

Accepted Manuscript

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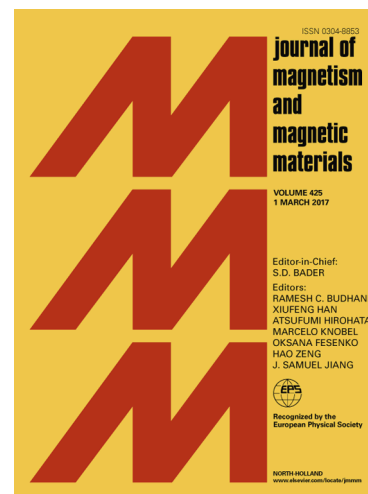
PII: S0304-8853(17)31411-7
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jmmm.2017.07.017>
Reference: MAGMA 62948

To appear in: *Journal of Magnetism and Magnetic Materials*

Received Date: 5 May 2017
Revised Date: 29 June 2017
Accepted Date: 6 July 2017

Please cite this article as: Q. Quan, L. Zhang, Q. Jiang, W. Lei, Q. Zeng, X. Hu, L. Wang, X. Yu, J. Du, G. Fu, R. Liu, M. Zhong, Z. Zhong, Effect of Nb doping on the microstructure and magnetic properties of Nd-Ce-Fe-B alloy, *Journal of Magnetism and Magnetic Materials* (2017), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jmmm.2017.07.017>

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Effect of Nb doping on the microstructure and magnetic properties of Nd-Ce-Fe-B alloy

Qichen Quan¹, Lili Zhang¹, Qingzheng Jiang¹, Weikai Lei¹, Qingwen Zeng¹, Xianjun Hu¹, Lei Wang^{1,a)}, Xi Yu², Junfeng Du², Gang Fu³, Renhui Liu¹, Minglong Zhong¹, Zhenchen Zhong^{1,b)}

¹ Jiangxi Key State Laboratory for Rare Earth Magnetic Materials and Devices/ Institute for Rare Earth Magnetic Materials and Devices (IREMMD), Jiangxi University of Science and Technology,

Ganzhou, 341000, P. R. China

²Ganzhou Fortune Electronic Ltd., Ganzhou, 341000, P. R. China

³Fujian Changting Golden Dragon Rare-Earth Co., Ltd., 366300, P. R. China

Abstract

With the intention to reduce the Nd content in Nd₂Fe₁₄B-type alloys, 20 at.% Ce and 0.5 at.% Nb substituting Nd and Fe in the Nd₁₃Fe₈₂B₅ alloys were previously employed to improve successfully the coercivity and the thermal stability without the energy product reduction. In this study, a light increase of the remnant polarization J_r was observed in (Nd_{0.8}Ce_{0.2})₁₃Fe_{82-x}Nb_xB₅ alloy at x=0.5 and x=1.0, resulting from the increasing amount of α -Fe phase. The optimum magnetic properties obtained with 0.5 at.% Nb doping are H_{cj} =13.1 kOe, J_r =0.79 T, $(BH)_{max}$ =13.3 MGOe, respectively. Besides, the coercivity H_{cj} and maximum energy product $(BH)_{max}$ for the melt-spun ribbons with 0.5 at.% Nb addition are higher than those of the Nb-free ribbons in the temperature range of 300-450 K. Both the variations of Curie temperature T_c and an increase of lattice constants a and c of the hard magnetic phase with Nb addition imply that some of Nb atoms may directly enter into the hard magnetic phase, occupying the Fe sites. With the analysis on the demagnetization curve, Henkel curve and the observation of transmission electron microscope (TEM), the results indicate that a small amount of Nb can enhance the coercivity and exchange coupling through improving the microstructure of alloys.

Keywords: Nb doping; Exchange coupling; Microstructure; Magnetic properties; Nd-Ce-Fe-B alloys

Corresponding author:

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