

Development of α,α -Disubstituted Crotylboronate Reagents and Stereoselective Crotylation via Brønsted or Lewis Acid CatalysisShang Gao,[§] Meng Duan,[§] Qianzhen Shao, K. N. Houk,* and Ming Chen*Cite This: *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 2020, 142, 18355–18368

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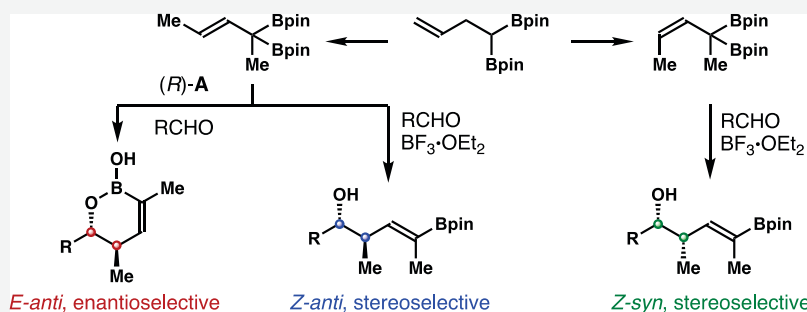
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ABSTRACT: The development of α,α -disubstituted crotylboronate reagents is reported. Chiral Brønsted acid-catalyzed asymmetric aldehyde addition with the developed *E*-crotylboron reagent gave (*E*)-*anti*-1,2-oxaborinan-3-enes with excellent enantioselectivities and *E*-selectivities. With $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ catalysis, the stereoselectivity is reversed, and (*Z*)- δ -boryl-*anti*-homoallylic alcohols are obtained with excellent *Z*-selectivities from the same *E*-crotylboron reagent. The *Z*-crotylboron reagent also participates in $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed crotylation to furnish (*Z*)- δ -boryl-*syn*-homoallylic alcohols with good *Z*-selectivities. DFT computations establish the origins of observed enantio- and stereoselectivities of chiral Brønsted acid-catalyzed asymmetric allylation. Stereochemical models for $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed reactions are proposed to rationalize the *Z*-selective allyl additions. These reactions generate highly valuable homoallylic alcohol products with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene unit. The synthetic utility is further demonstrated by the total syntheses of salinipryones A and B.

INTRODUCTION

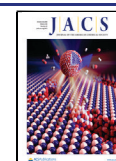
Polyketides are structurally complex secondary metabolites that often display a variety of biological activities.¹ They have played a significant role in the discovery and development of modern medicines.² Over the past several decades, polyketides have attracted significant attention from synthetic organic and chemical biology communities due to their structural complexity and medicinal relevance.³ As illustrated in Figure 1, one structural feature of numerous polyketides is the homoallylic alcohol unit with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene embedded in the carbon skeleton of these natural products (highlighted in red in Figure 1). Biosynthetically, such structural motifs are assembled via a series of transformations by collaborative efforts of several domains of the polyketide synthase, including ketosynthase, ketoreductase, and dehydratase.⁴ In parallel, several strategies are known for chemical syntheses of these molecules via a multistep reaction sequence.⁵ For example, the Kobayashi group developed a chiral auxiliary-based approach using vinyl ketene silyl *N,O*-acetal to access homoallylic alcohol with a trisubstituted alkene.^{5a–f} Alternatively, these molecules can be assembled by constructing the trisubstituted alkene from appropriate intermediates with the requisite stereocenters. For instance, the classic Wittig olefination of an aldehyde intermediate is one

method of choice to synthesize trisubstituted alkenes.^{5g–i} Such structural entities can also be formed via olefin metathesis from the alkene precursors.^{5j–l} Reductive coupling of an internal alkyne intermediate is another viable approach to prepare these molecules.^{5m–p}

As one of the most adopted methods to synthesize acyclic molecules with contiguous stereocenters, asymmetric carbonyl addition with crotylmethyl reagents has been extensively utilized to synthesize polyketide natural products.^{6,7} In principle, asymmetric aldehyde crotylation with α,α -disubstituted crotylmethyl reagents **A** (Scheme 1a) could provide a direct access to homoallylic alcohols with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene unit (e.g., **D**, Scheme 1a).^{8,9} However, to date there is no report on enantioselective synthesis of tertiary allylic organometallics such as **A**. Moreover, crotylmethyl reagents **A** are prone to undergo reversible 1,3-metallo shifts

Received: April 15, 2020

Published: October 14, 2020



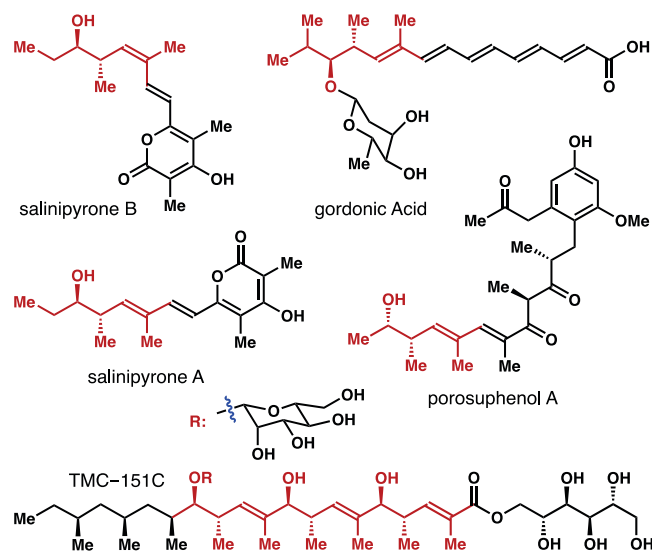
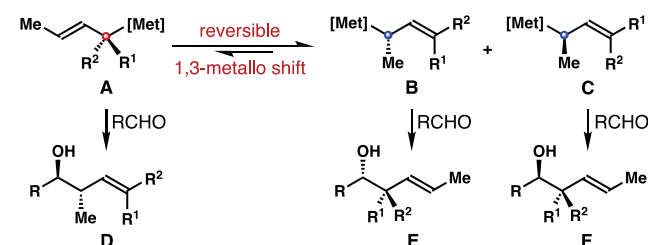


Figure 1. Selected natural products that contain homoallylic alcohols with a trisubstituted alkene group.

Scheme 1. Approaches to Enantioenriched Homoallylic Alcohols with a Stereodefined Trisubstituted Alkene

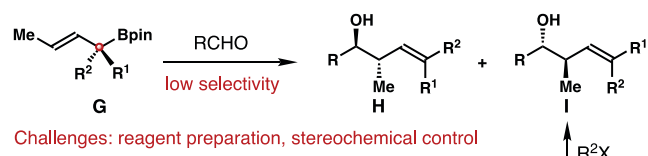
Approaches:

(a) Allylation via α,α -disubstituted crotylmethyl reagents:



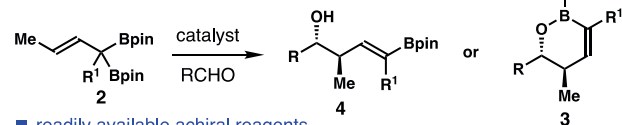
Challenges: reagent preparation, undesired 1,3-metallo shifts

(b) Allylation via α,α -disubstituted crotylboronates:



Challenges: reagent preparation, stereochemical control

(c) Our approach:



to form thermodynamically more stable secondary organometallics **B** or **C** (or a mixture of **A**, **B**, and **C**). It is conceivable that subsequent allylation event is unlikely to be selective, and a mixture of products **D**, **E**, and **F** will be generated from the process (approach a, Scheme 1). By contrast, crotylboronates are known to be configurationally stable and will not participate in reversible 1,3-metallo shifts at ambient temperature. Therefore, asymmetric allylation of aldehydes with α,α -disubstituted crotylboronate **G** could in theory produce the requisite homoallylic alcohols with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene unit (approach b, Scheme 1). However, this reaction often generates a mixture of two products **H** and **I**.

And stereoselectivity is low when the sizes of R^1 and R^2 groups are similar to each other. In addition, enantioselective preparation of such chiral nonracemic α,α -disubstituted crotylboron reagents is synthetically challenging.¹⁰ To our knowledge, highly stereoselective generation of homoallylic alcohols with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene unit through allylation is an unsolved problem. Therefore, we set a goal to develop catalytic methods to address this challenge.

With our continuing efforts to develop novel allylation reagents and catalytic methods for the syntheses of polyketide natural products,¹¹ we report herein the development of α,α -disubstituted crotylboronate reagents **2** (Scheme 1c). These reagents are achiral and can be conveniently synthesized from 1,1-diborylalkanes. In the presence of a proper catalyst, crotylation of aldehydes with reagents **2** generates products **3** or **4** with excellent selectivities (approach c, Scheme 1). This approach provides a general solution to access homoallylic alcohols with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene unit. Moreover, products **3** and **4** are highly versatile intermediates that can undergo a variety of subsequent transformations. In particular, cross-coupling reactions with electrophiles will produce homoallylic alcohols with a trisubstituted olefin (e.g., **H** and **I**, Scheme 1b).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

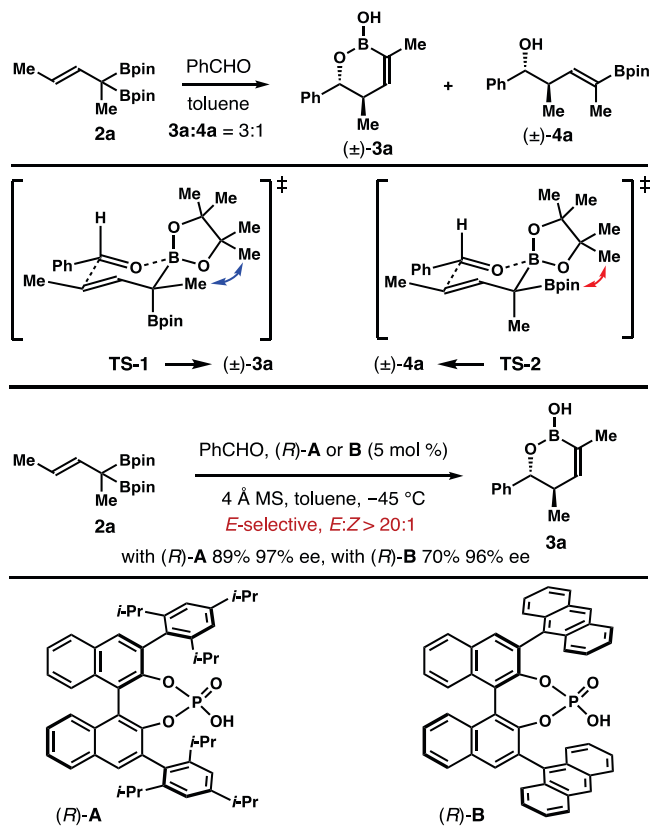
Reagent Development. To implement the strategy outlined in Scheme 1c, we prepared 1,1-diborylalkane precursor **1a** via sequential alkylation of 1,1-diborylmethane.¹² With precursor **1a** in hand, subsequent transition-metal-catalyzed olefin transposition was conducted. Initial experiments with Ru- or Ir-catalyzed olefin transposition of **1a** did not proceed. Presumably the steric bulk of nearby tetrasubstituted carbon atom prevents coordination of the alkene group of **1a** to the ligand-bound catalyst. Barton and co-workers showed that transposition of a sterically congested alkene of ergosterol can be achieved with $\text{RhCl}_3 \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$.¹³ We suspected that the less bulky, ligandless $\text{RhCl}_3 \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$ catalyst should be more accessible to bind the alkene unit of **1a** compared to a bulky ligand-bound catalyst. To test the hypothesis, isomerization of **1a** was conducted with $\text{RhCl}_3 \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$ as the catalyst. In the event, **1a** was treated with 10 mol % of $\text{RhCl}_3 \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$ in ethanol. No reaction occurred at ambient temperature or 40 °C even with prolonged time (24 h) (entries 1 and 2, Table 1). However, alkene transposition of **1a** proceeded smoothly at elevated temperature (60 °C), and the desired product **2a** was isolated in 61% yield (entry 3, Table 1). Formation of *Z*-isomer **2b** was not detected. Switching the solvent to ^tBuOH also produced boronate **2a** with high *E*-selectivity, albeit with a slightly lower yield (entry 4, Table 1). In larger scale reactions, the catalyst loading can be reduced to 5 mol %, and product **2a** was isolated in 76–81% yields with >20:1 *E*-selectivity (entries 5 and 6, Table 1).

Development of *E*-Selective Crotylation with Reagent **2a.** With a robust approach to access reagent **2a**, we carried out subsequent aldehyde allylation studies with **2a**. As shown in Scheme 2, addition of **2a** to benzaldehyde in the absence of any catalyst produced a 3:1 mixture of *E*-isomer ($\pm$)-**3a** and *Z*-isomer ($\pm$)-**4a**. These data suggest that the two competing transition states **TS-1** and **TS-2** have similar energies. **TS-1** with pseudoaxial placement of the α -Bpin group of reagent **2a** has a slight advantage over **TS-2** (α -Bpin in a pseudoequatorial position) owing to less pronounced gauche interactions between the methyl and Bpin groups

Table 1. Evaluation of Reaction Conditions for *E*-Selective Alkene Transposition of 1a^a

entry	conditions	2a:2b ^b	yield (%) ^c
1	RhCl ₃ ·3H ₂ O (10 mol %), EtOH, rt	ND	ND
2	RhCl ₃ ·3H ₂ O (10 mol %), EtOH, 40 °C	ND	ND
3	RhCl ₃ ·3H ₂ O (10 mol %), EtOH, 60 °C	>20:1	61
4	RhCl ₃ ·3H ₂ O (10 mol %), ^t BuOH, 60 °C	>20:1	49
5 ^d	RhCl ₃ ·3H ₂ O (5 mol %), EtOH, 60 °C	>20:1	76
6 ^e	RhCl ₃ ·3H ₂ O (5 mol %), EtOH, 60 °C	>20:1	81

^aReaction conditions: alkene 1a (0.2 mmol), RhCl₃·3H₂O (5 or 10 mol %), solvent (0.5 mL). ^bThe ratios of 2a and 2b were determined by ¹H NMR analysis of the crude reaction products. ^cYields of isolated products are listed. ^dThe reaction was conducted in a 0.5 mmol scale. ^eThe reaction was conducted in a 3 mmol scale.

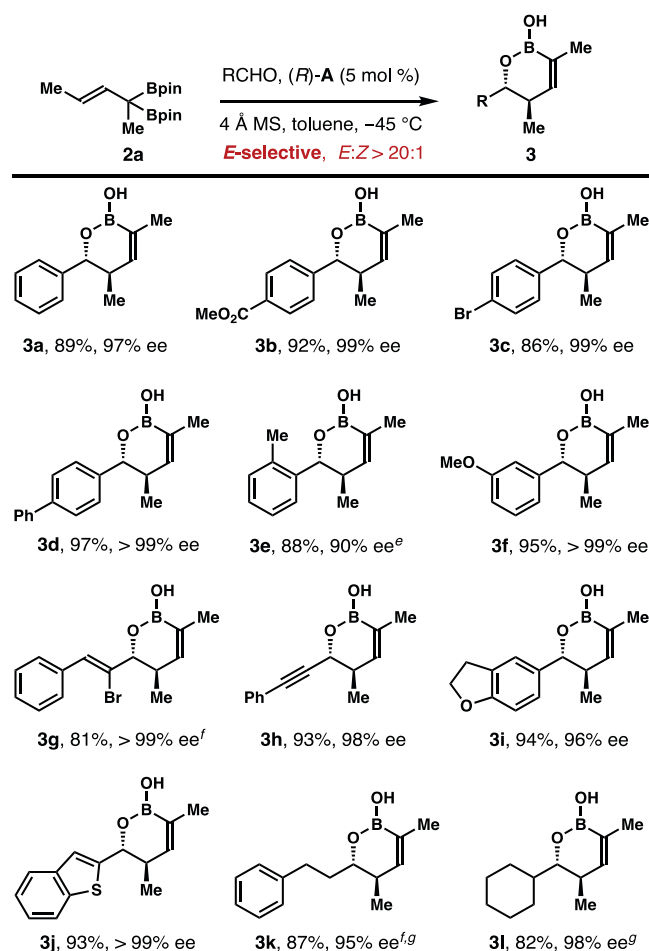
Scheme 2. Initial Allylation Studies with Reagent 2a

(shown with a blue arrow in TS-1) compared to the steric interactions between two Bpin groups (shown with a red arrow, TS-2).

Chiral phosphoric acid (R)-A (Scheme 2) has been reported to catalyze asymmetric allylboration of aldehydes by Antilla and co-workers.^{14,15} Following the seminal work, a variety of boron reagents have been shown to undergo chiral phosphoric acid-catalyzed enantioselective addition to aldehydes.^{16–18} The origin of enantioselection was elucidated by computational studies from the Houk and Goodman groups.¹⁹ We were intrigued whether the addition of phosphoric acid (R)-A to the reaction of benzaldehyde and reagent 2a could enhance stereoselectivity while maintaining a high level of enantiose-

lection. In the event, 5 mol % of phosphoric acid (R)-A was added to the reaction of 2a with benzaldehyde at -45 °C in toluene. Gratifyingly, product 3a was obtained in 89% yield with 97% ee and excellent *E*-selectivity (>20:1). A similar level of stereoselectivity and enantioselectivity was also achieved when phosphoric acid (R)-B was utilized as the catalyst under otherwise identical conditions (Scheme 2). These data indicate that the acid catalyst (R)-A or (R)-B enables highly face selective addition to benzaldehyde. More importantly, it also controls the stereoselectivity by positioning the more bulky α -Bpin group of 2a in a pseudoaxial orientation in the transition state and the less sterically demanding methyl group in a pseudoequatorial orientation (cf. TS-1 with the acid catalyst).

Substrate Scope for Phosphoric Acid-Catalyzed Crotylation with *E*-Crotylboronate 2a. The scope of aldehyde that undergoes enantioselective crotylation with boronate 2a was explored next. As summarized in Scheme 3,

Scheme 3. Scope of Aldehyde in Chiral Phosphoric Acid-Catalyzed *E*-Selective Allylation with Reagent 2a^{a–d}

^aAllylboronate 2a (0.13 mmol, 1.3 equiv), aldehyde (0.1 mmol, 1.0 equiv), (R)-A (5 mol %) toluene (0.3 mL), -45 °C. ^bYields of isolated products are listed. ^cEnantiomeric excess was determined by HPLC analysis using a chiral stationary phase of the product obtained from cross-coupling with PhI. ^dThe *E*/*Z* ratios were determined by ¹H NMR analysis of the crude reaction products. ^e10 mol % (R)-A was used. ^fThe ee was determined from the vinyl bromide product obtained from bromination of vinyl Bpin. ^g10 mol % catalyst (R)-B was used as the catalyst.

in the presence of 5 mol % of catalyst (R)-A, the reaction worked well with a broad scope of aldehydes. Allylation products **3** were obtained with excellent *E*-selectivities and enantiomeric excess. For instance, reactions of aromatic aldehydes with a substituent at the *para*-position provided products **3b–d** in 86–97% yields with >20:1 *E*-selectivity and 99% ee. The conversion was low for *ortho*-substituted aldehydes under standard conditions. The reaction rate was significantly enhanced by increasing the catalyst loading to 10 mol %, affording product **3e** in 88% yield with diminished enantioselectivity (90% ee). The reaction of *meta*-substituted aldehyde with **2a** proceeded smoothly to give product **3f** in 95% yield with >20:1 *E*-selectivity and 99% ee. α,β -Unsaturated aldehydes also reacted with crotylboronate **2a** to furnish products **3g,h** in 81–93% yields with >20:1 *E*-selectivities and 98–99% ee. Similar results were achieved with aldehydes that contain a heterocycle, and products **3i,j** were isolated in 93–94% yields with >20:1 *E*-selectivities and 96–99% ee. The reactions of aliphatic aldehydes with acid (R)-A as the catalyst gave products with moderate enantioselectivities (~85% ee). However, when phosphoric acid (R)-B was employed as the catalyst, allylated products were obtained with excellent enantioselectivities. In the presence of 10 mol % acid (R)-B, reactions of several representative aliphatic aldehydes with reagent **2a** furnished products **3k,l** in 82–87% yields with >20:1 *E*-selectivities and 95–98% ee.

Computational Studies. To gain further insights into the origins of observed *E*-selectivity and enantioselectivity of the chiral phosphoric acid-catalyzed crotylation with reagent **2a**, we applied density functional theory (DFT) calculations at the M06-2X/6-311+G(d,p)-SMD(toluene)//B3LYP-D3/6-31G(d) level of theory^{20–23} using Gaussian 09 with the ultrafine grid. The uncatalyzed allylboration of benzaldehyde with crotylboronate **2a** was studied first. As illustrated in Figure 2, transition state TS-3 leading to ($\pm$)-**3a** was found to

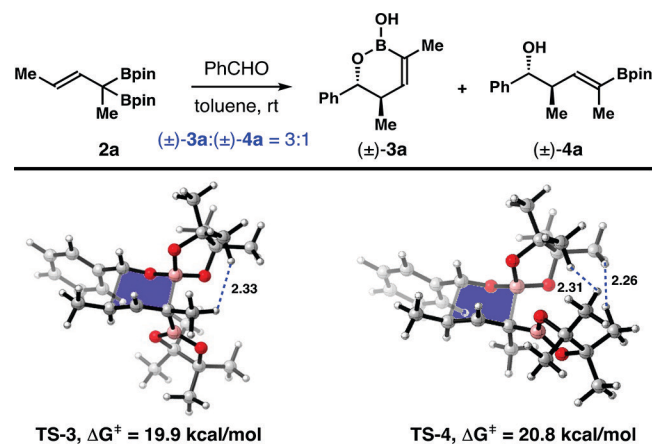


Figure 2. Optimized transition states TS-3 and TS-4 of noncatalyzed crotylation of benzaldehyde with crotylboronate **2a**. The bond lengths are in ångström.

be 0.9 kcal/mol lower in free energy than TS-4 that delivers ($\pm$)-**4a**. This finding is consistent with the experimentally observed selectivity, a 3:1 mixture of ($\pm$)-**3a** and ($\pm$)-**4a** favoring *E*-isomer **3a**. Examining the optimized geometries indicates that TS-3 is favored over TS-4 due to steric factors. In the disfavored transition state TS-4, the α -Bpin unit of **2a** occupies a pseudoequatorial position; both the H–H non-

bonding distances (2.31 and 2.26 Å) are shorter than those in TS-3 (2.33 Å), which indicates a larger repulsion between the two Bpin groups of reagent **2a** in TS-4 than that in TS-3. The energetics are in reasonable agreement with the experimentally obtained stereoselectivity.

Next, we explored chiral phosphoric acid (R)-A catalyzed asymmetric allylation of benzaldehyde with crotylboronate **2a**. As shown in Figure 3, transition state TS-6 has a pseudoequatorial placement of the Bpin group of reagent **2a** and gives alcohol **4a**. The competing transition state TS-5 that leads to product **3a** has a pseudoaxial placement of the α -Bpin group. DFT computations showed that the calculated free energy of TS-5 is 2.0 kcal/mol lower than that of TS-6. DFT calculations also indicate that, besides the repulsion between two Bpin groups of reagent **2a** in TS-6, the steric repulsion between the Bpin unit and the isopropyl groups of the acid catalyst (R)-A further destabilizes transition state TS-6. The nonbonding H–H distances are 2.32 and 2.32 Å (TS-6 in Figure 3). By contrast, with pseudoaxial orientation of the α -Bpin group, transition state TS-5 does not have such repulsive interactions. Further investigations revealed that to avoid significant steric clashes, the dihedral angle between 2,4,6-triisopropylphenyl group and the BINOL backbone of the catalyst is 93.1° in TS-6, which differs from the dihedral angle in the free catalyst (106.3°) by 13°, resulting in unfavorable catalyst distortion. In contrast, this dihedral angle in TS-5 is 104.2°, which is close to the one in the free catalyst (106.3°). We conclude that the unfavorable steric repulsions dictate the *E*-selectivity of chiral phosphoric acid-catalyzed crotylation with reagent **2a**.

As shown in the studies, chiral phosphoric acid (R)-A not only defines the stereoselectivity (*E*:*Z* > 20:1) of the crotylation by controlling the orientation of α -Bpin group in the transition state but also enables enantioselective addition of **2a** to aldehyde substrates. As shown in Figure 4, the calculated *re*-face attack in transition state TS-5 is more favorable energetically than *si*-face attack in TS-7 by 7.2 kcal/mol. The results explain the 97% ee observed experimentally. To better identify the factors that impact the enantioselectivity, optimized geometries of transition states TS-5 and TS-7 were compared. On the basis of the quadrant projection, the α -Bpin group is positioned in the narrow quadrant in TS-7, forcing the dihedral angle between 2,4,6-triisopropylphenyl group and the BINOL backbone of the catalyst to a significant distortion (120.0°) compared to optimized free catalyst (106.3°). By contrast, the α -Bpin group of **2a** occupies an empty quadrant in more favorable transition state TS-5. In addition, the steric repulsion between the 2,4,6-triisopropylphenyl substituent of acid catalyst (R)-A and the Bpin group of **2a** leads to a longer H-bond distance in TS-7 (1.53 and 2.29 Å) than those in TS-5 (1.48 and 2.11 Å) (Figure 4c). The shorter H-bond length results in a more compact transition state TS-5 compared to TS-7. Therefore, both the catalyst distortion and weaker H-bond interaction destabilize transition state TS-7, which leads to the exceptional enantioselectivity of the chiral phosphoric acid (R)-A catalyzed allylation with reagent **2a**.

Development of Z-Selective Crotylation with Reagent 2a. While the phosphoric acid-catalyzed aldehyde addition with reagent **2a** gave products with excellent *E*-selectivity, we were intrigued whether it is possible to achieve *Z*-selective allylation with **2a** in the presence of an appropriate Lewis acid.^{24–28} Scheme 4 shows the proposed model for

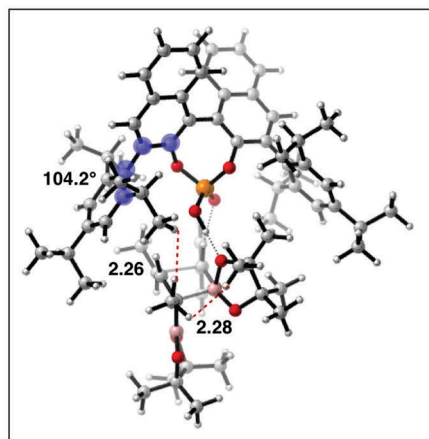
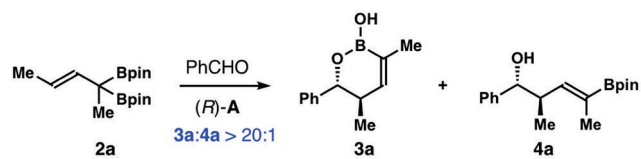
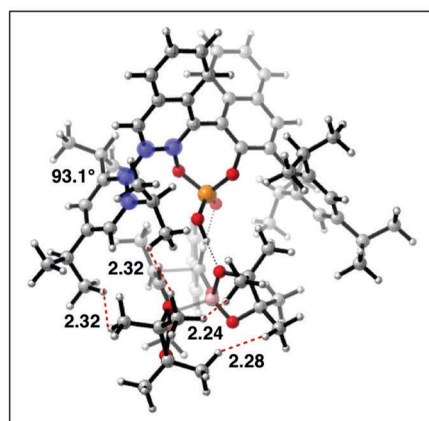
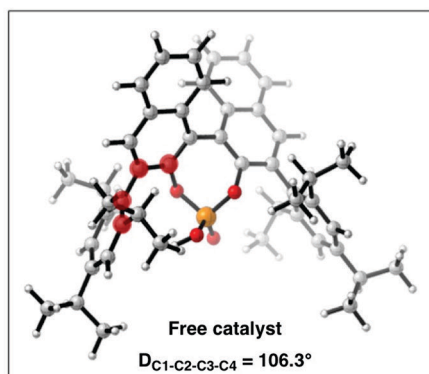
TS-5, $\Delta G^\ddagger = 11.8$ kcal/molTS-6, $\Delta G^\ddagger = 13.8$ kcal/mol

Figure 3. Optimized structures of transition states TS-5 and TS-6. The bond lengths are in Å.

Lewis acid-catalyzed allylation with reagent **2a** that may provide products with different stereochemical outcomes. There are two competing transition states TS-8 and TS-9 that lead to the formation of products **4a** and **3a**, respectively, when a Lewis acid coordinates to the lone pair of electrons of the oxygen atom shown in green. In TS-8, 1,3-*syn*-pentane interactions (shown with a blue arrow in TS-8) are developed

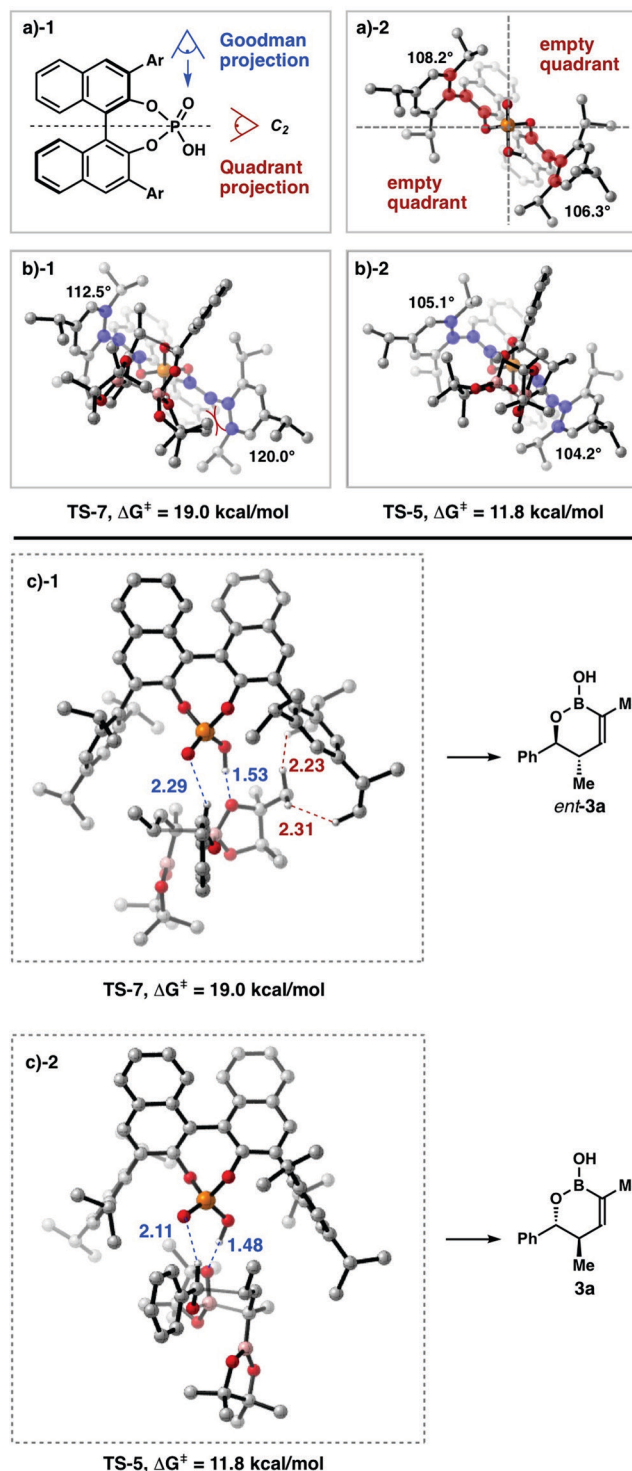
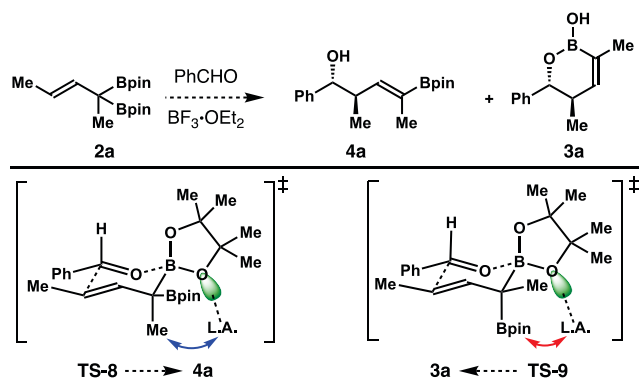


Figure 4. (a) Definition of Goodman and quadrant projections. (b) Quadrant projection of TS-7, TS-5, and catalyst (R)-A. (c) Goodman projection of TS-7 and TS-5. The bond lengths are in Å.

between the pseudoaxially positioned methyl group and the Lewis acid catalyst. In the competing transition state TS-9, similar 1,3-*syn*-pentane interactions also exist between the pseudoaxially oriented α -Bpin group and the Lewis acid (shown with a red arrow in TS-9). It is apparent that steric interactions in the latter case are much more severe. However, gauche interactions between the pinacol moiety on boron and the pseudoequatorially oriented substituent (the Bpin group in

Scheme 4. Transition State Analyses for Proposed Lewis Acid-Catalyzed Allylation with Reagent 2a



TS-8 or the methyl group in TS-9) should also be taken into account. Although the overall balance of *syn*-pentane and gauche interactions will ultimately determine the *E/Z*-selectivity of the reaction, we postulate that the *syn*-pentane interactions should be the dominant factor and TS-8 should be more favorable to give alcohol 4a as the major product.

Next, allylation studies of benzaldehyde with reagent 2a in the presence of a Lewis acid catalyst were conducted to probe whether product 3a or 4a will be formed preferentially. Benzaldehyde was treated with reagent 2a at $-78\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ in CH_2Cl_2 in the presence of 20 mol % of a Lewis acid catalyst. As shown in Figure 5, when $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ was utilized, the reaction

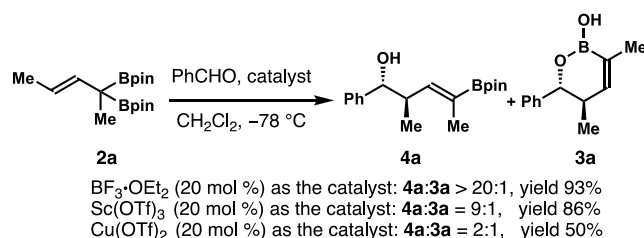
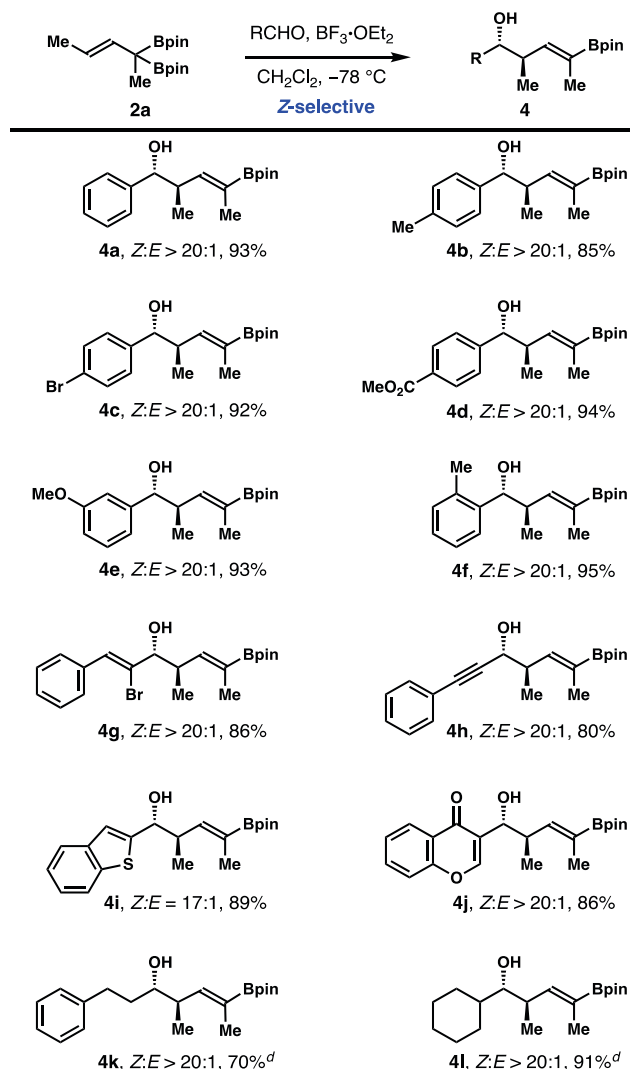


Figure 5. Results of Lewis acid-catalyzed allylation of benzaldehyde with reagent 2a.

provided alcohol 4a in 93% yield with >20:1 *Z*-selectivity. The formation of *E*-isomer 3a was not detected. Other Lewis acid catalysts such as $\text{Sc}(\text{OTf})_3$ and $\text{Cu}(\text{OTf})_2$ gave inferior results. To evaluate whether the origin of observed *Z*-selectivity is consistent with the proposed stereochemical model in Scheme 4, density functional theory (DFT) calculations at the M06-2X/6-311+G(d,p)-SMD(dichloromethane)//B3LYP-D3/6-31G(d) level of theory using Gaussian 09 with the ultrafine grid were conducted. However, the results from extensive computational studies with $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ catalyst coordinating to an oxygen atom of the BPin group cannot explain the observed *Z*-selectivity (see Supporting Information for details). We also considered the option that the $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ catalyst coordinates to the oxygen atom of the carbonyl group of benzaldehyde. Again, the computational results are not consistent with the experimental data (see Supporting Information for details). Therefore, the $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed aldehyde allylation with reagent 2a likely proceeds via a much more complicated mechanism. This will be the subject for future studies. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the inherent *E*-selectivity (3:1, Scheme 2) of the reaction can be reversed to excellent *Z*-

selectivity (>20:1) simply by employing an appropriate Lewis acid catalyst.

Substrate Scope for $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -Catalyzed Allylation with *E*-Crotylboron Reagent 2a. The scope of aldehyde that participated in $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed allylation with 2a was explored next. And the results are summarized in Scheme 5.

Scheme 5. Scope of Aldehyde in $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -Catalyzed *Z*-Selective Allylation with Reagent 2a^{a-c}

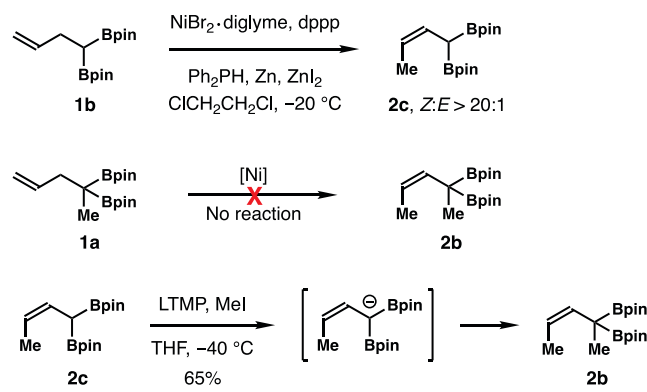
^aBoronate 2a (0.13 mmol, 1.3 equiv), aldehyde (0.1 mmol, 1.0 equiv), $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ (20 mol %), CH_2Cl_2 , $-78\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$. ^b*Z/E*-selectivities were determined by ^1H NMR analysis of the crude reaction products. ^cYields of isolated products are listed. ^dThe reactions were conducted at $-20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$.

Overall, the reaction worked well with a broad scope of aldehyde substrates. Aromatic aldehydes with different substitution patterns reacted with reagent 2a to provide homoallylic alcohols 4a–f in 85–95% yields with >20:1 *Z*-selectivities. The reactions of α,β -unsaturated aldehydes with boronate 2a occurred to give products 4g,h in 80–86% yields with >20:1 *Z*-selectivities. Aldehydes that contain a heterocycle are also suitable substrates for the reaction, furnishing products 4i,j in 86–89% yields with 17:1 to >20:1 stereoselectivities. The reaction rates of aliphatic aldehydes with 2a at $-78\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ were slow. Upon elevation of the reaction temperature to $-20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$

°C, the reaction was complete within 12 h, and alcohols **4k,l** were obtained in 70–91% yields with >20:1 *Z*-selectivities.

Development of *Z*-Crotylboronate **2b and *Z*-Selective Allylation with Reagent **2b**.** We recently showed that α -boryl-*Z*-crotylboronate **2c** can be prepared via Ni-catalyzed *Z*-selective olefin transposition from precursor **1b** (Scheme 6).²⁹

Scheme 6. Preparation of *Z*-Crotylboron Reagent **2b**

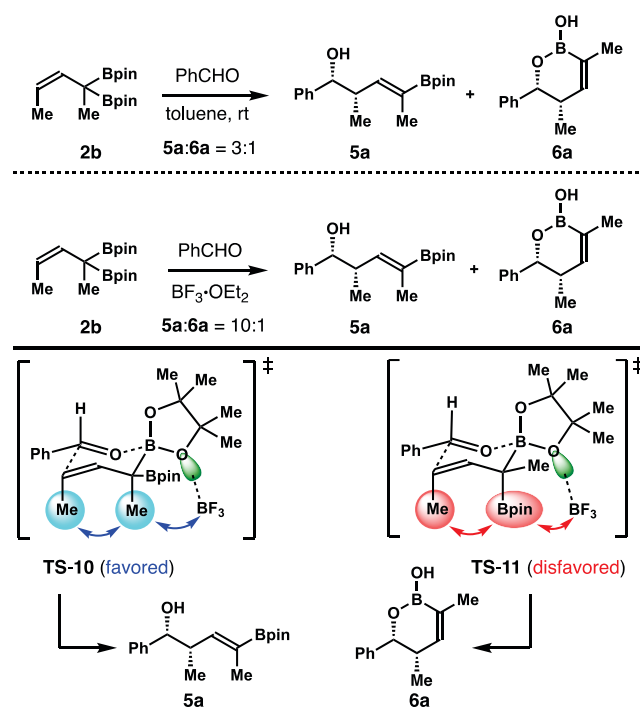


Under identical conditions, however, the reaction with **1a** did not occur. We were not able to generate any *Z*-crotylboron reagent **2b** through this approach even with extensive optimizations. We were pleased to discover that *Z*-reagent **2b** can be conveniently prepared from methylation of crotylboronate **2c** that was obtained via olefin transposition from **1b** (Scheme 6). Treatment of **2c** with LiTMP and MeI at −40 °C gave *Z*-crotylboron reagent **2b** in 65% isolated yield. It is worth noting that the *Z*-olefin geometry is conserved during the process. Erosion of the *Z*-olefin was not detected; presumably the anion generated from deprotonation is localized at the carbon atom due to electronic stabilization provided by the neighboring two boron atoms (the boron α -anion effect).³⁰

After securing of reagent **2b**, allylation studies of aldehydes with **2b** were carried out. As shown in Scheme 7, the reaction of reagent **2b** with benzaldehyde in the absence of any catalyst provided a 3:1 mixture of products **5a** and **6a**, favoring the *Z*-isomer **5a**. In the presence of 20 mol % $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$, the *Z*-selectivity was improved to 10:1, and *Z*-isomer **5a** was isolated in 76% yield (Scheme 7).

The proposed stereochemical model to explain the observed *Z*-selectivity of this reaction is shown in Scheme 7. Between the two competing transition states **TS-10** and **TS-11** that lead to the formation of **5a** and **6a**, **TS-11** suffers $A^{1,3}$ allylic strain³¹ between the methyl and α -Bpin groups of reagent **2b** as well as the *syn*-pentane interactions between the BF_3 catalyst and pseudoaxially positioned Bpin group of reagent **2b**. By contrast, $A^{1,3}$ allylic strain between the two methyl groups of **2b** and *syn*-pentane interactions between the BF_3 catalyst and axially positioned methyl group of **2b** are developed in transition state **TS-10**. The overall steric repulsion in **TS-10** is considerably less severe than that in **TS-11** because of the larger pseudoaxially positioned Bin group in **TS-11**. Therefore, the reaction of benzaldehyde with reagent **2b** in the presence of $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ produced the major *Z*-isomer **5a** that is derived from the favored transition state **TS-10**. DFT computational studies on BF_3 -catalyzed crotylation with reagent **2b** were also conducted. However, similar to the case of **2a**, the computational results cannot explain experimental data (see the

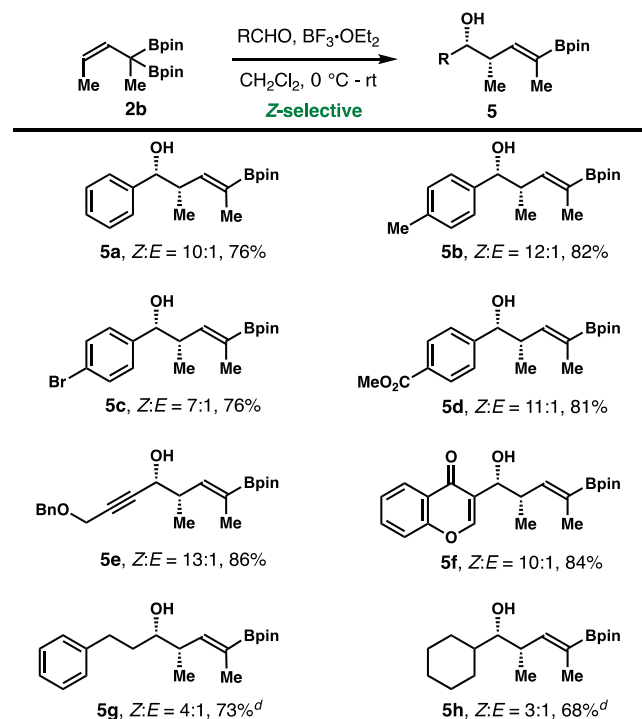
Scheme 7. Transition State Analyses for Allylation with **2b**



Supporting Information for details). Again, a different reaction mechanism might be operational for the $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed allylation with *Z*-reagent **2b**.

Substrate Scope for $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -Catalyzed *Z*-Selective Allylation with Reagent **2b.** Scheme 8 summarizes the scope of aldehyde that reacted with crotylboronate **2b** in the presence of $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$. The reaction worked reasonably well with several representative aldehyde substrates, including aromatic, α,β -unsaturated aldehydes, and aldehydes that contain a heterocycle. Products **5a–f** were isolated in 76–86% yields with (7–13):1 *Z*-selectivities. Reaction with aliphatic aldehydes did not proceed under the developed conditions. In the absence of $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$, however, the reactions of aliphatic aldehydes with **2b** did occur at 60 °C, and alcohols **5g,h** were obtained in 68–73% yields with moderate *Z*-selectivities. In general, the rates of allylation with *Z*-reagent **2b** are slower than the rates with *E*-reagent **2a** likely owing to the additional $A^{1,3}$ allylic strain between the two methyl groups involved in **TS-10** (Scheme 7). We also attempted catalytic asymmetric allylation reactions of benzaldehyde with reagent **2b** with either acid (*R*)-**A** or (*R*)-**B** as the catalyst. However, the reactions did not proceed to give any desired product. Currently we are evaluating other catalysts for enantioselective aldehyde addition with reagent **2b**.

Stereodifferentiation Reactions with Enantioenriched Aldehydes. Double stereodifferentiation reaction is an important approach to generate diastereomeric products from enantioenriched starting materials.³² To probe whether the developed catalytic conditions could be used to selectively form diastereomeric products by using two enantiomeric catalysts, reactions of enantioenriched aldehydes with boronate **2a** were examined. As shown in Scheme 9, the reaction of (*S*)-citronellal (**7**) with **2a** in the presence of 10 mol % of phosphoric acid catalyst (*R*)-**B** afforded product **8a** in 64% yield with >20:1 diastereoselectivity and *E*-selectivity. A similar diastereoselectivity and *E*-selectivity (>20:1) were observed

Scheme 8. Scope of Aldehyde in $\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$ -Catalyzed Allylation with Z-Crotylboronate **2b**^{a-c}

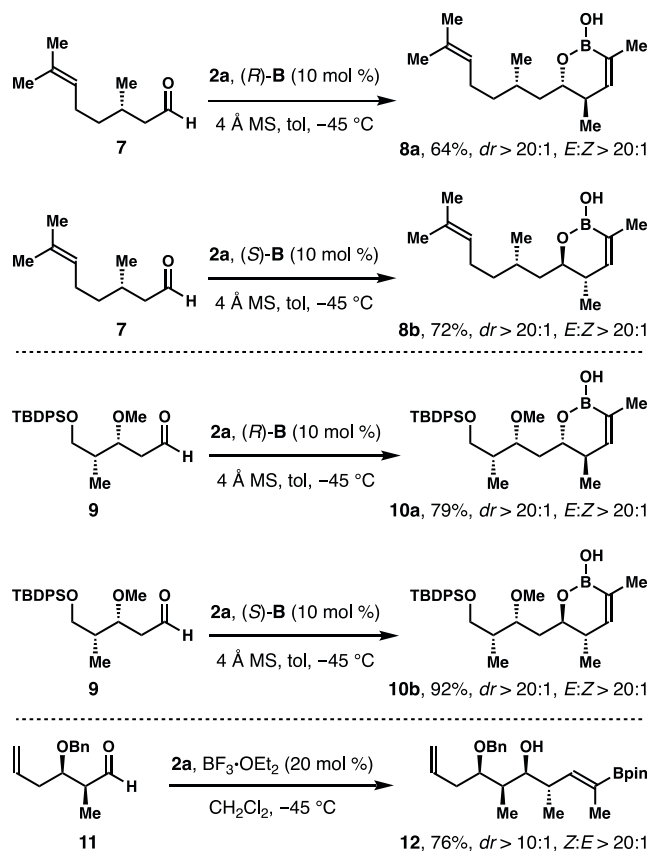
^aCrotylboronate **2b** (0.13 mmol, 1.3 equiv), aldehyde (0.1 mmol, 1.0 equiv), $\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$ (20 mol %), CH_2Cl_2 , $0\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ to rt. ^bDiastereoselectivities were determined by ^1H NMR analysis of the crude reaction products. ^cYields of isolated products are listed. ^dThe reactions were conducted in toluene at $60\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ without $\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$.

when acid catalyst (S)-**B** was used, and product **8b** was isolated in 72% yield. Studies with structurally more elaborated aldehyde **9** were also conducted. The reaction between **9** and boronate **2a** with (R)-**B** as the catalyst gave product **10a** in 79% yield. When the enantiomeric catalyst (S)-**B** was used, the reaction of **9** with reagent **2a** furnished product **10b** in 92% yield. In both cases, the reactions proceeded with >20:1 diastereoselectivities and E-selectivities. It is apparent that these double stereodifferentiation reactions proceeded under complete catalyst control to give products with high diastereoselectivities and E-selectivities.

In addition, diastereoselective reactions of enantioenriched aldehydes with reagents **2a** and **2b** were conducted. As shown in Scheme 9, $\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed allylation of aldehyde **11** with reagent **2a** gave product **12** in 76% yield with >20:1 Z-selectivity and high diastereoselectivity. The reaction of aldehyde **13** with reagent **2b** gave a complex mixture under the $\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed conditions, presumably due to the ornately functionalized nature of aldehyde **13**. However, the reaction of **13** with boronate **2b** proceeded without $\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{OEt}_2$ at $60\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ to give product **14** in 70% yield with >20:1 diastereoselectivity and a synthetically useful Z-selectivity (3:1).

Product Derivatization. The reactions of reagents **2** with aldehyde substrates produce homoallylic alcohol products bearing a vinyl Bpin group that can participate in a variety of subsequent transformations (Scheme 10). For instance, CuBr_2 -mediated bromination of **4a** provided vinyl bromide **15** in 82% yield. Vinyl bromide **15** should undergo transition-metal-catalyzed cross-coupling reactions with various aryl or vinyl

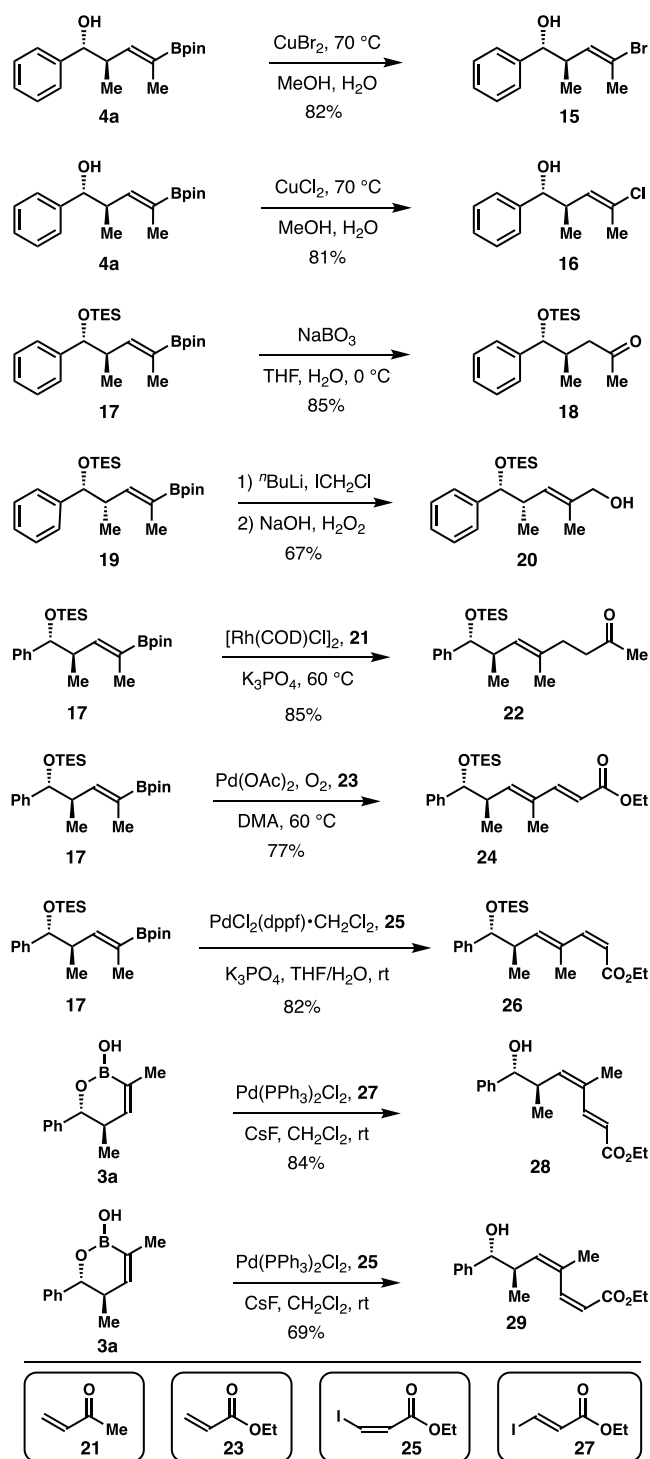
Scheme 9. Brønsted Acid-Catalyzed Double Stereodifferentiation Reactions with Enantioenriched Aldehydes



nucleophiles. Under similar conditions, vinyl chloride **16** was obtained in 81% yield when CuCl_2 was used. Oxidation of **17** with NaBO_3 gave ketone **18** in 85% yield. Compound **19** underwent a homologation–oxidation sequence to afford alcohol **20** in 67% yield.³³ On the other hand, the vinyl Bpin group in the products can be used directly for cross-coupling reactions to form a carbon–carbon bond. For example, Rh-catalyzed addition of vinyl boronate **17** to methyl vinyl ketone (**21**) generated ketone **22** in 85% yield.³⁴ Pd-catalyzed oxidative Heck reaction of **17** with ethyl acrylate (**23**) gave (E,E)-diene **24** in 77% yield.³⁵ Pd-catalyzed Suzuki coupling of **17** with (Z)-vinyl iodide **25** furnished (E,Z)-diene **26** in 82% yield.³⁶ Product **3a** can also be utilized directly for cross-coupling reactions. Suzuki coupling of **3a** with (E)-vinyl iodide **27** gave (Z,E)-diene **28** in 84% yield. Under similar conditions, (Z,Z)-diene **29** was obtained in 69% yield from the coupling reaction with (Z)-vinyl iodide **25**. Therefore, all four isomers of dienes were generated in high yields by employing different cross-coupling partners.³⁷ These studies highlight the versatile reactivities of allylation products (**3**, **4**, and **5**) to produce homoallylic alcohols with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene.

Total Synthesis of Salinipyrones A and B. To further demonstrate the synthetic utility of the method, total syntheses

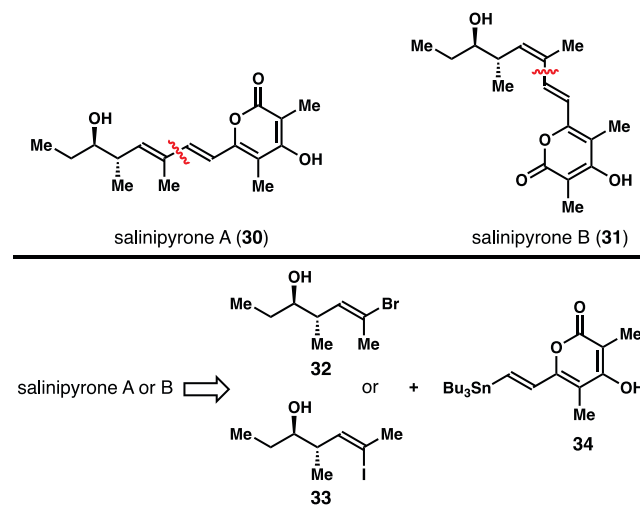
Scheme 10. Derivatization of Reaction Products



of salinipyrones A (30) and B(31) were pursued.³⁸ As shown in Scheme 11, we envisioned that salinipyrene A could be assembled via a Stille coupling of vinyl bromide 32 with vinyl stannane 34. A similar reaction between vinyl iodide 33 and vinyl stannane 34 should provide salinipyrene B. Vinyl halide 32 or 33 should be readily available via bromination or iodination of the corresponding vinyl boron precursor that can be obtained from allylation with crotylboronate 2a.

Syntheses of salinipyrones A (30) and B(31) using this strategy are shown in Scheme 12. Asymmetric allylation of propionaldehyde with reagent 2a in the presence of 10 mol %

Scheme 11. Retrosynthetic Analysis for the Syntheses of Salinipyrones A and B

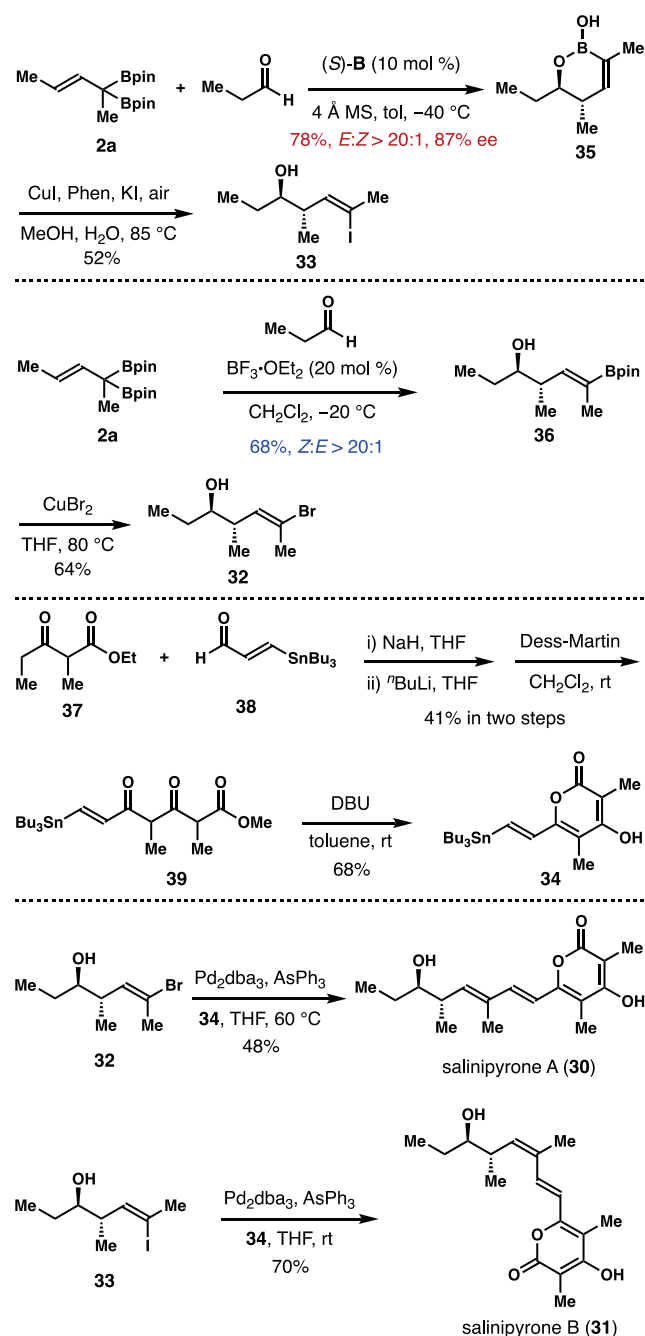


of chiral phosphoric acid (*S*)-B gave product 35 in 78% yield with 87% ee and >20:1 *E*-selectivity. CuI-mediated iodination of 35 provided *Z*-vinyl iodide 33 in 52% yield.³⁹ In parallel, BF₃·OEt₂-catalyzed allylation of propionaldehyde with reagent 2a furnished homoallylic alcohol 36 in 68% yield with >20:1 *Z*-selectivity. The vinyl Bpin unit of alcohol 36 was converted into *E*-vinyl bromide under the CuBr₂-mediated bromination conditions, affording product 32 in 64% yield. The synthesis of vinyl stannane 34 commenced from aldol reaction of β-ketoester 37⁴⁰ and aldehyde 38.⁴¹ The resulting aldol adduct was subjected to Dess–Martin oxidation⁴² to deliver product 39 in 41% yield over two steps. Treatment of 39 with DBU in toluene generated vinyl stannane 34 in 68% yield. Pd-catalyzed Stille coupling⁴³ of vinyl stannane 34 with vinyl bromide 32 at 60 °C gave salinipyrene A (30) in 48% yield. Similarly, salinipyrene B (31) was obtained in 70% yield from the Pd-catalyzed cross-coupling of vinyl iodide 33 and vinyl stannane 34 at ambient temperature. The spectroscopic data of synthetic salinipyrones A and B were in excellent agreement with the data previously reported for the two natural products.³⁸

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, we developed novel α,α-disubstituted *E*- and *Z*-crotylboronate reagents from readily available starting materials. Chiral Brønsted acid-catalyzed asymmetric allylation of aldehydes with *E*-crotylboron reagent 2a gave (*E*)-*anti*-1,2-oxaborinan-3-enes with excellent enantioselectivities and *E*-selectivities. The results demonstrate the dual-function of the chiral Brønsted acid catalysts: enhance the diastereochemical control while maintaining high enantioselectivity. DFT computation studies establish the origins of observed enantio- and stereoselectivity of chiral Brønsted acid-catalyzed asymmetric allylation. With BF₃·OEt₂ catalysis, the reactions of aldehydes with 2a proceeded to give δ-boryl-*anti*-homoallylic alcohols with excellent *Z*-selectivities. The inherent *E*-selectivity in the noncatalyzed reaction with 2a is reversed by simply employing BF₃·OEt₂ as the catalyst. BF₃·OEt₂-catalyzed allyl addition with *Z*-crotylboron reagent 2b gave δ-boryl-*syn*-homoallylic alcohols with good *Z*-selectivities. The presence of BF₃·OEt₂ catalyst enhances the *Z*-selectivities in these reactions. Stereochemical models for both BF₃·OEt₂-catalyzed allylations with reagents 2a and 2b are proposed to rationalize

Scheme 12. Total Synthesis of Salinipyrones A and B



the observed *Z*-selectivities. DFT calculations of $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$ -catalyzed allylations were also conducted, although the prediction is different from the experimental results. Such discrepancy suggests a much more complex scenario is involved in these processes. This approach provides a general solution to access homoallylic alcohols with a stereodefined trisubstituted alkene unit. Such structural entities are challenging to synthesize with prior allylation chemistry. Moreover, the reaction products contain a vinyl boron unit that can undergo a variety of transformations to form intermediates that are highly valuable for the syntheses of polyketide natural products. The synthetic utility is further demonstrated by total syntheses of salinipyrones A and B. Other synthetic applications will be reported in due course.

■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/jacs.0c04107>.

Experimental procedures and spectra for all new compounds (PDF)

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

■ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Financial support provided by Auburn University (to M.C.) is gratefully acknowledged. We are grateful to the National Science Foundation (Grant CHE-1764328 to K.N.H.) for financial support of this work. Calculations were performed on the Hoffman2 cluster at UCLA and the Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment (XSEDE), which is supported by the National Science Foundation (Grant OCI-1053575).

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