Communication

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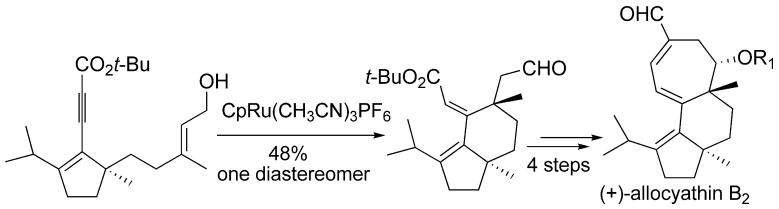

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Total Synthesis of (+)-Allocyathin B_2

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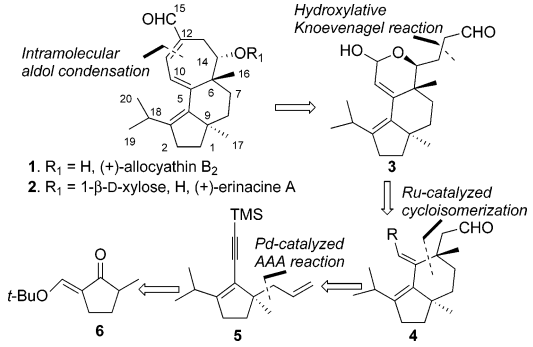
In 1979, Ayer and co-workers reported the structure of (+)-allocyathin B_2 (**1**, Scheme 1), a metabolite isolated from the fruit bodies of *Cyathus earlei* Lloyd, which possesses an unusual angularly fused 5−6−7 tricyclic framework with a highly unsaturated trienal motif and 1,4-anti quaternary methyl groups.[1a] This compound belongs to a family of diterpenes named cyathins, which were isolated from related species in the 1970s by the Ayer group.[1] These terpenoids exhibit interesting biological activities against actinomycetes, Gram-postitive and Gram-negative bacteria, as well as some fungi.[1b] In 1994, a D-xylose conjugate of allocyathin B_2, erinacine A (**2**, Scheme 1), which is a potent stimulator of nerve growth factor synthesis, was also isolated from the mycelia of *Hericum erinaceum* by Kawagishi.[2] The unique synthetic challenges and therapeutic relevance provided by these molecules attracted intense efforts from a number of research teams since the disclosure of their structures,[3] although only the groups of Snider and Tori have completed the racemic synthesis of allocyathin B_2, in 1996 and 1998.[4]

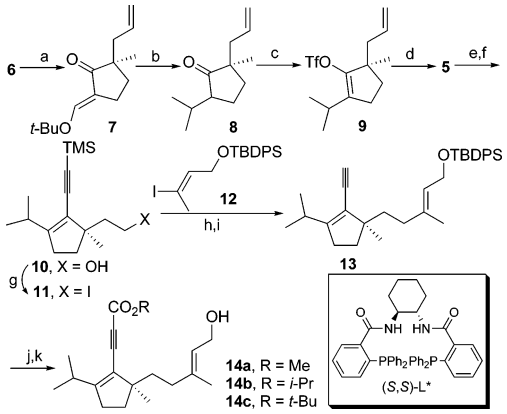
Our recent development of the palladium-catalyzed asymmetric allylic alkylation (AAA) of prochiral ketone enolates[5] and its successful application in the synthesis of hamigeran B allowed us access to ketone **8** in good yield and excellent enantiopurity from compound **6** (Scheme 2).[6] Subsequent conversion to triflate **9** was implemented by treatment of ketone **8** with LDA and $PhNTf_2$.[7] A Sonogashira reaction between triflate **9** and TMS−acetylene generated enyne **5** smoothly.[8] The allyl side chain was oxidatively cleaved (OsO_4, NMO; $NaIO_4$), reduced ($NaBH_4$), and iodinated (PPh_3, I_2, imidazole) to produce compound **11** in good overall yield. A Pd-catalyzed Negishi sp^3-sp^2 coupling reaction of alkyl iodide **11** after conversion to its zinc derivative and vinyl iodide **12**[9] followed by monodesilylation (K_2CO_3, MeOH) furnished terminal alkyne **13**.[10] Esters **14a**−**c** were prepared in two steps from compound **13** in a straightforward fashion involving acylation and deprotection (Scheme 2). This set the stage for the pivotal diastereoselective Ru-catalyzed cycloisomerization.[11]

Under our optimized conditions, the reaction of compound **14a** generated a separable 1.2:1 mixture of two geometrical isomers **15a** and **16a** in satisfactory yield along with a hydroxyl group transposition byproduct, alcohol **17a** (Scheme 3). Gratifyingly, this reaction proceeded with excellent stereocontrol, and only the desired 1,4-anti products were detected.[12] It is also worth noting that this is the first reported double bond isomerization in enyne cycloisomerization reactions to form six-membered rings.[13] The products are stable to the reaction conditions. Two scenarios were envisaged to rationalize the above observation. Presumably, initial oxidative cycloruthenation and β-hydride elimination produce the vinylruthenium hydride **18**, which is in equilibrium, via the hydridoruthenium allenolate, with **19** (Scheme 3).[11] The argument that the reaction outcome reflects the stability of intermediates **18** and **19** would be unlikely considering the relative size of the vinyl ester and the CpRu. In comparison, we favor the alternative of a typical Curtin-Hammett situation. If reductive elimination is slower than

Scheme 1. Retrosynthetic Analysis

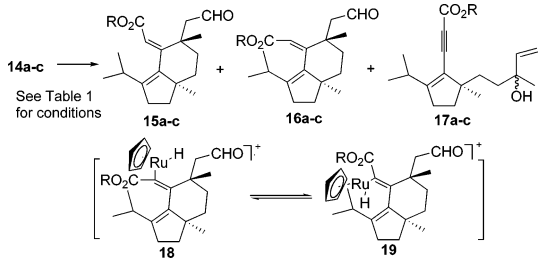


Scheme 2. Syntheses of Substrates **14a**−**c**[a]



[a] (a) LDA, $[(\eta^3\text{-}C_3H_7)PdCl]_2$ (0.5 mol %), (*S*,*S*)-L* (1 mol %), allyl acetate, Me_3SnCl, *t*-BuOH, 83%, 95% ee; (b) Me_2CuLi, −20 °C to room temperature, 86%; (c) LDA, $PhNTf_2$, 96%; (d) $Pd_2(dba)_3CHCl_3$ (2.5 mol %), PPh_3 (20 mol %), CuI (5 mol %), TMS−acetylene, $BuNH_2$, 50 °C, 85%; (e) OsO_4 (1 mol %), NMO; $NaIO_4$, 87%; (f) $NaBH_4$, 94%; (g) PPh_3, I_2, ImH, 97%; (h) *t*-BuLi, $ZnCl_2$, −78 °C to room temperature, then $Pd(PPh_3)_4$ (5 mol %), **12**; (i) K_2CO_3, MeOH, 74% from **11**; (j) *n*-BuLi, $ClCO_2Me$ (**14a**), $ClCO_2i$-Pr (**14b**), $(Boc)_2O$ (**14c**), −78 °C to room temperature, 99%; (k) TBAF, 52−55%.

Scheme 3. Ru-Catalyzed Cycloisomerization



olefin isomerization, it is imaginable that intermediate **19** undergoes faster reductive elimination than **18** to maximize relief of strain energy in the transition state. That means it does not matter which isomer is favored in the equilibrium; the reactive intermediate **19** leads to the major product **15**. This also explains our observation

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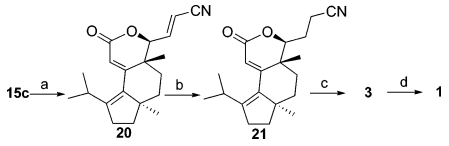
Table 1. Ru-Catalyzed Cycloisomerization[a]

entry	substrate	yield (**15** + **16**) %	**15**/**16** ratio
1	**14a**	62 (and 30% **17a**)	1.2:1[c]
2	**14b**	60[b]	1.5:1[c]
3	**14c**	55[b]	6.7:1[c]

[a] All reactions were performed with 20 mol % $CpRu(CH_3CN)_3PF_6$ and 100 mol % DMF in 2-butanone (0.1 M) at room temperature for 2 h. [b] Yields of **17b** and **17c** were not determined. [c] Ratio was determined after isolation. Both geometrical isomers were obtained as single diastereomers.

Scheme 4. Synthesis of (+)-Allocyathin B_2[a]



[a] (a) $PhS(O)CH_2CN$, piperidine, 75%; (b) 10% Pd/C, H_2, 83%; (c) DIBAL−H; (d) KOH, MeOH, 60 °C, 51% from **21**.

that *tert*-butyl ester **14c** gave the highest selectivity as the most relief was achieved in this case.

Since *Z*-isomer **16** is not suitable for the subsequent cyclization to form the seven-membered ring, we faced the challenge to further increase the ratio of compound **15**. If the rationale shown in Scheme 3 holds true, we reasoned that by increasing the size of the ester we might be able to attenuate the strain and thus promote the double bond isomerization. Indeed, we observed a drastic improvement in the ratio of compound **15** by changing methyl ester to *tert*-butyl ester without compromising the conversion and the diastereoselectivity (Table 1). Eventually compound **15c** was obtained in 48% yield as a single diastereomer.

With a viable route to compound **15c** in hand, a hydroxylative Knoevenagel reaction ($PhS(O)CH_2CN$, piperidine) was carried out to extend the carbon chain and introduce the α-hydroxyl group.[14] Instead of the corresponding alcohol, lactone **20** was obtained in good yield and with excellent diastereoselectivity (dr > 20:1, Scheme 4).[15] By taking advantage of the unique conformation of compound **20**, the C12−C13 double bond was selectively hydrogenated (10% Pd/C, H_2) to generate compound **21** in satisfactory yield.

At this point, we turned our attention to the construction of the final seven-membered ring through an intramolecular aldol condensation. Toward this end, compound **21** was partially reduced to aldehyde **3** and subjected to a variety of aldol conditions. Eventually, we found that aldehyde **3** participates in a base-mediated cyclization to afford (+)-allocyathin B_2 (**1**) in satisfactory yield (Scheme 4).[4a,16] The spectroscopic properties of synthetic (+)-allocyanthin B_2 were in full agreement with those reported in the literature.[4]

In conclusion, the first enantioselective synthesis of (+)-allocyathin B_2 was accomplished in 16 steps from 2-methylcyclopentanone highlighting a Pd-catalyzed enolate AAA reaction, a diastereoselective Ru-catalyzed cycloisomerization, and a unique hydroxylative Knoevenagel reaction. The unusual olefin isomerization in the Ru-catalyzed cycloisomerization was investigated and exploited for the synthesis. Since glycosidation of **1** produces erinacine A (**2**),[4c] this asymmetric route also constitutes a formal synthesis of this natural product as well. A full account of our efforts will be published in due course.

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Supporting Information Available: Full experimental procedures and characterization data (PDF). This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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