O-Sulfinylation of Alcohols with Methanesulfonyl Cyanide or p-Toluenesulfonyl Cyanide.

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(Received in USA 23 September 1991)

Key words sulfinates, methanesulfonyl cyanide, p-toluenesulfonyl cyanide, sulfinyl cyanates, O-sulfinylation

Abstract: Reaction of p-toluenesulfonyl cyanide or methanesulfonyl cyanide with alcohols in the presence of 1,8-diazabicyclo[5 4 0]undec-7-ene (DBU) or 1,4-diazabicyclo[2 2 2]octane (DABCO) gives sulfinates in good yield A mechanistic scheme involving sulfinyl cyanates 9 and 21 is suggested

Introduction

Transformation of alcohols to the corresponding imidates in a base-catalyzed reaction with various nitriles is an important reaction in synthetic organic chemistry This reaction has been known for almost a hundred years¹ (Nef, 1895) and it has found application for several synthetic purposes One major application is the use of imidates in glycoside and oligosaccharide synthesis² We have employed this method for the transformation of alcohols *via* their imidates to radicophilic thio- and selenocarbonyl derivatives for radical deoxygenation reactions³ In an attempt to obtain tosyl imidates of various alcohols from the base-catalyzed reaction with the corresponding alcohol 2 and tosyl cyanide 1a we have found that the corresponding sulfinates 4 were formed instead of the desired imidates (3) This prompted us to study this new reaction in detail and attempt to prove the mechanism

We have extended this new reaction by using methanesulfonyl cyanide 1b instead of p-toluenesulfonyl cyanide We found that 1b gave methanesulfinates 5 in high yield. The yields of this reaction were comparable to or higher than those of the corresponding p-toluenesulfinates^{4,5}

O-Sulfinvlation

Known methods for the synthesis of sulfinate esters require the activation^{6,7} of sulfinic acids, or the use of the corresponding sulfinyl chlorides 8.9 A recent report describes a one-pot synthesis of sulfinates from alcohols with sulfonyl chlorides and trimethyl phosphite¹⁰ The latter method, however, gives methanesulfinates in a lower yield⁴.

Radical deoxygenation of alcohols¹¹ (the Barton-McCombie reaction) can be carried out on derivatives of alcohols containing a thio- or selenocarbonyl moiety. In most systems this functionality is the most radicophilic, thereby directing the attack of the radical reagent to the derivatized alcohol There are numerous reagents¹² for the transformation of alcohols to thiocarbonyl derivatives suitable for this radical process As a continuation of our research in this field we reacted various alcohols with tosyl cyanide 1a (Scheme 1) in the presence of a base (DBU) to form the imidates 3 However, sulfinates 4 have been obtained in high yield, instead of 3 The sulphinates (4) formed in our reactions have been identified (in addition to physical methods) by comparison with authentic compounds and also by oxidizing them to the known sulfonates (tosylates)

A thorough study showed that primary, secondary and tertiary alcohols furnish p-toluenesulfinates upon treatment with DBU or DABCO and 1a Methanesulfonyl cyanide 1b gave the corresponding methanesulfinates 5 in high yields (all the yields are given in the Experimental section)

Tosyl cyanide is easily cleaved in homolytic^{5,19,20,21} or heterolytic processes¹³ With nucleophiles (ArO⁻, RS⁻, R₂N⁻, ArMgX) it gives ArOCN, RSCN, R₂NCN, ArCN-type products. The only other product of our reactions is TsS-4Me-Ph¹⁴ 13 This suggests a more complicated mechanism.

A possible mechanistic pathway leading to this new reaction is depicted in Scheme 2 and 3.

Scheme 3

Thus treatment of a sulfonyl cyanide (la) with a strong, non-nucleophilic base (in this case DBU or DABCO) would give via intermediates 7 and 8 the cyanate 9 We assumed that this cyanate 9 was responsible for the sulfinate transfer to the given alcohols present resulting in the formation of the corresponding ptoluenesulfinates 4. Blank experiments of tosyl cyanide and DBU or (DABCO) resulted in the formation of 13 (25%) most probably m accordance wuh Scheme 3.

In the presence of an alcohol the activated sulfinyl moiety of 9 can be transformed to sulfinates (4), or the weak S-O smgle bond may undergo homolync cleavage grvmg sulfinyl radrcals **11 In the** absence of alcohols or radical traps the formation of the thiosulfonate (13) can be interpreted as a self termination of 11^{15} (Scheme 3)

One may suggest that 13 could possibly take part in the formation of sulfinates 4 in accordance with the **Scheme 4**

We have therefore studied the reaction of 13 and cyclododecanol (2a) in the presence of DBU However, reaction of 2 equivalents of 13 with 1 equivalents each of DBU and 2a resulted in the formation of only 20% of cyclododecanol p-toluenesulfinate (4a) (24hr), and the known 4-tolyl-disulfide (15) (30%). This sulfinylation is much slower and gives much lower yrelds than the reacnon of tosyl cysnrde **(la)** and alcohols m the presence of DBU (reaction time. 2hr). Moreover, we could not detect the disulfide (15) in the latter These findings suggest that O,S-sulfenyl-sulfinates of type 14 are not mtermedrates m the sulfmylahon reacnon of **la m the** presence of DBU In order to corroborate our suggested mechanistic scheme of the sulfinylation reaction of 1a (Scheme 3), we attempted to detect the other product HOCN (6) Therefore we attempted the known reaction ¹⁶ of the cyanate anion with benzyl chloride and ethyl alcohol in DMF Indeed, in the one-pot procedure (sulfinylation, followed by the addition of benzyl chlonde and ethanol) we have obtained the benzyl urethane 10 (97% yield, g $1 c$)

Scheme 4

In order to find further evidence of the radical cleavage of the suggested intermediate 9, we have attempted to use mixed anhydrides of N-hydroxy-2-thropyridone (like 16), known thermal or photolytic sources of carbon radicals¹⁷ When used alone in darkness, neither DABCO nor 1a initiated the radical rearrangement of 16 to17

However, when 16 was treated m the dark wtth both DABCO and la, 19 was isolated m 17% yteld, undoubtedly formed from the phenylethyl radical 18. In a similar reaction 1b gave 20.

NMR experiments

13C NMR experiments

The progress of the rearrangement of tosyl cyande 1a in the presence of an equimolar amount of DABCO was followed by ¹³C NMR at low temperature DABCO was added into the tube containing the solution of 1a at - 60° C and 13 C NMR spectra were recorded at -60, -50, -40, -30, -20, -10, 0 and 20 $^{\circ}$ C. We have found that the reaction between tosyl cyanide la and the base takes place at temperatures higher than -50°C At -40°C the peaks of la completely disappear and a new set of peaks appear correspondmg to the cyanate 9 The most chatactensnc change is, as expected, the disappearance of the CN carbon at 113 6 ppm and the appearance of a new carbon at 152 5 ppm that is attributed to the OCN carbon of 9 This intermediate 9 is stable in the absence of alcohols up to -20°C At that temperature it disappears, due to the homolytic cleavage of 9

The same experiment was repeated with methanesulfonyl cyanide 1b In this case the rearrangement takes place upon the addition of DABCO at -60°C The carbon peaks of 1b (45 6 and 112 6 ppm) change to those of the corresponding cyanate (42 4 and 156 6 ppm) This change is similar to that, observed in the case of 1a We have found that this intermediate sulfinyl cyanate 21 is stable up to -50°C At -40°C this intermediate can no longer be detected The cyanate peak (152.5 ppm) disappears at -40°C The methyl signal of the intermediate methanesulfinyl cyanate 21 also disappears at -40°C, being replaced by that of the corresponding thiosulfonate 22

$$
MeS-OCN
$$

$$
MeSO2SMe
$$

$$
21
$$

$$
22
$$

Low temperature 13C NMR experiment in the presence of an alcohol.

DABCO (1 1 eq) was added carefully to methanesulfonyl cyanide **1b** (1 0 eq) in an NMR tube at -60°C The ¹³C NMR spectrum showed the complete disappearance of 1b and the appearance of the peaks of 21 as seen previously Cyclododecanol (0.8 eq) was then added at -60 $^{\circ}$ C The 13 C NMR spectrum of the crude mixture showed clearly the peaks of the corresponding methanesulfinate Sa The peaks of the intermediate methanesulfinyl cyanate 21 disappeared indicating that 5a was indeed formed from 21

Independent preparation of p-toluenesulfinyl cyanate 9 and methanesulfinyl cyanate 21

p-Toluenesulfinic acid⁶ was dissolved in CDCl₃ and the ¹³C spectrum was recorded at -60°C This solution was then treated with DABCO, followed by cyanogen bromide The $13C$ NMR spectra of this reaction mixture were then recorded at -60 , -50 , -40 , -30 , -20 , -10 , 0 and 20^oC respectively The 13 C peaks of 9 (immediately appeared at -60°C and disappeared at -20°C) are in good agreement with those, seen in the ptoluenesulfonyl cyanide + DABCO reachon **(Scheme 5)**

> A) 9 formed m the TsCN + DABCO reaction nuxture

B) 9 formed in the 4-MePhSO₂H + DABCO + BrCN reaction mixture

B) 21 formed in the MeSO₂H + DABCO + BrCN reaction at -60°C

Scheme 6

Similarly, treatment of methanesulfimc¹⁸ acid with DABCO and cyanogen bromide at -60^oC we have observed the appearance of a peak in the $13C$ NMR spectrum at 155 7 ppm. This can be attributed to the formation of the sulfinyl cyanate The corresponding value observed in the rearrangement of methanesulfinyl cyanide was 156 6 ppm. In both cases these peaks disappear above -40°C, indicating that these compounds are thermally unstable but can be made and used at - 60°C (Scheme 6).

Experimental

¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian XL-200E spectrometer for deuterochloroform solutions (δ scale, TMS as internal standard) Vanable temperature ¹³C NMR measurements were carried out on a Vanan XL-200 spectrometer. Mass spectra (70 eV, electron Impact) were obtamed usmg a Hewlett-Packard 5995C quadrupole GC-MS instrument. IR spectra were measured with a Perkin-Elmer 881 spectrometer; only the most significant absorptions are listed Glc analyses were performed with a Chrompack 439 instrument equipped with a FID detector and a DB-5 (0 1 mm) fused silica capillary column (30m x 0 25 nm) using nitrogen as carrier gas, and napthalene as internal standard Microanalyses were performed by Atlantic Microlabs, Atlanta, GA Melting pomts were determmed on a Kofler hot stage and are **uncorrected** N-Hydroxy-pyndme-2-throne was prepared from the 40% aqueous solution of its sodium salt (trade name sodium Omadine® a kind gift from the Olin Corporation)

General procedure for the synthesis of sulfinates 4 from the tosyl cyanide 1a.

To the solution of the starting alcohol 2 (2 mmol) in dry methylene dichloride (5-8 ml), DBU was added under argon at 0-5^oC (ice bath), followed by the addition of tosyl cyanide (1a) in small portions Then the pale yellow solution was allowed to warm up to room temperature and the reaction monitored by t l c The reaction was complete in less than 2 hr Then the mixture was concentrated in vacuum and the title compounds isolated by column chromatography on sdica gel (hexanes ether= 8 2)

Compound 4a: Yield 89% (from methylene dichloride hexanes), mp 51-52°C, IR (CHCl₃) 1126 cm⁻¹ (S=O), ¹H NMR (δ)[.] 1 1-1 9 (22 H, m, CH₂ groups), 2 4 (3 H, s, Me), 4 5 (1 H, m, H-1), 7 33 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz). 7 63 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), ¹³C NMR (δ) 20 0, 21 6, 23 5, 24 0, 24 2, 24 4, 30 9, 31 0, 78 2, 125 1, 129 7, 142 6, 143 2. m/z (%) 322 (0 3), 306 (1.6), 157 (100), HR-MS m/z = 322.1962, [calc. for C₂₅H₄₄O₂S 322 1966]. Compound 4a was identical with the product obtained by the reported procedure 10

Compound 4b⁶ Yield 85% (from methylene dichloride hexanes), mp 130-131^oC (lit.⁶ 132-135^oC, chloroform methanol), ¹H NMR (δ) 2 41 (6 H, s), 4 1-4 25 (2 H, m), 5 3 and 5 41 (2 H, m), 7 32 (4 H, d, J = $8Hz$), 7 62 (4 H, d, J = $8Hz$)

Compound $4c^6$ Yield. 91% (from methylene dichlonde: hexanes), mp 118-120^oC (lit.⁶ 121-123^oC, chloroform^{*} methanol), ¹H (δ)² 42 (3 H, s), 4 2-4 35 (1 H, m), 7 32 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 61 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz)

 \rm{H} (8) 2 42 (3 H, s), 3 95-4 4 (1 H, dt, J_{aa} = 10 5Hz, J_{ac} = 4Hz), 7 34 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 68 (2 H, d, J = Compound $4d^6$. Yield. 94%, mp (of the (S)-(-) menthyl p-toluenesulfinate) 102-104^oC (lit.⁶ 103-105^oC), 8Hz)

Compound 4e Yield 92% (from ether hexanes), mp 37-38°C, IR (CHCL₂) 1130 cm⁻¹(S=O), ¹H (δ) 0 8-1 8 (35 H, m), 2 41 (3 H, s, Me), 3 5-3 7 and 3 9-4 1 (2 H, dt, $J_1 = 7Hz$, $J_2 = 10Hz$), 7.32 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 61 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), ${}^{13}C(8)$ 14 2, 21 6, 22 8, 25 8, 29 3, 29 5, 29 6, 29 7, 29 8, 32 1, 64 6, 125 3, 129 8, 142 0, 142 6, m/z (%) 408 (0 3), 253 3), 157 (100), HR-MS m/z=408.3065, [calc for C₂₅H₄₄O₂S 408 30621

Compound $4f^{22}$ Yield 91%, IR (CHCL₃) 1130, 1140 cm⁻¹(S=O), ¹H (δ) (major) 1 2-1 6 (4 x 3 H, 4s), 2 44 (3 H, s), 3 9-4 3 (3 H, m), 4 76 (1 H, d, J = 3 6Hz), 4 95 (1 H, d, J = 3Hz), 5 85 (1 H, d, J = 3 6Hz), 7 37 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 68 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), (minor) 1 2-1 6 (4 x 3 H, 4s), 2 44 (3 H, s), 3 9-4 3 (3 H, m), 4 51 (1 H, d, J = 2 4Hz), 4 82 (1 H, d, J = 3 5Hz), 5 92 (1 H, d, J = 3 3Hz), 7 35 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 65 (2H, d, J = Hz), m/z (%) \cdot 399 (0 1), 383 (22), 139 (100)

Compound $4g^6$ Yield 87 5% (from methylene dichloride hexanes), mp 81-82^oC (lit ⁶ 80-82^oC), ¹H 17-2 3 (15 H, m), 2 45 (3 H, s), 7 30 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 60 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz)

p-Tolyl p-toluenethiosulfonate¹⁴ 13 Yield 36%, mp 74-76^oC (lit.¹⁴ 74-76^oC), ¹H (δ) 2 35 (3 H, s), 2 45 (3 H, s). 7 15 (2 H, d. J = 8Hz). 7 20 (2 H, d, J = 7Hz), 7 25 (2 H, d, J = 7Hz), 7 45 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz) An authentic specimen was prepared according to the literature procedure¹⁴

Oxidation of p-toluenesulfinates to p-toluenesulfonates *Typical procedure* To a solution of the appropriate p-toluenesulfinate 4 (0 5 mmol) in dry chloroform (5 ml) 60% mCPBA (0 210g, 1 mmol) was added at 0° C in small portions The reaction was monitored by t 1 c When all the sulfinate was consumed, the reaction mixture was extracted with sat aqueous sodium bicarbonate and dichloromethane and the organic layer dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate Removal of most of the solvents and dropwise addition of hexanes afforded the known tosylates m high yield

Independent preparation of the p-toluenesulfonates Typical procedure The alcohol 2 (2.5 mmol) was dissolved in dry pyridine (20 ml) at 0° C and treated with tosyl chloride (142 g, 75 mmol) added in small portrons After stumng overnight, the solvent was evaporated under vacuum and the residue was extracted wuh dichloromethane and water The organic layer was dried over magnesium sulfate and concentrated under vacum Gradual addition of hexanes afforded the known tosylates in high yield.

Cyclododecyl p-toluenesulphonate²³ Yield 89%, mp 88-89^oC, ¹H (δ) 1 1-1 8 (23 H, m), 2 4 (3 H, s), 4 65 (1 H, m), 7 31 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 80 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz)

3B-cholestanyl p-toluenesulphonate Yield 85%, mp 135-136^oC, ¹H (δ) 0 5-2 0 (m, cholest), 2 4 (3 H, s), 4 45 (1 H, m), 7 30 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz), 7 80 (2 H, d, J = 8Hz)

Reaction of the cyclododecanol 2a with 13 in the presence of DBU To a solution of the alcohol 2a (0 5 g, 2 7 mmol) m 20 ml dry drchloromethane were added DBU (0 42 g. 2 7 mmol) followed by compound 13 (15 g, 5 4 mmol) in small portions Surring was continued at room temperature for 24 hr and the reaction was followed by t 1 c The solvent was then concentrated and the mixture separated on silica gel using hexanes ether (in gradient) as eluent The p-tolyl disulfide 15 has been isolated in 30% yield together with compounds 4a (20%), 13 (52%) and 2a (73%)

p-Tolvl disulfide 15, mp $42-44^{\circ}$ C The spectral data of this compound were identical to those reported for the commercial product (Aldrich, 98%)

Synthesis of the benzylure than 10. The title compound was synthesized according to the literature procedure¹⁶ in 65% yield, mp 42-43^oC (lit 41 5-42^oC)

Synthesis of the benzylurethane 10 in situ The alcohol 2a (0 1 g, 0 54 mmol) was dissolved in 4 ml dry dichloromethane at 0°C and treated with DBU (90 mg, 0.59 mmol) followed by tosyl cyanide 1a (0.38 g, 2.1 mmol) in small portions The disappearance of the alcohol was followed by t l c After the end of the reaction 37 3 mg (0 81 mmol) of absolute ethanol and 82 mg (0 64 mmol) of freshly &strlled benzyl chlonde were added and the reaction mixture was kept boiling for 3 hr Glc analysis of the crude reaction mixture (an authentic sample was prepared and used for comparison))) mdrcated a 97% yield of the *In situ* prepared benzylumthane 10

Glc conditions 1µ1 samples were injected at once at an oven temperature of 80^oC for one minute After the temperature was increased to 250 $^{\circ}$ C at a rate of 15 $^{\circ}$ C/min Retention times 5 80 min (int standard) and 8 75 min (urethane 10)

Trapping experiments of the intermediate 9.

a Using the acyl N-hydroxy-2-thropyndone 16 Tosyl cyanide $1(100 \text{ mg}, 0.55 \text{ mmol})$ and compound 16 (0 43 g, 1 6 mmol) were placed in a flask covered with aluminum foil, under argon in 15 ml dry dich'oromethane, followed by addition of DABCO (30 mg, 0 28 mmol) in one portion The reaction mixture was stirred at 0°C for 3hr; then the solvent was distilled under vacuum The residue was purified on silica gel (hexanes. ether 80 20) to give the sulfide 19 in 17% yield as a pale yellow oil The indepedent preparation of the sulfide 19 was carried out according to the literature procedure²⁴ in 92% yield The same reaction of 1b gave the sulfide 20 in 7% yield

b Using cyclohexene according to the known procedure²¹ Tosyl cyanide 1a (100 mg, 0.55 mmol), (0.82) g, 10 mmol) of freshly distilled cyclohexene and 2 ml of dry dichloromethane were placed in a flask under argon The flask was covered with aluminum foil to protect the reaction maxture from light DABCO (30 mg, 0 27 mmol) was then added and the reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 3 hr The solvent was removed in vacuum ¹H NMR analysis of the crude mixture showed no evidence of adducts containing the cyclohexyl moiety

Preparation of the mixed anhydride of N-hydroxy-2-thiopyridone 16 was carried out according to the literature procedures²⁵

General procedure for the synthesis of methanesulfinates 5 from 1b and 2.

To the solution of the starting alcohol 2 (2 mmol) in dry methylene dichloride $(8-10 \text{ ml})$ DBU (1 1 eq., 2 2 mmol, 0 33 g, 0 33 ml) was added under argon at 0°C followed by dropwise addition of methanesulfonyl cyanide $(15 \text{ eq}, 3 \text{ mmol}, 032 \text{ g})$ The pale yellow solution was allowed to warm up to room temperature and monitored by tlc When the reaction was finished (tlc) the mixture was concentrated in vacuum and the products isolated by column chromatography on silica gel (hexanes ether = $8\quad2$)

Compound 5a Yield 92% (from hexanes), mp 26-27^oC, IR (CHCl₃) 1114 cm⁻¹ (S=O), ¹H NMR (δ) 1 3-1 9 (22 H, m, CH₂ groups), 2 60 (3 H, s, Me), 4 3-4 4 (1 H, m, H-1), ¹³C NMR (δ) 20 7, 20 8, 23 1, 23 2, 23 3, 24 0, 24 3, 30 4, 30 8, 44 7, 79 1, m/z (%) 167 (8), 55 (100), calcd for C₁₃H₂₆O₂S C 63 37, H 10 63, found C 63 46, H 10 67%

Compound 5b²⁶ Yield 91% (from hexanes/ether), mp 111-115°C (lit mp 97-112°C), IR (CHCl₃) 1110 cm⁻¹(S=O), ¹H NMR (δ) 0 65-2 51 (43 H, m), 2 62 (3 H, s, Me), 4 0-4 2 (1 H, m), 5 39 (1H, m), ¹³C NMR (δ) 44 8 (Me), 80 0 (C-3), m/z (%) 386 (25), 368 (100)

Compound 5c Yield 98% (from ether/pentane), mp $83-85^{\circ}$ C, IR (CHCl₂) 1119 cm⁻¹ (S=O), ¹H NMR (δ) 0.6-2.1 (46 H, m), 2.60 (3 H, s, Me), 4.1-4.2 (1 H, m), 13 C NMR (δ) 44.7 and 44.9 (Me), 79.7, 79.9 (C-3), m/z (%) 264 (25), 55 (100), calcd for C₂₈H₅₀O₂S C 74 61, H 11 18, found C 74 45, H 11 14%

Compound 5d^{10,27} Yield 93%, IR (CHCl3) 1123 cm⁻¹(S=O), ¹H NMR (8) 0 75-2 24 (18 H, m), 2 60 (3 H, s, Me), 2 62 (3H, s), 3 71-4 01 (2 H, m)

Compound 5e Yield 91% (from ether/hexanes), mp 38-39°C, IR (CHCl₂) 1123 cm⁻¹ (S=O), ¹H NMR (δ) 0 85-0 95 (t, 3H, J = 7Hz), 1 2-1 75 (32 H, m), 2 62 (3H, s), 3 95-4 05 (2 H, m), 13 C NMR (δ) 14 2, 22 8, 25.8, 29.3, 29.7, 29.8, 30.2, 32 0, 44 2, 68 5, m/z (%) 315 (10), 99 (30), 57 (100), calcd for $C_{19}H_{40}O_2S$ C 68 62, H 12.12, found C 68 69, H 12 06%

Compound 5f. Yield. 84%, mp 79-82^oC (from ether/pentane); IR (CHCl₃) 1074, 1135 cm⁻¹ (S=O), ¹H NMR (δ) 085-095 (t, 3H, J = 7Hz), 1 31, 1 34, 1 43, 1 51 (4 x 3H, s), 2.689, 2 693 (2 x 3H, s), 4 0-4 3 (4 H, m), 4 6 (1H, d, J = 3 5 Hz), 4 8 (d1H, d, J = 2 0 Hz), 5 9 (1H, d, J = 3 5 Hz), ¹³C NMR (δ) 25 2, 25 3, 26 2, 26 3, 26 6, 26 7, 26 8, 26 9, 44 3, 44 8, 66 8, 67 6, 72 2, 72 3, 76 5, 77 2, 77 8, 78 2, 80 3, 80 7, 83 0, 83 8, 83 9, 105 0, 105 3, 109 3, 109 4, 112 4, m/z (%) 307 (50), 249 (20), 127 (25), 101 (100), calcd for $C_{13}H_{22}O_7S$ C. 48.44, H 688, found C 48 55, H 6 90%

Acknowledgements: We thank the financial support of the National Institutes of Health and the Schering-Plough Corporation The technical assistance of Mr J R Espina (VT NMR) is also acknowledged Mr E A Theodorakis is a Schering Scholar

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