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Smc5/6 Coordinates Formation and Resolution of Joint Molecules with Chromosome Morphology to Ensure Meiotic Divisions

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Abstract

During meiosis, Structural Maintenance of Chromosome (SMC) complexes underpin two fundamental features of meiosis: homologous recombination and chromosome segregation. While meiotic functions of the cohesin and condensin complexes have been delineated, the role of the third SMC complex, Smc5/6, remains enigmatic. Here we identify specific, essential meiotic functions for the Smc5/6 complex in homologous recombination and the regulation of cohesin. We show that Smc5/6 is enriched at centromeres and cohesin-association sites where it regulates sister-chromatid cohesion and the timely removal of cohesin from chromosomal arms, respectively. Smc5/6 also localizes to recombination hotspots, where it promotes normal formation and resolution of a subset of joint-molecule intermediates. In this regard, Smc5/6 functions independently of the major crossover pathway defined by the MutL complex. Furthermore, we show that Smc5/6 is required for stable chromosomal localization of the XPF-family endonuclease, Mus81-Mms4[Δmes]. Our data suggest that the Smc5/6 complex is required for specific recombination and chromosomal processes throughout meiosis and that in its absence, attempts at cell division with unresolved joint molecules and residual cohesin lead to severe recombination-induced meiotic catastrophe.

Introduction

Sexually reproducing organisms reduce their genomic content by half in the gametes such that the normal chromosome copy number is restored in the zygote. To achieve this, homologous chromosomes (homologs) have to pair and then segregate to opposite spindle poles at the first division of meiosis. In many organisms, homolog pairing and segregation depends upon the developmental induction of hundreds of double-strand breaks (DSBs) throughout the genome (150–300 DSBs in yeasts and mammals) [1]. High levels of DSBs are necessary for homologs to pair efficiently along their entire lengths [2]. Moreover, a subset of DSB repair events lead to crossover formation. These reciprocal exchanges between homologs combine with sister-chromatid cohesion to form chiasmata, the physical connections that aid bi-orientation of homologs on the meiosis I spindle. Homolog separation at anaphase I thus requires the release of sister chromatid cohesion between chromosome arms. However, centromere cohesion is specifically protected to allow biorientation and accurate segregation of sister chromatids on the meiosis-II spindles [3–5].

Meiotic recombination is highly regulated and temporally coordinated with the meiotic cell cycle. Crossover-specific joint molecule intermediates (JMs) are formed during midprophase I of meiosis (‘thick threads’, pachytene), when homologous chromosomes are highly compacted and paired along their entire length by the synaptonemal complex. JMs are resolved into crossovers upon pachytene exit when a dedicated resolving process becomes


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Author Summary

Meiosis is a specialized cell division that exactly halves the number of chromosomes transmitted from each parent to their offspring via gamete cells (such as sperm and eggs). This requires that matching (homologous) chromosomes associate and then separate into different cells such that each gamete contains exactly one complete set of chromosomes. In many organisms, this sequence of events is facilitated by the induction and repair of chromosome breaks via a process called homologous recombination. As homologous chromosomes engage in recombination, matching DNA strands between broken and intact template chromosomes become intertwined in repair intermediates called Joint Molecules. In this study, we show that a highly conserved protein complex called the Structural Maintenance of Chromosomes 5/6 (Smc5/6) complex is important for regulating the choice of recombination template as well as for the resolution of Joint Molecules that is required for chromosomes to separate. Even though Joint Molecules remain unresolved in mutants that lack normal Smc5/6 function, cells still attempt to separate chromosomes and meiosis becomes catastrophic. Thus, Smc5/6 mutants have a two-fold defect: accumulation of unresolved Joint Molecules and a failure to stall meiosis in order to remove these structures.

activated by polo-like kinase [6–8]. In contrast, most noncrossovers arise during prophase I, independently of known resolving nucleases via a process termed synthesis-dependent single-strand annealing [8,9].

The formation of JMs is guided by the RecQ-family DNA helicase Sgs1/BLM, which limits the formation of aberrant JM structures, such as those that interconnect 3 or 4 chromatids instead of the normal two [10,11]. Resolution of aberrant JMs requires the activities of structure-selective nucleases, Mus81-Mms4, Sxl1-Sxl4 and Yen1 [11–14]. Sgs1 together with type-I topoisomerase, Top3, and accessory factor, Rmi1, defines a potent double Holliday junction (dHJ) “dissolving” enzyme that specifically promotes noncrossover formation [15,16]. At pre-crossover sites, this dissolution activity must be attenuated in order to ensure efficient crossing over.

In budding yeast, a majority of crossovers are formed via a dedicated pathway defined by the conserved, meiosis-specific MutS complex, MutS\(\gamma\) (Msh4–Msh5) that is predicted to encircle and thereby stabilize JMs [17–20]. From extensive studies, we know that components of the MutS\(\gamma\) pathway promote the formation of stable JMs, Single End Invasions (SEIs) and dHJs, and protect them from being dissociated by Sgs1 [10,20,21]. Subsequent resolution of dHJs into crossovers requires the DNA mismatch repair factors, Exo1 and the predicted endonuclease activity of MutL\(\gamma\), a complex of the MutL homologs Mlh1 and Mlh3 [22,23].

In C. elegans, MutS\(\gamma\) promotes all crossovers [24]. However, other organisms, such as fission yeast and Drosophila, lack MutS\(\gamma\). In Drosophila, an analogous function in protecting JMs from Sgs1/BLM anti-crossover activity has been inferred for two MCM-like proteins (mci-MCM). JM resolution in Drosophila occurs by the XPF-family endonuclease, MEI9-ERC1 [25,26]. In fission yeast, essentially all crossovers are generated by Mus81-Eme1, another XPF-family endonuclease [27–29]. In budding yeast, plants and mammals MutS\(\gamma\)-MutL\(\gamma\) is the predominant pathway of crossover formation, although Mus81-Eme1 (Mus81-Mms4 in budding yeast) also promotes a subset of crossovers [30–32]. Although Exo1-MutL\(\gamma\), Mus81-Mms4, and Sgs1 are the major JM processing activities during budding yeast meiosis, at least two additional endonucleases can also facilitate resolution in budding yeast and metazoans. Yen1 can act as a backup resolvase in the absence of Mus81-Mms4 [13,14,33]. Similarly, Slx1-Slx4 is essential for resolution of a subset of JMs, specifically when Sgs1 is absent [13,14,34–36]. Collectively, the JM resolution and dissolution activities establish two essential conditions for efficient homolog disjunction at meiosis I: formation of crossovers to facilitate homolog biorientation and the efficient removal of all JMs that would otherwise impede chromosome separation.

Meiotic recombination is coordinated with global changes in chromosome morphology, including sister-chromatid cohesion and condensation. These processes are mediated by Structural Maintenance of Chromosome (SMC) complexes, large clamp or ring-like structures that include cohesin, condensin and Smc5/6. Whereas cohesin and condensin have wide-ranging effects on global chromosome morphology as well as DNA repair [37], the Smc5/6 complex appears to operate locally to attenuate recombination [38–43]. During mitotic growth, the Smc5/6 has been proposed to stabilize stalled replication forks and prevent recombination at the fork [43,44]. However, if recombinational repair ensues, Smc5/6 also regulates later steps, promoting the resolution of recombination structures [38,45]. The core Smc5/6 complex does not contain any DNA repair activities, raising the question of how it facilitates replication and recombination. One model posits that Smc5/6 regulates effector proteins via an intrinsic SUMO E3 ligase activity, catalysed by the associated non-SMC element Nse2/Mms21 [46–48]. This SUMO-mediated process has been inferred for regulation of telomeric and kinetochore proteins, and the establishment of cohesion around DSB sites (in mitotically cycling cells) [49–52]. However, this emerging paradigm has not been extended to enzymes involved in JM resolution. Genetic or physical interactions between Smc5/6 and JM resolving enzymes have not been established.

Based upon the findings that chromosome segregation appeared worse in smc6 mutants that also lacked Sgs1 or Mus81, the Smc5/6 complex has been suggested to work in parallel with both Sgs1 and Mus81-Mms4 during mitotic DNA repair [40]. However, the severity of smc5/6 mutants in combination with mus81 or sgs1 could equally reflect both separate as well as collaborative functions. The only physical interaction described to date is with the Mph1/FANCN DNA helicase, whose interaction with Smc5/6 does not depend upon sumoylation [53].

Despite the central role of Smc5/6 in orchestrating responses to DNA damage in mitotic cells, the role of Smc5/6 in meiotic recombination remains equivocal. In one study, a critical role for budding yeast Smc5/6 was inferred to occur during premeiotic S-phase, since abolition of meiotic DSBs by mutation of Spo11 did not improve the block to chromosome separation caused by smc5/6 mutation [54]. In fission yeast, deletion of Nse5 or Nse6 is epistatic with the Mus81-Eme1 resolvase with regards to crossover generation suggesting that Smc5/6 regulates Mus81-dependent crossovers [55]. However, Mus81-Eme1 appears to be the sole resolvase acting during meiosis in fission yeast [56,57], so it is unknown whether this paradigm extends to organisms that employ multiple resolvases; or whether Smc5/6 influences all resolution activities via global changes in chromosome structure. In contrast to fission yeast, in C. elegans animals depleted for Smc5/6, crossover formation appears normal but meioticocytes contain excess RAD-51 foci indicative of unrepairied DSBs [58]. From these phenotypes, a specific defect in meiotic DSB-repair between sister-chromatids was inferred [59]. This raises the possibility that the
Smc5/6 complex regulates a subset of recombination events and their resolution via specific resolvable activities.

A possible explanation for these apparently contradictory phenotypes is the extent to which different organisms employ the different [JM resolution/dissolution activities [59]. In this study, we demonstrate that budding yeast Smc5/6 has essential roles during meiotic recombination in regulating the ordered formation of interhomolog joint molecules as well as their resolution. In smc5f6 mutants, intersister dHJs as well as multichromatid joint molecules accumulate and fail to be resolved. For the latter, we show that Smc5/6 regulates Mus81-Mms4 activity in joint molecule resolution and localization to meiotic chromosomes. In contrast, the main resolvable activity during meiosis (MutLγ) appears to function independently of the Smc5/6 complex.

Results

Smc5/6 accumulates at centromeres, cohesion-binding sites, and double-strand breaks (DSBs)

Affinity-tagged Smc5-13myc and Nse4-TAP proteins were expressed throughout meiosis (Figure S1A). A subset of Smc5-13myc migrated as a highly molecular weight band that likely corresponds to the sumoylated species (Figure S1A). Smc5-13myc displayed linear or punctate immuno-staining patterns along meiotic chromosomes, during prophase I, that became undetectable at diplonema and metaphase I (Figure S1B). The punctate localization of Smc5-13myc was dependent upon Cdc6 (which is required for meiotic DNA replication) and to a lesser extent on the type-II topoisomerase Top2 (Figure S1). In contrast, chromosomal staining of Smc5/6 did not require Spo11 (required for DSB formation), Rec8 (cohesion), or the type-I topoisomerases, Top1 and Top3 (Figure S1C and data not shown).

To obtain a higher resolution picture of Smc5/6 association with meiotic chromosomes, we carried out genome-wide ChIP-on-chip localization analysis for Smc5 tagged at its C-terminus with three V5 or 13 myc epitopes. Smc5 binds to many of the same chromosomal axis-associated sites as the meiosis-specific cohesin component, Rec8, and is similarly enriched at centromeres (Figure 1A, 1B). A similar, perhaps even more pronounced, enrichment at cohesin binding sites was also observed when a tagged Smc5-13myc protein was analyzed (Pearson’s correlation coefficient (PCC) for Smc5-3V5 vs. Rec8 = 0.22, p<10^-15; Smc5-13myc vs. Rec8 = 0.43, p<10^-15; Figure S2). The enrichment of Smc5 at cohesin binding sites, centromeres, and telomeres is similar to the localization pattern previously described for Smc5/6 in vegetative cells [60]. However, in contrast to the mitotic distribution [60], neither we nor Xaver et al. [61] observed an increased density of Smc5/6 association sites along longer chromosomes during meiosis.

To determine whether the association of Smc5 with meiotic chromosomes depended upon DSB formation, we determined the binding profile in the absence of Spo11 (Figure 1B). Aside from a small overall reduction in binding, we observed no gross changes in the Smc5-3V5 distribution either at or between core sites in a spo11A strain (Figure 1B). This result is consistent with our observation that Smc5 immuno-staining on individual, spread chromosomes depended upon DSB formation, we determined the magnitude with which Smc5 (our study) or Smc6 (Xaver et al.) associates with cohesion-associated sites during meiosis, during prophase I, that became undetectable at diplonema and metaphase I (Figure S1C). This pattern is reminiscent of the binding profiles of Rec114 and other factors required for DSB formation, which are inferred to result from interaction of the DSB sites with the chromosome axes at the time of DSB formation [62,63]. We conclude that Smc5/6 associates with cohesion association sites, centromeres, as well as DSB hotspots, and that this association occurs mostly independently of DSB formation.

The strong enrichment of Smc5/6 at centromeres (the strongest cohesion binding sites in the genome) as well as DSBs were also observed for the Smc6 subunit in independent experiments by Xaver et al. (2013). Using ChIP-seq, they observed a small enrichment at cohesin association sites as well. The differences in the magnitude with which Smc5 (our study) or Smc6 (Xaver et al.) binds cohesin associated sites is likely due to the affinity tags being placed on different subunits of the complex. These may be differentially accessible to the antibodies and/or local DNA. It is unlikely that the enrichment of Smc5/6 that we observe in the ChIP experiments is non-specific, because the patterns are similar for both Smc5-3V5 and Smc5-13myc, which were immunoprecipitated with different antibodies and resins. Moreover, other DSB factors tagged with 13myc did not show any significant enrichment to cohesin binding sites by ChIP-chip (data not shown). Finally, consistent with a fraction of Smc5/6 binding to chromosomal axes, more than 50% of Smc5-13myc foci localize to the synaptonemal complex (central element component, Zip1) in our experiments (Figure S1B). This makes it highly unlikely that non-specific association of the antibodies with proteins or sequences at cohesin binding sites gives rise to false peaks.

Smc5/6 is required for chromosome separation following meiotic DSB formation

Smc5 localization at sites of meiotic DSBs, cohesion binding, and centromeres suggests possible roles for the Smc5/6 complex in meiotic recombination and chromosome morphogenesis. Since Smc5/6 is essential, its meiotic functions were studied by deleting the core component, Smc5, and the kleisin (Nse4) using the CLB2 promoter, which is strongly repressed in meiosis [67] (Figure 2A). Meiosis-specific depletion circumvents the need for temperature-sensitive conditional alleles that require temperature-shift protocols, which may be complicated by the fact that several chromosomal processes are affected by temperature [20,68].

Strains carrying the pCENHIS5CMC5 or pCENHIS-NSE4 alleles (hereafter, smc5 and nse4) had normal vegetative growth and were not sensitive to DNA damaging agents (data not shown). In meiosis, although bulk DNA replication and spindle pole body separation were essentially normal (Figure 2B,C), nuclear divisions were severely defective (Figure 2D). Time-lapse studies revealed that although nuclear divisions were attempted at both anaphase I and II, as soon as spindles disassembled, DNA bodies retracted into a single mass that subsequently failed to be encapsulated in the spores (Figure 2F,H; Movie S1, S2, S3). None of 30 randomly selected cells imaged for either the smc5 or nse4 mutant managed to
stably separate their DNA at the completion of meiosis I or II (Figure 2E). Micronuclei or fragmented nuclei as well as aberrant chromosomal morphologies were also observed (Figure 2E, arrows). Despite the severe nuclear separation defect, both the smc5 and nse4 mutants went on to complete meiosis and form ascii with similar efficiencies to wild type (Figure 2F, G, ~90%). However, the failure to separate the DNA at meiosis I and II, prevented encapsulation of DNA into the spores (Figure 2H). This “meiotic catastrophe” was more pronounced for the nse4 mutant compared to the smc5. This is likely due to more efficient depletion of Nse4, when Smc5 was further depleted using an auxin-inducible degron fusion (P<sub>Clb2</sub>-SMC5-AID, [69]), despite the nuclear separation defect became more severe and analogous to that seen in nse4 cells (Figure 2F-H). We could not determine unequivocally that the P<sub>Clb2</sub>-SMC5-AID was more depleted than P<sub>Clb2</sub>-SMC5, since the depletion by P<sub>Clb2</sub>-SMC5 alone rendered Smc5 undetectable by Western blot (Figure 2A, data not shown). However, analysis of SMC5-AID (without Clb2 depletion) demonstrated that auxin-induced degradation of Smc5 does occur, even when Smc5 is expressed at normal levels from its native promoter (Figure S3). Together, these experiments support the notion that the less severe meiotic catastrophe seen in the P<sub>Clb2</sub>-SMC5 cells relative to P<sub>Clb2</sub>-NSE4 is due to less efficient depletion of Smc5. However, they do not rule out the possibility that Nse4 has a function distinct from Smc5, perhaps acting as part of the Nse1-Nse3-Nse4 subcomplex [70].

To determine whether meiotic catastrophe required the initiation of recombination, we abolished the DSB activity of Spo11, using the catalytically-dead spo11-I133F allele. This suppressed the nuclear separation defects of both smc5 and nse4 (Figure 3A). To address whether DNA damage or replication intermediates accumulated during pre-meiotic S-phase contribute to the nuclear separation defects of smc5 and nse4, we converted meiosis I into a single mitosis-like division by de-protecting centromeric cohesin at anaphase I (p<sub>103ΔA</sub>, while simultaneously inactivating recombination (spo11Δ). No effect of smc5 or nse4 mutation on either dyad formation or spore viability was observed (Figure 3B,C). This experiment rules out the possibility that gross S-phase defects alone are responsible for the meiotic chromosome segregation failure in smc5 and nse4 mutants. Thus, depletion of Smc5/6 causes severe recombination-dependent meiotic catastrophe. This is in sharp contrast to the smc6/9 temperature sensitive allele, which was previously shown to cause meiotic catastrophe independent of spo11 [54].

**Joint molecule metabolism is severely defective in smc5/6 mutants**

To investigate possible roles of Smc5/6 in meiotic DSB repair, we analysed meiotic recombination at the well-characterized HIS4LEU2 recombination hotspot construct using a series of Southern blot assays [71,72] (Figure 4). Restriction site polymorphisms combined with 1D or 2D gel electrophoresis and Southern analysis allow formation of DSBSs, crossovers, noncrossovers and several different species of joint molecules to be monitored at HIS4LEU2. Joint molecules include single-end invasions, double Holliday Junctions (formed between homologs or between sister chromatids) and multichromatid joint molecules (involving 3 or 4 chromatids) [10,71,72].

In wild-type cells, joint molecule levels peaked around 4.5 hours, at ~3% of hybridizing DNA, and disappeared by 8 hrs, when the majority of cells had completed the meiotic divisions (Figure 5A, C). In contrast, joint molecules in the smc5 mutant appeared with normal timing but persisted at high levels (4.7%) until at least 9 hrs. The nse4 mutant had a much more severe defect in joint molecule resolution, with very high levels of joint molecules (10%) persisting at 13 hrs (Figure 5C), when wild type cells have completed the meiotic divisions (Figure 2D). The level of unresolved joint molecules detected in the nse4 mutant is at least 3-fold higher than any other single mutant analyzed to date and is reminiscent of mutants that simultaneously lack multiple joint molecule resolution or dissolution activities [13,14,13,3].

Closer inspection of both the inter-sister- and inter-homolog-dHJ signals revealed additional spots or smears (Figure 5B). In the 1<sup>st</sup> dimension, these new signals migrated ahead of the main dHJ spots, suggesting a lower molecular weight. In contrast, the signals were retarded in the 2<sup>nd</sup> dimension relative to the main dHJ spots. It is currently unclear whether these JM species are extreme variants of dHJs (e.g. with very widely spaced Holliday junctions) or aberrant structures that are never formed in wild type. Regardless, their existence indicates that JM formation as well as resolution is altered in smc5 and nse4 mutants.

In contrast to joint molecules, the appearance, disappearance, and resection of DSBSs in smc5 and nse4 mutants occurred with largely wild-type kinetics (Figure 5D, Figure S4). These observations suggest that joint molecule formation occurs without any significant defects and that smc5/6-depleted cells are specifically defective in steps leading to the formation and resolution of joint molecules.

Crossover formation was delayed and final levels were reduced by 20–30% in smc5 and nse4 mutants. Crossovers accumulated to 22% of the DNA signal in wild type, while nse4 and smc5 mutants formed, respectively, 15% and 17% (Figure 5D and E, S4B). The double mutant (smc5 nse4) was indistinguishable from the nse4 single mutant (Figure S4).

**smc5 and nse4 mutants accumulate joint molecules between homologs, sister chromatids, and multiple chromatids**

To understand whether smc5/6 mutants accumulate a specific class of joint molecules, we separately quantified the levels of single-end invasions (SEIs), double Holliday Junctions (dHJs), and multi-chromatid joint molecules (mcJMs) using 2D gels (Figure 5C). Compared to the wild type, the smc5 mutant showed slightly elevated levels of all joint molecule species and delayed disappearance. In the nse4 mutant, all classes of joint molecule accumulated to higher levels than wild type and remained elevated throughout the meiotic time course (Figure 5C). We infer that Smc5/6 plays a general role in joint molecule metabolism.

**Homolog bias is decreased in the smc5 and nse4 mutants**

Our observations that smc5 and nse4 mutants accumulate unresolved joint molecules while still forming high levels of
crossovers raise the possibility that more total joint molecules are made in these mutants. To address this question, we used the resolution-defective *ndt80*Δ mutant to quantify joint molecule formation independently of changes in the efficiency of resolution [6,8]. In both *ndt80*Δ and *ndt80*Δ *nse4*, total accumulated joint molecules plateaued at similar levels and with essentially identical kinetics (~15%, Figure 5C, lower panel *ndt80*Δ). However, intersister dHJs and multichromatid JMs were increased at the expense of interhomolog dHJs when compared to the *ndt80*Δ mutant alone (Figure 5C; lower panel *ndt80*Δ). Consistently, the ratio of interhomolog dHJs to intersister dHJs (“interhomolog bias”) was decreased from 4.1 (4.1±0.5) in the *ndt80*Δ strain, to 2:1 in both mutants (1.9±0.3 and 1.7±0.2 in *smc5 ndt80*Δ and *nse4 ndt80*Δα, respectively; Figure 5C and data shown not). Similarly, when *NDT80* was present, the IH:IS dHJs ratio was also decreased from a steady-state ratio of ~3.5±0.4 in wild type to 2.1±0.2 in *smc5* and 2.1±0.2 in *nse4* (P<0.01; Figure 5C). We conclude that overall JM levels are not significantly altered by depletion of *Smc5/6*, but the spectrum of JMs is altered such that intersister and multichromatid joint molecules are increased at the expense of interhomolog dHJs. Similar conclusions have been reached by two other labs [61,73].

Combined depletion of *sgs1* and *smc5/nse4* synergistically increases joint molecule accumulation

In budding yeast meiosis, Sgs1 helicase is a central regulator of meiotic recombination intermediates during meiotic prophase [10–14]. Similar to *smc5* and *nse4* strains, *sgs1* mutants form more multichromatid and intersister JMs, but fewer interhomolog dHJs [10]. However, unlike *smc5* and *nse4*, joint molecule resolution and chromosome segregation occur efficiently in *sgs1* cells. To examine the relationship between *Smc5/6* and Sgs1, we combined *smc5* or *nse4* depletion mutants with meiosis-specific deletion of Sgs1 (*P*<0.01; Figure 5C). Both crossover and noncrossover formation were synergistically decreased in the *smc5 sgs1* and *nse4 sgs1* double mutants (Figure 6A and data not shown). On their own, *smc5*, *nse4*, and *sgs1* single mutants exhibited, respectively, 1.5%, 13%, and 0.6% joint molecules at time points when cells had completed meiosis (13 h; Figure 6A and data not shown). In both the *smc5 sgs1* and *nse4 sgs1* double mutants, we observed synergistic increases in all species of joint molecules, which accumulated to 14% and 20%, respectively (Figure 6A and data not shown). This level of accumulation of joint molecules is similar to that seen when both Sgs1 helicase and structure-specific endonucleases (Mms81-Mms4, Sks1-Sks4, and Yen1) are lacking (~20%, [13,14]). Given that crossover and noncrossover levels are high in the *smc5* and *nse4* strains (Figure 5E, 6B), we infer that Sgs1 can still function proficiently to promote crossovers and noncrossovers when *Smc5/6* is depleted.

Absence of MutLγ diminishes crossing over in the *nse4* mutant

MutLγ is inferred to be an endonuclease that specifically promotes the resolution of dHJs into crossovers along the MutSγ pathway for crossing over [17,22,23,74]. To test whether the crossovers formed in *smc5/6* mutants are formed via this pathway, we deleted *MLH3* in the *smc5* and *nse4* mutants. Although the *mlh3Δ* mutation alone caused a substantial decrease in crossovers (compare 18%±0.5% in wild type to 8.2%±0.2% in the *mlh3Δ*; Figure 6D), crossing-over in the double mutants was further decreased (4.5±0.5% for *smc5 mlh3Δ* and 4.4±0.2% for *nse4 mlh3Δ*; Figure 6D; data not shown for *smc5*). Importantly, noncrossovers were unaffected, consistent with the notion that MutLγ predominantly yields crossovers [23,75]. We infer that MutLγ is active and responsible for all crossovers in *smc5/6* mutants.

Zip3 foci are increased in *smc5* and *nse4* mutants and synopsis occurs with wild-type kinetics

MutLγ promotes crossovers in conjunction with MutSγ, which in turn interacts with and requires Zip3, for its association with meiotic chromosomes [reviewed in [76]]. Zip3 associates in a punctate pattern with meiotic chromosomes at axial association sites, where homolog synopsis initiates and where crossovers will form [2,77]. We reasoned that if MutLγ and MutSγ are active in the *smc5* and *nse4* mutants, then Zip3 localization along meiotic chromosomes as well as synopsis should occur with normal proficiency. To assess whether this was the case, we detected a GFP-tagged Zip3 and co-stained for the synaptonemal complex protein, Zip1 (Figure 6E). In the wild type, we observed 30 Zip3-GFP foci in pachytene nuclei; this number was increased 1.2–1.3-fold in the *smc5* and *nse4* mutants (Figure 6F). This increase was similar in magnitude to that observed in an *sgs1*-depleted strain (Figure 6F) [78].

Zip3 promotes the assembly of the synaptonemal complexes (SC). No significant differences were observed in the kinetics of SC assembly and disassembly, including turnover of Zip1 protein, in the *smc5* and *nse4* when compared to the wild type (Figure S6). Thus, early steps in MutSγ-dependent crossover formation and initiation of synopsis are not adversely affected by depletion of *Smc5/6*.

### Smc5/6 affects Mus81-Mms4-dependent joint molecule resolution

Our results further distinguish phenotypes observed for *Smc5/6* from those of *sgs1*: *Smc5/6* depletion does not suppress the crossover defect of MutLγ, unlike that seen in *sgs1 mlh3Δ* mutants [10]. These phenotypes could be explained if *Smc5/6* has additional roles in joint molecule resolution via the Mus81-Mms4 endonuclease, which becomes essential for resolution in *sgs1* mutants [11,12].

To determine whether *Smc5/6* affects the functions of structure-selective endonucleases during meiosis, we deleted *MMS4* (*mms4*), the regulatory subunit of Mus81, and also the two cryptic endonucleases Yen1 and Sks1-Sks4 [79]. Yen1 and

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**Figure 2. Meiotic depletion of Smc5 or Nse4 leads to meiotic catastrophe.** (A) Western blot of depletion of 3HA-Smc5 (Y941) and 3HA-Nse4 (Y942) protein levels under the *P*~*Cdc20*~ promoter. Mutants are referred to as *smc5* and *nse4* throughout. (B) FACS analysis of S-phase progression in wild type (Y940), *smc5* (Y941) and *nse4* (Y942) mutants. (C) Population kinetics of spindle pole body separation (n = 200 per time point). (D) Population kinetics of nuclear divisions (n = 200 per time point). (E) Montage of time series of nuclear divisions and spindle dynamics from representative time-lapse movies. H2B-mCherry and Tub1-GFP are pseudo-coloured in magenta and green, respectively. Maximum projections are shown. Bars: 4 µm. Full movies are available as Supplemental Movies S1 to S4. Arrows indicate examples of nuclear spikes and arrowheads show fragmentation/micronuclei. Strains: WT (Y3606), *smc5* (Y3627), *nse4* (Y3630). (F) DNA encapsulation failure in *smc5* and *nse4* mutants. Upper panel DIC, lower panel, DAPI (DNA). The boxed asci are shown with DNA (green) overlaid in the insets in the lower panel, bottom left. Note that the samples are taken from different time points in the various strains. Bars, 5 µm. (G) Proportion of cells completing meiosis and forming an ascus (di-tyrosine fluorescence). (H) Proportion of ascii with encapsulated DNA (bottom). All data were collected after 24 hours in liquid sporulation medium. Three independent diploids were assessed for each genotype (standard deviations are shown). Strains: WT (Y1381), *smc5* (Y2705), *P*~*LEU2*~*SMC5-AID* (Y3252), *nse4* (Y2704), *smc5 nse4* (Y3185). doi:10.1371/journal.pgen.1004071.g002
Figure 3. Meiotic depletion of Smc5 and Nse4 leads to Spo11-dependent nuclear separation defects in meiosis. (A) Catalytic-dead Spo11 mutation rescues nuclear separation at anaphase I in the Smc5/6 mutants (n=100). Bars indicate standard error bars for a proportion. Strains: WT (Y1381), smc5 (Y2705), nse4 (Y2704), smc5 nse4 (Y3185), spo11-Y135F (Y3147), spo11-Y135F smc5 (Y3150), spo11-Y135F nse4 (Y3153), spo11-Y135F smc5 nse4 (Y4202). (B and C) Schematic of sister chromatid segregation at meiosis I in spo11Δ spo13Δ mutants. Dyad formation and viability after 24 hours in sporulation medium of Smc5/6 mutants in conjunction with the spo11Δ spo13Δ bypass. Strains: spo11Δ spo13Δ (Y2816), spo11Δ spo13Δ smc5 (Y2846), and spo11Δ spo13Δ nse4 (Y2848).
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Slx–Slx4 have only minor, if any, roles in joint molecule resolution in otherwise wild-type cells [13,14,33].

Crossover levels were roughly similar in the mms4 yen1 slx4 mutant (11.6 ± 0.4%) and nse4 (12.7 ± 0.7%) mutants (Figure 7A,B). Noncrossovers were also further decreased in the nse4 mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant. In the wild type, the noncrossover signal contributed 2.4 ± 0.1%, compared to 2.1 ± 0.1% in the nse4 mutant, 1.6 ± 0.3% in the mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant. At least two reasons could account for the further loss of crossover and noncrossover products in the nse4 mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant. Smc5/6 could promote joint molecule resolution in parallel with one or more of the three endonucleases. Alternatively, the formation of joint molecules leading to crossovers and noncrossovers could be perturbed. Analysis of joint molecules in the nse4 mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant displayed a further decrease in the IH:IS dHJ ratio (1:1) compared to the nse4 single and mms4 yen1 slx4 triple mutants (2:1). This indicates that Smc5/6 operates in parallel with the resolvases to promote interhomolog template bias (Figure 7C). Assuming a direct relationship between interhomolog-dHJs and the generation of interhomolog products (crossover and noncrossover), the decreased IH:IS bias (50%) in the nse4 mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant would be predicted to lead to a loss of half the crossovers (predicted 7.3% crossover products based on the 14.5% crossovers seen in the nse4 mutant). The observed value of 7.4% crossovers (Figure 7B) is in good agreement with this. The additive reduction of interhomolog bias in the nse4 and mms4 yen1 slx4 mutants is therefore sufficient to explain the further decreases in crossover and noncrossover levels seen in the nse4 mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant.

To further address which endonuclease was affected by Smc5/6, we focussed upon analysing the genetic interaction with Mus81-Mms4 (Figure 7D, E). Crossover levels (Figure 7E) as well as the IH:IS dHJ ratios (Figure 7D) were similar in the mms4, nse4, and nse4 mms4 mutants. These observations show that abolishing Mus81-Mms4 activity has little consequence for joint molecule resolution at least when Smc5/6 is depleted. Moreover, crossover

Figure 4. Assessment of meiotic recombination at the HIS4LEU2 hotspot. (A–C) The HIS4LEU2 hotspot. mcJM: multichromatid joint molecules (abbreviations: M-Mom, D-Dad), IS-dHJ interister double Holliday Junctions, IH-dHJ interhomolog double Holliday Junctions, SEI- single-end invasions, DSBs- double strand breaks. Digesting with XhoI gives diagnostic band sizes from parental molecules, Mom and Dad, as well as recombinant fragment lengths (R1 and R2). These are predominantly crossovers. The different molecules can be separated on 1D (A) and shape-dependent separation on 2D gels (C). Further digestion with NgoMIV differentiates noncrossovers from parental molecules (B). The * indicates a non-specific signal.

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Figure 5. Aberrant joint molecules accumulate in smc5 and nse4 mutants. (A) Examples of time courses from 2D gels. Blue lines point at joint molecules formed between homologous chromosomes (interhomolog, IH) and red lines indicate joint molecules composed of sister chromatids (intersister, IS). Strains: WT (Y2976), smc5 (Y1211), nse4 (Y1212). (B) Enlarged dHJ spots from wild type, smc5, and nse4. (C) Smoothed levels of single
levels were substantially higher in the nse4 mutant compared to the nse4 nse4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant, which suggests that Yen1, or more likely, Slx1–Slx4 promotes a significant amount of crossing over, presumably via a function that promotes interhomolog bias (Figure 7C).

In contrast to the effect of deleting Sgs1 in the nse4 mutant background, the level of unresolved joint molecules did not increase in the nse4 nse4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant, but instead decreased (compare 4.3±0.6% to 12.9±2.4% in the nse4 single mutant; Figure 7B). This was also the case for the nse4 mutant (6.6% unresolved joint molecules; Figure 7E). We interpret these results to mean that when Smc5/6 is depleted, the Mus81-Mms4 endonuclease renders a significant proportion of joint molecules non-cleavable by Sgs1 and/or MutLγ.

Association of Mus81 with meiotic chromosomes is defective in smc5 and nse4 mutants

To investigate whether chromosomal localization of Mus81-Mms4 was affected in the smc5 and nse4 mutants, we assessed the ability of Mus81-9myc to form foci on spread, meiotic chromosomes at pachytene, when joint molecules reach their highest levels. Pachytene-stage nuclei were selected by virtue of linear association with or be stabilized on meiotic chromosomes is diminished when Smc5/6 complexes are depleted.

Smc5/6 mutants progress into the meiotic divisions with high levels of γH2A foci

Our observations imply that unresolved joint molecules in the smc5 and nse4 cells cause severe failure of chromosome segregation during anaphase I and II and, ultimately, meiotic catastrophe (Figure 2). This recombination-dependent meiotic catastrophe hypothesis makes at least two predictions. First, the cell cycle should occur with similar timing in the mutant and wild-type strains and, second, individual meiotic nuclei should show increased DNA damage at anaphase I and anaphase II, when cells are attempting to divide their nuclei.

To test these predictions, we monitored markers for early prophase I, exit from prophase I, and entry into meiosis II, which allowed us to calculate and thus compare transit times in the wild type to Smc5/6-depleted cells. Induction of the meiotic DNA damage response (DDR), monitored by the Mec1/ATR-dependent phosphorylation of HORMA-domain protein, Hop1, and γH2A [80,81] occurred with similar timing, 3–4 hours after transfer to sporulation medium (Figure 8A). Spindle pole body separation, a marker for pachytene exit, and indeed spindle formation both occurred with relatively normal timing in the two mutants compared to wild type (Figure 8A). Consistent with this, the timing of Cdc5 and Clb1 expression, both under the regulation of the Ndt80 transcription factor that facilitates pachytene exit [67], were also similar in all three strains. These results suggest that exit from pachytene occurred with similar timing in the smc5 and nse4 mutants compared to the wild type strain.

To follow M-phase events, we assessed steady-state levels of Rec8 and Pds1, the securin orthologue in budding yeast. Degradation of both occur at the onset of anaphase I and anaphase II. Rec8 and Pds1 degradation occurred around 7 hours in all three strains and the second wave of Pds1 degradation (anaphase II onset) was observed in both wild type and smc5 (Figure 8B). The nse4 time course was presumably less synchronous such that the second wave of Pds1 and Rec8 degradation was not detected [82]. To assess meiosis II entry, we used the B-type cyclin, Clb3. In all three strains, Clb3 expression appeared at similar times (Figure 8A). Collectively, these observations strongly support the notion that the meiotic progression is not significantly delayed or arrested in Smc5/6-depleted cells.

The population kinetics of γH2A suggest that smc5 and nse4 mutants undergo meiotic catastrophe with damaged DNA. In the wild-type, γH2A disappeared by 7–8 hours, whereas it remained high in the two mutant strains, even at 12 hours when meiosis was completed (Figure 8A, and data not shown). Consistent with this analysis, immunostaining for γH2A foci in combination with tubulin revealed meiosis I and meiosis II cells that also contained an increased number of γH2A foci (Figure 8C,D). In the wild type, cells with anaphase I spindles showed confluent, low intensity background γH2A staining as well as a few punctate foci (median: 3 foci). In contrast, analogous nuclei from both smc5 and nse4 mutants contained large numbers of γH2A foci, many of which were located off the main body of DNA (Figure 8C), suggestive of perturbed DNA/chromatin structure. Furthermore, in nuclei with meiosis II spindles, 5% of smc5 and 42% of nse4 nuclei (n = 50) contained punctate γH2A staining (Figure 8D). The lower number of γH2A-positive staining anaphase II nuclei in the smc5 mutant presumably reflects the lower level of unresolved joint molecules relative to nse4 (Figure 5). Collectively, these data indicate that smc5/smc6 mutants progress through the meiotic divisions with elevated levels of γH2A.

Finally, we investigated whether smc5 and nse4 mutants are deficient in maintaining the DDR-induced meiotic arrest that occur in mutants, where high levels of single-stranded DNA accumulate (dmc1Δ, ndt80Δ, and hop2Δ) [83]. Depletion of Smc5 or Nse4 had no effect on the meiotic progression in any of these mutants (Figure 8E). Combining the dmc1Δ nse4 or hop2Δ nse4 mutants with fpr3ΔA, which is required for checkpoint maintenance [84], resulted in high levels of checkpoint bypass (Figure 8E). These data demonstrate that Smc5 and Nse4 mutants are checkpoint proficient and that the progression into the meiotic nuclear divisions with unresolved joint molecules is unlikely to be caused by defective DDR maintenance.

Meiotic cohesin is mis-regulated in smc5 and nse4 mutants

Unresolved joint molecules are inferred to impede chromosome separation in cells undergoing the meiotic divisions [11,12]. However, cleavage of cohesin by separase is also essential for chromosome disjunction [85]. Smc3/6 localizes to cohesin-binding sites (Figure 1) and in S. pombe, smc5/6 mutants show increased retention of cohesin during mitosis that contributes to chromosome segregation defects [86,87]. These considerations led
Figure 6. Sgs1 and MutLγ are functional in smc5/6. (A) Representative images of 2D analysis from sgs1 mutant (P<sub>CLB2</sub>-3HA-SGS1) in combination with nse4. (B) Quantification of total joint molecules, crossovers and non-crossovers, and total joint molecule levels at meiotic endpoints (13 hours). Quantification from three independent diploids; error bars represent the standard deviation. (C) Representative images of crossover formation in mlh3Δ mutants, in combination with nse4. (D) Quantification of crossovers, noncrossovers, and total joint molecule levels from three independent diploids (13 hours). (E,F) Analysis of Zip3 foci. Representative images and Tukey-Kramer box-and-whisker plot of 30 nuclei from each strain (boxes
represent the 25th–75th percentile; the median value is denoted by the horizontal bar, and the whiskers are 1.5 × the 25–75th percentile or max or min. values–whichever are the lowest). Fold increase in Zip3-GFP foci relative to wild type was calculated based on the arithmetic mean (horizontal bar, magenta). Note that the Zip3-GFP causes some polycomplex formation of Zip1 predominantly in the mutants but also in the wild type. The distributions of all four mutant strains were significantly different from wild type (p < 0.01, Kruskall–Wallace). Collectively, they firmly support the notion that across a range of species, Smc5/6 has essential functions in mediating chromosome resolution in response to induction of meiotic recombination [55, 58, 61, 73, 91].

Recemm-induex meiotic catastrophe in smc5/6 mutants is caused by a combination of three factors

During meiosis, Smc5/6 localizes to centromeres, cohesin-binding sites and sites of meiotic DSBs (Figure 1). However, the chromosome-length dependent increase in the density of Smc5/6 binding sites reported in vegetative cells [60] is not observed in meiosis. We identified at least three factors that contribute to the general failure of chromosome separation seen in smc5/6 mutants. First, high levels of joint molecules, both between homologs and sister chromatids, remain unresolved, especially in the nse4 mutant (Figure 9C, Mann-Whitney p < 0.01). Assessment of retention of cohesin in spread nuclei confirmed that the cohesin was associated with meiotic chromosomes (Figure S8). Moreover, we also observed smc5 nuclei at anaphase II with significant cohesin staining (Figure S8B). It is likely that this residual cohesin that we detect with antibodies but not live cell imaging in the smc5 mutant, reflect relatively low levels of retained cohesin that cannot be detected due to the decreased sensitivity of live cell imaging.

To address whether the delayed removal of cohesin relative to the nuclear divisions contributed towards the severe chromosome segregation defects of the smc5/6 mutants, we engineered a TEV protease cleavage site into Rec8 (in addition to the two separate cleavage sites) and expressed TEV protease around anaphase I onset (Figure 10A–D). We observed small improvements in chromosome segregation at anaphase I in both strains, with a more pronounced effect in smc5 (Figure 10F, G). However, the contribution of the persistent cohesin towards the severe meiotic catastrophe is likely relatively small compared to the failure to remove joint molecules prior to the meiotic divisions, especially in the nse4 strain.

Finally, we noticed that the retention of centromeric cohesin was severely defective in the two mutants (Figure 9, S8A, C). This premature loss of centromeric cohesin correlated with the precocious separation of sister centromeres (Figure 9E) and indicates that smc5/6 mutants experience problems with the establishment and/or retention of cohesin. We conclude that the mis-regulation of cohesin is two-fold in the Smc5/6-depleted cells: removal of arm cohesin is delayed while the protection of centromeric cohesin is compromised as well.

Discussion

The Smc5/6 complex is essential for chromosome segregation in following the induction of DSBs in meiosis

SMC complexes regulate a vast array of chromosomal processes, including DNA repair, during mitosis and meiosis [37]. In this study, we set out to determine whether the third, highly conserved SMC complex, Smc5/6, has roles in meiotic recombination. We were particularly interested in determining whether depletion of Smc5/6 leads to general recombination defects, like cohesin or condensin [89, 90], or whether specific pathways would be perturbed in its absence (Figure S9).

Despite its central role in mitotic cells in mediating resolution and separation of chromosomes in response to DNA damage, the role of the Smc5/6 complex in meiotic recombination has remained enigmatic. Previous findings suggested that Smc5/6 mediated its critical role during premeiotic S-phase, since deletion of Spo11 did not alleviate the chromosome separation defect of smc6 temperature-sensitive mutants [34]. In this work, we show clearly that the budding yeast Smc5/6 complex is required for chromosome resolution following induction of meiotic recombination (Figure 3). Similar findings are reported by two independent studies in budding yeast [61, 73]. Collectively, they firmly support the notion that across a range of species, Smc5/6 has essential functions in mediating chromosome resolution in response to induction of meiotic recombination [55, 58, 61, 73, 91].

Smc5/6 is critical for joint molecule metabolism at meiotic DSB hotspots

Physical monitoring of joint molecules indicates that Smc5/6 regulates both the formation of recombination intermediates as well as their resolution (Figure 5) [61]. In accompanying studies the hypomorphic smc6–36 allele and the SUMO E3 ligase-dead mms21–11 alleles also accumulate joint molecules [61, 73]. Therefore, inactivation or depletion of four distinct components of the core budding yeast Smc5/6 complex leads to defective joint...
Figure 7. Smc5/6 regulates joint molecule resolution by Mus81-Mms4. (A) Representative images of 1D analysis of crossover levels. (B) Quantification of crossovers, non-crossovers, and total joint molecule levels at meiotic endpoints (13 hours). Quantity from three independent diploids; error bars represent the standard deviation. (C) Representative images of 2D analysis of IH:IS ratio in nse4 and nse4 mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutants in the ndt80Δ background (13 hours). Data from three independent diploids. (D) Representative images of 2D analysis of IH:IS ratio in nse4 and nse4 mms4 mutants the ndt80Δ background (13 hours). Data from three independent diploids. (E) Quantification of crossovers and total joint molecules in nse4 mms4 mutants compared to individual single mutants and the nse4 mms4 yen1 slx4 quadruple mutant. (F,G) Representative images of Mus81 foci on spread, meiotic nuclei and quantification of Mus81-9myc foci. Nuclei were selected on the basis of linear Zip1 structures (pachynema). 100 nuclei were assessed for each strain. For the mms4 single strain, we ran only one diploid in parallel with the nse4 mutants. These data were similar to those described previously [14]. Strains: WT (Y3137), smc5 (Y3135), and nse4 (Y3144).

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Smc5/6 regulates Mus81-1-Mms4-dependent resolution of joint molecules, whilst MutLγ remains active

In S. pombe, Mus81-1-Eme1 promotes most or all crossovers and deletion of Nse5 or Nse6 diminishes crossing over [27,28,53,57]. Our findings show that Smc5/6 may be specifically required for resolution mediated by structure-specific endonucleases such as Mus81-1-Mms4 and perhaps also Yen1 and Sxl1-Sxl4 in organisms with alternative resolving pathways. Specifically, we found that crossover levels and inter-homolog bias in nse4 mutants were not further reduced when Mus81-1-Mms4 was also mutated (Figure 7D,E). In contrast, mutation of Sgs1 or Mlh3 synergistically reduced crossover levels in nse4 cells (Figure 6). These observations suggest that Smc5/6 coordinates resolution of joint molecules that form independently of the major, MutSγ-dependent pathway. It is possible that Smc5/6 affects resolution of all non-Msh4/5 joint molecules. We infer that it is unlikely that Smc5/6 deletion leads to gross, general chromosomal defects that generally affect recombination, as seen in condensin mutants, where Cdc5/Polo-like kinase fails to associate with meiotic chromosomes and recombination is perturbed [90,93].

How might Smc5/6 regulate joint molecule resolution? In the case of Mus81-1-Mms4, hyperphosphorylation and presumably hyperactivation of endonuclease activity still occurs in the nse5 and nse4 mutants (Figure S7). However, association of Mus81 with meiotic chromosomes is diminished (Figure 7D,E), even during early prophase I, consistent with observed defects during the formation of joint molecules (Figure 7D,E). Although we do not know whether the Mus81 foci we observe reflect catalytically active Mus81-1-Mms4 complexes, our data support the idea that Smc5/6 mediates chromosomal association of Mus81-1-Mms4.

Smc5/6 has been reported to have low affinity interactions with single stranded DNA [94]. It is possible that the complex targets Mus81-1-Mms4 to substrates containing single-stranded regions. However, no direct interaction between Mus81-1-Mms4 and the Smc5/6 complex has been reported. Another possibility is that Smc5/6 holds joint molecules (or their precursors) in a conformation that ultimately allows resolution by Mus81-1-Mms4. In this regard, the novel joint molecule species that we detect in the nse5 and nse4 mutants may represent structures that cannot be resolved by Mus81-1-Mms4 or other resolving endonucleases. EM studies have revealed aberrant JM structures in sgs1 and mms4 sgs1 mutants that might represent hard-to-resolve structures [12]. Finally, Smc5/6 may also regulate local chromosome structure around a subset of DSBs and this could impact on recombination [86]. For example, mis-regulation of cohesin could indirectly influence inter-homolog bias, as seen in rec8Δ mutants [89].

Materials and Methods

The SI contains Movie S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7; nine additional Figures (S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9); and one Table (S1).
Yeast strains and meiotic time courses

Strains are described in Table S1. They are all derived from SK1.

 Diploid cells were grown to saturation in YEPD (1% yeast extract, 2% bactopeptone, 2% dextrose, pH 6.5), then inoculated at 5x10^6 cells per ml in SPS (0.05% yeast extract, 1% peptone, 0.17% YNB, 1% potassium acetate, 0.5% ammonium sulphate, 0.05 M potassium hydrogen phthalate at pH 5.5) and grown to a cell density of 5x10^7 cells per ml. To induce meiosis, cells were resuspended in SPM (pH 7.0) consisting of 1% potassium acetate, 0.02% raffinose, 0.02% antifoam (Sigma, A8311), 2% histidine, 1.5% lysine, 2% arginine, 1% leusine and 0.2% uracil.

Genome-wide Smc5 DNA binding and microarray analysis

Genome-wide Smc5 association was measured as previously published [95]. Briefly, Smc5 crosslinked chromatin was immunoprecipitated with 2 μl anti-myc 9E11 (Abcam) or 20 μl anti-V5 beads (Sigma-Aldrich). Immunoprecipitated and input DNA samples were cohybridized to a custom DNA microarray (Agilent) and data were normalized as previously described.

Molecular assays

Molecular assays were carried out as described previously [72], with the modification that we used the Phase Lock Gel for phenol extraction. We analysed three independent diploids for each strain.

CHEF analysis of chromosome breakage

To measure genome wide DSB signal, chromosome-length DNA captured in agarose plugs [96] was separated by pulsed field gel electrophoresis under the following conditions: 1.3% agarose in 0.5×TBE; 14°C; 6 V/cm; swing angle 120°, ramped switch time of 15–23 seconds over 30 hours (Biorad CHEF DR III). Following a denaturing transfer to nylon membrane, a radioactive DNA telomeric probe for the left side of chromosomes III (CHiA) was hybridized to the membrane. Radioactive signal was collected on phospho-screens, imaged using a Fuji FLA5100 and quantified using FujiFilm Image Gauge software. DSB signal was measured as a percentage of the total lane signal [97]. DSB molecules occurring further from the probe are underestimated due to DSBs occurring closer to the probe on the same molecule. To correct for this, the estimated DSB frequency was calculated using Poisson correction: Percentage broken chromosomes (Poisson corrected) = −ln(n−1)−measured DSB signal. To produce lane profiles, 900 lane slices were exported from Image Gauge and combined from 6–10 hours and each slice plotted as a percent of total lane signal.

Yeast protein extraction & protein analysis

Cells from meiotic cultures (OD_{600} 1.2–1.5, 2 ml) were disrupted using glass beads in 200 μl of ice cold 20% TCA. Precipitates were collected by centrifugation and washed in 400 μl of ice cold 5% TCA. Precipitates were resuspended in 100 μl of SDS-PAGE sample buffer (4% SDS, 5% β-mercaptoethanol, 0.15 M DTT, 20% glycerol, 0.01% bromophenol blue); boiled for 5 minutes at 95°C, centrifuged, and the supernatant containing protein was collected.

Proteins were separated by SDS-PAGE, transferred to nitrocellulose membranes, and probed with the appropriate antibodies followed by HRP-conjugated secondary antibodies (DAKO, 1:2000). HRP activity was detected using Pierce ECL Western Blotting Substrate followed by exposure to Amersham Hyperfilm ECL or using the Image Quant LAS 4000 imaging system.

Antibodies used for western blotting


TEV protease induction

Meiotic cultures were arrested at pachynema after 6 hours in SPM. TEV protease and Ndt80 were induced by the addition of 1 μM β-estradiol.

Protein synthesis block

Protein synthesis was blocked by the addition of cyclohexamide to meiotic cultures to a final concentration of 200 μg/ml. Cyclohexamide was added to meiotic cultures 1 hour after Ndt80 induction.

Auxin-dependent degradation of Smc5

The P_{CEN}-SMC5 was C-terminally-tagged with the AID [69]. To induce degradation of Smc5, we added 150 μl of 500 mM auxin (3-indoleacetic acid; Sigma I375-0), resuspended in 1N NaOH, to 50 ml meiotic cell cultures. This was added at 1 hour after transfer to SPM. Addition of auxin at earlier time points...
Figure 10. Retained arm cohesin at anaphase I contributes to the chromosome resolution defect in the smc5 and nse4 mutants. (A) Diagram of bivalent resolution by cohesin (Rec8) cleavage along arms regions. Abbreviations: MT-microtubules, CEN-centromeres, scissors depict TEV protease. (B) TEV-9Myc expression after induction during a meiotic time course and the TEV cleavage site introduced into Rec8. Note that Rec8-TEV287-PK retains its two separase (Esp1) cleavage sites. (C) Rec8-TEV287-PK cleavage by TEV protease in ndt80Δ ubr1Δ cells. TEV protease was induced 6 hours into meiosis when >80% are arrested in pachynema. FL-full length Rec8-TEV287-PK. Left panel shows no TEV induction; the middle
panels shows TEV induction; and the right panel shows TEV induction and cyclohexamide treatment (CHX) 1.15 hours after induction. Pgk1 was used as a loading control. Strain: Y3380. (D) Experimental set up of TEV protease induction after meiotic prophase by simultaneous induction of TEV protease and prophase exit (NDT80-IN). (E) Analysis of protein levels of Rec8-TEV-PK in arrested and released (NDT80-IN) cells. (F) Nuclear separation at anaphase I. Bar graph shows proportion of tetrads with fully separated, 'stretched' or compacted nuclear appearance. The * denotes statistically significant differences (p<0.01, G-test) in the distribution of classes. (G) DNA encapsulation into spores. Bar graph shows proportion of tetrads with fully encapsulated DNA. The * denotes statistically significant differences (p<0.05, G-test) in the distribution of classes. Strains: WT (Y3264- no TEV and Y3299), smc5 (Y3261- no TEV and Y3237), and nse4 (Y3258- no TEV and Y3240).

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Figure 11. Model for Smc5/6 function during meiosis. (A) In wild type cells, Smc5/6 is present and ensures the formation of IH-dHJs either directly or perhaps by removing mcJMs and IS-dHJs, returning them to an interhomolog fate. This could be done in co-operation with helicases and resolvases, potentially Mus81-Mms4. (B) In the absence of Smc5/6, second end regulation is aberrant and cells enter late prophase with increased mcJMs and IS-dHJs. These are not cleaved by Mus81-Mms4, which is hyperphosphorylated by Cdc5, because it requires Smc5/6. Since the joint molecules do not appear to trigger a prophase I checkpoint, smc5/6 mutants enter the nuclear divisions with joint molecules as well as precociously separated sister kinetochores that prevent chromosome segregation, leading to meiotic catastrophe.

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resulted in arrest during the preceding mitotic divisions when cells underwent premeiotic growth in pre-sporulation medium (SPS).

Meiotic nuclear spreading, immunofluorescence, and antibodies

Nuclear spreading and antibodies have been described elsewhere [98,99], except that we treated cells with both zymolyase 100T and glusulase in order to generate spheroplasts for some strains. Fixation followed by indirect immunofluorescence was carried out by fixing cells in 4% formaldehyde for 15–45 minutes at room temperature.

When assessing Mus81-Mms4 foci, we carefully controlled for the extent of spreading, because we noted that even in the wild type, a small proportion of nuclei did not contain Mus81-Mms4K13myc foci. When we applied more extreme spreading techniques, all Mus81-Mms4K13myc staining (but not Zip1) was abolished in the wild type (data not shown). This suggests that the Mus81-Mms4K13myc interaction with meiotic chromosomes is less stable than Zip1.

Live cell imaging

Cells were initially incubated in sporulation media for 6–8 hours. 20 μl of cells were added to a Y04D CellASIC plate (CellASIC ONIX microfluidic perfusion system) and imaged inside an environmental chamber set at 30°C. A flow rate of 8 psi was used to load the cells and a steady-state flow rate of 2 psi was used for the duration of the time course.

Time-lapse microscopy was carried out using a Personal DeltaVision (Applied Precision) with xenon or solid-state illumination, using associated proprietary software (SoftWoRx software; version 4.0.0, Applied Precision). Images were captured using an UPLS Achromat 1.4 numerical aperture, ×100 magnification oil immersion objective (Olympus), auxiliary magnification to prevent undersampling, standard DeltaVision filter sets FTTC (ex 490, em 525 nm) and TRIC (ex 555, em 605 nm), yielding approximate resolutions (Rayleigh’s d) of ~229 nm and 264 nm in the xy, respectively, whereas axial resolutions were approximately 811 and 953 nm. Photon detection was carried out using a Cascade2 1 K EMCCD camera (Photometrics) using a gain of 230 and no binning. Images were taken using exposure times of 0.023 sec. and 32% transmission (FTTC) and 32% transmission and 0.1 sec. exposure (TRICC). 6–7 z-stacks at 1 μm were collected. Final images for sporation were carried out with DIC, 32% transmission and 0.05 sec. exposure. Images were recorded every 5 minutes for the first 90 minutes, every 20 minutes for the next 80 minutes and then every 45 minutes for the last 90 minutes. Around 12 hours after imaging the sporation of the cells at each point of imaging was assessed. Only cells that sporulated were included in the analyses.

Image analysis and manipulation

Images were deconvolved using SoftWoRx software (version 4.0.0, Applied Precision). Subsequent 3D analysis to measure spindle length was carried out using Imaris (version 7.0.0, Bitplane).

3D images are presented as maximum projections, rendered in Softworx or Imaris. Some images were manipulated in Adobe Photoshop CS5.1 using the following procedure. Images were converted to .psd files from .Softworx files before being opened in Adobe Photoshop. Only the max/min input levels of each channel were adjusted manually to adjust differences in the imaging intensities. Images were cropped preserving the relative ratios, and the size bar copied to a second layer of the image. For aesthetic reasons, a broader bar covering the size and the out-of-focus number was added on top of the original. Analysis of foci numbers was carried out manually and with the ‘Find Peaks algorithm’ (ImageJ plugin is available from: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/gdsc/intranet/microscopy/imagej/plugins and documentation: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/gdsc/intranet/microscopy/imagej/findpeaks).

Peaks were identified above a background level using non-maximal suppression. An allowance was made for peak regions covering multiple pixels with the same intensity (plateau maxima). A watershed algorithm was used to assign all non-maxima pixels to the appropriate peak by following the maximum gradient. Peak expansion was restricted using the height above background. Following identification the boundaries between peaks were calculated and the highest boundary point between touching peaks stored as saddles. A peak merge algorithm was used to join insignificant smaller peaks into their neighbour peak defined using the highest saddle point. Peaks were identified as insignificant using height and area criteria.

Noisy data were smoothed using a Gaussian blur prior to peak identification. Reported peak statistics always use the intensity values from the original unsmoothed image. The algorithm can be applied to 2D or 3D images and is available as a plugin for ImageJ. The plugin allows setting parameters to control the background identification, search method, merge criteria and the results output. The plugin is scriptable via the ImageJ macro facility and provides a GUI that allows the parameters to be adjusted with real-time results update. The plugin will be published separately elsewhere.

Statistics

We used various statistical tests in R (www.r-project.org), as indicated throughout the text. P-values were adjusted for multiple pair-wise comparisons according to Dunn-Sidak to reflect α<0.05. Standard error bars around proportions were calculated as \(\sqrt{p(1-p)/n}\), where p is the proportion of the specific class (n>100 for each strain). For the Pearson product-moment correlation, the cor.test uses the t-statistics to calculate the p-value and the Fisher z transform to generate an asymptotic confidence interval (95%).

Supporting Information

**Figure S1** Smc5-13myc localization on meiotic chromosomes. (A) Expression of Smc5-13myc and Nse4-TAP during meiosis. Note the Smc5-13myc band travelling with lower electrophoretic mobility (indicated by the arrow); likely the sumoylated species of Smc5. Strain: Smc5-13myc (Y2824), and Nse4-TAP (Y2826). (B) Localization of Smc5-13myc and Zip1. Note the lack of apparent colocalization during leptonema and zygonema. (C) Localization of Smc5-13myc to chromosomes in the spindle. Strain: Smc5-13myc (red, H5492) and Rec8-3HA (purple, H4471, [65]) plotted for Chromosome III. Lower panel shows enlarged, overlay
on the right arm of Chromosome III (150–300 kb). (B) Overlay of the Rec8-3HA and Smc3-3V5 (Figure 1) or Smc3-13myc (A) binding profiles near CEN3. (C) The binding of Smc3-13myc was normalized to Rec8-3HA binding using the data shown in (A) to reveal weaker, non-core regions (red). DSBR sites mapped by ssDNA enrichment are indicated below (blue, H118, [100]).

Figure S3 Auxin-induced degradation of Smc5-AID. (A) Western blot analysis of Smc5-AID-V5 after mock treatment or treatment with 1.5 mM auxin at 1 hour after transfer to sporulation medium. Strain: Y4540. (B) Quantification of DNA encapsulation in Smc5-AID depleted cells. Note that continuous treatment with auxin leads to better depletion and a more severe phenotype, but that the mock-treatment with solvent (NaOH) alone (but not solvent+auxin) causes sporulation defects. (PDF)

Figure S4 Meiotic recombination and crossing over in the smc5 nse4 mutant is similar to the nse4 single mutant. (A) Example of 1D analysis of crossover recombination. (B) Quantification of crossover levels from three independent diploids (24 hours). Strains: WT (Y2976), smc5 (Y1211), nse4 (Y1212), smc5 nse4 (Y4179). (PDF)

Figure S5 Smc5- or Nse4-depletion does not increase DSBR levels in RAD50S or dmc1Δ mutants. (A) Representative CHEF gel followed by Southern blotting using the CHAT probe (chromosome III, left end) in dmc1Δ strain background. Percentage total lane signal was calculated by smoothing the histogram of signals from 900 bins in each lane. Strains: dmc1Δ (SG492), nse4 dmc1Δ (SG481), and smc5 dmc1Δ (SG478). (B) Quantification of DSBRs (non-parentally sized fragments) are presented as raw data (left) or Poisson corrected (right, see materials and methods) for each time point. (C) Representative CHEF gel followed by Southern blotting using the CHAT probe (chromosome III, left end) in RAD50S strain background. Strains: RAD50S (SG488), nse4 RAD50S (SG484), and smc5 RAD50S (SG491). (D) Quantification of DSBRs are presented as raw data (left) or Poisson corrected (right). (PDF)

Figure S6 SC formation and disassembly occurs with normal kinetics in the smc5 and nse4 mutants. (A) Examples of Zip1 staining at pachynema in the wild type, nse4 and smc5 mutants. Strains: WT (Y967), smc5 (Y3080) and nse4 (Y2729). (B,C) Kinetics of Zip1 staining patterns and polycomplex formation (PC) in wild type and the nse4 mutant. Left: Examples of Zip1 behaviour as ‘dotty’, ‘dot-linear’ and ‘linear’ staining, representative of leptotene, zygonema, and pachynema, respectively in nuclei from the nse4 mutant (these are similar to those seen in wild type). The arrow indicates an aggregate of Zip1, likely a polycomplex (PC). Bars, 2 μm. Right: Proportion of nuclei with no Zip1, dotty, dot-linear, or fully linear Zip1 staining (upper panel) and the proportion containing a PC (lower panel). At least 100 nuclei were inspected for each time point. We chose a time course where spindle formation kinetics indicated similar synchrony in the two strains to allow direct comparison (not shown). The arrow denotes the time at which cells were released from prophase I arrest by induction of NDT80 expression (NDT80-IN) allowing SC disassembly and Zip1 degradation (C) to be followed. (PDF)

Figure S7 Steady-state levels and hyperphosphorylation of Mus81-9Myc and Mms4-9myc are not decreased in the Smc5- and Nse4-depleted strains. (A,B) Western blot of Mus81-9myc and Mms4-9myc. Loading factor Pgkl was analysed on the same Western blot. Strains: WT (Y3618- Mus81-9myc, Y3683- Mms4-9myc), smc5 (Y3621- Mus81-9myc, Y3689- Mms4-9myc) and nse4 (Y3624-Mus81-9myc, Y3686- Mms4-9myc). (C) Mms4-9myc hyperphosphorylation occurs concomitantly with Cdc5 expression in wild type as well as the smc5 and nse4 strains. Pgkl was used as loading factor. (PDF)

Figure S8 (A) Immunostaining of fixed, semi-spread nuclei at anaphase I. Examples of anaphase I nuclei with associated Rec8-GFP along arms (‘arm retention’) as well as precocious loss of centromeric cohesin. Quantification is shown below. Anaphase I nuclei were staged by length; imaging with Pds1-tdTomato showed that all anaphase I spindles >4 μm were at anaphase I in wild type as well as the two mutants. (B) Representative images of Rec8-GFP of anaphase II nuclei in the wild type and smc5 mutant. (C) Overexposure of the FRTC (Rec8-GFP) channel to illustrate that the centromeric Rec8 is indeed not detected at anaphase I in smc5 and nse4 mutants. Box illustrates an anaphase I spindle (>4 μm). Overexposed GFP signals are from prophase I nuclei. (TIF)

Figure S9 Integration of proposed Smc5/6 function within other JM regulatory mechanisms. The main crossover-generating mechanism is meiosis-specific and depends upon the preferential stabilization of recombination-intermediates by the ZMM proteins (green). Smc5/6 stabilizes other recombination intermediates and promote their resolution into both crossovers (class II) and noncrossovers by Mus81-Mms4 (grey box). (EPS)

Movie S1 Time lapse imaging of nuclear divisions and spindle dynamics for wild type (Y3606). H2B is pseudocoloured in magenta and tubulin in green. This movie corresponds to panel 1 (upper panel) in Figure 2E. (WMV)

Movie S2 Time lapse imaging of nuclear divisions and spindle dynamics for smc5 (Y3627). H2B is pseudocoloured in magenta and tubulin in green. This movie corresponds to panel 2 in Figure 2E. (WMV)

Movie S3 Time lapse imaging of nuclear divisions and spindle dynamics for smc5 (Y3627). H2B is pseudocoloured in magenta and tubulin in green. This movie corresponds to panel 3 in Figure 2E. (WMV)

Movie S4 Time lapse imaging of nuclear divisions and spindle dynamics for nse4 (Y3630). H2B is pseudocoloured in magenta and tubulin in green. This movie corresponds to panel 4 in Figure 2E. (WMV)

Movie S5 Time lapse imaging of Rec8-GFP degradation in wild type (Y2572). Rec8-GFP is pseudocoloured in green; CNM67-mCherry and Pds1-tdTomato is shown in magenta. This movie corresponds to panel 1 in Figure 9B. (WMV)

Movie S6 Time lapse imaging of Rec8-GFP degradation in smc5 (Y2673). Rec8-GFP is pseudocoloured in green; CNM67-mCherry and Pds1-tdTomato is shown in magenta. This movie corresponds to panel 2 in Figure 9B. (WMV)

Movie S7 Time lapse imaging of Rec8-GFP degradation in nse4 (Y3047). Rec8-GFP is pseudocoloured in green;
Table S1  List of strains used in this study. Individual strains used for the experiments are listed in the relevant figure legend.

Author Contributions

Conceived and designed the experiments: EH NH AH HGB AC SN LN SG PWJ ST. Performed the experiments: AC ST PWJ HGB SN ACC LN ZL EH AH SG. Analyzed the data: EH AH HGB LN ST ACC AC NH SG PWJ. Contributed reagents/materials/analysis tools: ADH PA. Wrote the manuscript: EH AH NH HGB.


