

Enantioselective Copper-Catalyzed Borylative Amidation of Allenes

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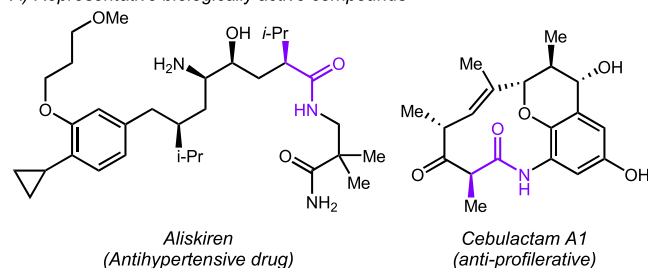


Supporting Information

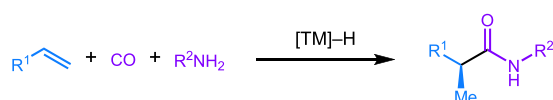
ABSTRACT: An approach for the copper-catalyzed synthesis of enantioenriched amides bearing an α -stereogenic center is disclosed. This method involves the addition of an allyl copper species to an isocyanate and allows access to α -substituted chiral amides in high yields and high-to-excellent enantioselectivities. The utility of α -vinyl β -boryl amides in synthesis is highlighted by the diversification of products to afford highly useful scaffolds. DFT calculations reveal that the catalyst preferentially coordinates to the oxygen of the isocyanate. Enantiocontrol arises from the steric repulsion between the boryl group and the stereodirecting phenyl of the chiral ligand.

Enantiopure amides containing α -stereogenic centers constitute an essential class of bioactive structural motifs

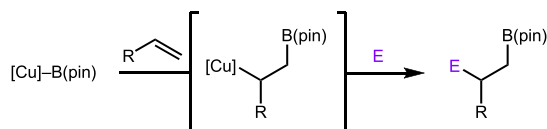
A) Representative biologically active compounds



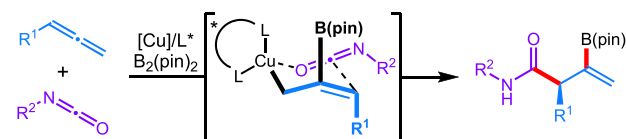
B) Asymmetric hydroaminocarbonylation, [Cu] Wu (2020), [Pd] Guan (2021)



C) Borylative functionalization of unsaturated substrates



D) This research: Cu-catalyzed borylative amidation of allenenes



• boroamidation • aliphatic amides • high yields • high enantioselectivity

Figure 1. (A) Representative biologically active compounds containing α -substituted chiral amides. (B) Asymmetric hydroaminocarbonylation. (C) Copper-catalyzed borylative reaction. (D) Our strategy to build α -aliphatic substituted chiral amides via a process that features a six-membered transition state.

(Figure 1A).¹ Current research efforts have focused on the development of catalytic approaches for the synthesis of amides in an asymmetric fashion. Enantiomerically enriched amide scaffolds containing an α -stereogenic center can be accessed by a variety of methods, including the α -functionalization of amides,² C–H insertion of carbenoids,³ and hydrogenation/hydroboration of α,β -unsaturated amides.⁴ Yet, the efficient asymmetric synthesis of chiral amides remains challenging.

As an alternative approach, aminocarbonylation has attracted significant attention, enabling the direct transformation of simple alkenes, amines, and carbon monoxide (as well as CO surrogates) to valuable amides via transition metal catalysis.⁵ While carboxylic acid and ester derivatives containing an α -stereogenic center may be accessed by asymmetric hydroxycarbonylation and alkoxycarbonylation,⁵ the enantioselective aminocarbonylation of alkenes for the synthesis of α -substituted chiral amides remains relatively underdeveloped. Recent efforts have led to the development of copper- and palladium-catalyzed aminocarbonylation strategies to furnish α -substituted amides in an asymmetric manner (Figure 1B).⁶ Palladium-catalyzed methods for the enantioselective synthesis of chiral amides from aliphatic alkenes suffer from limited substrate scopes, low enantioselectivities, and moderate regioselectivities.^{6b} As such, the direct synthesis of α -substituted chiral amides from aliphatic unsaturated substrates requires further development.

Since their discovery, copper-catalyzed borylative reactions represent an efficient strategy for preparing multifunctional building blocks from unsaturated substrates and electrophiles.⁷ Although the Cu–B intermediate species can react with both

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the unsaturated substrate and the electrophile, the majority of approaches developed to date proceed through the migratory insertion of unsaturated substrates to the Cu–B species, followed by the interception of the Cu–C species by an electrophile (Figure 1C). In this regard, asymmetric approaches to access chiral amides featuring an α -stereogenic center have been demonstrated using aryl allenes as the unsaturated substrate.⁸

Due to the prevalence of aliphatic groups at the α -position of amide motifs in biologically active molecules, we sought to develop an asymmetric method to directly access α -aliphatic substituted amides. The asymmetric addition of an allyl copper species to electrophiles has emerged as an attractive strategy to construct versatile alkenyl boronates.^{9,10} To the best of our knowledge, an enantioselective approach for the synthesis of α -aliphatic substituted amides remains unreported. Herein, we disclose a highly enantioselective copper-catalyzed borylative amidation of aryl and alkyl allenes using alkyl isocyanates to access α -vinyl β -boryl amides containing an α -stereogenic center in high yield and enantioselectivity (Figure 1D).

We began our investigation of this copper borylative amidation process using cyclohexyl allene **1a** and benzyl isocyanate **2a** (Table 1). Notably, aliphatic isocyanates are typically less reactive electrophiles compared to aryl isocyanate counterparts.^{1c} In 2018, we reported the asymmetric synthesis of α -alkyl amidoboronates¹¹ using planar chiral *N*-heterocyclic carbene (NHC)–Cu complexes.¹² When our chiral NHC–Cu complexes were used, the addition of the NHC–Cu–B(pin) species to imines afforded α -alkyl amidoboronates. Based on this initial result, we hypothesized that this Cu–B(pin) species could be intercepted by the unsaturated substrate **1a** and subsequently reacted with isocyanate **2a** to produce the desired product **3a**. A preliminary screen investigated the use of our planar chiral mono- and bidentate NHC salts/copper complexes, but these were unsuccessful in providing the desired product **3a** (entry 2, Table 1; see Table S1).

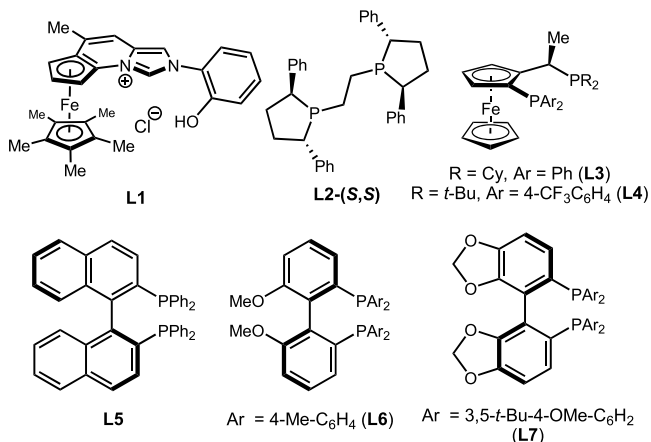
To our delight, we found that Cu(OAc)₂ and L2-(S,S) delivered the branched product **3a** in 78% yield and 92:8 enantiomeric ratio (e.r.) at 40 °C (entry 1, Table 1). The use of other bisphosphines provided no improvement in yields and enantioselectivities (entries 3–6). A significant drop in yield was observed using other alkoxide bases (entries 8–11). However, the use of Et₂O as a cosolvent improved the yield and maintained the enantioselectivity (entries 12–15).

The asymmetric borylative amidation of aryl and alkyl substituted allenes **1** with cyclohexyl isocyanate **2a** was explored under the optimal conditions (Table 2). A broad range of α -vinyl β -boryl aliphatic amides containing an α -stereogenic center were produced with excellent levels of enantiopurity. The reaction of aryl allenes featuring electron-donating and -withdrawing groups at the *para*-(3c,d), *meta*-(3e,f), and *ortho*-positions (3g–i) were found to be suitable, and products were isolated in good-to-high yields and exceptional enantiomeric ratio.

A dioxolane and 1-naphthyl group were tolerated as well, furnishing the enantioenriched 3j,k. Products featuring sterically large aryl groups (3g–i,k) were accessed with excellent enantiomeric ratios. It should be noted that the reaction was compatible with allenes featuring simple aliphatic groups (3l,m), silyl ethers (3n), esters (3o), chlorides (3p), and phenyls, (3q) and the products were isolated with high-to-excellent yield and high er. The absolute configuration of the

Table 1. Optimization of Reaction Conditions for the Cu-Catalyzed Borylative Amidation of Allenes^a

entry	variation of standard condition	yield (%) ^b	e.r. (%) ^c
1	none	78 ^d	92:8
2	L1 instead of L2-(S,S)	—	nd
3	L3 instead of L2-(S,S)	77	79:21
4	L4 instead of L2-(S,S)	52	92:8
5	L5 instead of L2-(S,S)	66	91:9
6	L6 instead of L2-(S,S)	42	90:10
7	L7 instead of L2-(S,S)	—	nd
8	KOtBu instead of NaOtBu	—	nd
9	LiOtBu instead of NaOtBu	17	92:8
10	NaOMe instead of NaOtBu	—	nd
11	NaOtAm instead of NaOtBu	50	92:8
12	PhMe instead of PhMe/Hexane/Et ₂ O	42	92:8
13	THF instead of PhMe/Hexane/Et ₂ O	34	89:11
14	Et ₂ O instead of PhMe/Hexane/Et ₂ O	73	86:14
15	Hexane instead of PhMe/Hexane/Et ₂ O	45	92:8

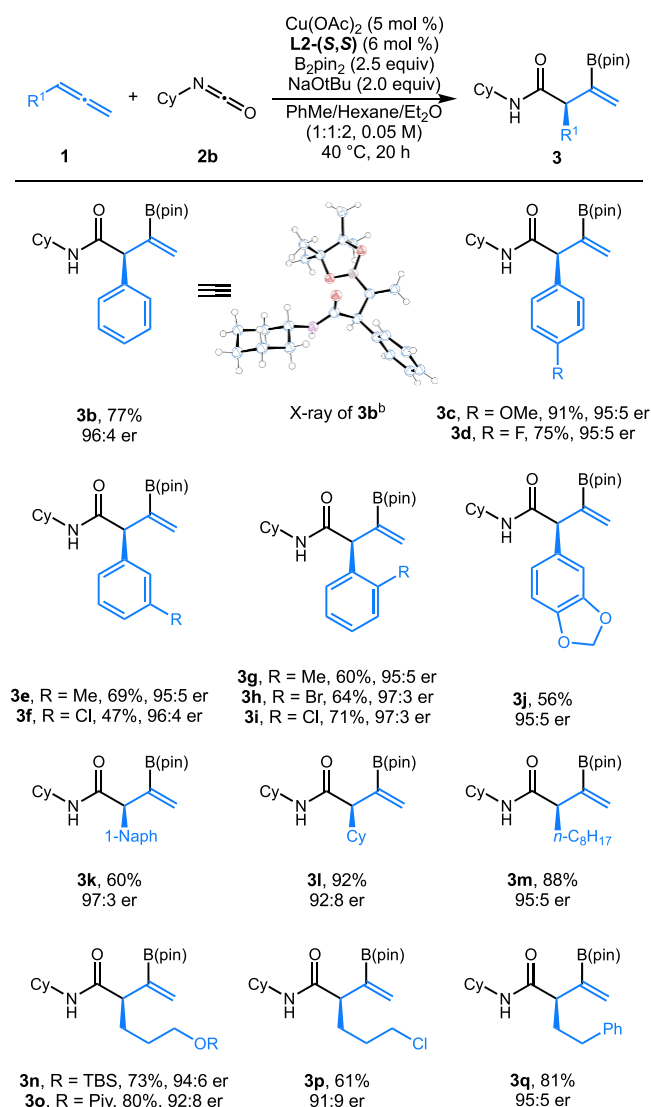


^aReactions performed with **1a** (0.2 mmol), **2a** (0.6 mmol), B₂(pin)₂ (0.5 mmol), base (0.4 mmol), Cu(OAc)₂ (5 mol %), Ligand (6 mol %), toluene/hexane/Et₂O (1:1:2, 0.05 M). Absolute configuration of **3a** determined based on X-ray crystallographic analysis of **3b**.¹³ ^b¹H NMR yield with 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as internal standard. ^cE.r. determined by chiral-phase SFC analysis. ^dYield of isolated product.

major enantiomer (*S* for **3b**) was determined by X-ray crystallographic analysis.¹³

We next explored the scope with regard to isocyanates **2** in the asymmetric borylative amidation (Table 3). While simple alkyl isocyanates afforded the corresponding products (**3r–3t**), an isocyanate bearing a 4-methoxy gave the product **3u** in high yield but with diminished enantiomeric ratio. Highly enantiopure aliphatic secondary amides proceeded efficiently with isocyanates featuring silyl ether and an allyl isocyanate to yield products **3v** and **3w**, respectively. Furthermore, an isocyanate containing a stereogenic center was efficiently transformed to the amide products (**3x,y**) when either chiral ligands (L2-*S,S*, and L2-*R,R*) were employed, indicating that the enantiocontrol is ultimately governed by the chiral catalysts.

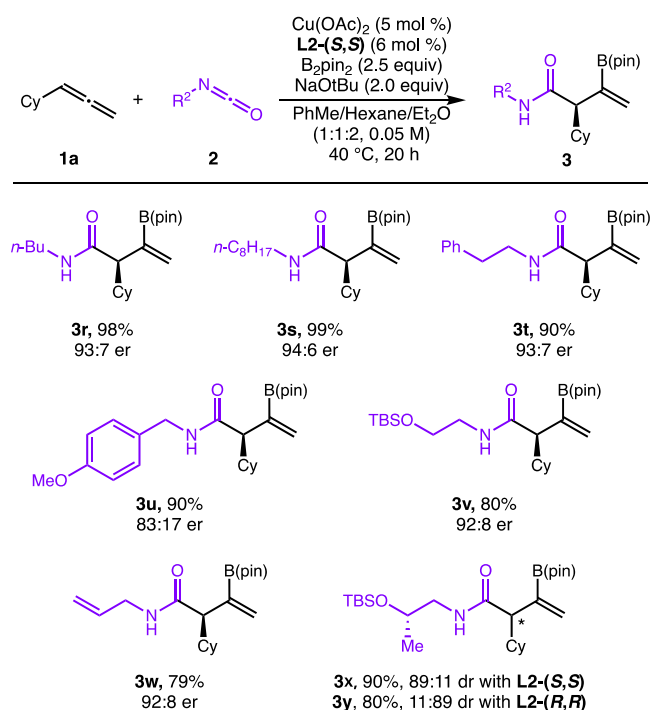
We further investigated the possibility of other types of allenes. An attempt to access a quaternary stereogenic center using a 1,1-disubstituted allene was successful, providing **4a** in

Table 2. Evaluation of Allene Substrate Scope^a

^aReactions performed at a 0.2 mmol scale. See the [Supporting Information](#) for details. Yields reported for isolated product. E.r. determined by chiral-phase SFC analysis. ^bReference 13.

28% yield and 72:28 er (Scheme 1A). However, when employing racemic 1,3-disubstituted allene **1ab**, product **4b** was obtained in high yield, excellent regio- and stereoselectivity (>20:1 E), and excellent enantioselectivity. The reaction of **1ab** with benzyl isocyanate afforded **4c** in 36% yield and 95:5 er, whereas product **4d** was obtained from racemic cyclic allene in somewhat diminished enantioselectivity. The reaction of racemic 1,3-disubstituted allenes using copper catalysts to provide enantioenriched products is still underdeveloped,^{14–16} and the mechanistic rationale behind these enantioconvergent transformations is currently under investigation (Scheme 1B).¹⁷

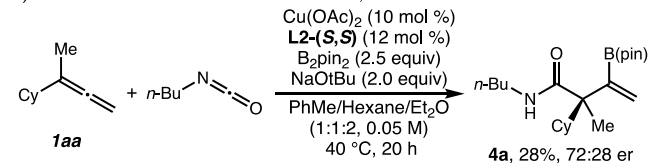
A plausible catalytic cycle for the borylative amidation of allenes can be proposed based on previous as well as our own computational studies (Figure 2).^{18,19} Initially, catalytically active bisphosphine ligated-copper alkoxide **A** is generated *in situ* via the reaction of Cu(OAc)₂, L2, and NaOtBu.²⁰ Subsequent transmetalation with B₂(pin)₂ affords copper-B(pin) species **B** (step 1). Intermediate **B** reacts regio- and

Table 3. Evaluation of the Isocyanate Scope^a

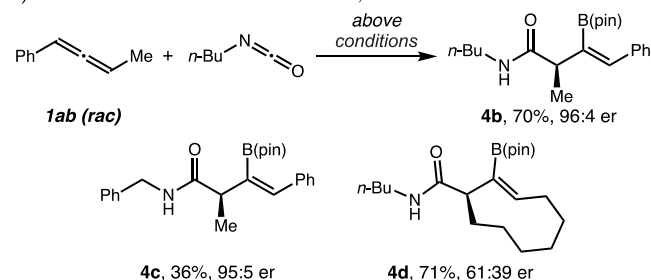
^aReactions performed at a 0.2 mmol scale. See the [Supporting Information](#) for details. Yields reported for isolated product. E.r. determined by chiral-phase SFC analysis.

Scheme 1. Extension of Substrate Scope

A) Enantioselective amidation reaction of 1,1-disubstituted allene



B) Enantioselective amidation reaction of 1,3-disubstituted allenes



chemoselectively with allene **1** to furnish allyl copper intermediate **C** (step 2). **C** undergoes γ -addition (step 3) rather than α -addition to the isocyanate via six-membered transition state **D** (step 4). Regeneration of copper alkoxide **A** provides the desired α -vinyl β -boryl aliphatic amide containing an α -substituted stereogenic center (**3**, step 5).

We engaged DFT (PBE²¹-D3BJ²²/6-31G*²³/SMD²⁴ (Et₂O) at 313 K) to elucidate the origins of enantioselectivity for the borylative amidation, specifically for the isocyanate addition (**D**, Figure 2). We explored the α - vs γ -addition processes and the impact of *E/Z* configuration of the allyl-Cu species as well as Cu-N vs -O coordination in the key enantiodetermining step.¹⁸ The lowest energy transition

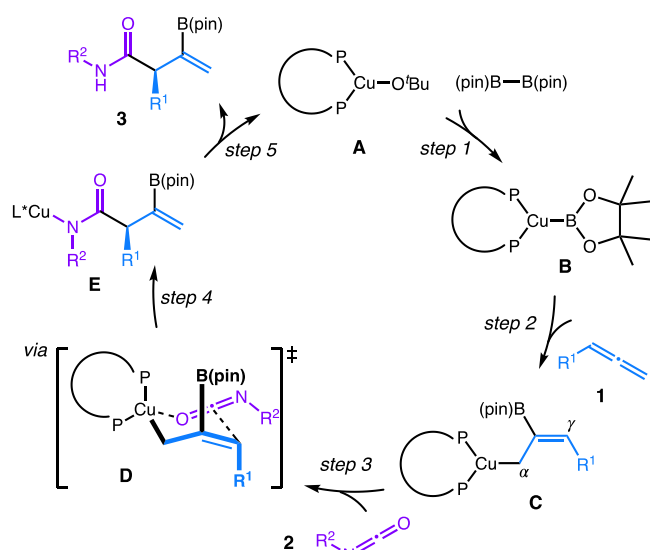


Figure 2. Proposed catalytic cycle.

structures are shown in Figure 3. α -Addition was found not to be a stationary point on the potential energy surface. The *Z* allyl transition structures were universally more stable than the *A*-1,2-strained *E* structures.¹⁸ Surprisingly, transition structures

bearing Cu–O coordination was energetically similar to the sterically congested Cu–N (**Major-Cu-O-(S)-TS** vs **Major-Cu-N-(S)-TS**, $\Delta G^\ddagger = 0.3$ kcal/mol; Figure 3A). This was a sharp contrast to the minor transition structures, where, as expected, the congested Cu–N coordinated transition structure (**Minor-Cu-N-(R)-TS**) was significantly higher in energy than the Cu–O (**Minor-Cu-O-(R)-TS**) ($\Delta G^\ddagger = 2.2$ vs 7.0 kcal/mol, respectively). The computed enantioselectivity of 2.2 kcal/mol for the minor product arising from **Minor-Cu-O-(R)-TS** agreed well with the experimental selectivity of 2.4 kcal/mol (96:4 e.r., **3b**, Table 2). To elucidate the origins of the observed enantioselectivity, we engaged in a quadrant steric map analysis (Figure 3C). The Cu–L2-(*S,S*) complex has clearly defined quadrants where approach of the substrate is blocked (Figure 3C, center). The **Major-TS-(S)**, which leads to the experimentally observed (*S*)-product, experiences minimal steric interaction with the catalyst system (Right, Figure 3C). In contrast, the boryl group of the **Minor-TS-(R)** directly experiences a destabilizing steric repulsion with the stereodirecting phenyl group. Specifically, this interaction is between the proximal boryl oxygen and the *ortho*-hydrogen of the stereodirecting phenyl group (**Minor-Cu-O-(R)-TS**, Figure 3B).

Subsequently, synthetic derivatizations were carried out to further demonstrate the utility of this asymmetric borylative

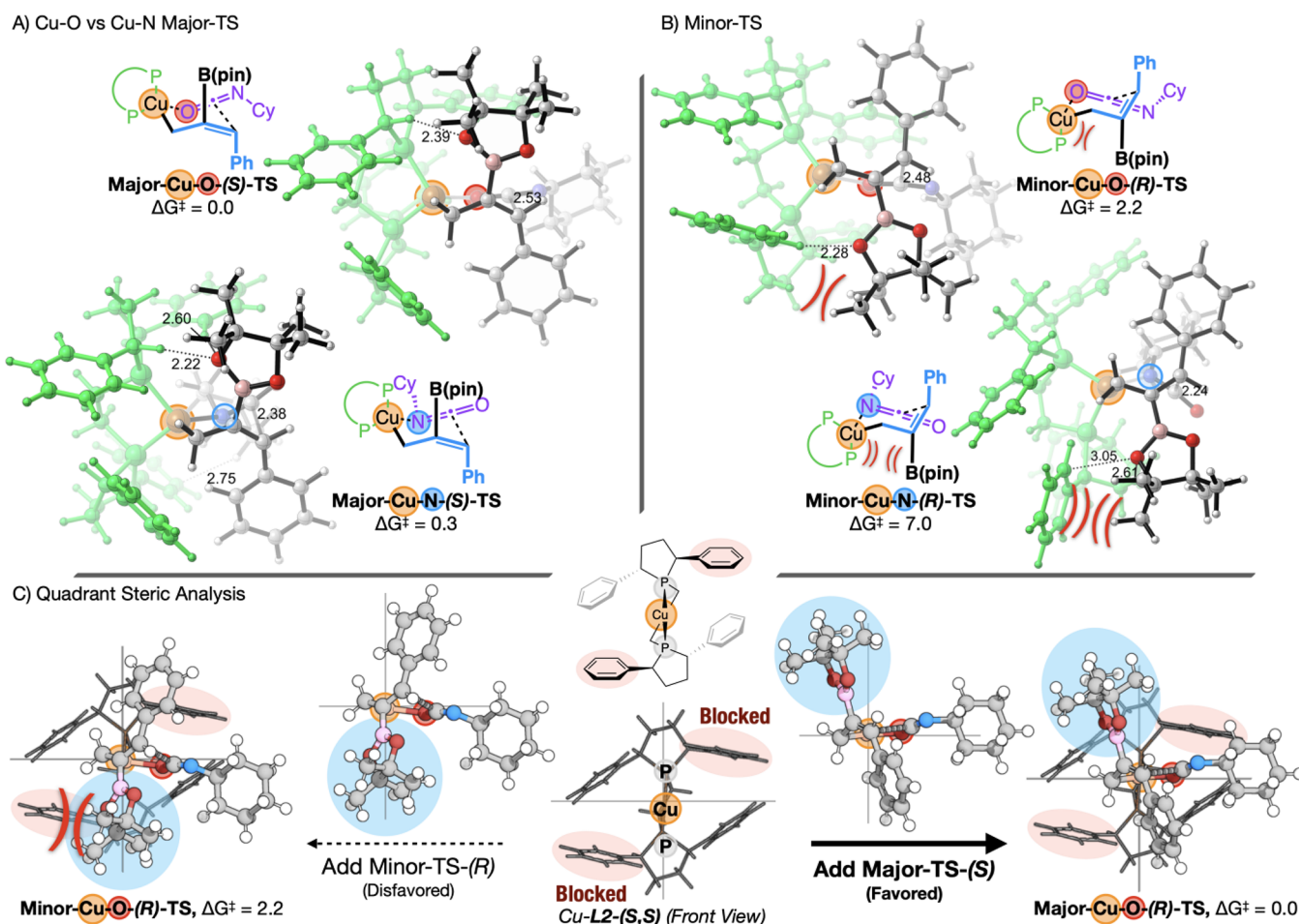
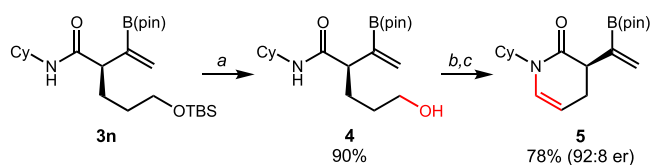


Figure 3. DFT computed transition structures (TS) for the enantioselective copper-catalyzed borylative amidation of allenes. (A) Major-Cu-O-TS vs major-Cu-N. (B) Minor-Cu-O-TS vs minor Cu-N. (C) Quadrant steric analysis showing the steric accessibility of Cu-L2-(*S,S*) (center), the lack of steric repulsion with the **Major-TS-(S)** (right), and the significant steric repulsion with the **Minor-TS-(R)** (left).

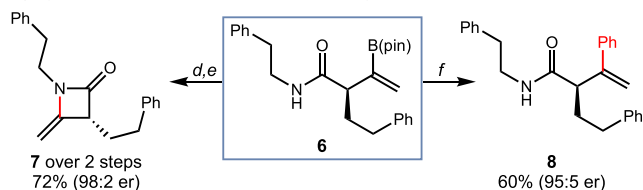
amidation in synthesis (Scheme 2). We envisioned that deprotection of **3n** would afford an alcohol that could be

Scheme 2. Synthetic Applications

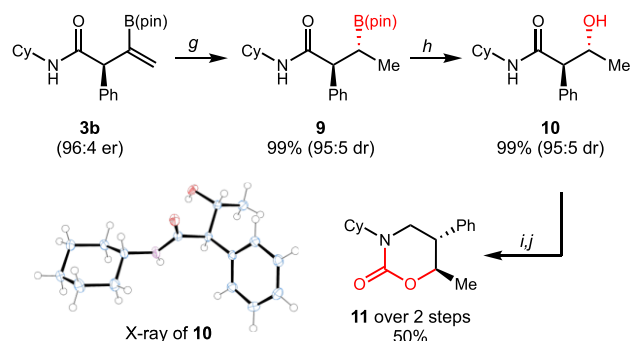
A) Synthesis of δ -lactam



B) Synthesis of β -lactam and palladium-catalyzed Suzuki coupling reaction



C) Synthesis of anti- α -phenyl β -hydroxy amide and oxazinanone



^aConditions: (a) TBAF (2.0 equiv), THF, 60 °C, (b) DMP (1.0 equiv), CH_2Cl_2 , (c) *p*-TsOH (1.0 equiv), CH_2Cl_2 , (d) CuBr_2 (3 equiv), $\text{MeOH}/\text{H}_2\text{O}$, 100 °C, 12 h (1:1), (e) CuI (5 mol %), $\text{Me}_2\text{NCH}_2\text{CO}_2\text{H}$ (10 mol %), K_2CO_3 (2.0 equiv), THF (0.1 M), 90 °C, 20 h, (f) PhI (3.0 equiv), $\text{PdCl}_2(\text{dppf})$ (5 mol %), Cs_2CO_3 (2.0 equiv), CH_3CN , (g) H_2 (1 bar), $\text{Rh}(\text{COD})_2\text{BF}_4$ (5 mol %), dppb (6 mol %), CH_2Cl_2 , (h) H_2O_2 , NaOH (3.0 M), THF, rt, 3 h,¹³ (i) BH_3 , THF, THF, 70 °C, 2 h. (j) CDI (1.0 equiv), Et_3N (3.0 equiv) CH_2Cl_2 , 2 h.

oxidized, and intramolecular condensation of the resulting aldehyde yielded the δ -lactam **5** in 70% total yield with a high er (92:8) (Scheme 2A).²⁵ We found that the treatment of the B(pin) group of **6** with CuBr_2 and subsequent cyclization via Cu-catalyzed Ullmann coupling delivered the corresponding β -lactam **7** in high yield in two steps without enantioerosion (98:2 e.r.) (Scheme 2B). Moreover, when alkenyl boronate **6** was subjected to a Suzuki coupling using Pd/dppf , the corresponding 1,1-disubstituted alkene **8** (60% yield, 95:5 e.r.) was easily accessed without competitive epimerization or isomerization^{9b} (Scheme 2C). Finally, a rhodium-catalyzed hydrogenation of the alkenyl boronate of **3b** provided the synthetically important amide **9** with high diastereoselectivity (>95:5 d.r.). The anti- α -phenyl- β -hydroxy amide **10** was obtained by subsequent stereoretentive oxidation of the B(pin) group of **9** in quantitative yield with excellent diastereoselectivity (>95:5 d.r.). This process provides a unique way to access typically difficult anti aldol type motifs. The anti-stereochemistry of the products **9** and **10** was determined by X-ray crystallographic analysis.¹³ Reduction of an amide group

and cyclization afforded the cyclic carbamate **11** in 50% overall yield.

In summary, we have developed an efficient copper-catalyzed enantioselective borylative amidation reaction using readily accessible allenes and simple isocyanates. The addition of the allyl copper species to isocyanates results in nearly exclusive regioselectivity. This protocol allows for the synthesis of α -vinyl β -boryl amides containing an α -stereogenic center with high-to-excellent enantioselectivity. The reaction proceeds efficiently with broad functional group tolerance and can access enantioenriched aryl and alkyl substituted α -stereogenic centers without isomerization or epimerization. The synthetic utility of alkenyl boronates was demonstrated by several transformations. DFT investigations revealed the mode of coordination and source of enantiocontrol in the transformation. Further developments of stereoselective borylative reactions based on these findings are ongoing.

ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/jacs.2c10507>.

Experimental details and characterization data, computational data, and crystallographic data (CCDC 2181752 (**3b**) and 2182017 (**10**)) (PDF)

Accession Codes

CCDC 2181752 and 2182017 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge via www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif, or by emailing data_request@ccdc.cam.ac.uk, or by contacting The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre, 12 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK; fax: +44 1223 336033.

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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This paper was published ASAP on December 6, 2022 with production errors in Table 1 (missing graphic heading) and in

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