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### REDUCTION OF 3- AND/OR 5-UNSUBSTITUTED 2-ETHYLPYRAZOLIUM SALTS WITH COMPLEX METAL HYDRIDES. SYNTHESIS OF PYRAZOLIDINES

Luis A. Bañuelos<sup>a</sup>; Purificación Cuadrado<sup>a</sup>; Ana M. González<sup>a</sup>; Francisco J. Pulido<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Departamento de Química Orgánica, Universidad de Valladolid, Valladolid, Spain

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the refluxing period. The hot slurry was filtered to afford 184 g of white solid containing 97% ether and 3% **3** by liquid chromatography. The solid was further purified by slurring in 800 mL of acetone and 200 ml of water and refluxing for one-half hour. Hot filtration of the slurry produced **11** of 98% purity with a mp. 240-241°. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>): δ 2.26 (s, 12H), 4.75 (s, 4H), 7.50 (s, 2H).

*Anal.* Calcd. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>18</sub>Br<sub>4</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 35.88; H, 2.99; Br, 53.16. Found: C, 35.96; H, 3.01; Br, 53.03

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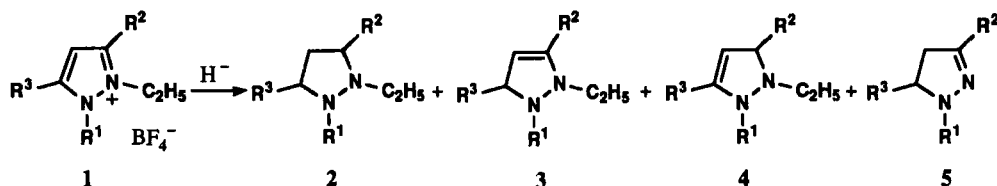
### REDUCTION OF 3- AND/OR 5-UNSUBSTITUTED 2-ETHYLPYRAZOLIUM SALTS WITH COMPLEX METAL HYDRIDES. SYNTHESIS OF PYRAZOLIDINES

*Submitted by* Luis A. Bañuelos, Purificación Cuadrado,  
(04/13/89) Ana M. González\* and Francisco J. Pulido

*Departamento de Química Orgánica  
Universidad de Valladolid  
47011 Valladolid, SPAIN*

Previous disclosures<sup>1</sup> described the regioselective synthesis of 3-pyrazolines by reduction of 1,3,5-trisubstituted 2-alkylpyrazolium salts with complex metal hydrides (CMH). The present investigation reports that the reduction of 3- and/or 5-unsubstituted 2-ethylpyrazolium salts with the same hydrides leads to results different from the above, giving pyrazolidines (**2**) as major products (Table 1).

The formation of pyrazolidines which does not depend of the molar ratio of hydride used,

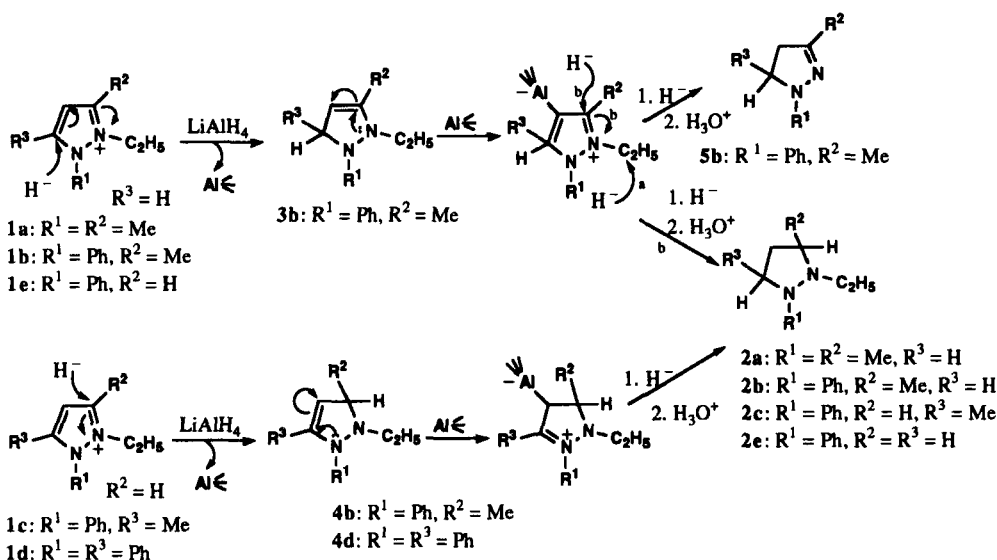


may be due to the low steric requirements of the 3- or 5-unsubstituted pyrazolium salts which are

TABLE 1 Reduction of 2-Ethylpyrazolium Tetrafluoroborates (1) with Complex Metal Hydrides<sup>a</sup>

| Substrate No. | R <sup>1</sup> | R <sup>2</sup> | R <sup>3</sup> | Hydride <sup>f</sup>            | Solvent           | Time (hrs) | Products and Yield (%) <sup>b</sup> |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1a            | Me             | Me             | H              | NaBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | EtOH              | 6          | 2a (79)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LiAlH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup> | Et <sub>2</sub> O | 4          | 2a (55) <sup>d</sup>                |
| 1b            | Ph             | Me             | H              | NaBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | EtOH              | 6          | 2b (80)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LiAlH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup> | Et <sub>2</sub> O | 4          | 3b (50) + 4b (31)                   |
|               |                |                |                | LTBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | THF               | 6          | 4b (45) + 5b (24)                   |
| 1c            | Ph             | H              | Me             | NaBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | EtOH              | 6          | 2c (75)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LiAlH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup> | Et <sub>2</sub> O | 4          | 2c (71)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LiAlH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup> | THF               | 4          | 2c (60)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LTBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | THF               | 6          | 2c (67)                             |
| 1d            | Ph             | H              | Ph             | NaBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | EtOH              | 6          | 4d (75)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LiAlH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup> | Et <sub>2</sub> O | 4          | 4d (80)                             |
| 1e            | Ph             | H              | H              | NaBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | EtOH              | 6          | 2e (82)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LiAlH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup> | Et <sub>2</sub> O | 4          | 2e (77)                             |
|               |                |                |                | LTBH <sub>4</sub> <sup>c</sup>  | THF               | 6          | 2e (73)                             |

a) Reactions were carried out at room temperature. b) Yields refer to isolated pure products. c) Molar ratio 1:hydride = 1:2. d) Isolated as a complex with borane. e) Molar ratio 1:hydride = 1:1. f) LTBH = LiAl(O-Bu-*t*)<sub>3</sub>H.



readily attacked by a second hydride. The reaction apparently proceeds by initial attack of hydride at the unsubstituted C-3 or C-5 position and formation of a 3-pyrazoline intermediate (3). The second hydride attack at C-5 or C-3 may occur with preliminary Lewis acid initiated isomerization leading to the final pyrazolidine (2) (Scheme 1). Although, 3-pyrazolines have been reported to be stable toward CMH,<sup>2</sup> they are readily reduced to pyrazolidines by the combination of LiAlH<sub>4</sub> with AlCl<sub>3</sub>. In some cases the reaction stops at first stage of the proposed pathway giving 3-pyrazolines (3 and 4) as the only products.

The reaction of **1b** with lithium tri-*t*-butoxyaluminium hydride (LTBH) also affords a small amount of the 2-pyrazoline (**5b**). The formation of **5b** could be explained according to the general mechanism outlined in Scheme 1. Similar dequaternizations involving Hofmann eliminations or hydrogenolysis of the  $\overset{+}{N}-C_2H_5$  bond have been previously reported.<sup>3</sup> Physical constants and spectral data for pyrazolidines (2), 3-pyrazolines (3 and 4) and 2-pyrazolines (5) are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Pyrazolidines (2), 3-Pyrazolines (3 and 4) and 2-Pyrazolines (5)

| Product <sup>a</sup>       | mp <sup>b</sup><br>(°C)        | IR(nujol<br>or film)<br>(cm <sup>-1</sup> ) | <sup>1</sup> H NMR<br>(CDCl <sub>3</sub> /TMS) |                        | δ [ppm] <sup>c</sup>   |                          |                          | J [Hz] |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------|
|                            |                                |   | R <sup>2</sup>                                 | R <sup>3</sup>         | 3-H                    | 4-H                      | 5-H                      |        |
| <b>2a</b>                  | Oil <sup>d</sup>               | —   | 1.10<br>(d, 3H, J = 6.5)                       | —                      | 2.90<br>(m, 1H)        | 1.85<br>(m, 2H)          | 2.60<br>(m, 2H)          |        |
| <b>2a</b> ·BH <sub>3</sub> | 184-185<br>(ethanol)           | 2400<br>(B-H)                               | 1.25<br>(d, 3H, J = 6.5)                       | —                      | 2.80<br>(m, 1H)        | 1.70<br>(m, 2H)          | 3.30<br>(m, 3H)          |        |
| <b>2b</b>                  | oil <sup>d</sup>               | —   | 1.40<br>(d, 3H, J = 6)                         | —                      | 3.05<br>(m, 1H)        | 2.20<br>(m, 2H)          | 3.40<br>(m, 2H)          |        |
| <b>2c</b>                  | oil <sup>d</sup>               | —   | —  | 1.40<br>(d, 3H, J = 6) | 2.80<br>(m, 2H)        | 2.10<br>(m, 2H)          | 3.55<br>(m, 1H)          |        |
| <b>2e</b>                  | oil <sup>d</sup>               | —   | —  | —                      | 2.90<br>(t, 2H, J = 7) | 2.15<br>(m, 2H)          | 3.45<br>(t, 2H, J = 7)   |        |
| <b>3b</b>                  | oil <sup>d</sup>               | 1670<br>(C=C)                               | 1.70<br>(s, 3H)                                | —                      | —                      | 5.55<br>(t, 1H, J = 5)   | 4.00<br>(d, 2H, J = 5)   |        |
| <b>4b</b>                  | oil <sup>d</sup>               | 1650<br>(C=C)                               | 1.10<br>(d, 3H, J = 6)                         | —                      | 6.65<br>(m, 1H)        | 4.20<br>(m, 1H)          | 3.50<br>(m, 1H)          |        |
| <b>4d</b>                  | 84-85<br>(ethanol)             | 1620<br>(C=C)                               | —  | 7.00<br>(s, 5H)        | —                      | 5.70<br>(t, 1H, J = 2.5) | 3.60<br>(d, 2H, J = 2.5) |        |
| <b>5b</b>                  | 75-76 <sup>e</sup><br>(hexane) | 1550<br>(C=N)                               | 2.10<br>(t, 3H, J = 1.2)                       | —                      | —                      | 2.70<br>(m, 2H)          | 3.60<br>(m, 2H)          |        |

a) Yields of isolated products are listed in Table 1. b) Uncorrected. c) δ 2.40 (s, 3H, N-CH<sub>3</sub>), 2.60-2.90 (q, 2H, J = 7, N-CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.05 (t, 3H, J = 7, N-CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 6.90-7.10 (m, 5H, N-C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>5</sub>). d) Unstable oily compound. e) lit.<sup>5</sup> mp. 76-77°(ether or ligroin).

## EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

Melting points were determined on a Buchi apparatus and are uncorrected. IR spectra were recorded using a Pye-Unicam SP1100 spectrometer and the  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectra were performed on a Varian T-60 instrument; chemical shifts are expressed in ppm relative to TMS as internal standard.

**2-Ethyl-1,3-dimethylpyrazolidine (2a). Typical Procedure.**- A solution of 2-ethyl-1,3-dimethylpyrazolium tetrafluoroborate<sup>4</sup> (**1a**, 2.1 g, 10 mmol) in ethanol (20 mL) was added to a suspension of sodium borohydride (0.75 g, 20 mmol) in ethanol (20 mL). The mixture was stirred at 25° for 6 hrs., acidified with a saturated  $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$  solution (30 mL), and then extracted with ether (2x25 mL). The organic layer was dried over  $\text{MgSO}_4$  and the solvents removed. The crude product was chromatographed on silica gel using dichloromethane as eluent to give 1.01 g (79%) of **2a** as a colorless oil.

**2-Ethyl-3-methyl-1-phenyl-3-pyrazoline (3b) and 1-Ethyl-5-methyl-2-phenyl-3-pyrazoline (4b). Typical Procedure.**- A solution of 2-ethyl-3-methyl-1-phenylpyrazolium tetrafluoroborate<sup>4</sup> (**1b**, 2 g, 7.2 mmol) in ether was added to a suspension of lithium aluminium hydride (0.27 g, 7.2 mmol) in ether (20 mL). The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 4 hrs. and hydrolyzed with saturated  $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$  (20 mL). The ethereal layer was separated and dried over  $\text{MgSO}_4$ . Evaporation of the solvent left an oil which was chromatographed on silica gel using dichloromethane as eluent. The following compounds were obtained: 2-ethyl-3-methyl-1-phenyl-3-pyrazoline (**3b**) as a colorless oil from the first fraction; yield: 0.67 g (50%). 1-Ethyl-5-methyl-2-phenyl-3-pyrazoline (**4b**) as a colorless oil from the second fraction; yield: 0.40 g (30%).

TABLE 3. Elemental Analysis Data

| Product No.              | Elemental Analysis (Found) |                 |                 |                 |  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| <b>2a</b>                | Calcd.                     | C 65.58 (65.45) | H 12.56 (12.48) | N 21.85 (21.93) |  |
| <b>2a.BH<sub>3</sub></b> | Calcd.                     | C 59.19 (59.26) | H 13.47 (13.51) | N 19.72 (19.60) |  |
| <b>2b</b>                | Calcd.                     | C 75.75 (75.87) | H 9.52 (9.43)   | N 14.72 (14.59) |  |
| <b>2c</b>                | Calcd.                     | C 75.75 (75.64) | H 9.52 (9.61)   | N 14.72 (14.79) |  |
| <b>2e</b>                | Calcd.                     | C 74.96 (74.84) | H 9.14 (9.07)   | N 15.89 (15.95) |  |
| <b>3b</b>                | Calcd.                     | C 76.56 (76.70) | H 8.55 (8.38)   | N 14.87 (14.76) |  |
| <b>4b</b>                | Calcd.                     | C 76.56 (76.43) | H 8.55 (8.62)   | N 14.87 (14.96) |  |
| <b>4d</b>                | Calcd.                     | C 81.56 (81.65) | H 7.24 (7.11)   | N 11.19 (11.24) |  |

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### A CONVENIENT PREPARATION OF 5,5-DIALKYL MELDRUM'S ACIDS

Submitted by      Bang-Chi Chen<sup>†</sup> and Ping Lue<sup>\*††</sup>  
(08/21/91)

<sup>†</sup> Department of Chemistry  
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA 19104

<sup>††</sup> Occidental Chemical Corporation, Technology Center  
2801 Long Road, Grand Island, NY 14072

Meldrum's acid (1, 2,2-dimethyl-1,3-dioxane-4,6-dione, isopropylidene malonate), discovered by Meldrum,<sup>1</sup> is an attractive alternative to acyclic malonate esters in organic synthesis.<sup>2</sup> 5,5-Dialkyl Meldrum's acids are versatile synthetic intermediates and their applications in organic transformations have been amply demonstrated and well documented.<sup>2,3</sup> As a consequence, many efforts have been aimed at developing efficient methods for the preparation of these synthetically useful compounds.<sup>2,4</sup> On the other hand, however, each of the existing methods suffers one or another disadvantages such as low yield, apparently resulting from the hydrolytic ring-opening by the base employed; or tedious, often chromatographic separation of products. We now report a convenient method for preparation of 5,5-dialkyl Meldrum's acids (2) based on our recent observation that triethylamine in dimethyl sulfoxide acts as a homogeneous, but strong enough base in the reaction of Meldrum's acid with carbon disulfide.<sup>5</sup>

When treated with triethylamine in dimethyl sulfoxide, Meldrum's acid (1) reacts readily with alkyl halides<sup>6</sup> at room temperature to afford 5,5-dialkyl Meldrum's acids (2). The reaction is convenient, involving stirring of the reaction mixture at room temperature. Since the reaction gives high yield (>90%) of product, work-up becomes very simple. Addition of water to the reaction