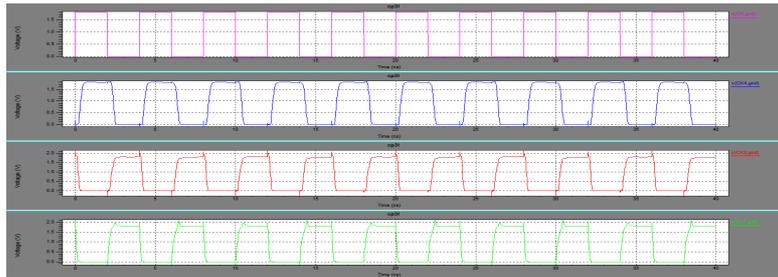


Fig 5 Clock phase generator

Pulse generator consists of a clock phase generator, pseudo-NAND/NOR gates for the fall/rise paths. Generally, the CPf/CPp signals should be high or low based on pseudo-NAND/NOR gates and the clock signals CK (I and IV) is complementary with the CK (0 and III) and each inverter is assumed to have the same delay τ_{inv} . The width of CPf and CPp pulses determines the width of the transparency window of CP³L latch in which the input can affect the output. The transparency window width can be modified by changing the inverter delay in clock phase generator in Fig. 5. Almost all pulsed latches adopt this same pulse generator topology. The delayed QD is kept stable as its previous value during the transparency window; it prevents glitches in CPp/CPf and reduces dynamic energy.

The output Q is connected directly to the pseudo-NAND/NOR without the delay stage in Fig. 4, hence any output transition within the transparency window immediately triggers the generation of an additional (undesired) pulse. If delay stage is not inserted in the feedback path the glitch occurs in CPp but it doesn't affect the output. The delay stage is not strictly necessary, but its insertion of delay provides better results.

B. CONDITIONAL SHAREABLE PUSH-PULL PULSED LATCH

Here we present a different implementation with same concept and the total pulse generator is shared by adding a conditional logic. But in CP³L, the pulse generator cannot be shared among multiple latches since pseudo-NOR/NAND are driven by QD, which is different for each latch. The schematic of conditional shareable push-pull pulsed latch (CSP³L) is shown in Fig. 6

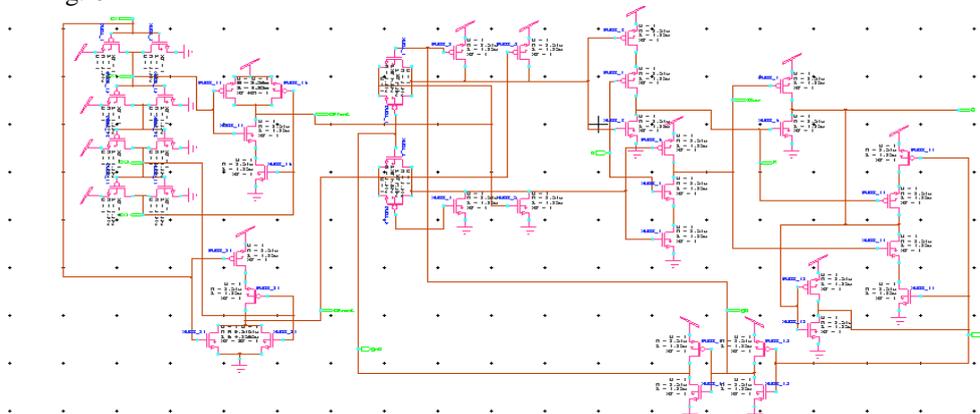


Fig. 6: CSP³L topology

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In CP3L pseudo NAND/NOR gates used but in case of CSP3L in shareable pulse generator static NAND/NOR gates are used to generate the pulses which is CPf , ext and CP_r , ext and have the same role as CPf and CP_r had in CP^3L . The external pulses are coming from shareable pulse generator. The conditional pulse selection logic consists of two transmission gates and two small keepers to maintain the same operation as before. The extra delay is added in the feedback because the transmission gates need complementary control signals.

The operation is similar to CP3L but the main difference is in conditional pulse selection logic and it enables the pulses according to the delayed output QD. Based on QD (1 or 0) the rise/fall paths will be enabled and it transfers the pulses to the next stage which is similar to the CP3L. A small difference from CP3L, the input capacitance seen from external pulses in CSP3L depends on Q, which may lead to data-dependent clock skew. In practical cases, this is not possible.

IV. DUAL STACK TECHNIQUE

A variation of the sleep approach is the zigzag approach, the overhead caused by sleep transistors is reduced by placing alternating sleep transistors. Another technique for power reduction is the stack approach, which breaks down an existing transistor into two half size transistor by using stack effect then sleep transistors are added in parallel to one of the divided transistors.

During sleep mode, sleep transistors are turned off and stacked transistors suppress leakage current while saving state. Each sleep transistor, placed in parallel to the one of the stacked transistors, reduces resistance of the path, so delay is decreased during active mode. However, area penalty is a significant matter for this approach NMOS once every transistor is replaced by three transistors and NMOS once additional wires are added for S and S', which are sleep signals. Another technique called Dual stack approach uses the advantage of using the two extra pull-up and two extra pull-down transistor NMOS in sleep mode either in OFF state or in ON state. NMOS once the dual sleep portion can be made common to all logic circuitry, less number of transistor NMOS is needed to apply a certain logic circuit.

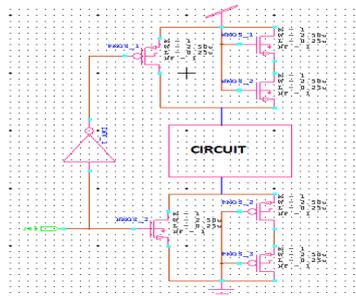


Fig.7: Dual-Stack approach

This dual stack approach is implemented to the above conditional push- pull latches and the new designs are proposed and are shown in figures 8 and 9.

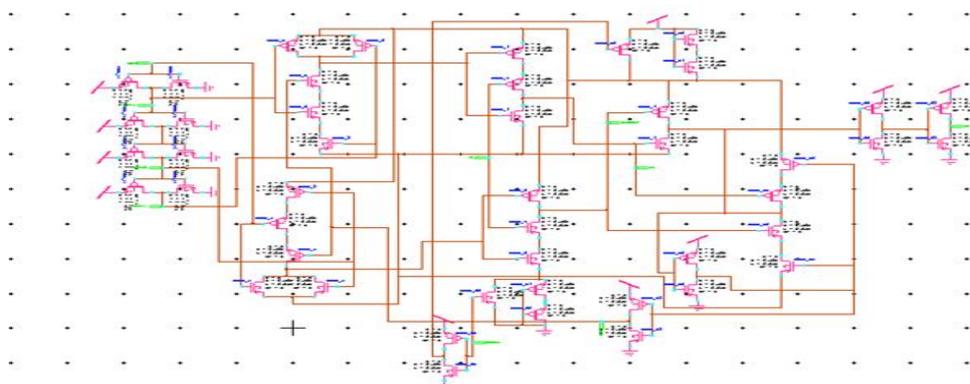


Fig.8: CP³L with dual stack technique

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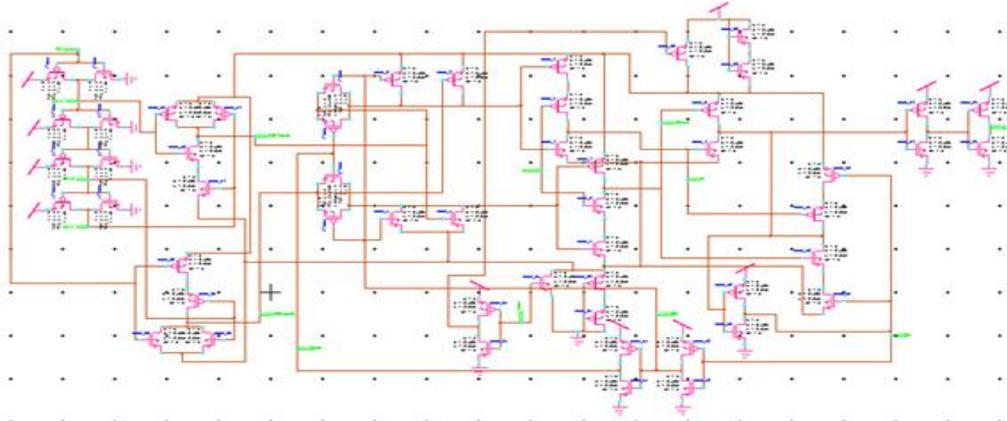


Fig.9: CSP³L with dual stack technique

V. SIMULATION RESULTS

The simulation of all above designs is carried out by using Tanner EDA tool v13.0 with 180nm technology. The simulated waveforms of existing and proposed TGPL, CP³L, and CSP³L are given in below figures:

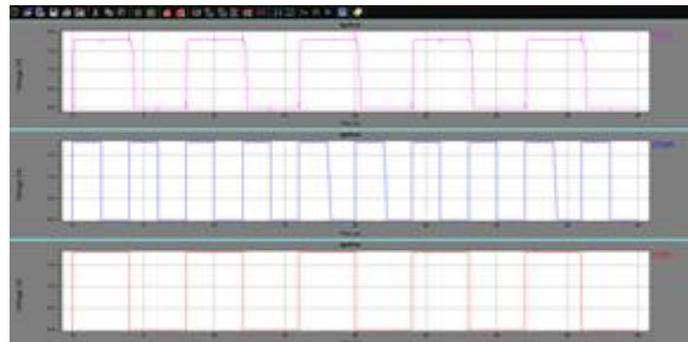


Fig.10: Simulated waveforms of TGPL design

The above fig:10 contains the clk and D are the inputs and Q is the output. In this figure clk operates in rising edge the output Q will be based on D input.

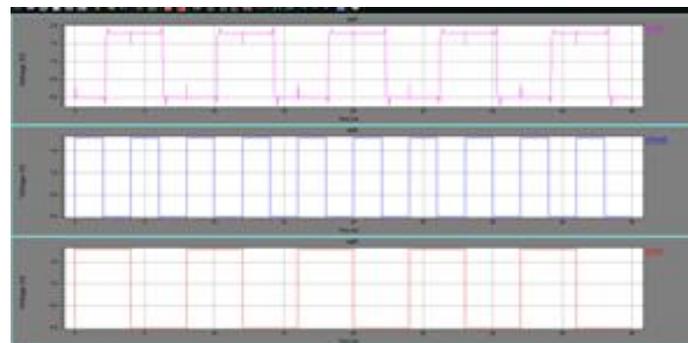


Fig.11: Simulated waveforms of CP³L design

The operations of CP³L and CSP³L are same but the main difference is CSP³L is sharable.

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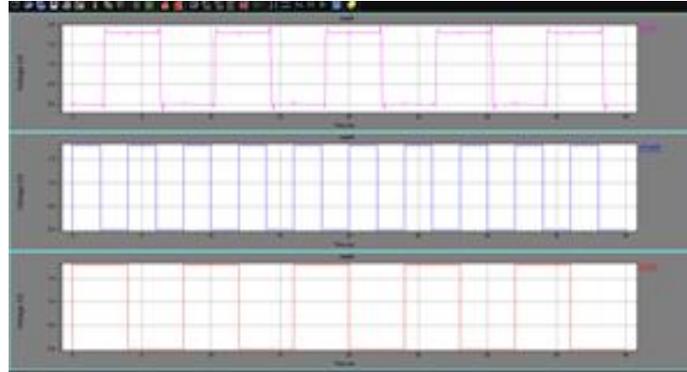


Fig.12: Simulated waveforms of CSP³L design

Both the fig:11 &12 the clk will be operated in falling edge and the output Q will be based on D input and delayed Q_d which will acts as another input. If D=0, Q_d=0 or 1 then Q=0. If D=1, Q_d=0 or 1 then output Q=1 based on CP_f and CP_r.

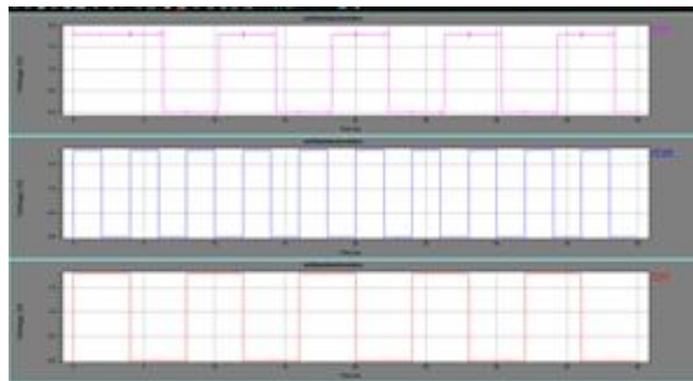


Fig.13: Simulated waveforms of CP³L Dual Stack design

Dual stack techniques for CP³L and CSP³L are mainly used to reduce power dissipation and delay. In dual stack technique all the vdd and gnds can be removed and places dual stack transistors and connects to single vdd and gnd

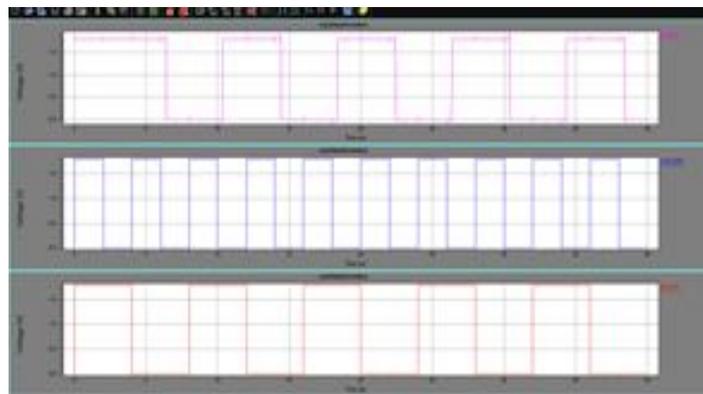


Fig.14: Simulated waveforms of CSP³L dual stack design

Both the fig: 13& 14 the clk operates at the falling edge and if D=0 and Q_d=0 or 1 output Q=0.if D=0, Q_d=1 or 0 then Q=1 means the operation is same as CP³L and CSP³L but the performance will be improved compared to CP³L and CSP³L i.e., fig: 11 & 12



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PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

Table.1: Performance comparison table of different designs

	TGPL	CP ³ L	CSP ³ L	CP ³ L dual stack	CSP ³ L dual stack
Power dissipation(w)	138μ	114μ	104μ	111μ	101μ
Delay(sec)	3.22n	2.32n	2.34n	2.31n	2.34n

From the above comparison the CP³L and CSP³L dual stack techniques is having high performance (means less power dissipation and delay)and TGPL is having less performance.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper, a new class of pulsed latches has been introduced. Its push–pull final stage and split paths in the first stage enable a significant reduction in path and parasitic effort. Also the dual stack transistor method is applied to these pulsed latches to improve the performance by reducing the power consumption. All designs are simulated in Tanner tool with 180nm CMOS technology and the comparison results are tabulated.

The future activities may include other sequential designs using pulsed latches with high performance

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