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First proton acceleration and X-ray emission at the Apollon laser facility

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We present the first results from the commissioning of the short-focal-length area of the Apollon laser facility, which was performed with the main laser beam (F1), scaled to a nominal power of 3 petawatts. This beam delivered on-target pulses of 40 J average energy and 22 fs duration. Stable acceleration of protons (above 50 MeV) and strong emission of X-rays were recorded, showing good laser-to-target coupling efficiency. This will be followed in 2024 by a last commissioning stage at the 10 petawatt level.

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