

# Automatic In-network Control Empowered by Programmable Infrastructure

*Liangcheng Yu*  
*09/2022*



# Ubiquitous network control tasks

## *Out-of-control events*

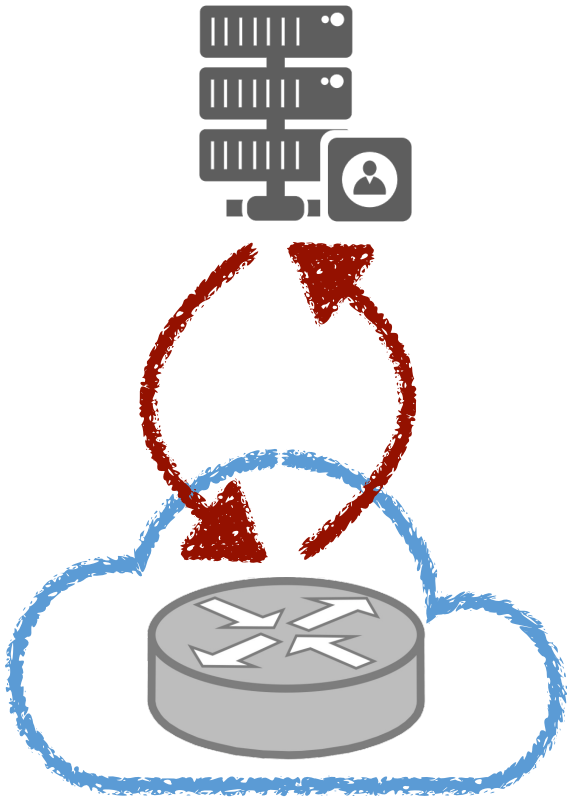
- Congestion collapse
- Network hotspots
- DoS attacks
- Effects of failure events
- Time drifts
- Bandwidth starvation
- ...



## *Network control mechanisms*

- Congestion control
- Load balancing
- Security policies
- Failure mitigation
- Clock synchronization
- Fairness control
- ...

# Network control



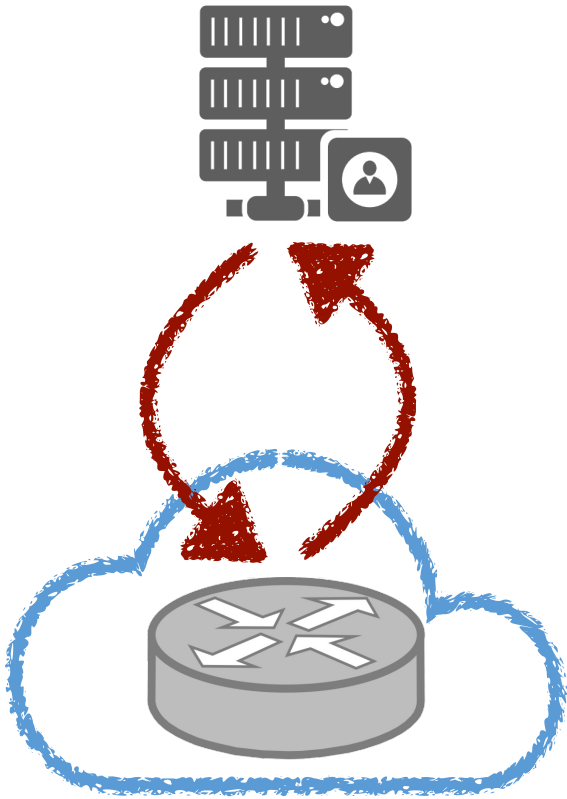
Need for **fast, real-time, and automatic** control at scale

- *Networks are getting fast:  $< 1 \rightarrow 10 \rightarrow 100 \rightarrow 800 \rightarrow \dots$  [Gbps]*
- *Implication: **microscopic** (e.g.,  $O(\mu s)$ ) event, harder management*
- *Closed-loop reactions: e.g., rate control, load balancing, ...*

Traditional network control

- *Mode of operation: infrequent ( $O(100\ ms)$ ), asynchronous, and manual*

# Network control



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***Fill the gap towards high-frequency network control?***



# Network control

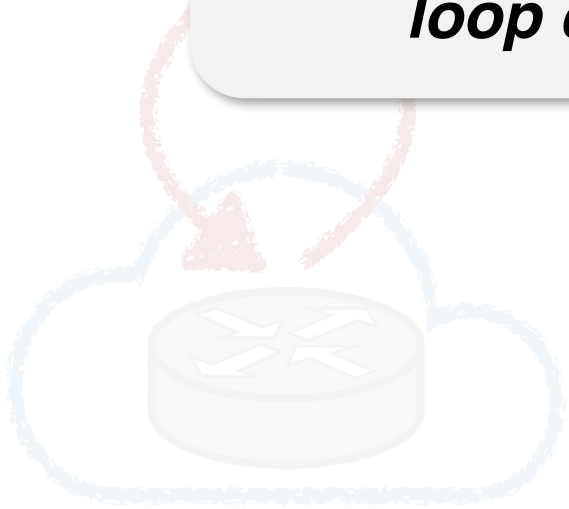
Need for fast, real-time, and automatic control at scale

Once you've got a software platform where you can **change its behavior**, you can start introducing previously absurd-sounding ideas, including fanciful ideas of **automatic, real-time, closed-loop control of an entire network.** — Nick McKeown

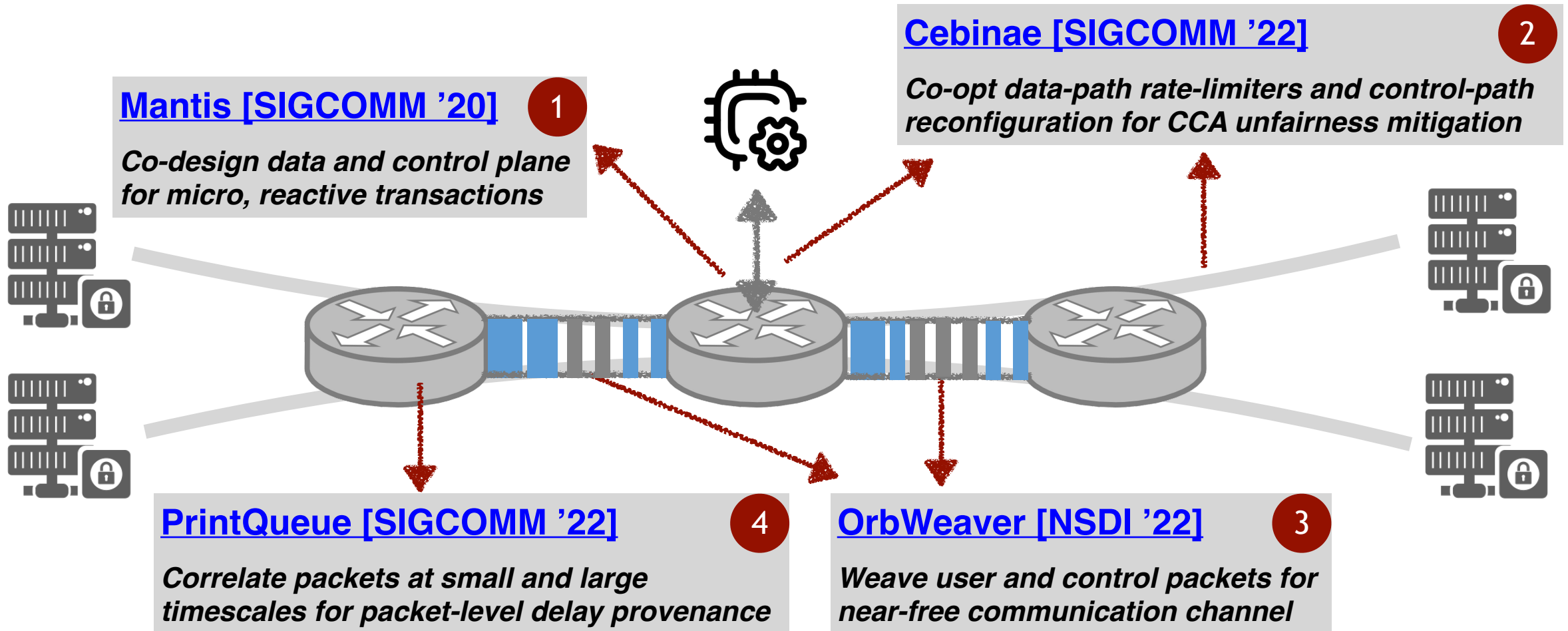
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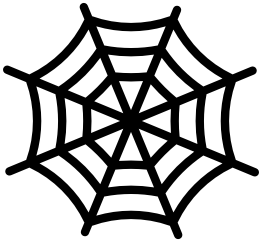
*Fill the gap towards high-frequency network control?*



# Pushing switches to the limit via tight coupling



# Outline



## OrbWeaver:

Using IDLE Cycles in Programmable Networks for Opportunistic Coordination



## Cebinae:

Scalable In-network Fairness Augmentation

# Networks are woven from packets

- A primary goal of computer networks: ***deliver packets***
  - ***User application***: video streaming, web browsing, file transfer...
  - ***Non-user application***: control messages, probes about network state, keep alive heartbeats...

# Networks are woven from packets

- A primary goal of computer networks: ***deliver packets***
  - ***User application***: video streaming, web browsing, file transfer...
  - ***Non-user application***: control messages, probes about network state, keep alive heartbeats...
- Often, two classes of traffic ***multiplex*** the same network

# When introducing a new in-band application...

To consume **extra BW** for **fidelity** (of the control application), or not to?

- *Time synchronization*: clock-sync rate → precision
- *Failure detector*: keep alive message frequency → detection speed
- *Congestion notification*: signaling data and rate → measurement accuracy

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Is the trade-off between fidelity and overhead necessary?

# When introducing a new in-band application...

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- Can we coordinate at **high-fidelity** with a **near-zero cost** (to usable bandwidth, latency...)?

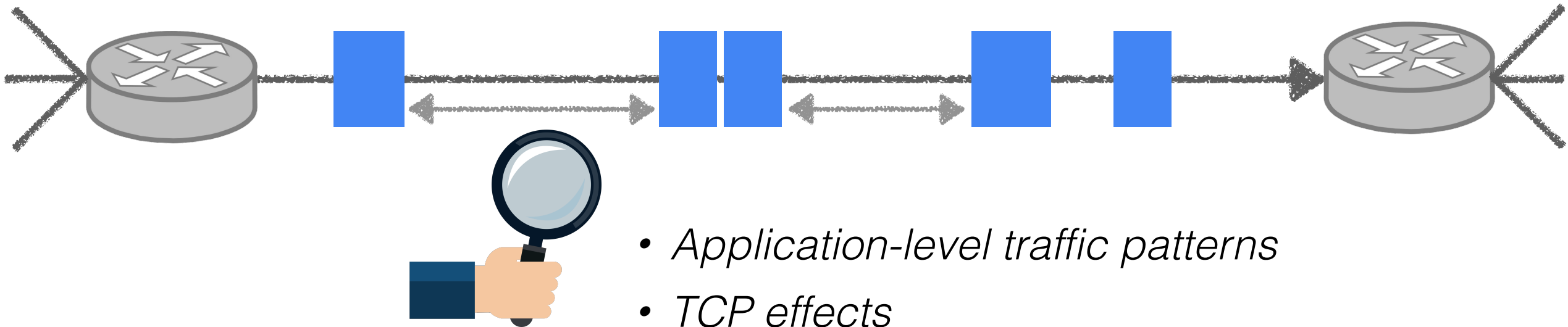


Can we coordinate at **high-fidelity** with a **near-zero cost** to usable bandwidth and latency?

**Idea: Weaved Stream**

- Exploit **every gap** ( $O(100ns)$ ) between user packets opportunistically
- Inject customizable **IDLE packets** carrying information across devices

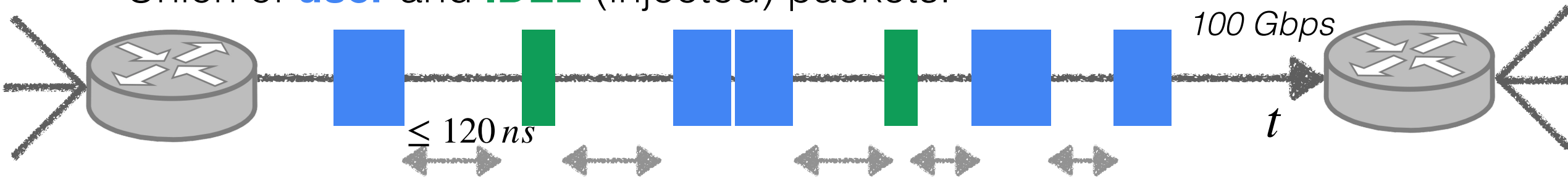
# Opportunity: $< \mu s$ gaps are prevalent



- *Application-level traffic patterns*
- *TCP effects*
- *Structural asymmetry*
- ...

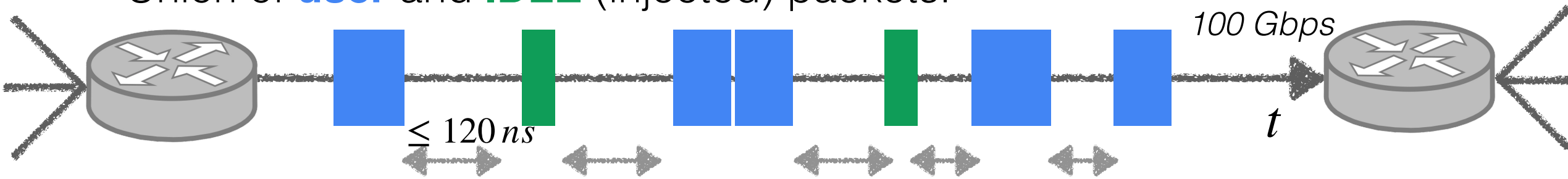
# Abstraction: weaved stream

- Union of **user** and **IDLE** (injected) packets:



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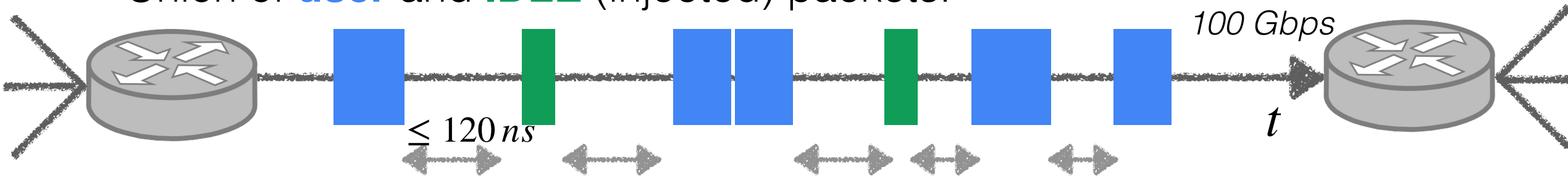
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**[R2 Little-to-zero overhead]** Not impact user packets or power draw

# Abstraction: weaved stream

- Union of **USER** and **IDLE** (injected) packets:

Implement many ***in-network applications***  
(*failure detection, clock sync, congestion notification...*)  
***for free!***

1. [Predictability] Interval between ***any two consecutive*** packets  $\leq \tau$
2. [Little-to-zero overhead] Weaved IDLE packets not impact user packets

# Abstraction: weaved stream

- Union of **user** and **IDLE** (injected) packets:



## Crazy idea?

Extending IDLE characters to higher layers

- Data plane packet generator
- Replication engine
- Data plane programmability
- Flexible switch configuration (priorities, buffers...)

1. Interv

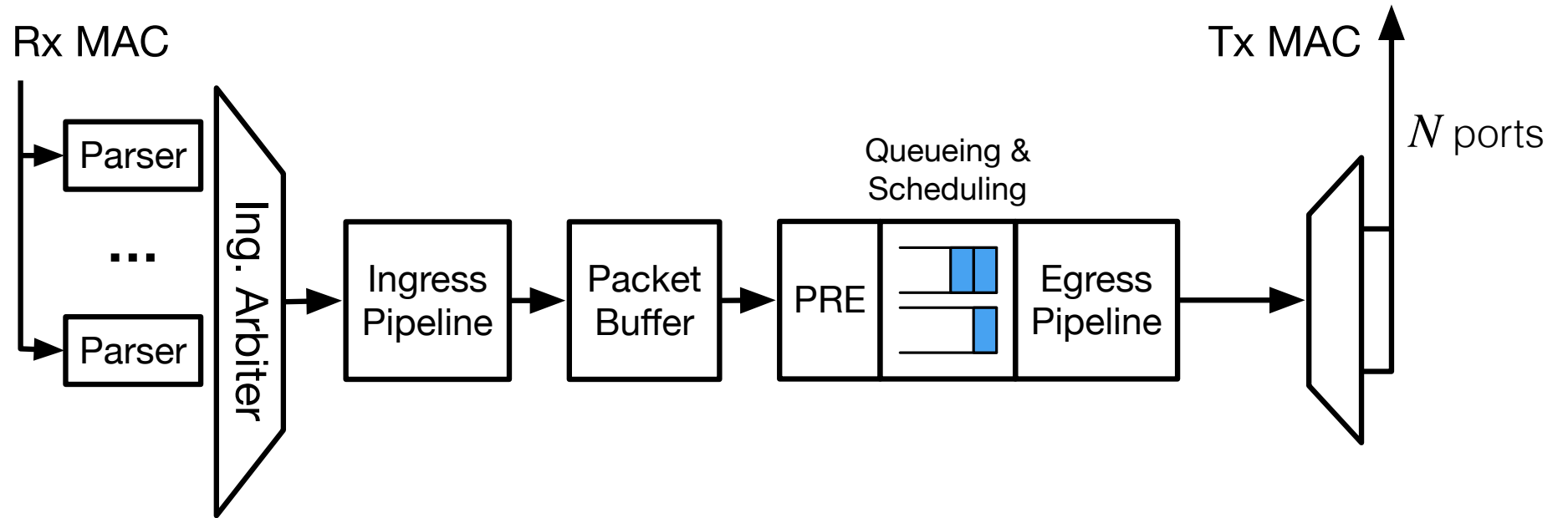
2. Weaved IDLE packets incur **little-to-zero** impact to user packets

# Outline

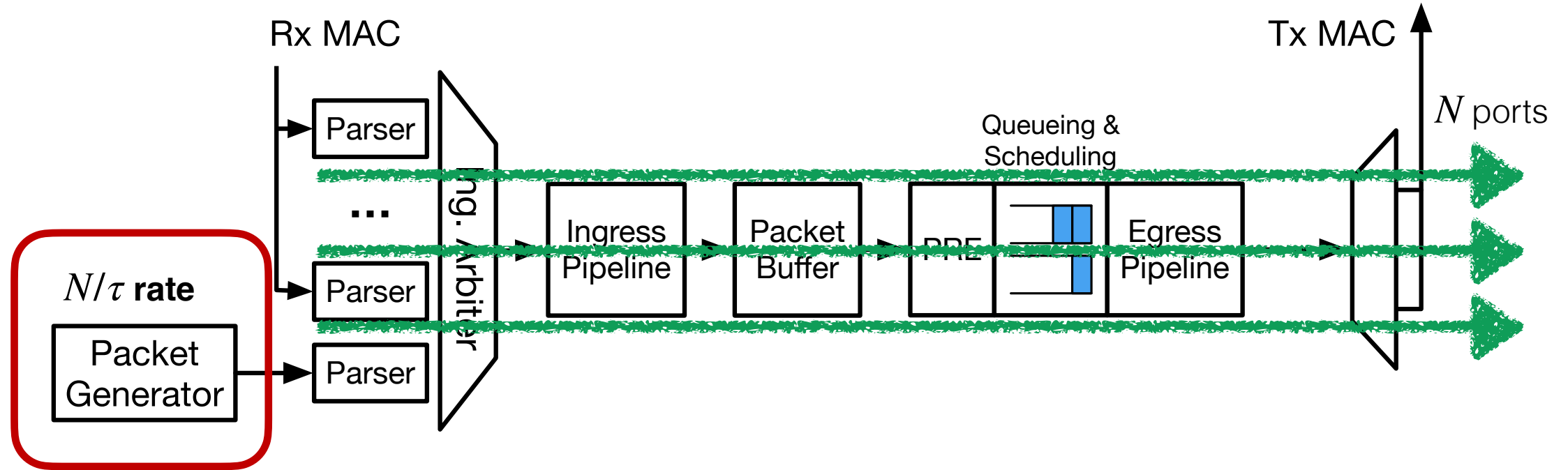
1. Switch data plane architecture
2. Weaved stream generation
3. OrbWeaver applications



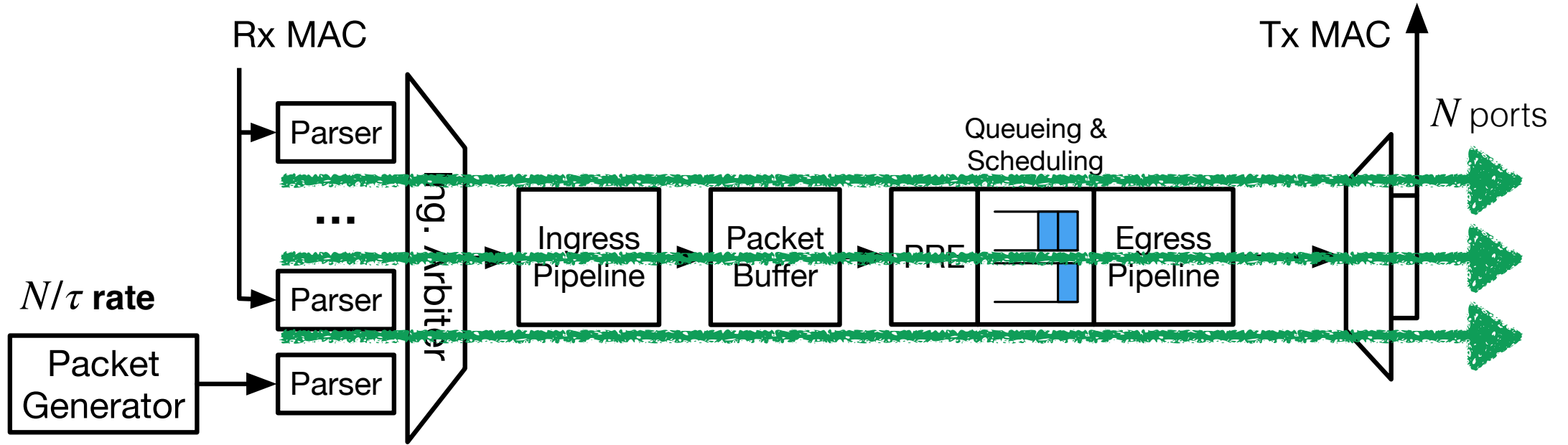
# RMT switch model



# Naive weaved stream generation



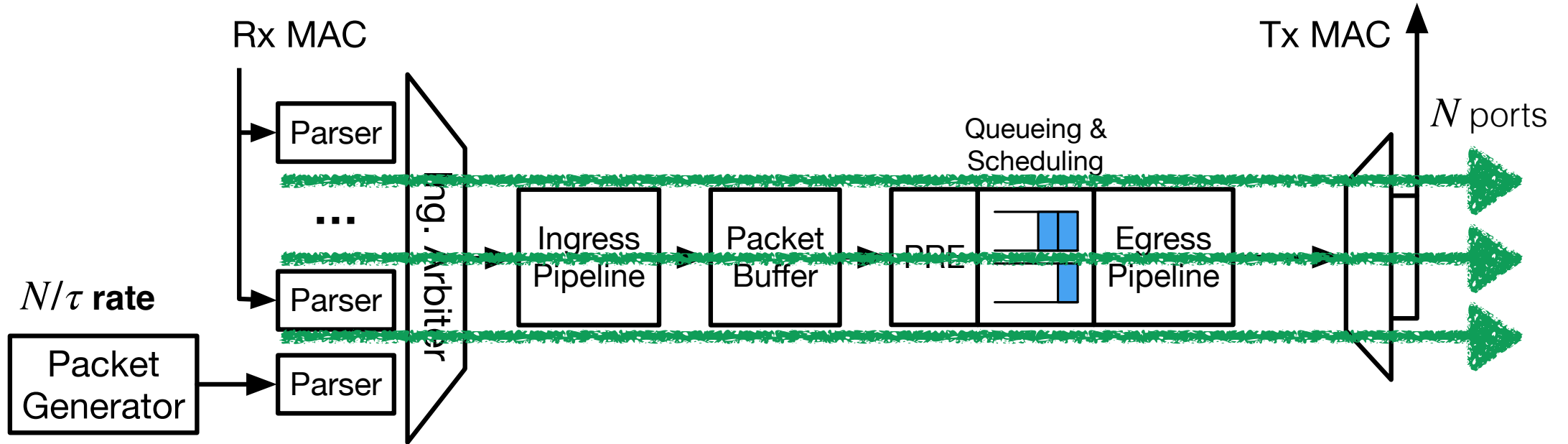
# Naive weaved stream generation



Predictability even there is no user traffic

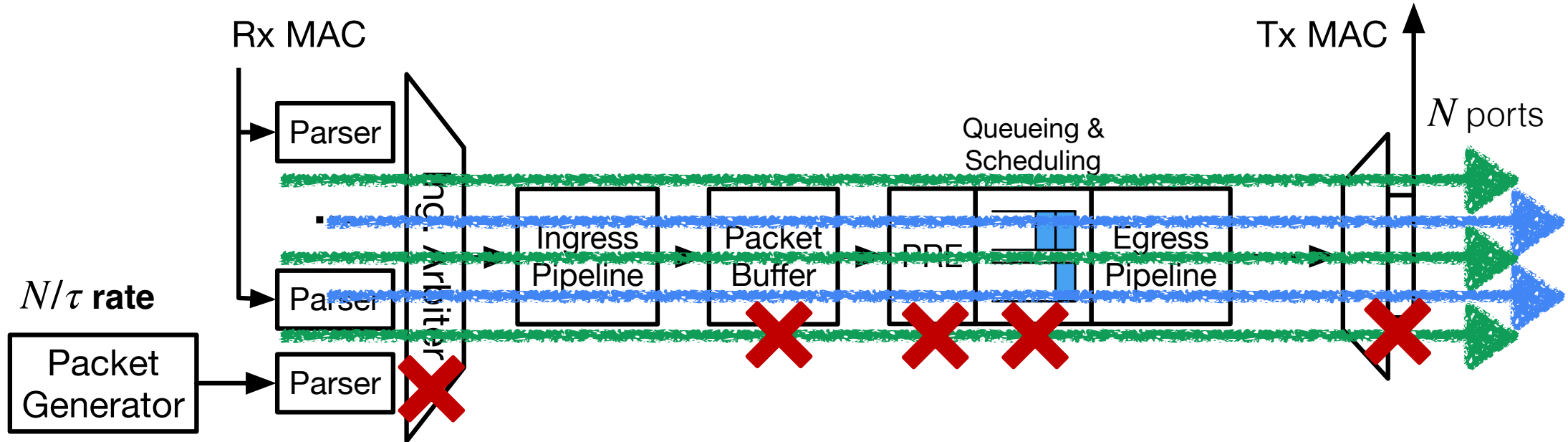


# Problems with blind injection



**Scalability:** overwhelm packet generator capacity to satisfy target rate

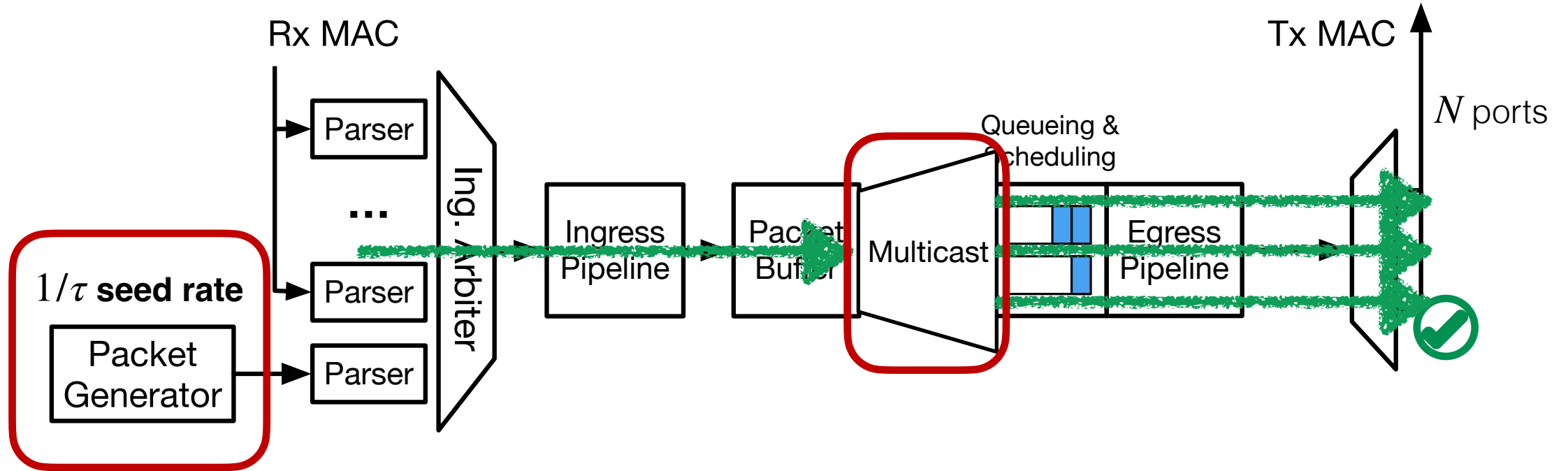
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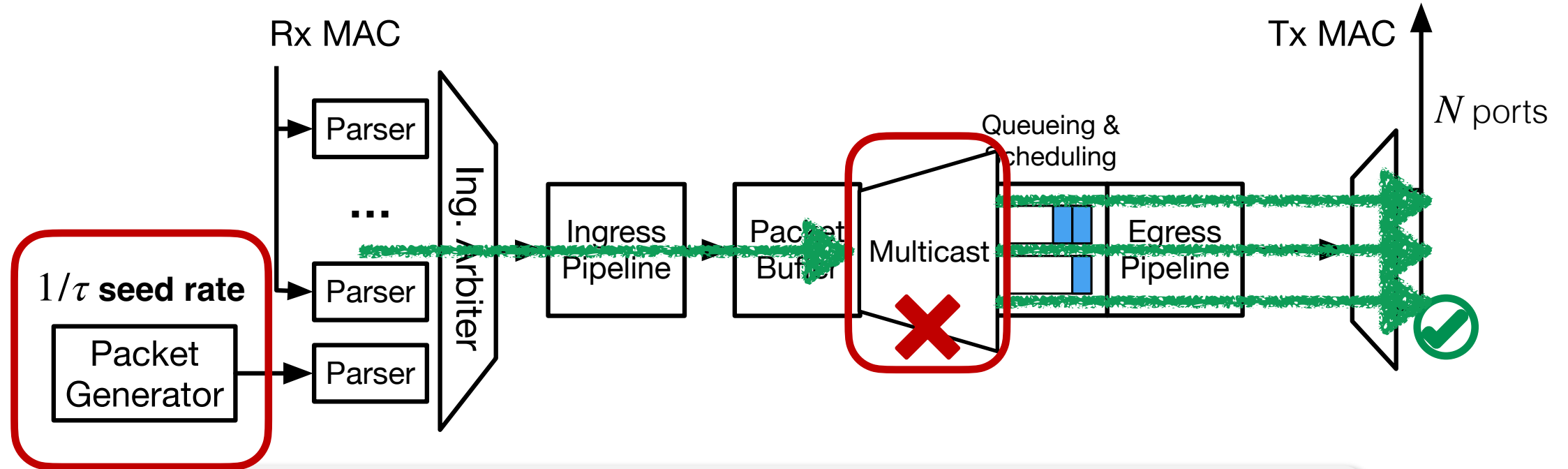
**Scalability:** overwhelm packet generator capacity to satisfy target rate

**Interference upon cross-traffic:** throughput, latency, or loss of user traffic!

# Amplify seed stream

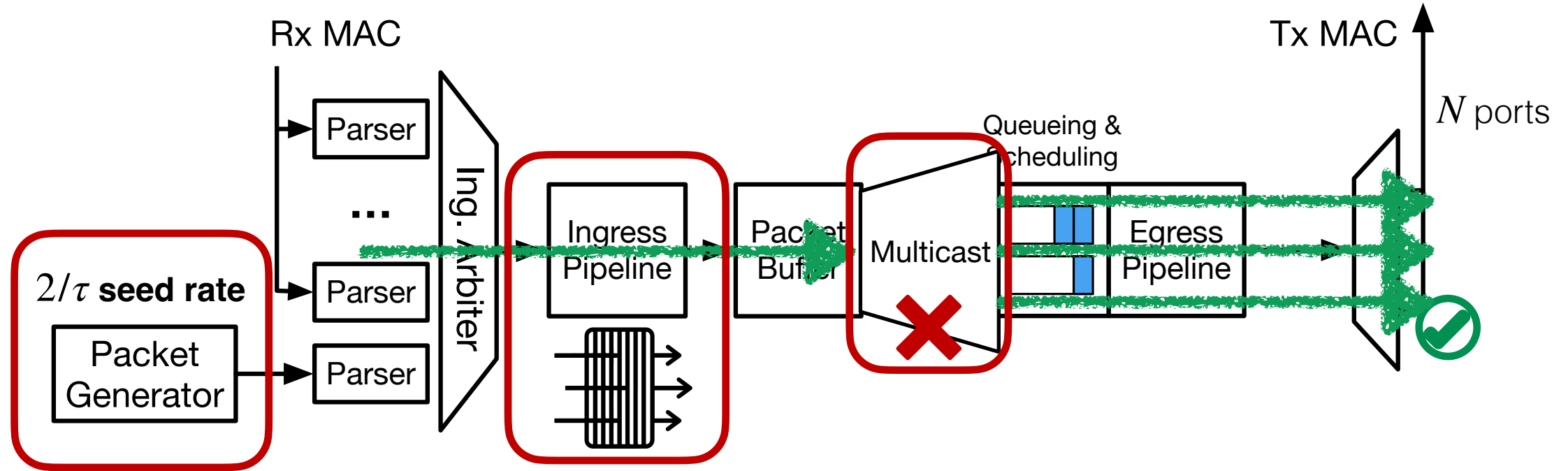


# Amplify seed stream



**Monopolize usage and waste PRE packet-level BW!**

# Amplify seed stream on demand

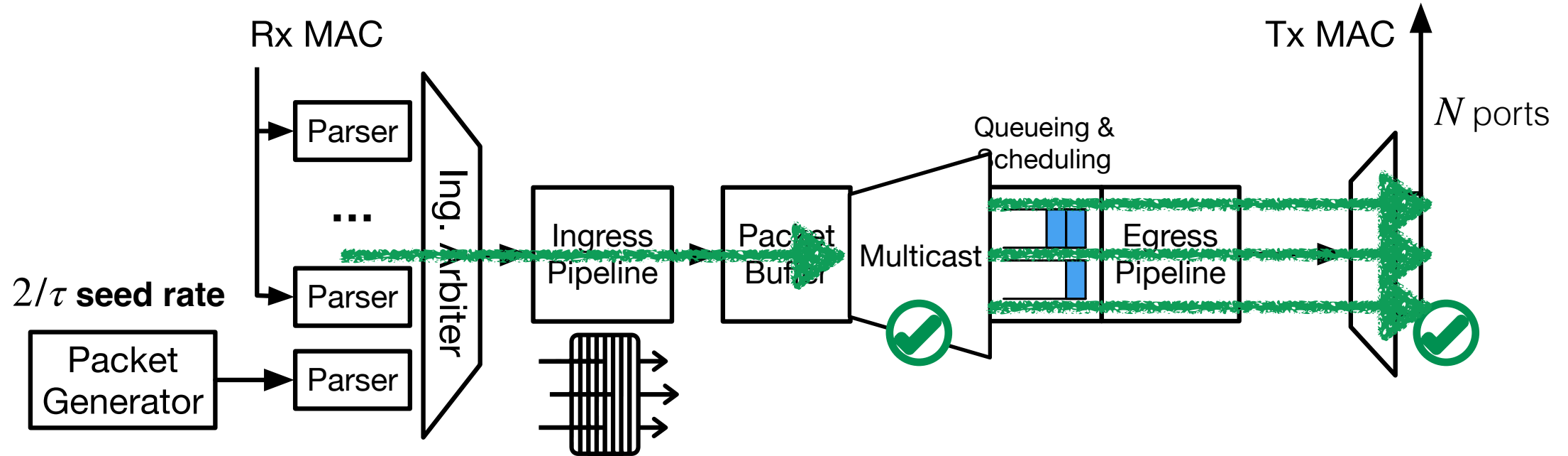


## **Selective filtering**

- (Tiny) sending history state of past cycle to each egress port
- Create an IDLE packet to a port **only if we need an IDLE packet**



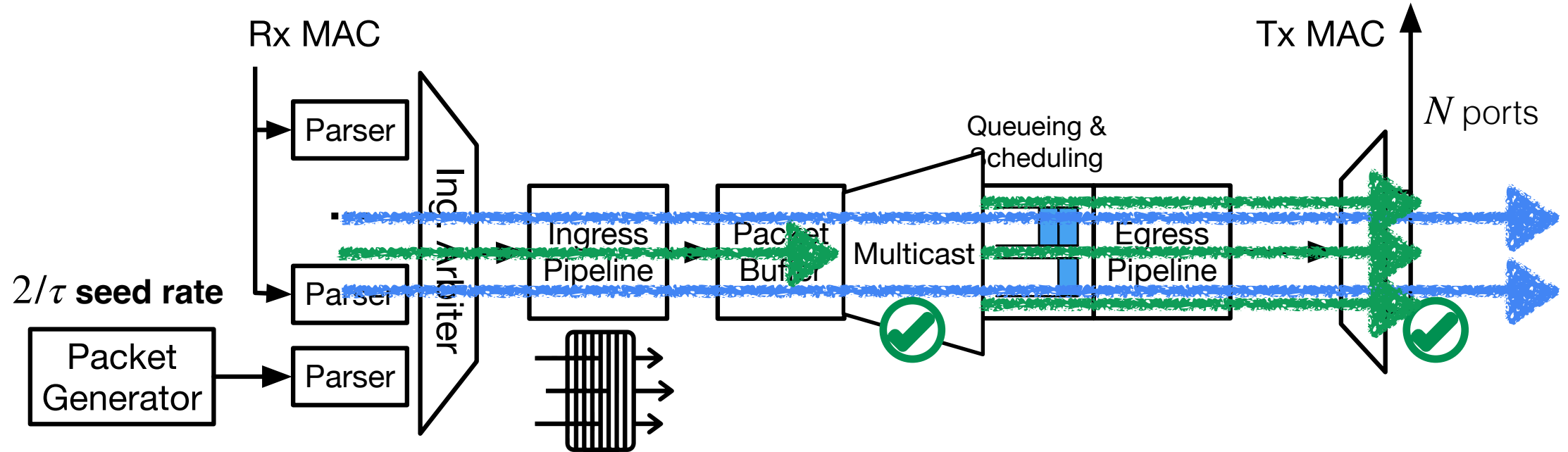
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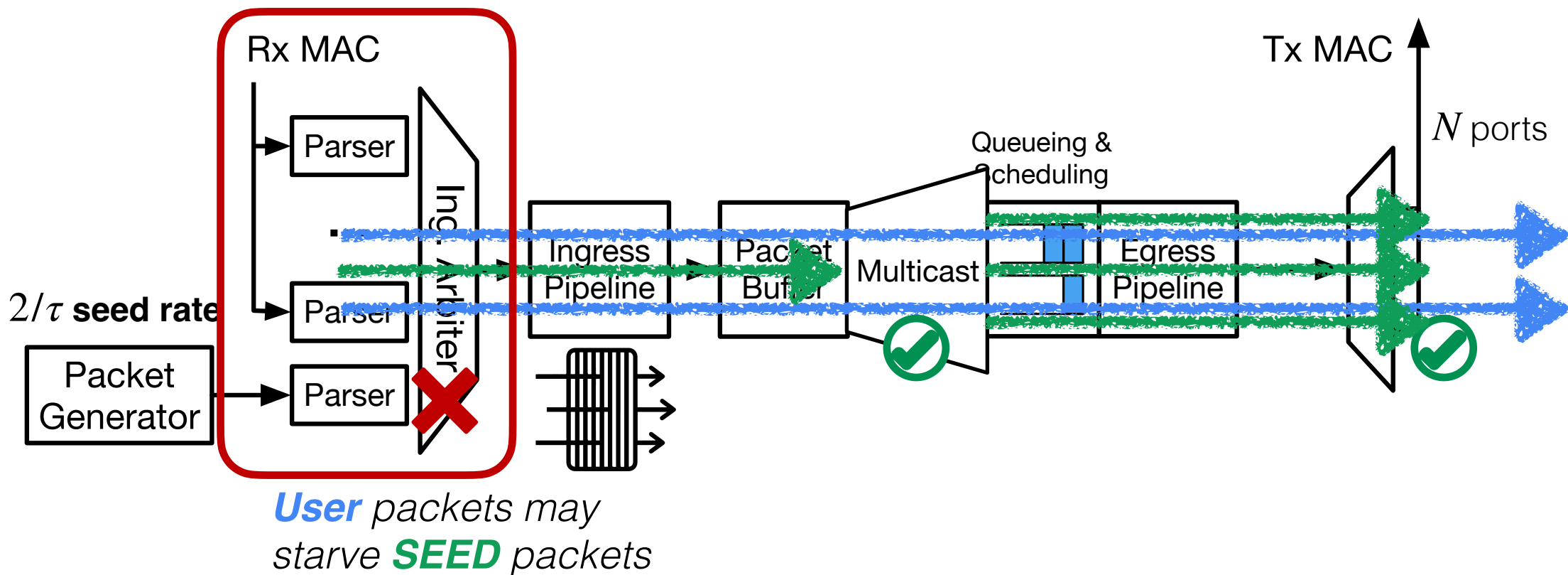
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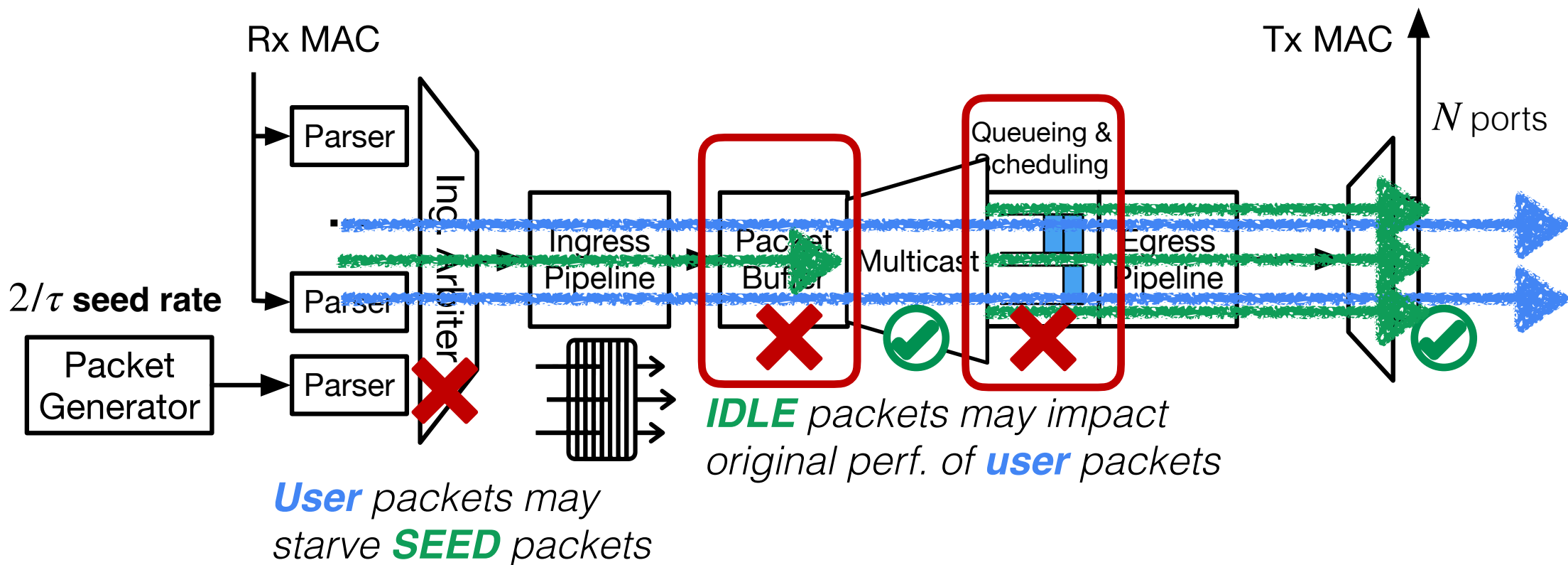
# Cross-traffic contention



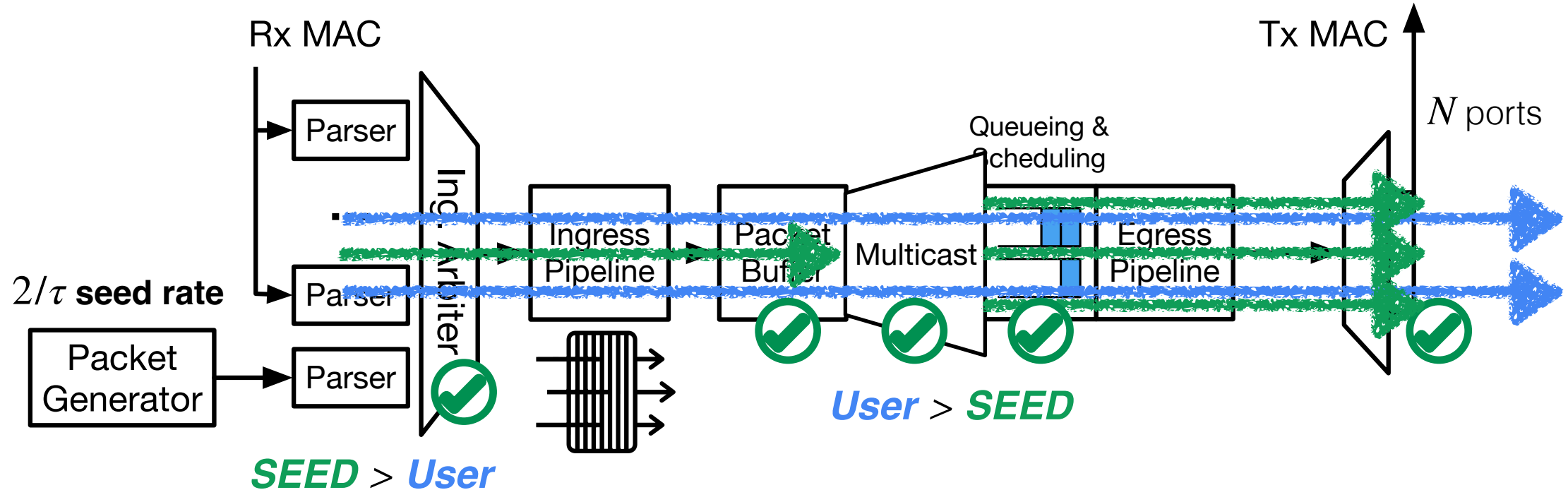
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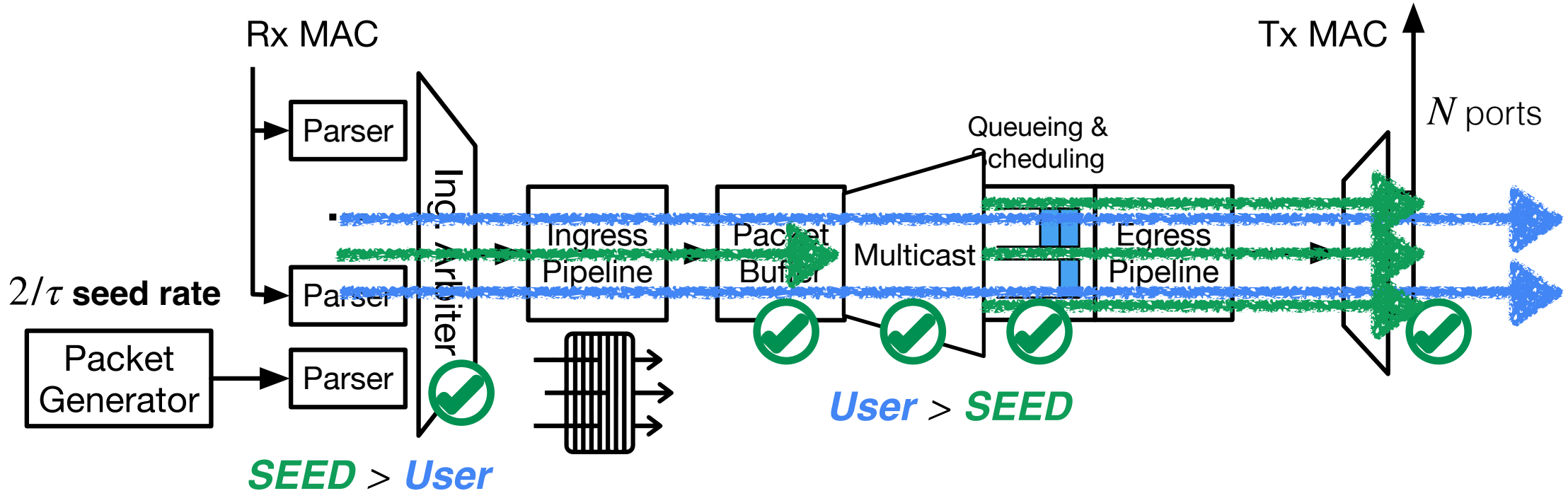
# Preventing contention



## Rich configuration options for priorities and buffer management

- Zero impact of weaved stream predictability ✓
- Zero impact of **user traffic** throughput or buffer usage ✓

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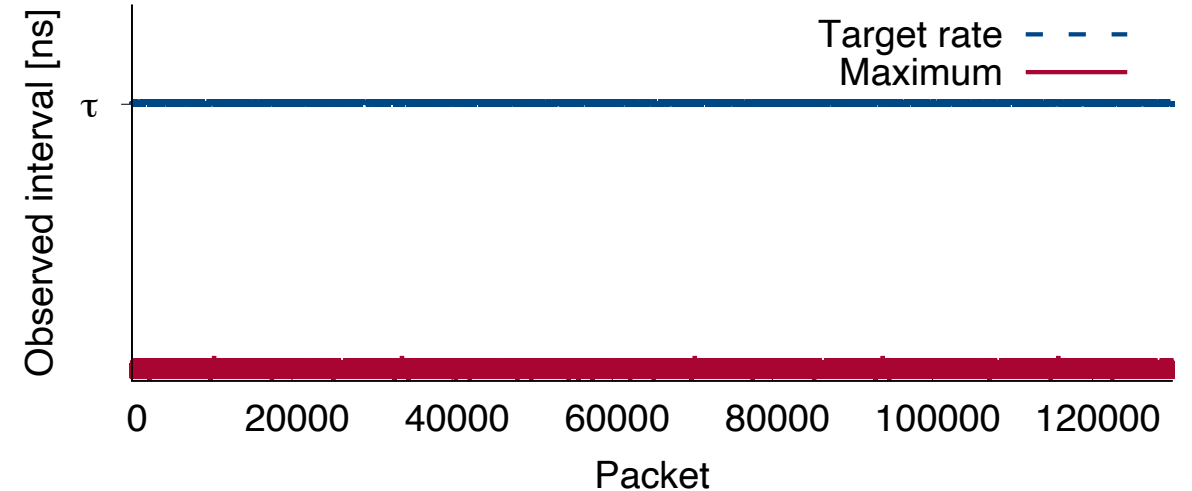
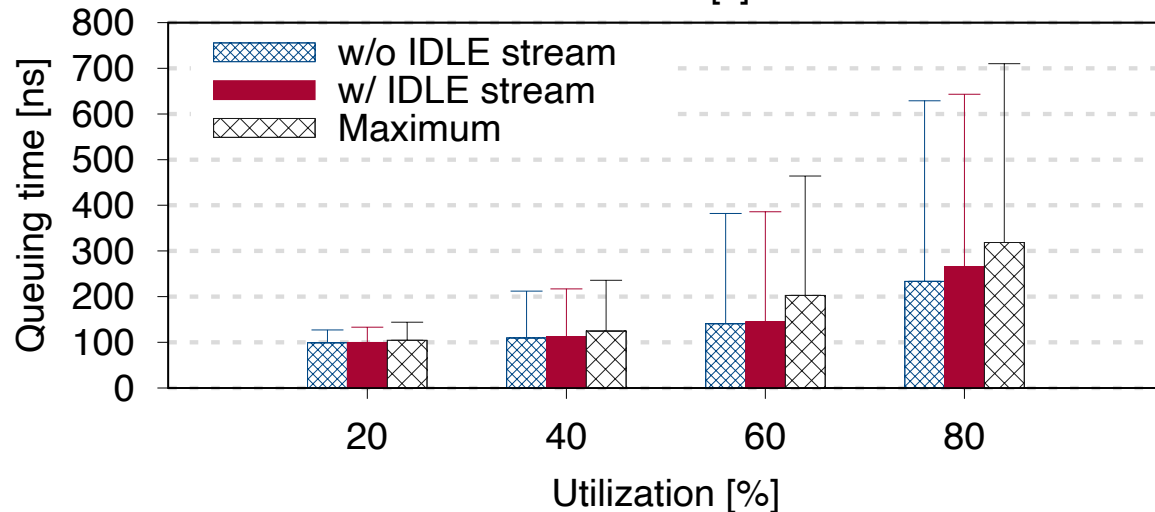
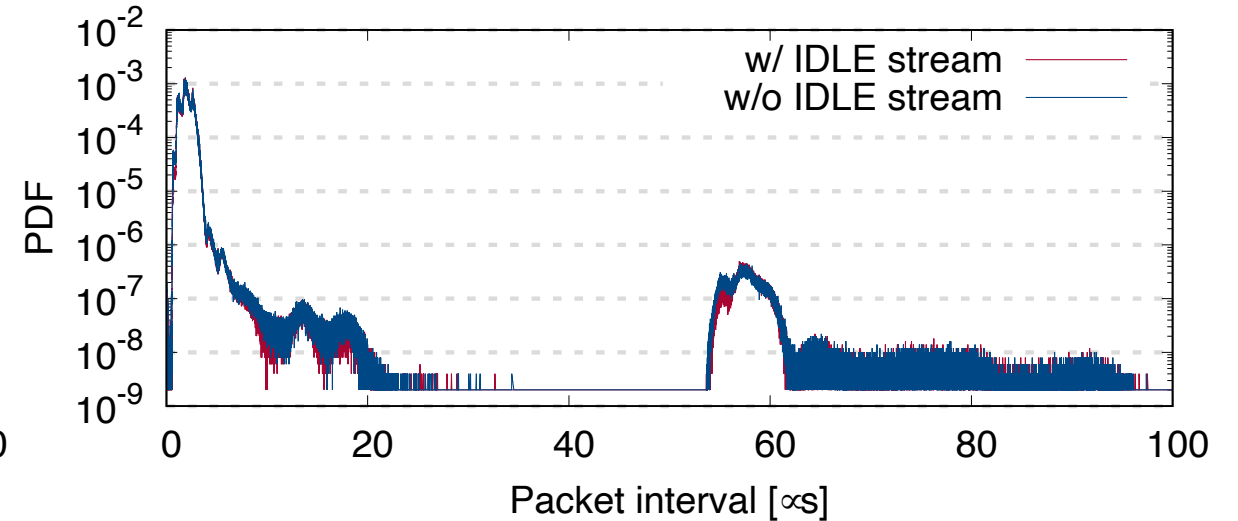
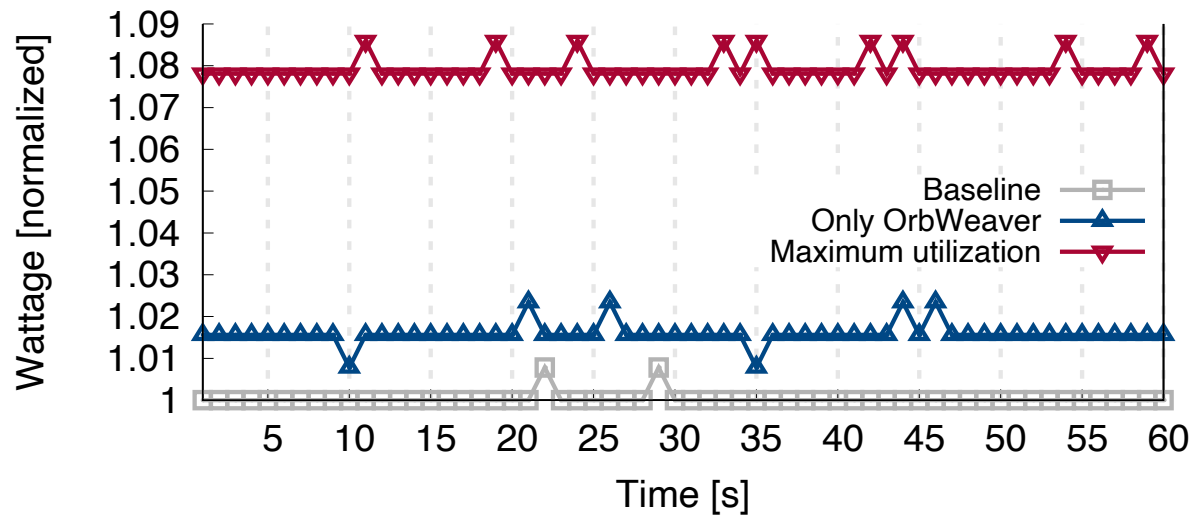


## Rich configuration options for priorities and buffer management

- Zero impact of weaved stream predictability ✓
- Zero impact of **user traffic** throughput or buffer usage ✓
- Negligible impact of latency of **user packets** ✓

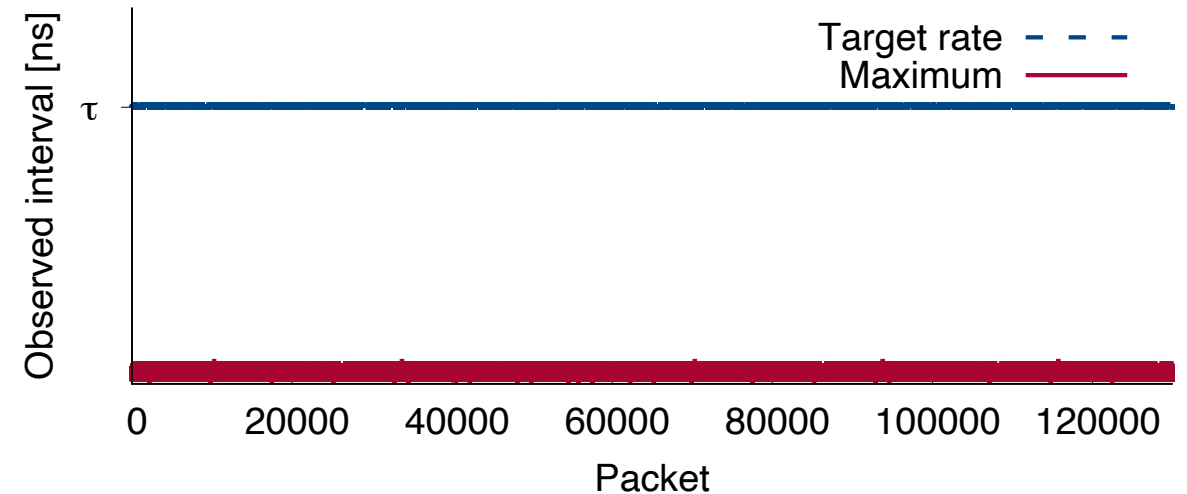
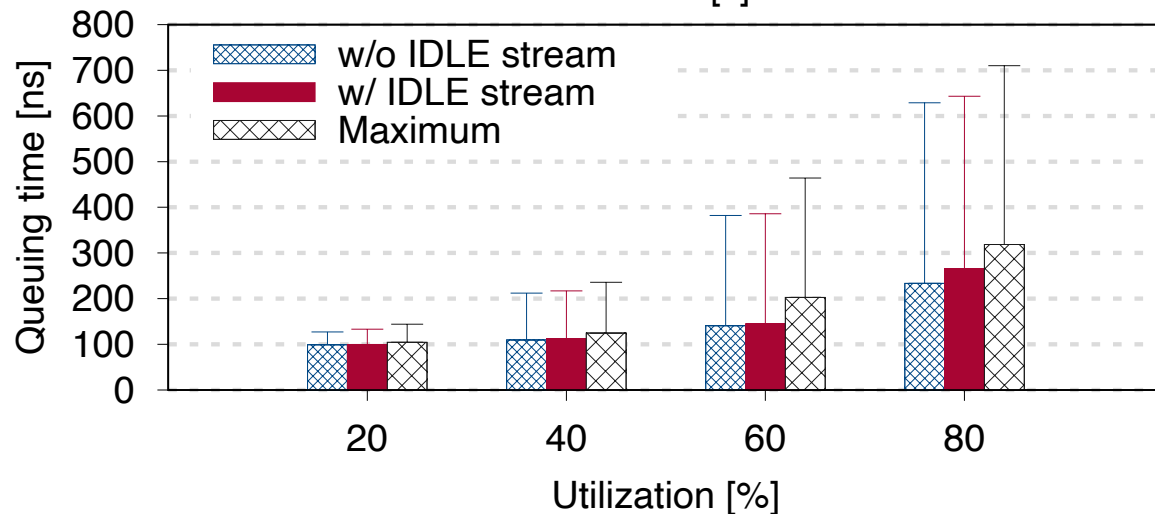
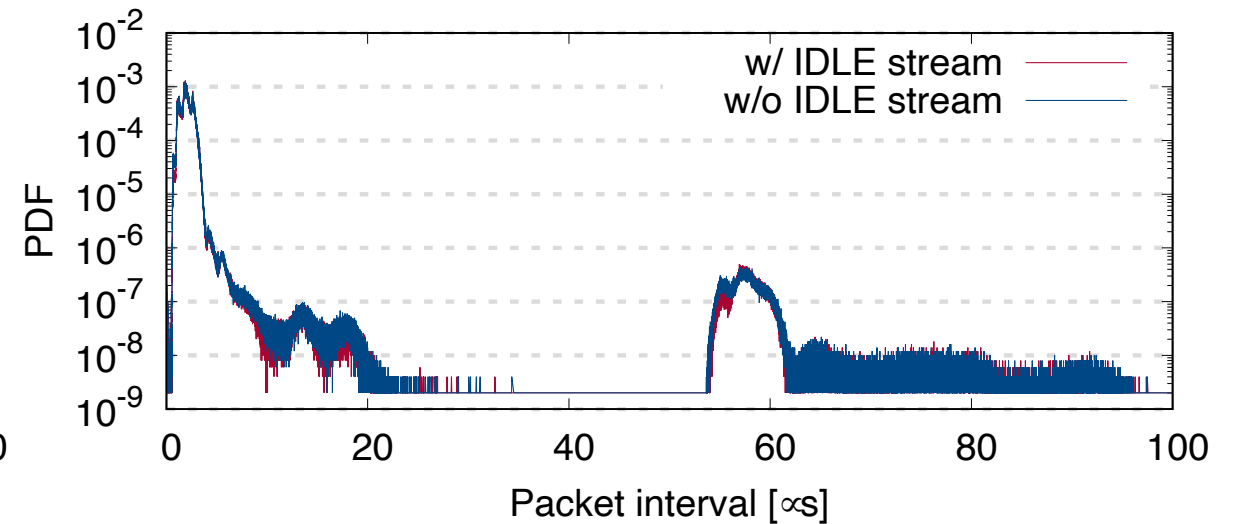
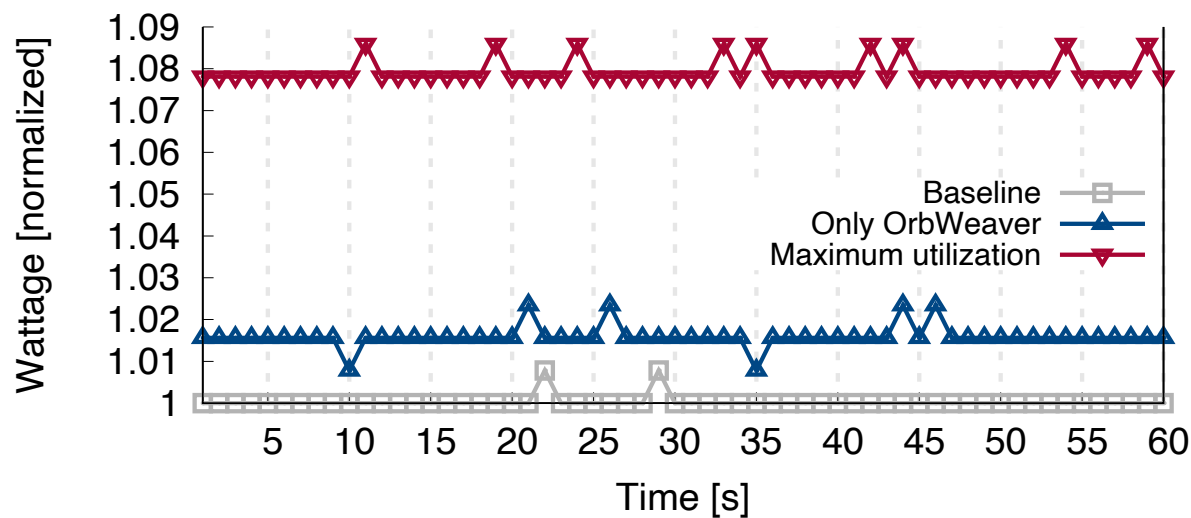
# Implementation and evaluation

Hardware prototype on a pair of Wedge100BF-32X Tofino switches



**Takeaway:** **Little-to-no impact** of power draw, latency, or throughput while guaranteeing **predictability** of the weaved stream!

Hardware prototype on a pair of Wedge100BF-32X Tofino switches





# OrbWeaver use cases



***Free information  
dissemination [R2]***



***Fine-grained network  
state inference [R1]***

Performance aware routing

Flowlet load imbalance

Consistent replicas

Network queries

Latency  
localization

Header compression

Microburst detection

In-band telemetry

Event-based  
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Failure detection

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Packet forensics

Clock synchronization

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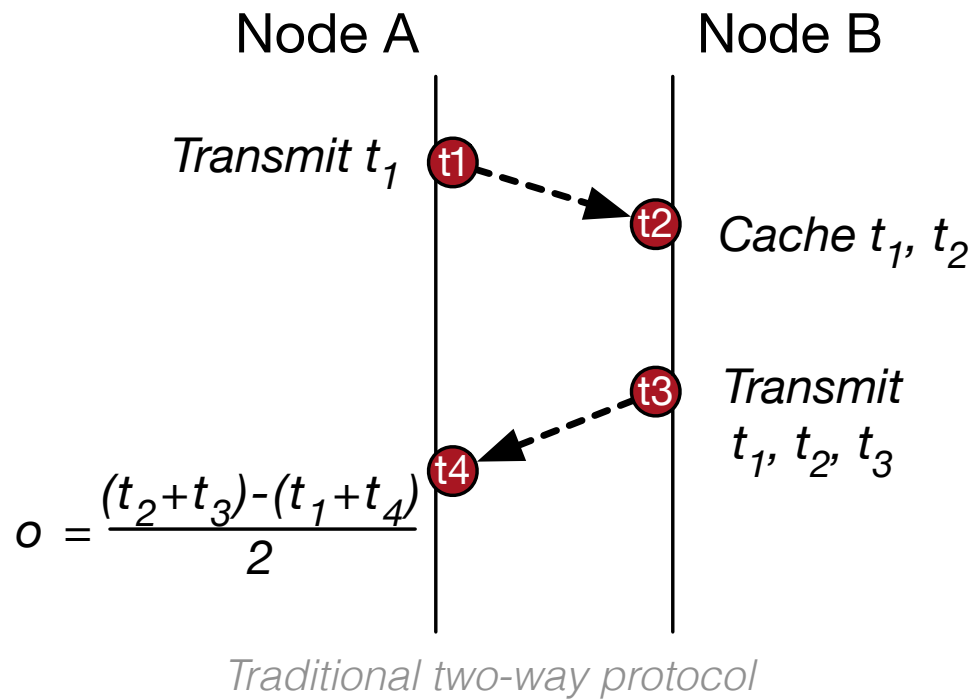
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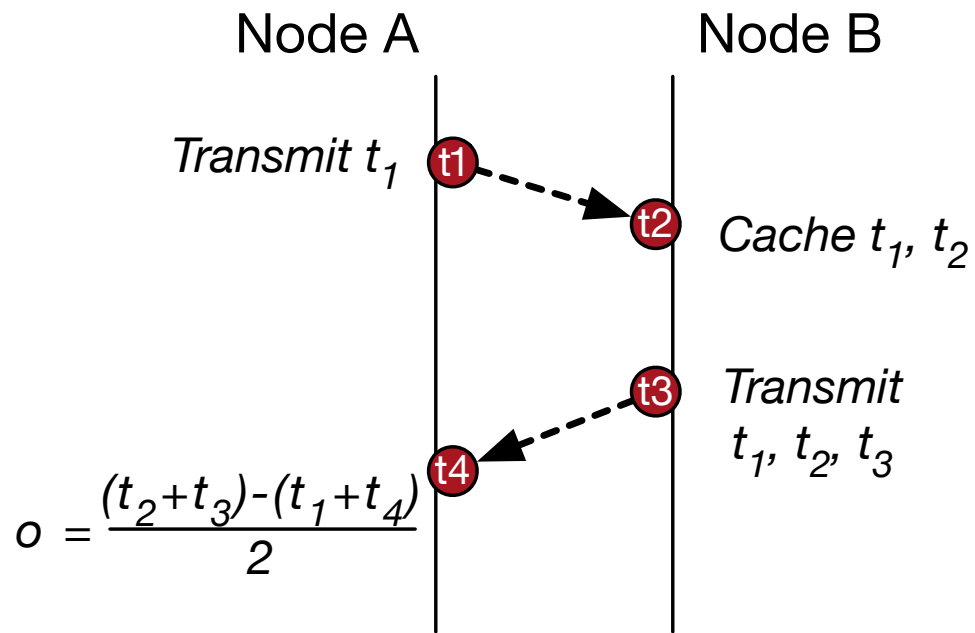
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# Example: time synchronization



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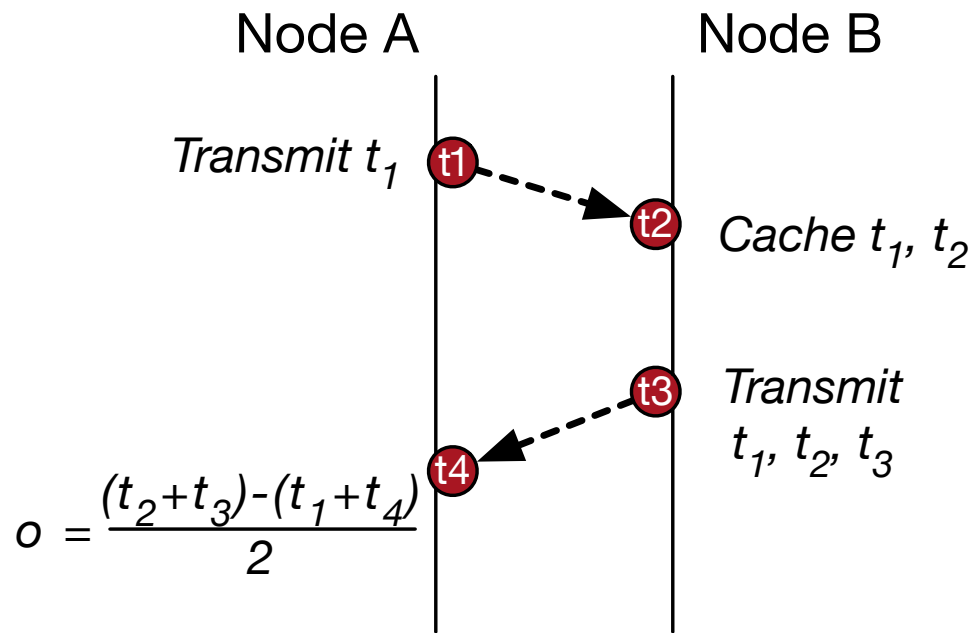


*Traditional two-way protocol*

## *Existing approaches for high precision*

- Require special hardware (such as DTP)
- Require messaging overheads (such as DPTP)

# Example: time synchronization



*Traditional two-way protocol*

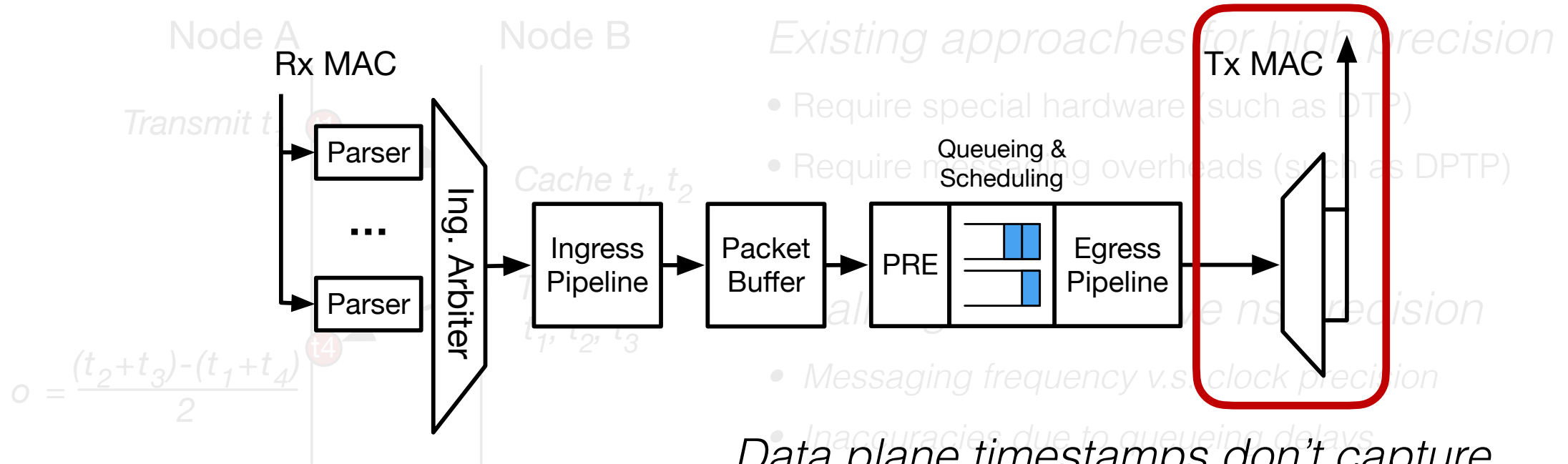
## *Existing approaches for high precision*

- Require special hardware (such as DTP)
- Require messaging overheads (such as DPTP)

## *Challenges to achieve ns precision*

- Messaging frequency v.s. clock precision
- Inaccuracies due to queueing delays

# Example: time synchronization



*Data plane timestamps don't capture the actual point of serialization*

# OrbWeaver Redesign

Key ideas:

1. Embed timestamp information in **free IDLE packets** [R2]

# OrbWeaver Redesign

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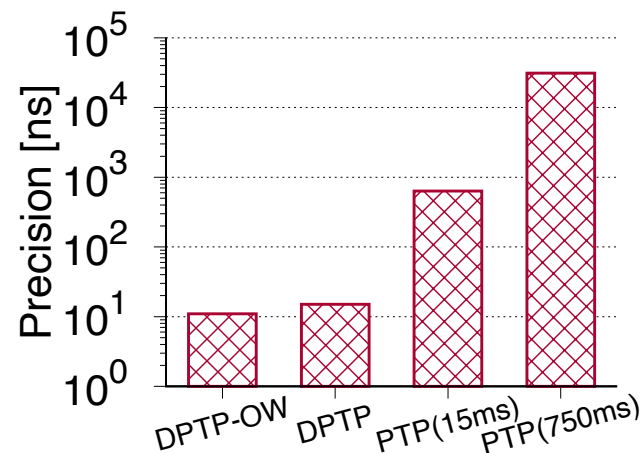
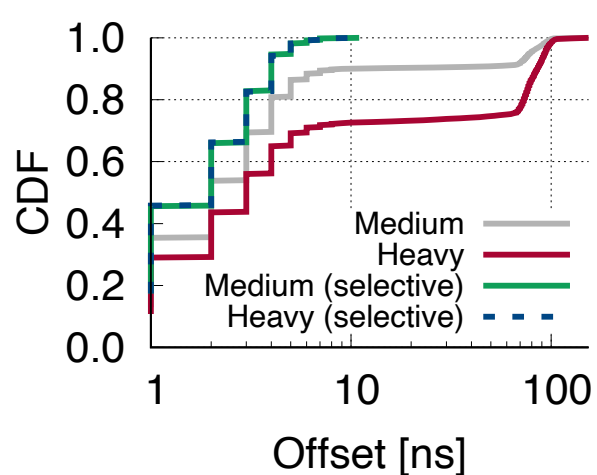
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# OrbWeaver Redesign

## Key ideas:

1. Embed timestamp information in **free IDLE packets** [R2]
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Achieve same or better performance with close-to-zero overheads

# Summary



- **Weaved stream abstraction** to harvest IDLE cycles
  - Guarantee predictability with little-to-zero overhead

# Summary



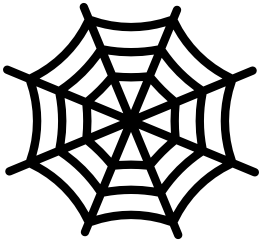
- **Weaved stream abstraction** to harvest IDLE cycles
  - Guarantee predictability with little-to-zero overhead
- Generic support of a wide range of data plane applications for free
  - ***Don't*** need to choose between coordination fidelity and bandwidth overhead



<https://github.com/eniac/OrbWeaver>

Thank you for your attention!

# Outline



## OrbWeaver:

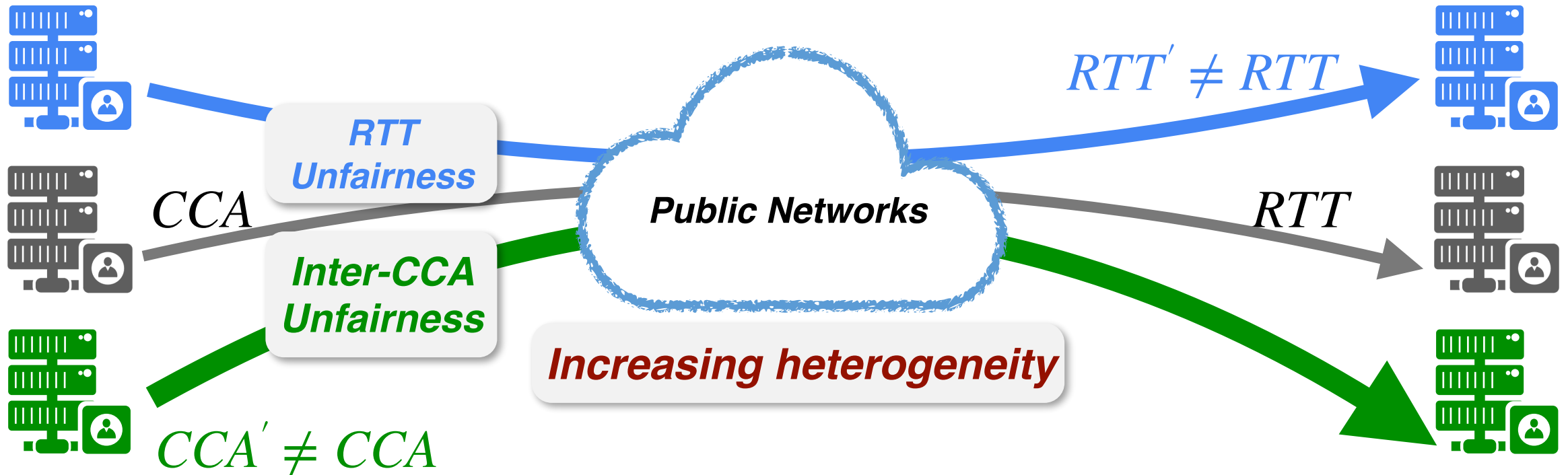
Using IDLE Cycles in Programmable Networks for Opportunistic Coordination



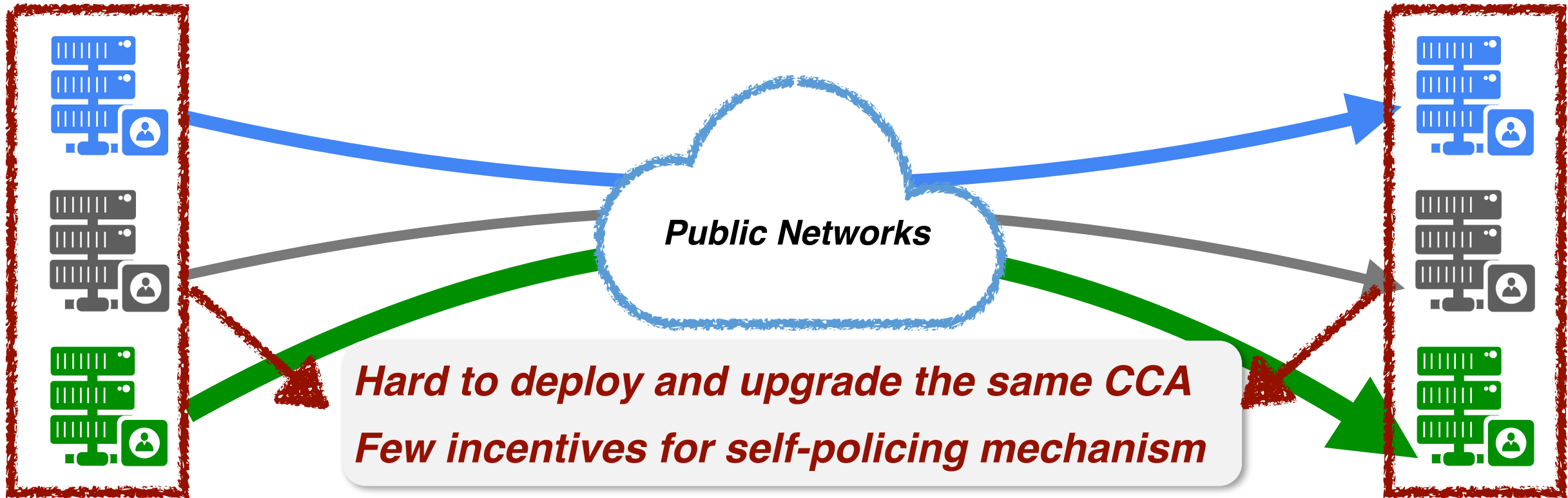
## Cebinae:

Scalable In-network Fairness Augmentation

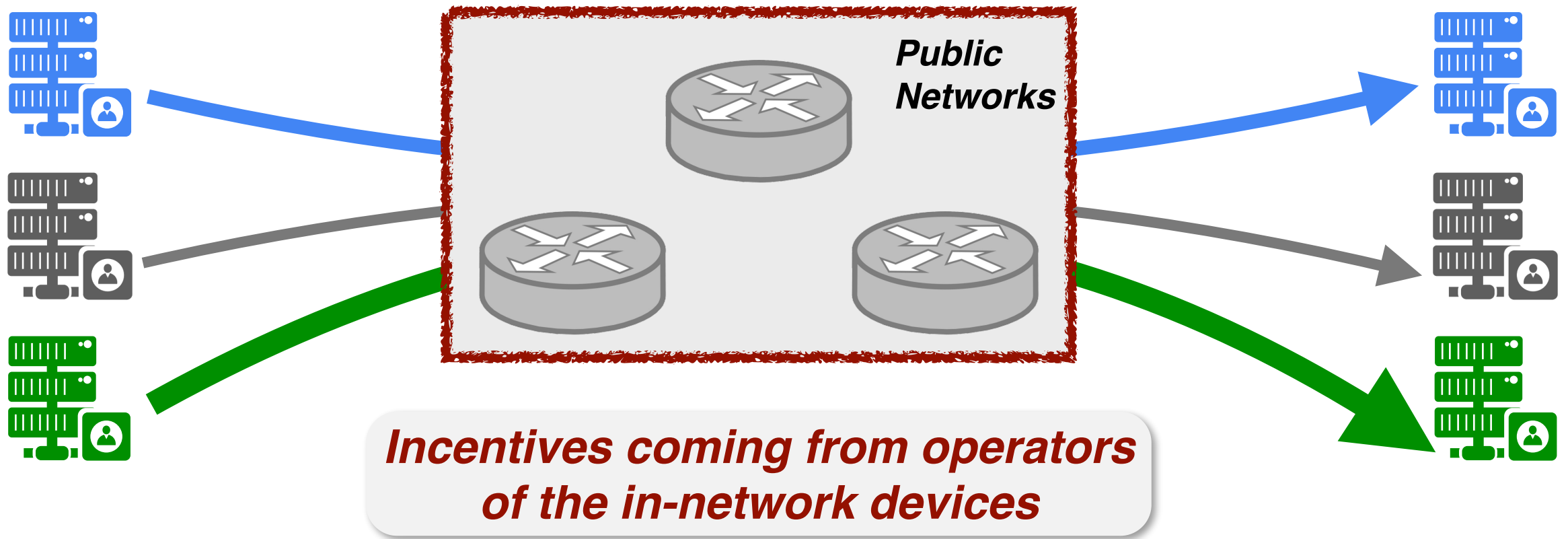
# Public networks care about fairness



# Fairness enforcement at the end hosts?



# In-network fairness enforcement



# In-network fairness enforcement

- Existing approaches suffer from limited practicalities
  - **Assumption:** *specialized hardware for per-flow queues, end-host cooperation...*



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- AFQ [NSDI '18]: practical emulation of ideal FQ on COTS hardware
  - **Constraints:** *e.g., # priorities, queues, buffers*

# In-network fairness enforcement

- Existing approaches suffer from limited practicalities
  - **Assumption:** *specialized hardware for per-flow queues, end-host cooperation...*
- AFQ [NSDI '18]: practical emulation of ideal FQ on COTS hardware
  - **Constraints:** *e.g., # priorities, queues, buffers*

Challenging to **strictly** enforce FQ on **each individual flow**

# Cebinae: a simpler approach

- Relaxation of fairness **at every instance in time**
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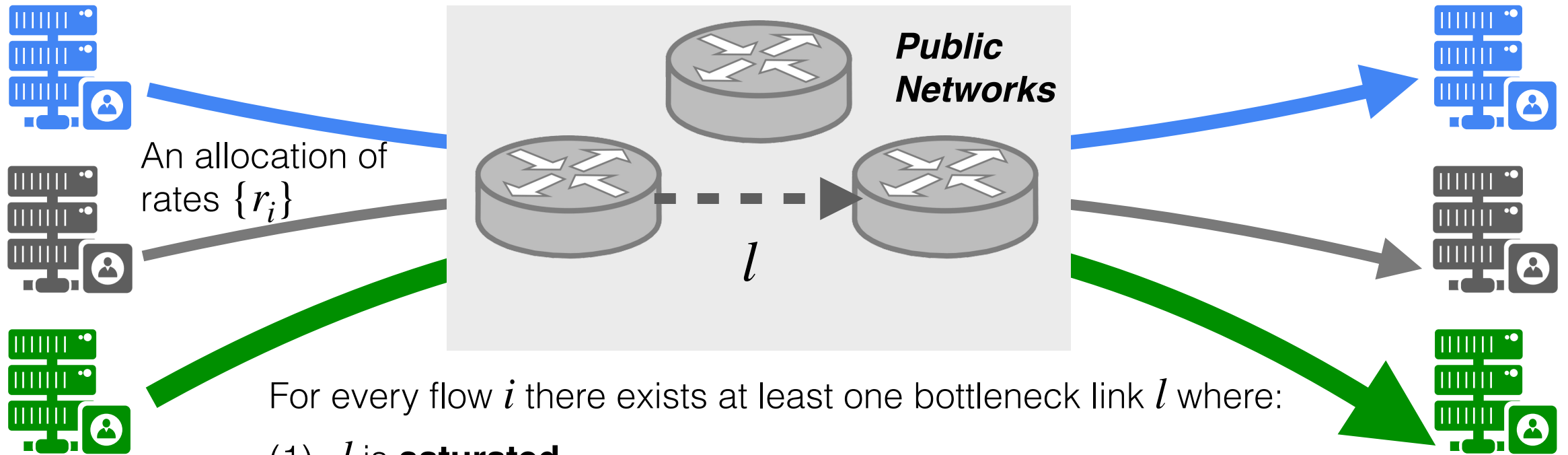
## **Cebinae router architecture for binary taxation**

- **Zero modifications and coordinations** to/with legacy host CCAs
- Requirement of only **two queues/priorities**
- Compatibility with CCAs operating on **both loss and delay** signals

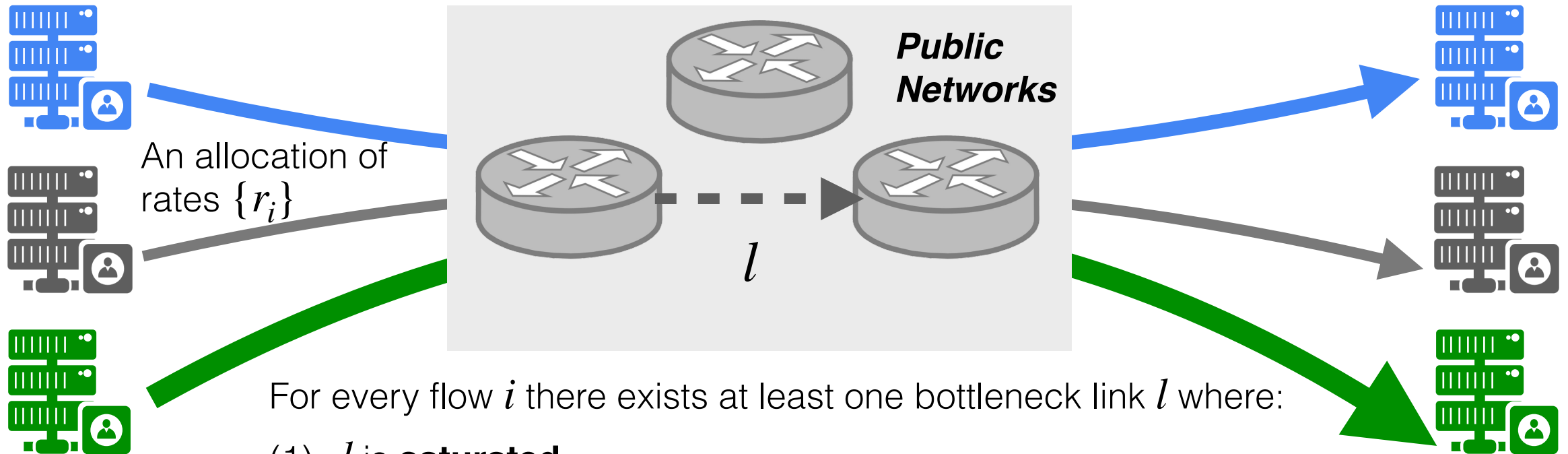
# Outline

1. Conceptual foundation for binary classification
2. Cebinae's taxation mechanism
3. Evaluation

# Max-min fairness



# Max-min fairness



**Implication: distributed *verification* of max-min fairness**



# Local verification

**Each link  $l$  can determine the set of bottlenecked flows:**

If  $l$  non-saturated:

***All flows not bottlenecked***

Else, for each flow  $i$ :

If  $i$  is among  $l$ 's largest rate(s)

***$i$  is bottlenecked at  $l$***

Else

***$i$  is not bottlenecked at  $l$***

# Local verification

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***$i$  is not bottlenecked at  $l$***

**Observation:**

1. Each conditional can be determined using ***only local information***
2. ***Binary classification:*** bottlenecked ( $\top$ ), not bottlenecked ( $\perp$ )

# Naive enforcement

**Each link  $l$  can determine the set of bottlenecked flows:**

If  $l$  non-saturated:

*NOP*

Else, for each flow  $i$ :

If  $i$  is among  $l$ 's largest rate(s)

*Drop packets of **all  $i$ s** per their current rate*

Else

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## **Drawbacks:**

1. Can not push an already-unfair allocation fair
2. CCAs may not be responsive to loss signals

# Cebinae taxation

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If  $l$  non-saturated:

*NOP*

Else, for each flow  $i$ :

If  $i$  is among  $l$ 's largest rate(s)

***Penalize**  $i$  with their taxed rate*

Else

*NOP*

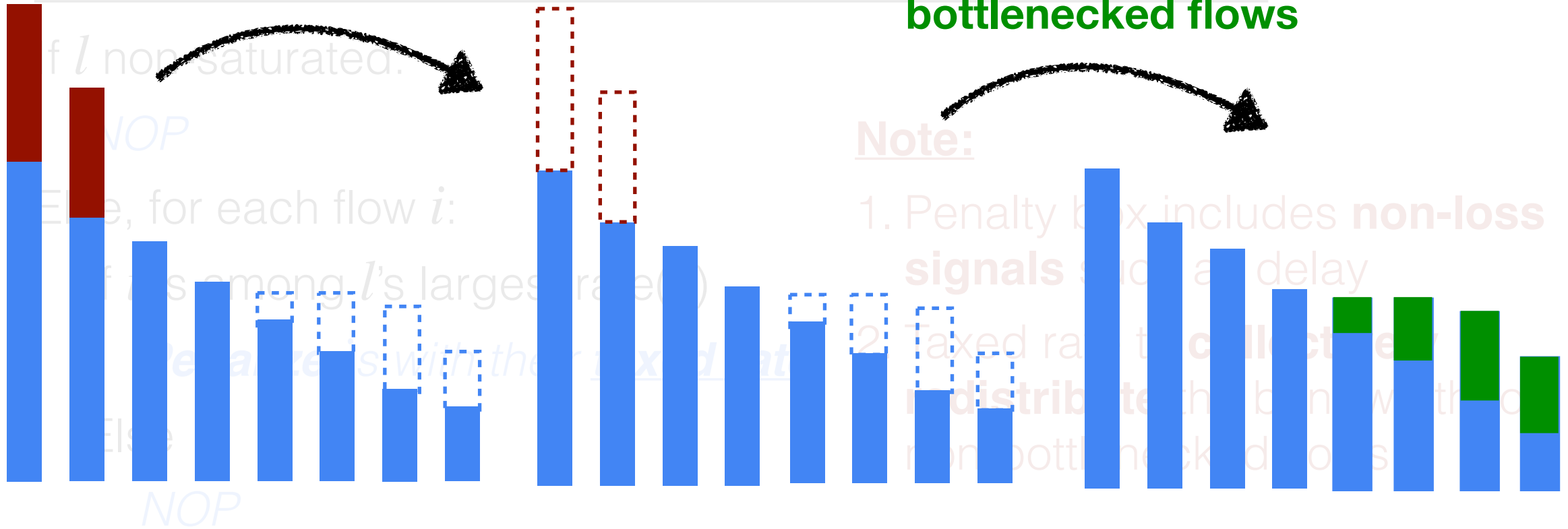
## **Note:**

1. Penalty box includes **non-loss signals** such as delay
2. Taxed rate to **collectively redistribute** the bandwidth to non-bottlenecked flows

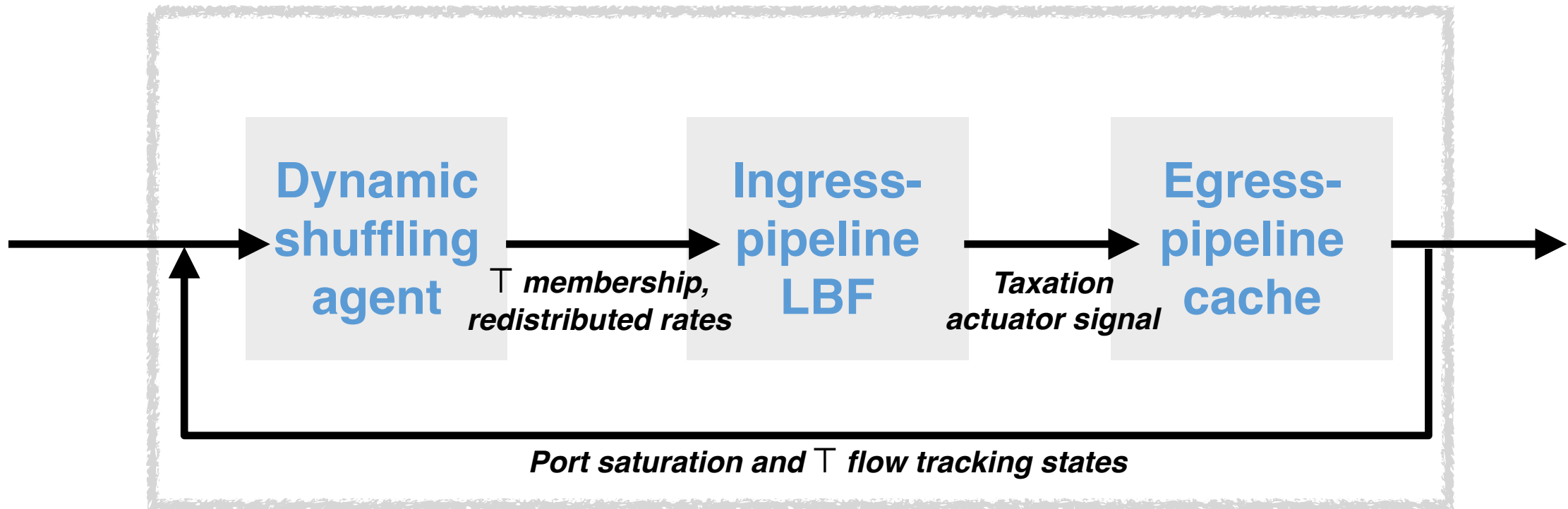
# Cebinae taxation

**Tax bottlenecked-flows exceeding  
fair bandwidth share**

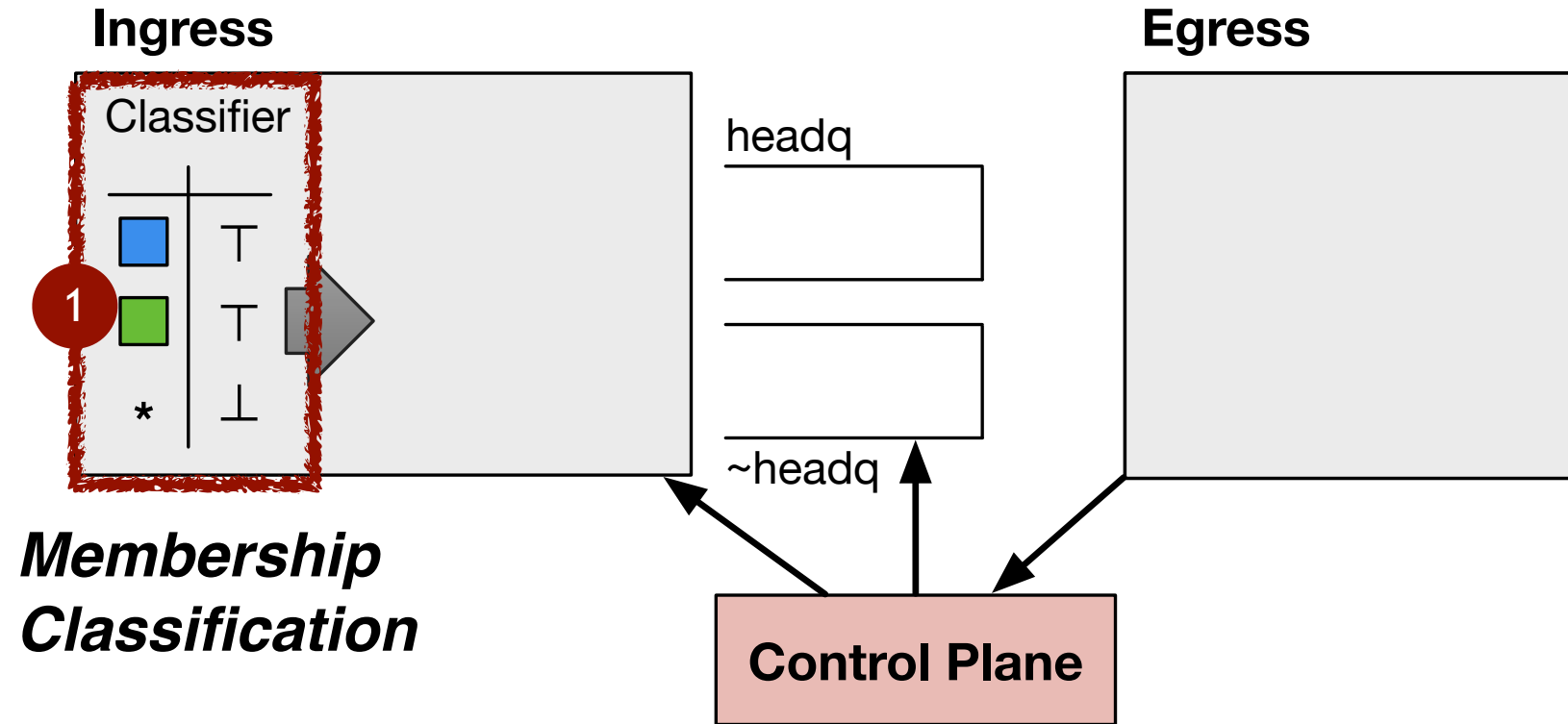
**Redistribute to non-  
bottlenecked flows**



# Instantiation: Cebinae router architecture

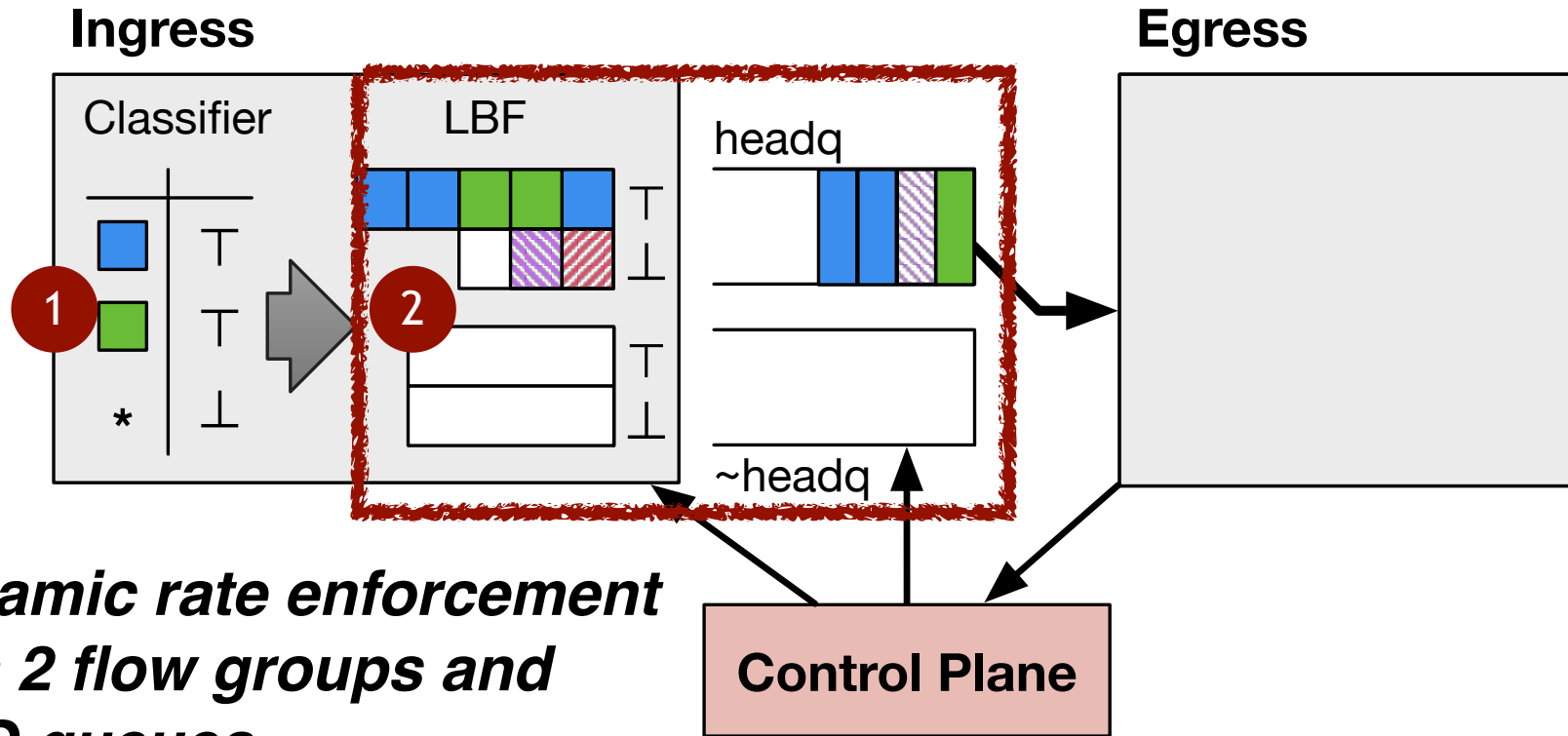


# Normal operation



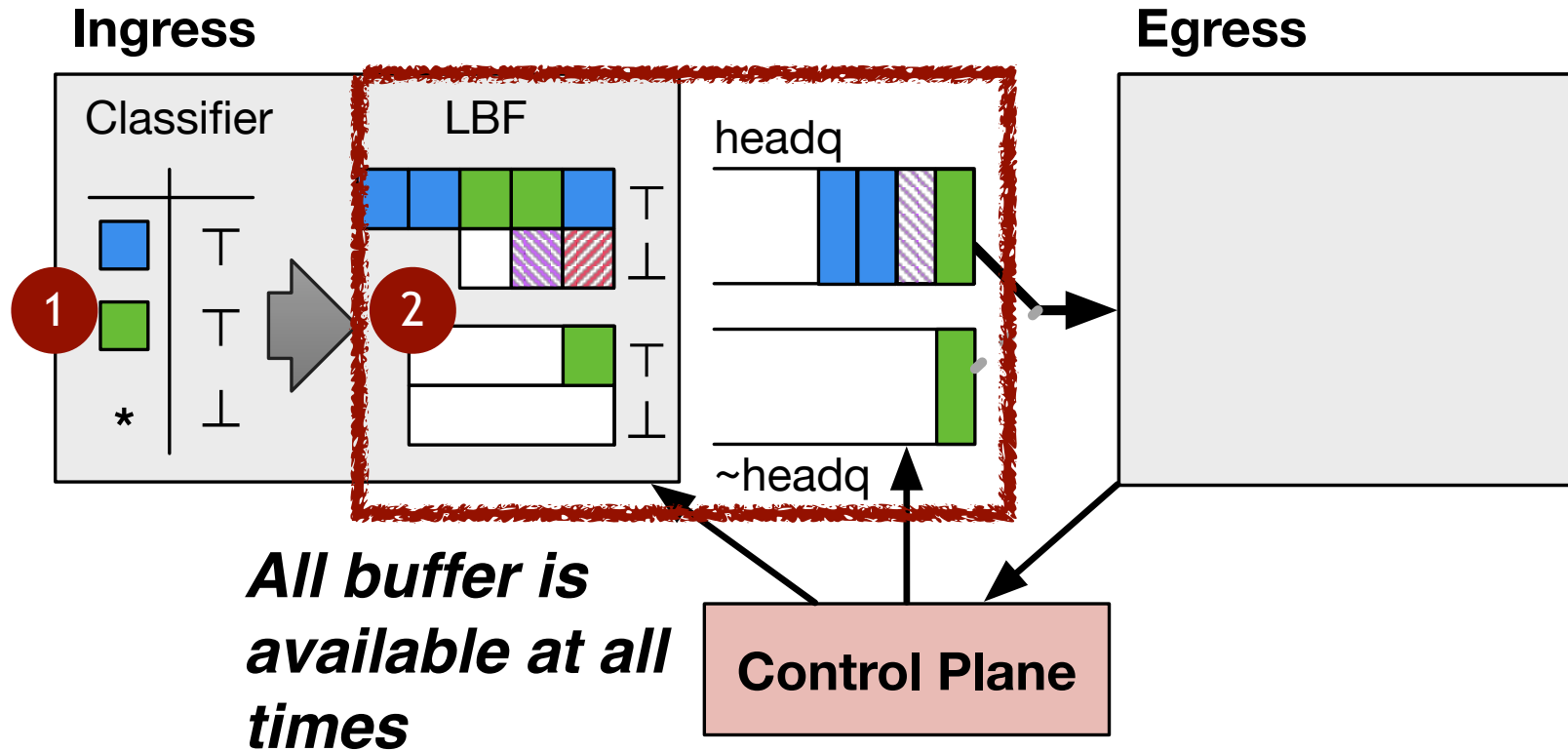


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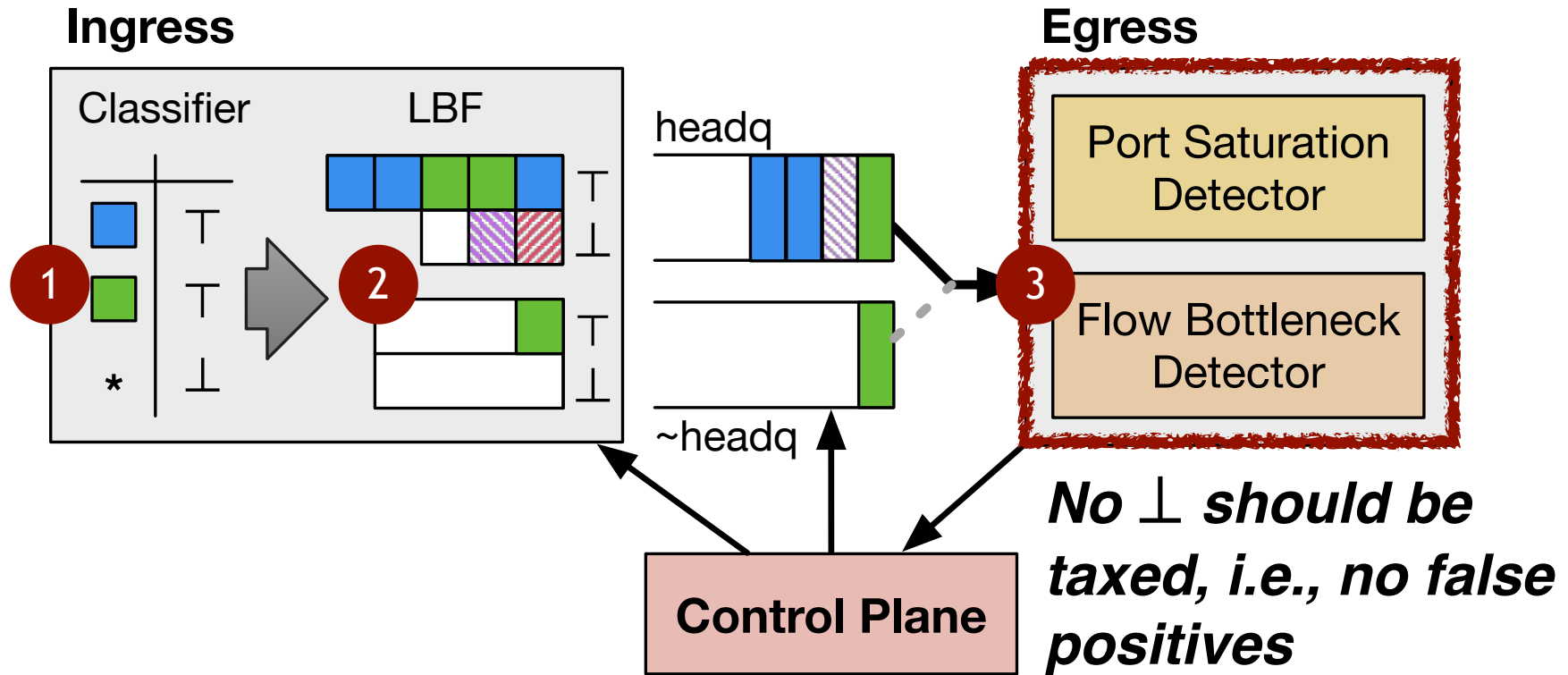


***Dynamic rate enforcement  
with 2 flow groups and  
FIFO queues***

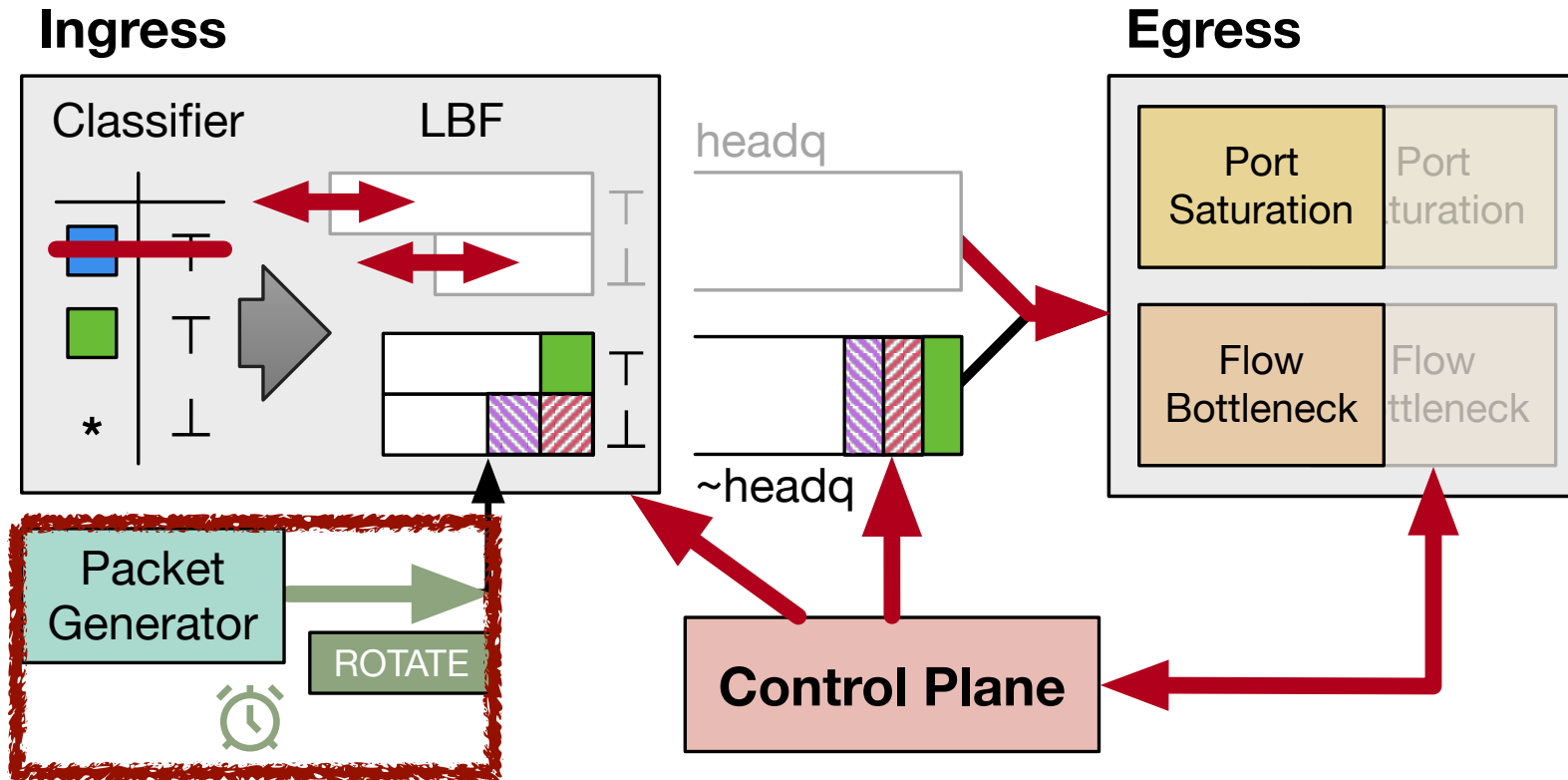
# Normal operation



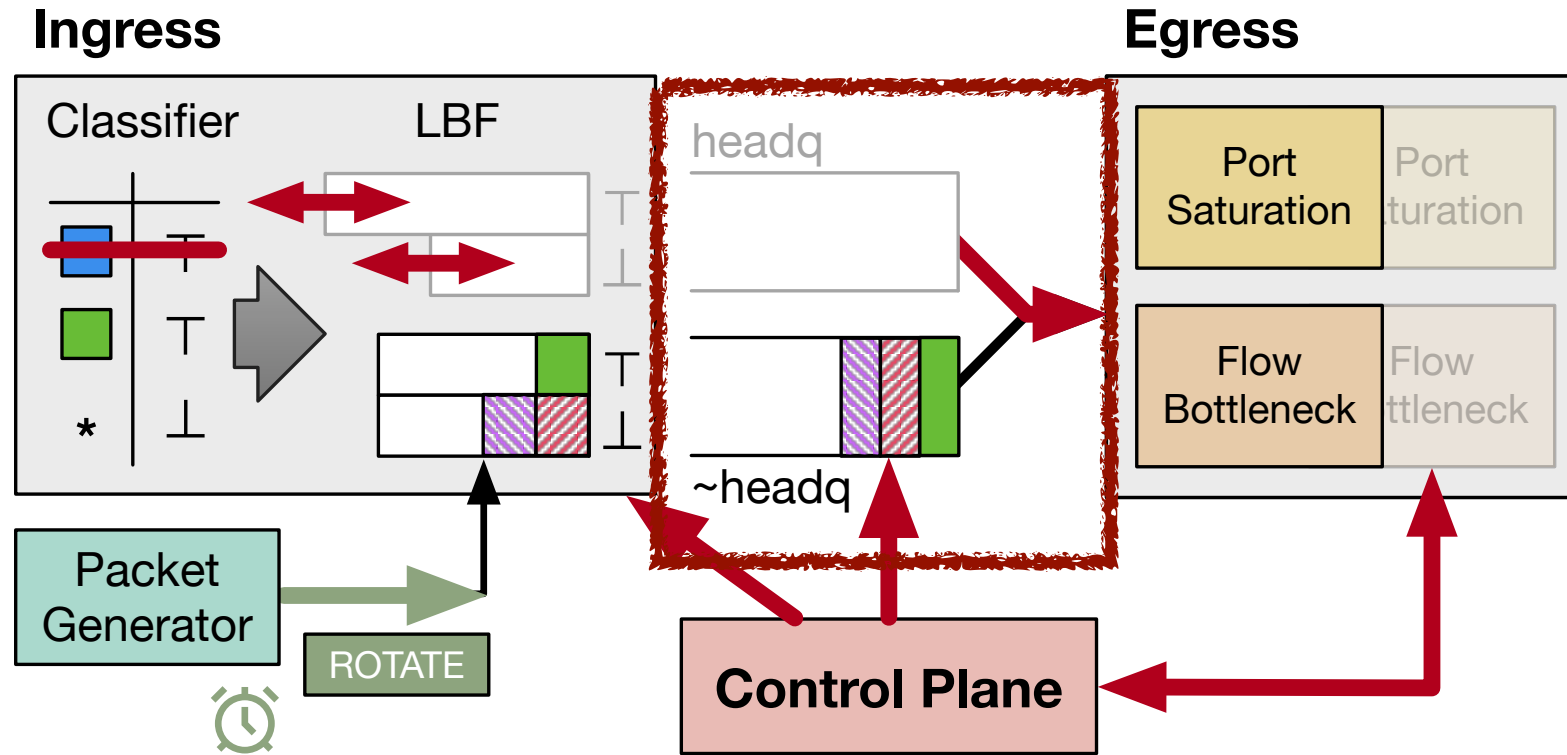
# Normal operation



# Per-round reconfiguration

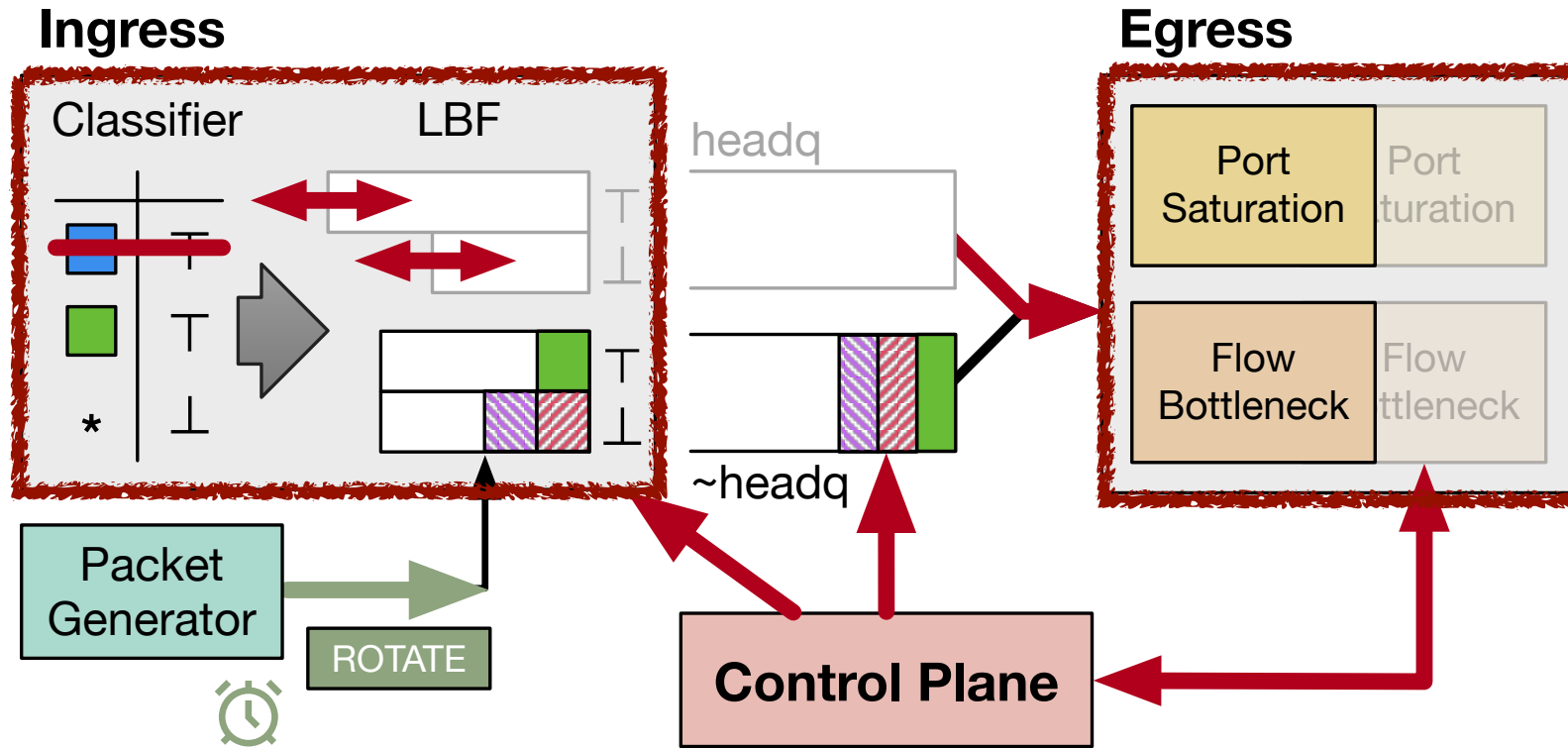


# Per-round reconfiguration



**Virtual pacing** : guarantee **no reordering** and avoid violation of draining deadline in the worst case

# Per-round reconfiguration



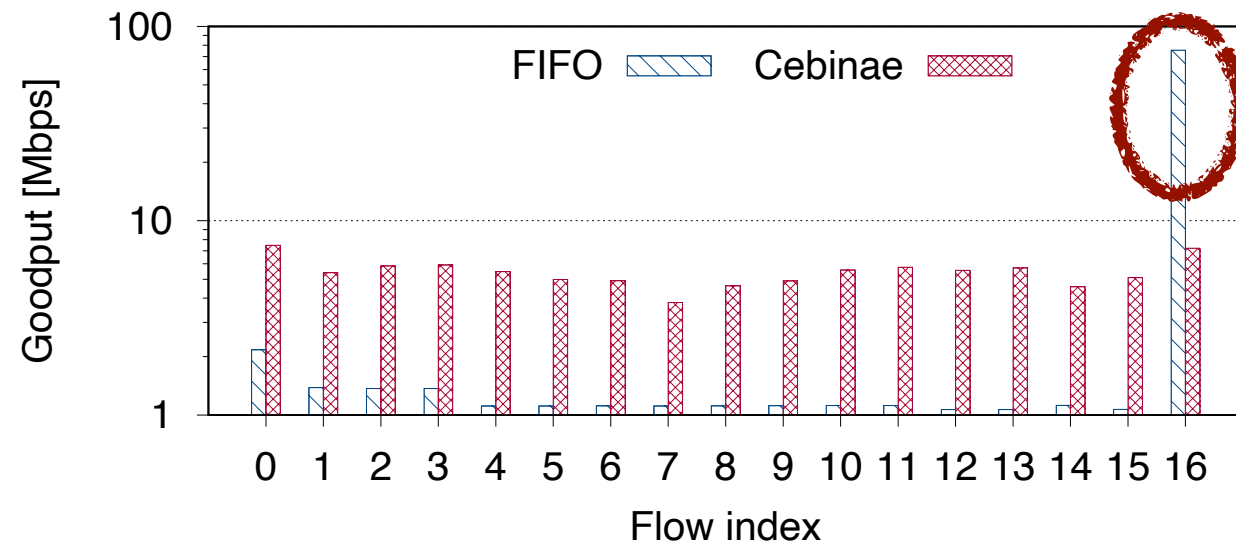
**Atomic transactions:** *LBF states and egress caches*

# Implementation and evaluation

*Hardware prototype on a Wedge100BF Tofino switch testbed and NS-3 module*

- Is Cebinae agnostic to CCAs?
- Can Cebinae mitigate unfairness (RTT, inter-CCA)?
- Can Cebinae move towards max-min fairness?
- Is Cebinae easy to configure?
- Does Cebinae resource usage scale?
- ...

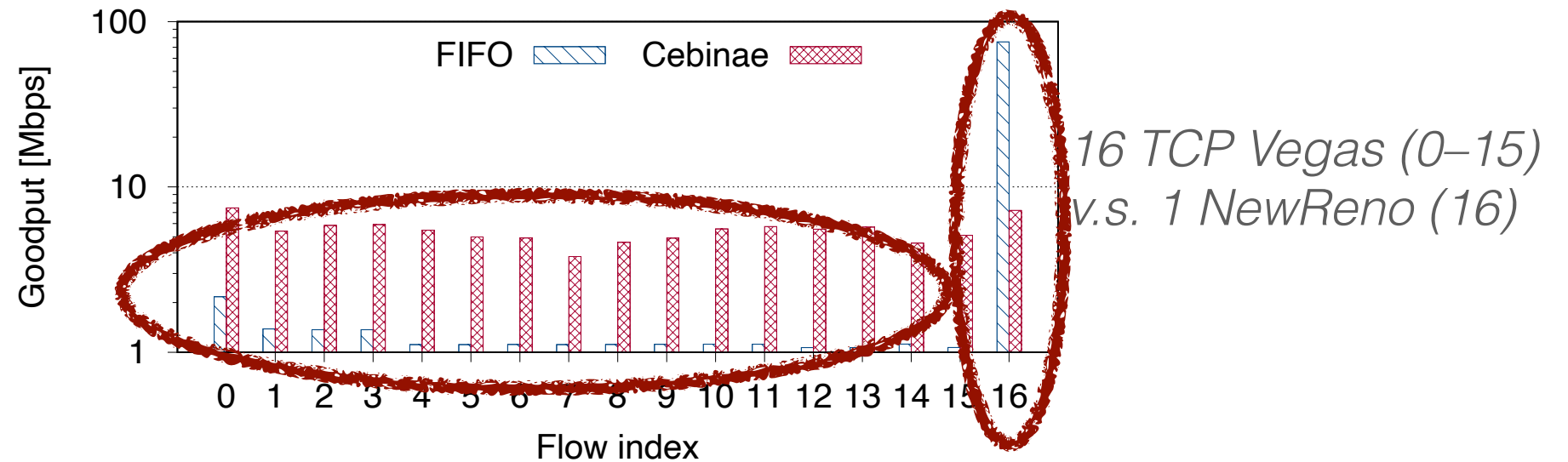
# Cebinae mitigates unfairness



*16 TCP Vegas (0–15)  
v.s. 1 NewReno (16)*

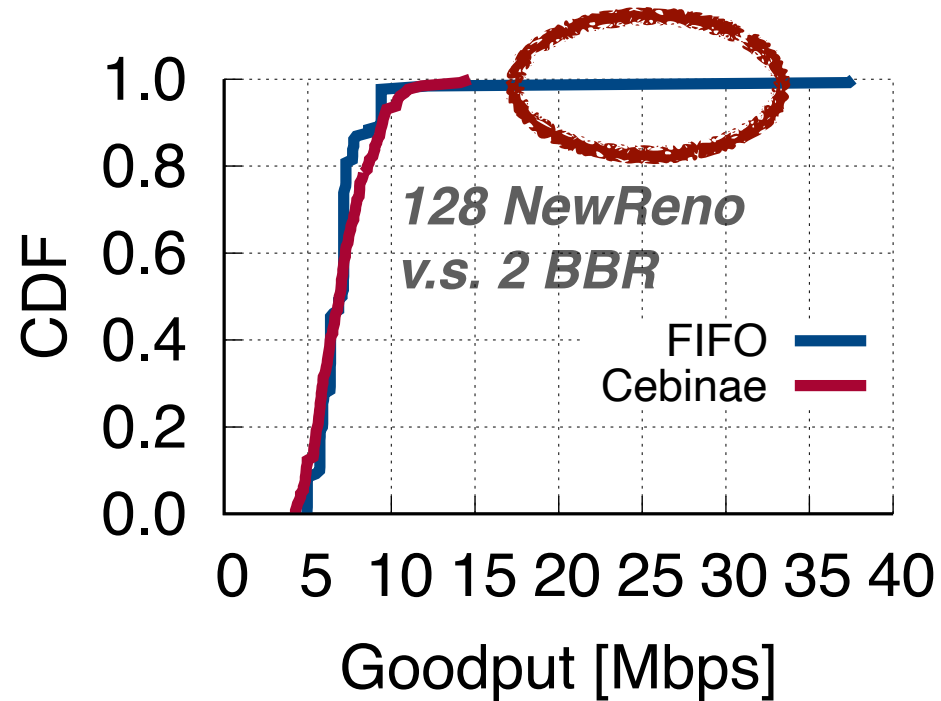


# Cebinae mitigates unfairness

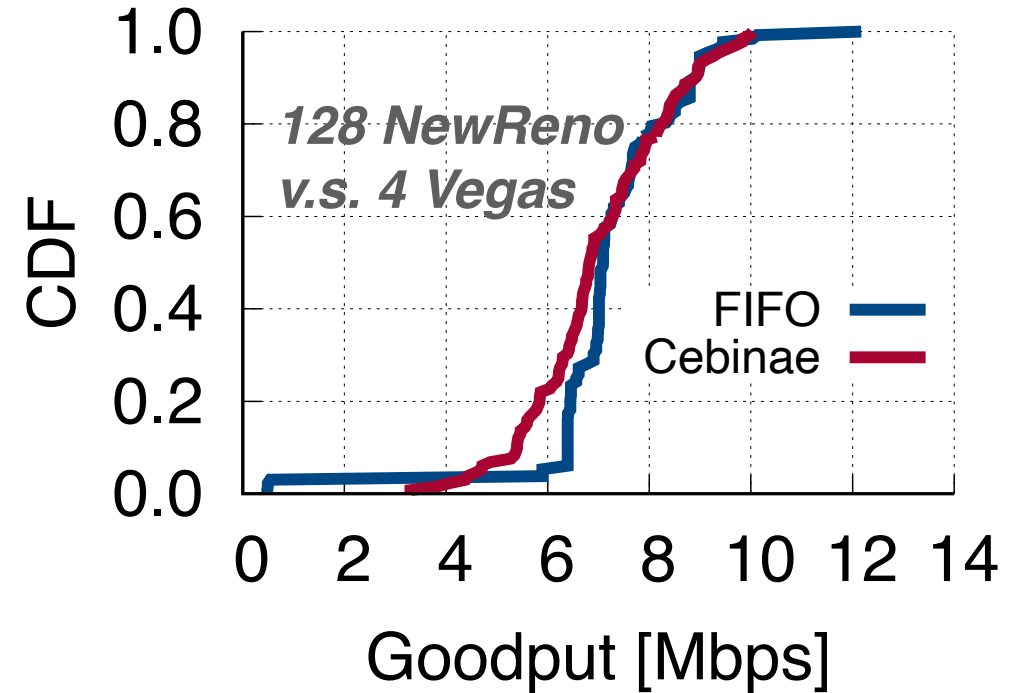


Mitigates the **skewed and persistent unfairness** with little efficiency impact: **JFI from 0.093 to 0.984**

# Cebinae mitigates unfairness

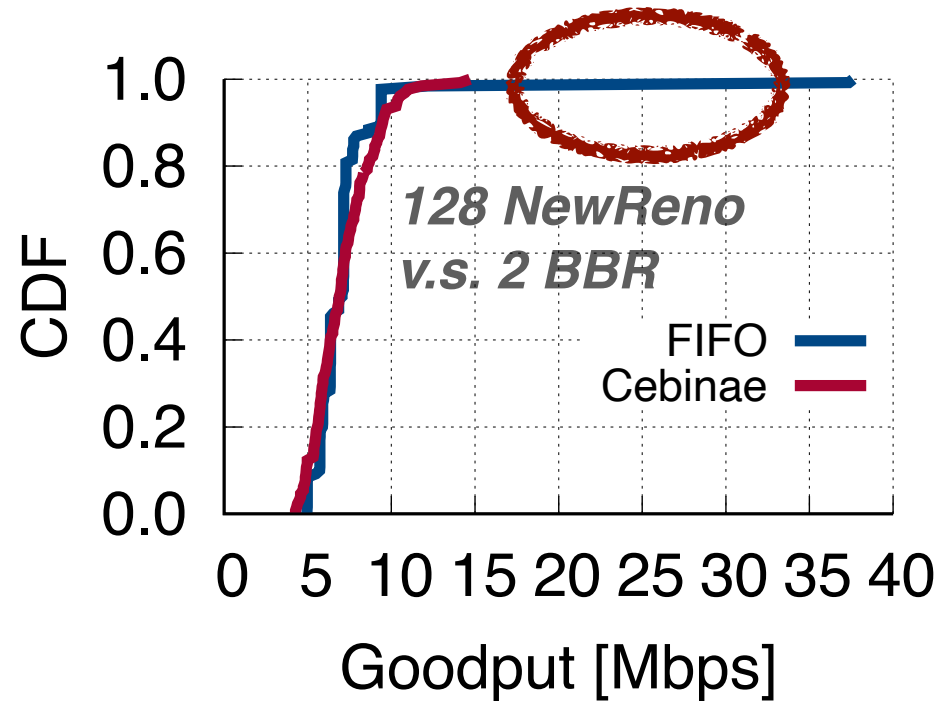


***Preventing aggressiveness***

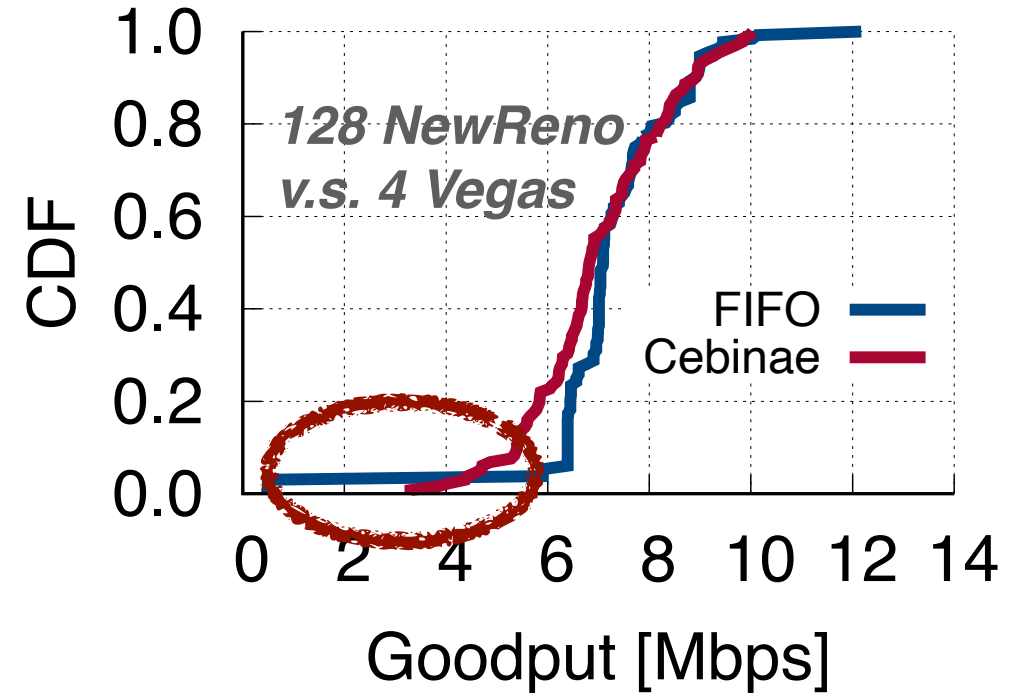


***Mitigating starvation***

# Cebinae mitigates unfairness



***Preventing aggressiveness***



***Mitigating starvation***

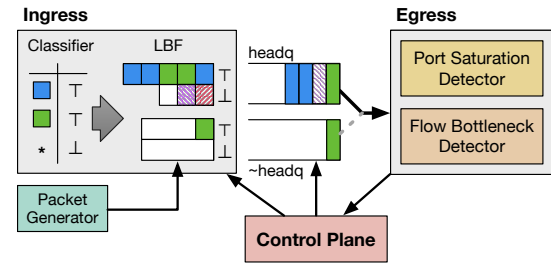
# Cebinae mitigates unfairness

Btl. BW	RTTs [ ms]	Buf. [MTU]	CCAs	Throughput [Mbps]			Goodput [Mbps]			JFI		
				FIFO	FQ	Cebinae	FIFO	FQ	Cebinae	FIFO	FQ	Cebinae
100 Mbps	{20.8, 28}	250	{NewReno:2, NewReno:8}	98.95	95.62	95.92	95.35	92.16	92.44	0.740	0.982	0.999
100 Mbps	{20.4, 40}	350	{Cubic:8, Cubic:2}	98.96	98.95	98.00	95.37	95.37	94.45	0.539	1.000	0.980
100 Mbps	{20.4, 60}	500	{Vegas:2, Vegas:8}	98.88	98.83	98.88	95.29	95.24	95.29	0.873	1.000	0.993
100 Mbps	{200}	1700	{NewReno:16, Cubic:1}	98.28	90.99	94.53	94.38	87.61	91.02	0.446	0.995	0.925
100 Mbps	{100}	850	{NewReno:16, Cubic:1}	98.72	91.45	95.58	95.11	88.10	92.08	0.857	0.998	0.960
100 Mbps	{50}	420	{NewReno:16, Cubic:1}	98.90	93.86	95.37	95.30	90.45	91.90	0.936	0.999	0.993
100 Mbps	{50}	420	{Vegas:16, Cubic:1}	98.90	98.90	95.47	95.30	95.30	91.99	0.096	1.000	0.988
100 Mbps	{100}	850	{Vegas:16, NewReno:1}	98.71	97.77	95.67	95.07	94.19	92.16	0.093	0.999	0.985
100 Mbps	{100}	850	{Vegas:128, NewReno:1}	98.88	98.74	97.45	95.26	95.10	93.88	0.189	0.966	0.976
100 Mbps	{60}	500	{Vegas:8, NewReno:8, Cubic: 2}	98.87	98.02	96.52	95.27	94.45	93.00	0.510	0.991	0.973
1 Gbps	{5}	420	{NewReno:32, Cubic:8}	989.8	989.8	985.4	954.0	954.0	949.7	0.844	0.988	0.955
1 Gbps	{10}	850	{Vegas:128, Cubic:1}	989.8	989.8	968.0	954.0	954.0	932.9	0.048	0.966	0.953
1 Gbps	{10}	850	{Vegas:1024, Cubic:2}	989.8	989.8	949.2	953.6	953.6	914.1	0.275	0.833	0.846
1 Gbps	{50}	4200	{NewReno: 128, BBR: 1}	988.7	923.6	981.6	952.7	890.0	945.8	0.992	0.975	0.990
1 Gbps	{50}	4200	{NewReno: 128, BBR: 2}	988.9	953.9	979.9	952.8	919.2	944.2	0.951	0.963	0.981
1 Gbps	{50}	21000	{NewReno: 128, BBR: 2}	988.8	953.9	963.8	952.7	919.2	928.7	0.773	0.963	0.936
1 Gbps	{100}	8350	{NewReno: 128, BBR: 2}	986.9	938.2	956.3	950.7	903.9	921.1	0.884	0.968	0.967
1 Gbps	{10}	850	{Vegas:64, NewReno:1}	989.8	989.8	976.2	953.8	954.0	940.7	0.042	0.967	0.976
1 Gbps	{100}	8500	{Vegas:4, NewReno:128}	986.9	917.6	957.3	950.8	884.1	922.2	0.946	0.970	0.971
1 Gbps	{100, 64}	8500	{Vegas:4, NewReno:128}	988.4	941.1	959.8	952.4	906.8	924.7	0.956	0.970	0.964
1 Gbps	{100}	8500	{Vegas:8, NewReno:128}	987.0	936.1	964.4	950.8	901.8	929.0	0.921	0.968	0.969
1 Gbps	{10}	850	{Vegas:128, BBR:1}	989.8	989.8	987.3	954.0	954.0	951.5	0.886	0.965	0.985
1 Gbps	{100}	8500	{Bic:2, Cubic:32}	985.1	960.3	952.6	944.9	924.9	911.3	0.799	0.999	0.946
10 Gbps	{50, 44}	41667	{NewReno:128, Cubic:16}	9876	9705	9780	9514	9352	9420	0.917	0.969	0.968
10 Gbps	{28, 28}	25000	{NewReno:128, Cubic:128}	9891	9856	9787	9532	9498	9432	0.863	0.942	0.952

# Cebinae is agnostic to CCAs

Btl. BW	RTTs [ ms]	Buf. [MTU]	CCAs	Throughput [Mbps]			Goodput [Mbps]			JFI		
				FIFO	FQ	Cebinae	FIFO	FQ	Cebinae	FIFO	FQ	Cebinae
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# Summary



- **No modifications nor coordinations** to/with legacy host CCAs
  - *Real-time switch architecture serializing in-network compute modules*
- COTS hardware and **minimal resource requirements**
  - *Two queues/priorities are sufficient*
- Compatible with CCAs using **both loss and non-loss signals**
  - *Generic support of a wide range of Internet CCAs and environments*



<https://github.com/eniac/Cebinae>

Thank you for your attention!

# More details

