1061-57-138 **Fabiola Manjarrez-Gutierrez***, Instituto de Matematicas, UNAM, Area de la Investigacion Cientifica, Circuito Exterior. CU Coyoacan, 04510 Mexico DF, Mexico. *Additivity of circular width for knots in S^3.* Preliminary report.

A circular handle decomposition of a knot exterior $E(K)$ is a structure $E(K) = (R\times I)\cap N_1\cap T_1...\cap T_l\cap N_l/(R\times 0 \sim R\times 1)$, each N_i is a collection of 1-handles, each T_i is a collection of 2-handles and R is a Seifert surface for K. We can reorder the handles in such a way that the intermediate steps are as "simple" as possible, giving rise to the definition of *circular width of the knot exterior*, denoted by $cw(E(K))$, and *circular thin position of the knot exterior*. Let $K_1\sharp K_2$ be the connected sum of two knots K_1 and K_2 in S^3, it is not hard to see that $cw(E(K_1\sharp K_2)) \leq cw(E(K_1))\sharp cw(E(K_2))$. It is natural to ask: Is it true that $cw(E(K_1\sharp K_2)) = cw(E(K_1))\sharp cw(E(K_2))$?. We will show special cases for which the answer is positive, as well as a partial result that could let us to answer the question in the more general set. (Received April 12, 2010)