Solvent Free Zinc (NSNO) Complex- Catalyzed Dihydroboration of Nitriles

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I. Experimental

General considerations

All experiments were carried out under dinitrogen, using a MBraun glovebox unless otherwise stated. Diethyl ether, toluene and THF were dried on columns of activated alumina using a J. C. Meyer (formerly Glass Contour) solvent purification system. Anhydrous C_6D_6 and THF-d₈ were dried with activated alumina (ca. 10 wt %) overnight, followed by filtration. CDCl₃ was stored over activated 4 Å molecular sieves (heated at 250 °C for 24 h under vacuum). Anhydrous methanol and ethanol were purchased from Aldrich and used as obtained. Other chemicals were used as obtained commercially: 2-chloromethylpyridine (Alfa Aesar), 2-amino benzenethiol (Alfa Aesar), diethylzinc (Aldrich), salicylaldehyde (Aldrich), sodium borohydride (Aldrich). All reagents were purchased from commercial suppliers. ¹H and ¹¹B NMR spectra were recorded on a 300 MHz Bruker Avance or Avance II instrument at room temperature (21−25 °C). ¹H NMR spectra were referenced respectively to solvent residual protons (C_6D_6 , δ 7.15; CDCl₃, δ 7.26; THF d_8 , δ 1.72 and 3.58). Mass spectra were recorded on an AB Sciex Q1MS mass spectrometer with electrospray ionization (ESIMS) in positive mode (ion spray voltage, 5000.0 V; TEM, 400 °C; declustering potential, 11.00 V; focusing potential, 300.0 V) with samples prepared to ca. 0.05 mg/mL in acetonitrile or dichloromethane. For electron impact (EI), solid samples were prepared by drying products under vacuum, and spectra obtained using a Kratos Concept S1 instrument (Hres 7000−10000). X-ray diffraction data were collected on a Bruker Smart or Kappa diffractometer equipped with an ApexII CCD detector and a sealed-tube Mo K source $(\lambda = 0.71073 \text{ Å})$.

Synthesis of H2L

Precursor 1 was obtained through the literature procedure.^[1] To an ethanolic solution of 1 (2.00 g, 9.24 mmol) was added salicylaldehyde (1.129 g, 9.24 mmol) and the mixture was refluxed for 2 h. Then, the solution was cooled down to 0-5 °C and NaBH₄ (0.70 g, 18.48 mmol) was added pinch wise and the mixture was heated to 50 °C for 2 h. Finally, the solvent was removed under vacuum and H2L was extracted with ethyl acetate and kept in the freezer. After 4-6 h, colourless crystals of H_2 L appeared and were filtered and dried (2.41 g, 81%). The same crystal was used for X-ray crystallography. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl3): δ 9.09 (b, 1H, OH), 8.50 (d, 1H, N-adjacent H in Py ring), 7.62 (t, 1H, aromatic), 7.39 (d, 1H, aromatic), 7.21 (ov mult, 4H, aromatic), 7.12 (d, 1H, aromatic), 6.90 (m, 2H, aromatic), 6.84 (d, 1H, aromatic), 6.70 (t, 1H, aromatic), 5.91 (brt, 1H, NH), 4.39 (d, 2H, N-CH2), 3.99 $(s, 2H, S-CH₂).$

Synthesis of Zn-1

3 mL of 1 M solution of diethylzinc in hexane (3.00 mmol) was added to a solution of H₂L (0.96 g, 3 mmol in 5 mL of THF) dropwise at RT. The final solution turned yellow after 5 min and **Zn-1** precipitated out after 2 h. The precipitate was filtered, washed with diethyl ether (3×3 mL), and dried under vacuum (2.08 g, 89%). Suitable crystals for crystallography were grown by ether layering of a THF solution of **Zn-1** at RT. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl3): δ 8.80 (d, 1H, N-adjacent H in Py ring), 7.72 (t, 1H, aromatic), 7.64 (d, 1H, aromatic), 7.38 (ov mult, 2H, aromatic), 7.21 (d, 1H, aromatic), 7.02 (ov mult, 2H, aromatic), 6.84 (d, 1H, aromatic), 6.66 (d, 1H, aromatic), 6.58 (t, 1H, aromatic), 6.39 (t,

1H, aromatic), 4.43, 4.32 (d, 14 Hz, 1H), 4.16, 3.94 (d, 14.5 Hz, 1H). EI-MS [M/2] 384.02, Calc'd 384.03 (Figure S5).

Synthesis of O-borylated HL (HL-Bpin)

0.1 g of **H2L** (0.31 mmol) was dissolved in 5 mL of THF in a vial and 44 µL of HBpin (0.31 mmol) was added and the solution wasstirred at room temperature for 5 h. Then the solvent was evaporated under vacuum and the residue dissolved in C₆D₆. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, C₆D₆): δ 8.30 (d, 1H, N-adjacent H in Py ring), 7.40 (d, 1H, aromatic), 7.28 (d, 1H, aromatic), 7.23 (d, 1H, aromatic), 6.97 (ov mult, 2H, aromatic), 6.83 (ov mult, 2H, aromatic), 6.51 (ov mult, 2H, aromatic), 5.90 (t, 1H, NH), 4.30 (d, 2H, N-CH₂), 3.91 (s, 1H, S-CH₂), 1.00 (s, 12H, Bpin CH3) (Figure S20). ¹¹B NMR 21.8 ppm (Figure S19). ESI-MS [NaM]⁺ 471.18, Calc'd 471.18.

Catalysis protocols

A catalyst stock solution was prepared by dissolving 15 mg (0.020 mmol) of **Zn-1** in 4 mL of THF. Ten small vials were charged with 20 µL of the catalyst stock solution (0.7 mg, 0.001 mmol, 1 mol%). Then, THF was evaporated under vacuum and nitrile substrates (0.1 mmol: isobutyronitrile 6.9 mg or 8.9 µL, acetonitrile 4.1 mg or 5.2 µL, 2-chlorobenzonitrile 13.7 mg, 2-bromobenzonitrile 18.2 mg, 3-chlorobenzonitrile 13.7 mg, 3-bromobenzonitrile 18.2 mg, 4-fluorobenzonitrile 12.1 mg, 4-bromobenzonitrile 18.2 mg, 2 thiophenecarbonitrile 10.9 mg or 9.3 μ L, 4-methoxybenzonitrile 13.3 mg) were added to the vials, and subsequently after putting a tiny magnetic stir bar in the vials, HBpin (29 μ L, 0.2 mmol) was added to the vials. The vials were capped and the stir bars started stirring very gently. After 6-12 h, the reaction mixtures were dissolved in C₆D₆ and transferred to NMR tubes and a ¹H NMR spectrum was taken at room temperature. Concentration of the di-hydroborated products were calculated based on integrals of the characteristic product signal in the reaction mixture and the known [HBpin] as well.

II. Spectroscopic Data

ure S1. ¹H NMR spectrum of H₂L. * indicates protic impurity in CDCl₃.

Figure S2. ¹³C NMR spectrum of H_2L . * indicates protic impurity in CDCl₃.

Figure S3. ¹H NMR spectrum of Zn-1. * indicates protic impurity in CDCl₃ (top). ESI-MS spectrum of Zn-1 (bottom).

Figure S4.¹³C NMR spectrum of Zn-1. * indicates protic impurity in THF-d₈.

Figure S5. ESI-MS spectrum of the evaporated filtrate of the stoichiometric reaction mixture of **Zn-1** and HBpin after 12 h.

Figure S6. ¹H NMR spectrum of [isobutyronitrile](javascript:) hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in $C_6D_6.$

ure S7.¹H NMR spectrum of acetonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in C₆D₆.

Figure S8. ¹H NMR spectrum of 2-chloro-benzonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in C_6D_6 .

Figure S9. ¹H NMR spectrum of 2-bromo-benzonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in C_6D_6 .

Figure S10. ¹H NMR spectrum of 3-chloro-benzonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in C_6D_6 .

Figure S11. ¹H NMR spectrum of 3-bromo-benzonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in C_6D_6 .

Figure S12. ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra of 4-fluoro-benzonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in CDCl₃.

Figure S13. ¹H NMR spectrum of 4-bromo-benzonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in C_6D_6 .

Figure S14. ¹H NMR spectrum of 2-cyano-thiophene hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in $C_6D_6.$

Figure S15. ¹H NMR spectrum of 4-methoxy-benzonitrile hydroboration product. * indicates protic impurity in C_6D_6 .

III. Mechanistic Studies

A small vial was charged with 4-fluorobenzonitrile (12 mg, 0.1 mmol), **Zn-1** (38.5 mg, 0.05 mmol) and 1 mL of C_6D_6 . The vial was capped and the mixture was stirred for 2 h at room temperature and then transferred to an NMR tube and ¹⁹F and ¹H NMR spectra were recorded (Figure S16).

A small vial was charged with **Zn-1** (38.5 mg, 0.05 mmol), HBpin (15 μ L, 0.1 mmol) and 1 mL of C₆D₆. The vial was capped and the mixture was stirred for almost 2 h and then transferred to an NMR tube and ¹H and ¹¹B NMR spectra were recorded. Then 2.6 µL of acetonitrile (0.05 mmol) was added to the same NMR tube. The NMR tube was well shaken, left in the glovebox for 8 h, at room temperature. ¹H and ¹¹B NMR spectra were then recorded (Figure S17).

Through the same procedure, **Zn-1** (38.5 mg, 0.05 mmol) and 2 equiv of HBpin (15 µL, 0.1 mmol) were treated together and after 12 h, 1 H and 11 B NMR spectra were recorded for comparison (Figures S17 and S18).

In an attempt to recover a zinc complex after the catalytic reaction, 15 mg (0.020 mmol) of **Zn-1**, acetonitrile (20.8 µL, 0.4 mmol) and HBpin (116 µL, 0.8 mmol) were added to a vial with a magnetic stir bar and the vial was capped. After 12 h, any remaining acetonitrile was evaporated under vacuum and 5 mL of hexane was added. After all the product was dissolved in hexane, the mixture was filtered and the residue was collected as a pale green-white powder and dried under vacuum. The filtrate was then subsjected to ESI-MS analysis (Fig. S5). The residue showed no solubility in available solvents and a reaction run using the residue (5 mg), acetonitrile (5.2 μ L, 0.1 mmol) and HBpin (29 μ L, 0.2 mmol) showed no hydroboration product after 24 h. Also, addition of HCl to this residue resulted in gas bubble formation as the residue dissolved. Finally, the filtrate from above was evaporated and the resulting residue also showed no nitrile hydroboration activity.

Figure S16. Stacked plot of ¹H NMR (top) and ¹⁹F NMR (bottom) spectra of **Zn-1** in C₆D₆ (black) and reaction of Zn-1 dimer with two equiv of 4-fluorobenzonitrile (blue). * Indicates C₆D₆ and ^ indicates 4fluorobenzonitrile.

Figure S17. Stacked plot of ¹H{¹¹B} NMR spectra (in C_6D_6) of **Zn-1** (A), reaction of **Zn-1** dimer with two equiv of HBpin (**B**), B after 12 h (**C**), and subsequent addition of one equiv of acetonitrile to B (**D**).* indicates diborylamine product of acetonitrile hydroboration.

Figure S18. ¹¹B{¹H} NMR spectra (in C₆D₆) of O-borylated HL (A), stoichiometric reaction of **Zn-1** dimer with 2 equiv of HBpin (**B**), **B** after 12 h (**C**), **C**'s filtrate after solvent evaporation (**D**), and subsequent reaction of **B** with acetonitrile (**E**). * indicates HBpin and ● indicates product of acetonitrile dihydroboration.

Figure S19. ¹H NMR spectrum of O-borylated HL (HL-Bpin). $*$ indicates protic impurity in C_6D_6 .

Figure S20. ESI-MS spectrum of O-borylated HL (HL-Bpin) [NaM]⁺.

IV. Kinetic Studies

All kinetic reactions were set up in a nitrogen-filled glovebox and performed the same way with appropriate amounts of **Zn-1**, 2-fluorobenzonitrile, HBpin, and N-(4-fluorobenzyl)-4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-N- (4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-amine (abbreviated as 4-F- C_6H_4)CH₂N(Bpin)₂) – See **Table S1**.

General Procedure for Reaction A.

Note: All employed concentrations of **Zn-1** in the kinetic study are calculated for a monomer form of the zinc complex (Mm: 385.79 g/mol) not the dimeric form. This consideration is only for the kinetic study (Other **Zn-1** concentrations in other sections are stated for the dimeric form having Mm: 771.58 g/mol). **Product isolation**: A vial was charged with 7 mg of **Zn-1** (0.01 mmol, 1 mol%). Then, 4-fluorobenzonitrile (121 mg, 1 mmol) and HBpin (290 μ L, 2 mmol) were added to the vial. After 10 h, the product (g) was extracted into 10 mL of pentane and filtered. Then, the solution was concentrated to 2 mL and kept at -30 °C overnight, so crystals of (4-F-C₆H₄)CH₂N(Bpin)₂ (g) were formed (several crystals were separated for crystallography) and then filtered and dried under vacuum. Product *g* was then used in the kinetic study for reaction F (Table S1).

A catalyst stock solution was prepared by dissolving 15 mg (0.040 mM as a monomer) of **Zn-1** in 4 mL of THF. 10 small vials were charged with 20 µL of the catalyst stock solution (0.7 mg, 0.002 mM, 2 mol%). Then, THF was evaporated under vacuum and 4-fluorobenzonitrile (17 mg, 0.1 mM) was added to the vials and subsequently after putting a tiny magnetic stir bar in the vials, HBpin (29 µL, 0.2 mM) was added, the vials were capped and the stir bars started stirring very gently. Every 45 min (Reactions A, C, D, E and F) or 40 min (Reaction B) the reaction mixture of one of the vials was immediately dissolved in C_6D_6 and transferred to an NMR tube and ¹H and ¹¹B NMR spectra were taken at room temperature. The concentration of $(4-F-C₆H₄)CH₂N(Bpin)₂$ product was calculated based on integrals of the known [HBpin] and the characteristic signal of $(4-F-C_6H_4)CH_2N(Bpin)_2$. All the other 5 reactions (B-F) were carried out through the same procedure, but reaction F in which $(4-F-C₆H₄)CH₂N(Bpin)₂ (12 mg, 0.032 mM)$ was added to the vials before adding HBpin. The outlier results (compared to the uniform progression of the catalytic yield vs. time) were repeated several times and for the cases in which the results of all the repetitions were close, the average was considered, otherwise the best matching one was selected.

Table S1. Concentrations of Reagents for Reactions A-F for VTNA* .

*All the amounts are in mM.

Figure S21. VTNA of rate order of [4-Fluorobenzonitrile].

Figure S22. VTNA of rate order of [HBpin].

Figure S23. VTNA of rate order of [Zn-1].

Figure S24. VTNA of $(4-F-C_6H_4)CH_2N(Bpin)_2$ vs. Σ [4-Fluorobenzonitrile][HBpin][Zn-1] Δt to give k_{obs} .

Figure S25. VTNA of [4-Fluorobenzonitrile] vs. Time to find out if the catalytic system suffers either product inhibition or catalyst deactivation. Top: before time adjustment. Bottom: after time adjustment

Figure S26. VTNA of [4-Fluorobenzonitrile] vs. Time to find out if the catalytic system suffers product inhibition. Top: before time adjustment. Bottom: after time adjustment

V. Crystallographic Details

Crystallographic data for all compounds were collected from a single crystal mounted on a MiTeGen dual thickness MicroMount using Parabar oil. Data were collected on a Bruker ApexII single crystal diffractometer equipped with a graphite monochromator. The instrument was equipped with a sealed tube Mo K^{α} source (λ = 0.71073 Å), an ApexII CCD detector and a dry compressed air-cooling system operating at 203 K. Raw data collection and processing were performed with the Apex3 software package from Bruker.^[2] Initial unit cell parameters were determined from 36 data frames from select ω scans. Semi-empirical absorption corrections based on equivalent reflections were applied.^[3] Systematic absences in the diffraction data-set and unit-cell parameters were consistent with the assigned space group. The initial structural solutions were determined using ShelxT direct methods,^[4] and refined with full-matrix least-squares procedures based on F^2 using ShelXL or ShelXle. ^[5] Hydrogen atoms were placed geometrically and refined using a riding model. Additional crystallographic information is given in Table S2.

Table S2: X-ray crystallographic data collection and refinement details.

Table S3. Bond lengths for product *g* .

Table S4. Bond lengths for **H 2 L** .

Table S5. Bond lengths for **Zn-1.**

VI. References

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