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Palladium and Iron Cocatalyzed Aerobic Alkene Aminoboration

Brittany L. Gay, [⊥] Ya-Nong Wang, [⊥] Shreeja Bhatt, Anika Tarasewicz, Daniel J. Cooke, E. Grace Milem, Bufan Zhang, J. Brannon Gary, Michael L. Neidig, and Kami L. Hull*



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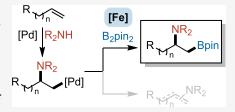
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ABSTRACT: Aminoboration of simple alkenes with nitrogen nucleophiles remains an unsolved problem in synthetic chemistry; this transformation can be catalyzed by palladium via aminopalladation followed by transmetalation with a diboron reagent. However, this catalytic process faces inherent challenges with instability of the alkylpalladium(II) intermediate toward β -hydride elimination. Herein, we report a palladium/iron cocatalyzed aminoboration, which enables this transformation. We demonstrate these conditions on a variety of alkenes and norbornenes with an array of common nitrogen nucleophiles. In the developed strategy, the iron cocatalyst is crucial



to achieving the desired reactivity by serving as a halophilic Lewis acid to release the transmetalation-active cationic alkylpalladium intermediate. Furthermore, it serves as a redox shuttle in the regeneration of the Pd(II) catalyst by reactivation of nanoparticulate palladium.

■ INTRODUCTION

Alkene difunctionalizations are straightforward approaches to install two functional groups across a carbon-carbon double bond, delivering valuable compounds from easily accessible starting materials in a single step. 1-4 Two common and versatile functionalities in organic chemistry are amines and boronic acids and their ester analogues. Amines and their derivatives are featured prominently in natural products, pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, and organic materials. 5,6 Boronic acids and esters have found widespread use in synthetic chemistry^{7–10} and are key pharmacophores in a number of pharmaceuticals. Therefore, alkene aminoboration, which incorporates both valuable functional groups in a single step, is a particularly desirable transformation. One approach is the Cu-catalyzed umpolung aminoboration (Scheme 1a). 14-22 These transformations occur through migratory insertion of a Cu-boryl intermediate into an alkene to form a stable Cu-alkyl species (1),²³ which then undergoes oxidative functionalization with an electrophilic amine. This methodology necessitates the presynthesis of O-benzoylhydroxylamine(s) (R_2N-OBz) and is limited to the formation of tertiary aliphatic amines (2). A generalized aminoboration strategy utilizing commercially available nitrogen nucleophiles (R₂N-H) directly is a desirable and complementary methodology.

Known for their versatile reactivity, Pd catalysts are excellent at constructing C-N bonds *via* aminopalladation of alkenes. Amoreover, as in the Miyaura borylation, Pd-(II)-C intermediates are known to undergo transmetalation with diboron reagents, e.g., bis(pinacolato)diboron (B₂pin₂). Combining these two steps: (i) aminopalladation of an alkene and (ii) interception of the resulting Pd(II)-C^{alkyl} intermediate (4) with B₂pin₂ would afford the 1,2-amino-

boration product upon reductive elimination. However, this requires the transient intermediate 4 to undergo intermolecular transmetalation faster than intramolecular β -hydride elimination (Scheme 1c) and is especially challenging as β -hydride elimination from 4 is known to be rapid. To date, Pd-catalyzed aminoboration has been achieved by use of a directing group on the alkene. The metalacyclic intermediate (3) formed upon aminopalladation is stabilized by 8-aminoquinoline (AQ), inhibiting β -hydride elimination relative to transmetalation (Scheme 1b). Developing strategies for aminoboration of directing-group-free alkenes with R₂N-H remains an unsolved challenge. The state of the state of

■ RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reaction Development. Initial experiments explored the Pd-catalyzed aminoboration of terminal, unactivated homoallylbenzene (5) with phthalimide (PhthNH) and B_2pin_2 using O_2 as the oxidant (Table 1). In the absence of any additive, neither aminoboration product 6 nor aza-Wacker product 7 is observed (entry 1). As Lewis bases are conventional additives used to promote transmetalation with diboron reagents, ³² we examined a series of these reported Lewis bases. Unfortunately, they are ineffective at aminoboration, giving <1% yield of 6 (entries 2–6).

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Scheme 1. Transition-Metal-Catalyzed Intermolecular Alkene Aminoboration

a. Cu-catalyzed umpolung aminoboration with nitrogen electrophiles

b. Aminoboration of directing-group-tethered alkenes with R₂N-H

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
 & AQ & [Pd] \\
 & R^5 & KHCO_3 \\
 & R^7 & Pd & N \\
 & N & X \\
 & R^6 & 3
\end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
 & R^7 & Bpin O \\
 & R^5 & AG \\$$

c. Aminoboration of directing-group-free alkenes with R2N-H

Challenge: Intermolecular Transmetalation vs. Intramolecular
$$\beta$$
-H Elimination

[Pd]
$$\begin{array}{c}
R^{6} \\
N \\
H
\end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c}
R^{6} \\
N \\
R
\end{array}$$

Consequently, an alternative strategy was required. In a recent report focused on Pd-catalyzed remote diboration by Kochi and co-workers, a cationic Pd(II) species is the active catalyst which was generated in situ by the addition of NaBAr₄^F.³³ Similarly, halophilic Lewis acids have also been proposed to promote transmetalation in Pd-catalyzed cross-coupling reactions.^{34,35} Inspired by these elegant strategies, various Lewis acidic additives³⁶ were screened in the presence of PdCl₂(MeCN)₂ (entries 7-14). The desired product 6 is observed with Cu(OTf)₂ and Fe(OTf)₃ in 24 and 12% yield, respectively, along with substantial aza-Wacker product (7), alkene isomerization (8), and $O(Bpin)_2$ (9), a byproduct formed by the Pd-catalyzed oxidation of $B_2pin_2^{37}$ (entries 7 and 8). To our delight, Fe(OTf)2 affords 6 in 62% under the same conditions (entry 9). Other Lewis acids were less effective (entries 10–14). Additionally, no conversion was observed when Brønsted acid additives were added, implying that halophilicity of the additive is important in promoting aminoboration (entries 15–17). After screening other reaction parameters (the Supporting Information, Tables S2-S10), aminoboration 6 is formed in 72% isolated (81% in situ) yield using 2 mol % PdCl₂(MeCN)₂, 50 mol % Fe(OTf)₂, 10 mol % benzoquinone (BQ), 1.0 equiv of PhthNH (0.25 mmol), 4.0 equiv of 5, and 4.0 equiv of B2pin2 under an O2 atmosphere at 40 °C (entry 18). We hypothesize that BQ serves as a cooxidant for Pd(0), as less 9 is observed in its presence. Notably, we do not observe mixtures of regioisomers under the reaction conditions.

Scope of Aminoboration of Terminal Alkenes. Under the optimized conditions, a wide variety of terminal alkenes participate in the reaction to afford the 1,2-aminoboration products in good to excellent yields (Table 2). The reaction

Table 1. Selected Additive Screening of the Pd-Catalyzed Aminoboration of Homoallylbenzene^a

"Reaction conditions: PhthNH (0.25 mmol), **5** (2.0 equiv), B_2pin_2 (4.0 equiv), $PdCl_2(MeCN)_2$ (2.0 mol %), additive, **5** Å molecular sieves (125 mg), N,N-dimethylacetamide (DMA) (0.75 mL, 0.33 M), and O_2 balloon, $60\,^{\circ}C$, $24\,h$. "GC yields using 1-methylnaphthalene as an internal standard. "Reaction was carried out with 10 mol % BQ and 4.0 equiv of **5** at 40 °C for 72 h. See the Supporting Information for detailed reaction conditions." Isolated yield is given in parentheses.

conditions are scalable as **6** is isolated in 67% yield (1.4 g) on a 5.0 mmol scale. A variety of substitutions on the aryl ring are well tolerated, including electron-donating and electron-withdrawing groups (10–16, 41–64%). Notably, both aryl chlorides and bromides remain intact over the course of the reaction, affording 12 and 16 in 60 and 54% yields, respectively; no protodehalogenation or cross-coupling products are observed. Both bishomoallylbenzene and simple aliphatic alkenes, such as octene, dodecene, and allylcyclohexane, form 17–20 in good yields (62–63%). Increasing the steric hindrance proximal to the alkene does impact the reactivity, as vinylcyclohexane requires an elevated reaction temperature (60 °C) to afford 21 in 50% yield and the bulky tert-butylethylene delivers only trace product 22 (<5%).

Functional groups proximal to the alkene are generally tolerated. To our delight, allyl acetate, an excellent oxidant for Pd(0), undergoes the aminoboration to afford 23 in 60% yield with no observed allylation products. Additionally, benzyl ethers and benzoyl groups are well tolerated as 24 and 25 are isolated in 47 and 65% yields, respectively. While styrene is readily aminoborylated (26) in 52% yield, allyl benzene is a poor substrate, forming 27 in 25% yield along with extensive alkene isomerization.

Table 2. Scope of Pd/Fe Cocatalyzed Aminoboration of Simple Alkenes^{a,b,c}

"See the Supporting Information for detailed reaction conditions. Isolated yields are indicated. "5 mmol of PhthNH. "The d.r. is indistinguishable by "1H NMR; we presume that the products form as a 1:1 mixture of diastereoisomers.

Delightfully, other nucleophiles are also tolerated in the aminoboration of homoallylbenzene: phthalimide derivatives undergo the aminoboration and form 28–30 in good yields (50–70%). Benzoxazolinone reacts efficiently and 31 is isolated in 77% yield. Further, isatin, maleimide, and trifluoromethanesulfonamide are suitable nucleophiles and deliver aminoboration products 32–34 in modest yields (39–43%).

We also tested the compatibility of these conditions with bioactive motifs: 35-39 are formed in good to excellent yields (55-81%) with excellent chemoselectivity. Nitrogen-containing functionalities, such as α -amino acids and indole heterocycles, are stable under the reaction conditions (38 and 39). Finally, robustness screens³⁹ were performed, and a variety of additional functionalities, *e.g.*, benzofuran, benzo-

thiophene, *N*-phenylacetamide, and alkyl chloride, are tolerated and remain intact under optimized conditions (the Supporting Information, Figure S2).

Scope of Aminoboration of Norbornene (NBE). Next, we investigated the aminoboration of internal alkenes. Simple 1,2-disubstituted alkenes, such as 2-octene and cyclooctene, show poor reactivity (the Supporting Information, Figure S3). In contrast, NBE is an excellent coupling partner^{40,41} and affords aminoboration product 40 in 88% isolated yield under slightly modified reaction conditions. Notably, 40 forms in near quantitative 99% isolated yield (1.8 g) on a 5.0 mmol scale. Given the promising results with different R₂N–H sources with homoallylbenzene, we then explored the scope of nitrogen nucleophiles in the aminoboration of NBE (Table 3). In addition to PhthNH, a variety of substituted phthalimide

Table 3. Scope of Pd/Fe Cocatalyzed Aminoboration of Norbornene a,b

^aSee the Supporting Information for detailed reaction conditions. Isolated yields are indicated. ^b5.0 mmol of PhthNH.

derivatives participate in the reaction to afford 41-44 in good to excellent yields (80-94%). Other imides are also tolerated, including maleimide and succinimide, delivering 45 and 46 in 76 and 81% yields, respectively. Isatin reacts efficiently, giving 47 in 86% yield. Single-crystal X-ray diffraction analysis of 47 confirms that the cis-exo-diastereoisomer is formed selectively, consistent with a cis-aminopalladation on the exo-face of NBE. 42 Aminoboration with benzoxazolinone derivatives also proceed smoothly affording 48-50 in excellent yields (90-98%). Likewise, oxazolidinone is an excellent nucleophile, as **51** is isolated in 86% yield. (S)-4-phenyl-2-oxazolidinone gives 76% yield of aminoboration product 52, with a modest d.r. of 3.7:1, indicating that steric encumbrance proximal to the nucleophile moderately decreases the yield. Benzyl carbamate, a readily deprotected ammonia surrogate, also participates, affording 53 in 64% isolated yield. Aliphatic sulfonamides, including methanesulfonamide and cyclopropanesulfonamide, afford 54 and 55 in 84 and 63% yields, respectively. Finally, aryl sulfonamide derivatives bearing both electron-rich, electron-deficient, and potential steric encumbrance are well tolerated, affording 56-58 in very good yields (72-84%).

In most aminopalladation reports, imides, sulfonamides, and carbamate derivatives are competent classes of nucleophiles described to undergo aminopalladation. Limited examples describing intermolecular aminopalladation with less acidic amide nucleophiles have been reported. The successful

incorporation of diverse amides *via* aminopalladation remains a synthetic challenge. To our delight, however, primary amides are competent nucleophiles under our aminoboration reaction conditions. Electron-deficient trifluoroacetamide and benzamides participate and deliver **59–63** in modest to great yields (49–87%). Electron-rich benzamides, including *p*-^tBu and *p*-OMe-benzamide, also participate, giving **64** and **65** in 73 and 92% yields, respectively. Trimethylacetamide, a primary alkyl amide, also performs well under our conditions, affording **66** in 78% yield. Finally, symmetric dimethyl ester-functionalized NBE participates in the reaction delivering **67** in 91% yield.

Mechanistic Investigations. With scope in hand, we then began mechanistic investigations to elucidate the role of the Fe cocatalyst. It has been reported that metal triflate salts can serve to generate triflic acid (TfOH) in situ, which is subsequently responsible for Brønsted acid catalysis. As such, we sought to determine if Fe is the active catalyst or if it is generating TfOH in situ. Over a range of concentrations (0.5–10.0 mol %), TfOH does not promote the aminoboration reaction in the absence of Fe(OTf)₂ (Scheme 2a). Furthermore, the use of 2,6-di-tert-butylpyridine as a proton scavenger has no significant impact on the efficiency of the reaction, giving 6 in 66% in situ GC yield (Scheme 2b). In combination, these data support Fe being the active cocatalyst in this system.

Scheme 2. Possibility of TfOH Catalysis^a

"See the Supporting Information for detailed reaction conditions. GC yields using 1-methylnaphthalene as an internal standard.

Given that Fe is likely the active cocatalyst, we hoped to elucidate its role in the aminoboration reaction. We hypothesized that it may promote the transmetalation between the $Pd(II)-C^{alkyl}$ formed upon aminopalladation and B_2pin_2 . To isolate this step from the rest of the catalytic cycle, we investigated the reaction of (phen)Pd(Me)(Cl) (68) with B_2pin_2 as a model system. ³³ As seen in Scheme 3a, when

Scheme 3. Stoichiometric Borylation^a

^aSee the Supporting Information for detailed reaction conditions. GC yields using 1-methylnaphthalene as an internal standard.

68 is combined with B_2pin_2 in the absence of an additive, trace Me-Bpin (**69**) is observed (<5% GC yield, entry 1). As we hypothesized, $Fe(OTf)_2$ can facilitate this reaction under an oxygen atmosphere, affording **69** in 52% *in situ* yield. However, only 5% of Me-Bpin is observed if the reaction is carried out under N_2 (entry 2). Interestingly, $Fe(OTf)_3$ and $Zn(OTf)_2$ can promote the reaction between **68** and B_2pin_2 , delivering product **69** in comparable yields under O_2 and O_2 (entries 3 and 4). Moreover, under our aerobic conditions with $Fe(OTf)_2$, we observe the slow formation of O_2 in *situ* EPR spectroscopy (Supporting Information, Figure S6). As such, we speculated that O_2 acts as a halophilic Lewis acid and abstracts the chloride O_2 to liberate a reactive cationic

complex prior to transmetalation. Supporting this, when AgOTf, a source of Ag^+ ions that can irreversibly remove Cl^- , is used as the additive, 93 and 68% yields of **69** are obtained under O_2 or N_2 , respectively. Likewise, when a cationic Pd(II) complex, $[(phen)Pd(Me)(MeCN)]^+[OTf]^-$ (70), is directly combined with B_2pin_2 in DMA, an 89% in situ GC yield of **69** is observed after 5 min (Scheme 3b).

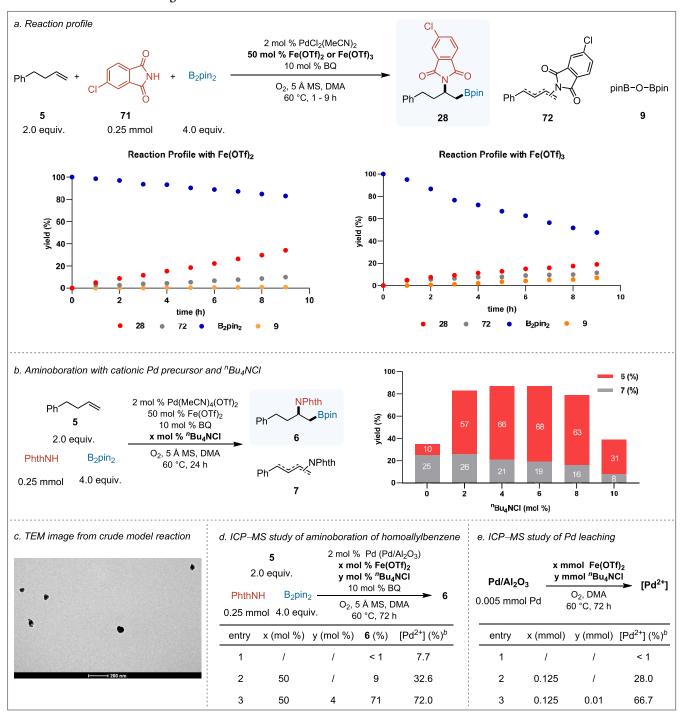
We then sought to understand the apparent contradiction that Fe(OTf)₃ is an inferior cocatalyst in the aminoboration reaction (Table 1, entries 12 and 13 and Supporting Information, Table S16), yet [Fe³⁺] is required to promote transmetalation. This suggests that the [Fe³⁺] complex, formed in situ from Fe(OTf)2 and O2, has reactivity distinct from that of Fe(OTf)₃. We monitored the reaction between homoallylbenzene (5), 4-chlorophthalimide (71), and B_2pin_2 in the presence of $Fe(OTf)_2$ or $Fe(OTf)_3$ (Scheme 4a). $Fe(OTf)_2$ is faster and more selective than Fe(OTf)3. 28 forms in 34% in situ yield with 3.4:1 of 28:72 after 9 hours with Fe(OTf)₂, while $Fe(OTf)_3$ affords 28 in 19% in situ yield (1.7:1 28:72). A substantially higher consumption of B2pin2 is observed with $Fe(OTf)_3$ vs $Fe(OTf)_2$: 48 and 83% B_2pin_2 remain after 9 hours, respectively. While we are unable to characterize all boron-containing side products, it is worth noting that a higher amount of O(Bpin)₂ (9, 7% yield) is observed with Fe(OTf)₃ vs 1% with Fe(OTf)2.

Considering these results, we propose that nonselective Cl⁻ abstraction occurs with increased concentrations of Fe(OTf)₃, which promotes side reactions by generation of a cationic [Pd(II)]⁺ species prior to aminopalladation (the Supporting Information, Figure S9). Indeed, the cationic Pd precursor, Pd(MeCN)₄(OTf)₂, is an inferior catalyst and favors the formation of the aza-Wacker product 7 (8% yield, 0.75:1 6:7, the Supporting Information, Table S19, entry 12) in the absence of an Fe cocatalyst. Similarly, in the presence of Fe(OTf)₂, Pd(MeCN)₄(OTf)₂ favors the aza-Wacker product, delivering 7 in 25% along with 10% of 6 (0.4:1 6:7) (Scheme 4b).

Based on these observations, we hypothesize that the equilibrium between the stable Pd(II)-Cl (II, Scheme 5) and the active $[Pd(II)]^+$ (III, Scheme 5) is crucial for selective aminoboration. To verify this, we investigated the aminoboration of homoallylbenzene 5 with $Pd(MeCN)_4(OTf)_2$ in the presence of "Bu₄NCl (0–10 mol %); the reactivity and selectivity are restored, affording 6 in 66% yield (3:1 6:7) with 4 mol % added $Cl^{-47,48}$ Higher loadings of Cl^- (\geq 10 mol%) are beneficial with respect to selectivity but have deleterious effects on the conversion to 6 and 7, suggesting that excess Cl^- , relative to Pd, inhibits the reaction (Scheme 4b and Supporting Information, Table S19).

Redox-inactive Lewis acids, such as Zn(OTf)₂, promote borylation in the stoichiometric investigations (entry 4, Scheme 3a), but redox-active Fe is required to facilitate turnover, suggesting that it may have an additional role in the catalytic cycle. While optimizing the aminoboration reaction, we noted that increasing the loading of PdCl₂(MeCN)₂ above 2 mol % leads to significantly lower yields of 6 (the Supporting Information, Table S4). Further, the addition of Hg⁰ decreased conversion to 2% yield of 6 (the Supporting Information, Figure S7). Both of these observations are consistent with the formation of Pd nanoparticles (Pd NPs). Holded, Pd NPs are observed by transmission electron microscopy (TEM) imaging of the reaction mixture (Scheme 4c, and the Supporting Information, Figure S8).

Scheme 4. Mechanistic Investigations a,b



"See the Supporting Information for detailed reaction conditions. $^{b}[Pd^{2+}]$ represents the Pd content in supernatant, which was determined by ICP-MS.

We hypothesized that the redox activity of the Fe cocatalyst may be its distinguishing feature and that it serves as a redox shuttle between O_2 and the Pd NPs. To test this, we used Pd/Al₂O₃ as a nanoparticulate catalyst. In the presence of Fe(OTf)₂ and Bu₄NCl, this heterogenous Pd(0) source catalyzes the aminoboration reaction of homoallylbenzene to afford **6** in 71% *in situ* yield (Scheme 4d, entry 3). In the absence of Fe(OTf)₂, <1% of **6** is observed (Scheme 4d, entry 1). There are two plausible scenarios for this Fe-catalyzed oxidation of Pd/Al₂O₃: (i) the Fe may be serving to break up

the Pd NPs and form homogeneous/colloidal Pd(II) complexes or (ii) the Fe may be oxidizing the surface of the Pd NPs and promoting heterogeneous catalysis. As seen in Scheme 4d, to distinguish between these two scenarios, Pd content of the solid phase vs the supernatant was determined via inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) in the aminoboration of homoallylbenzene (for further details, see the Supporting Information, Tables S20–S23). In the absence of the Fe cocatalyst and Bu₄NCl, 92.3% of the palladium remains in the solid phase. In the presence of 50 mol

Scheme 5. Proposed Mechanism for Pd/Fe Cocatalyzed Aminoboration of Nitrogen Nucleophiles, Directing-Group-Free Alkenes and B₂pin₂

% Fe(OTf)₂, 32.6% of Pd is in the supernatant; this is consistent with the Fe catalyst acting as an electron transfer mediator and leaching Pd from the NPs. Furthermore, when Bu₄NCl is added, 72.0% of Pd is found in solution (Scheme 4d, entry 3), suggesting that Cl⁻ facilitates this process. Control experiments, shown in Scheme 4e, support the [Fe]/ Cl--mediated leaching of Pd from Pd NPs.5

With the role of the Fe cocatalyst elucidated, we finally wanted to determine the mechanism of aminopalladation. The cis relationship between the NPhth and Bpin in 40-67 is consistent with cis-aminopalladation and a stereoretentive borylation. To determine if the terminal alkenes also proceed through a cis-aminopalladation, cis-deuterostyrene was subjected to the aminoboration conditions to afford $26-d_1$. The Bpin of $26-d_1$ was then oxidized with H_2O_2 ; a subsequent reduction/cyclization sequence afforded $73-d_1$ as a single diastereoisomer (eq 1). NOESY experiments of 73 and 73- d_1 confirm the cis relationship between the deuterium and phenyl ring, consistent with cis-aminopalladation (for further details, see the Supporting Information, Section 5.11).

$$\begin{array}{c} 2 \text{ mol } \% \text{ PdCl}_{2}(\text{MeCN})_{2} \\ 50 \text{ mol } \% \text{ Fe}(\text{OTf})_{2} \\ 10 \text{ mol } \% \text{BQ} \\ \hline O_{2} \text{ balloon, 5 Å MS, DMA} \\ 60 \text{ °C, 24 h} \\ \\ \hline \text{NPhth} \\ \text{Bpin} \\ \hline 2. \text{ NaBH}_{4} \\ \hline 3. \text{ TFA, CH}_{2}\text{Cl}_{2} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Given our investigations, we propose the following mechanism (Scheme 5): (i) ligand exchange to the Pd(II) catalyst I followed by (ii) cis-aminopalladation of the alkene, affords II, (iii) halide abstraction by [Fe³⁺] generates III, which (iv) undergoes transmetalation with B_2pin_2 generating **IV** and

finally, (v) reductive elimination produces the aminoboration product and V. The Pd(0) (V) then either undergoes direct oxidation to I or aggregates to form Pd NPs (VI), which are then oxidatively leached by Fe and Cl⁻ to regenerate I.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, we have developed a cooperative Pd/Fe catalytic system to realize the directing-group-free aminoboration of terminal alkenes and norbornenes with common nitrogen nucleophiles and B₂pin₂. The Fe cocatalyst plays two crucial roles in the reaction serving as (i) a halophilic Lewis acid to deliver the cationic Pd intermediate prior to transmetalation and (ii) a redox shuttle, which leaches active Pd(II) from Pd NPs. The impact of the results presented herein will likely go beyond the aminoboration reaction. This novel Lewis acidpromoted transmetalation between Pd-alkyl intermediates and B₂pin₂ is likely to impact other borylation methodologies. Further, the ability of Fe cocatalysts to reactivate Pd NPs under aerobic conditions may have implications for other Pdcatalyzed aerobic oxidations.

ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/jacs.3c05790.

Additional optimization and mechanistic studies data; experimental procedures; characterization data; and annotated NMR spectra (PDF) MNova FID Files (ZIP)

Accession Codes

CCDC 2221987 contains 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

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Corresponding Author

Kami L. Hull — University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, United States; o orcid.org/0000-0003-3102-2686; Email: kamihull@utexas.edu

Authors

- Brittany L. Gay University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, United States; orcid.org/0000-0002-6481-6071
- Ya-Nong Wang University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, United States; Orcid.org/0000-0002-5838-3855
- Shreeja Bhatt University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, United States; orcid.org/0000-0003-3262-2894
- Anika Tarasewicz University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, United States
- **Daniel J. Cooke** University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, United States
- E. Grace Milem University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, United States; Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas 75962, United States; orcid.org/0009-0001-7467-1160
- Bufan Zhang University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627, United States
- J. Brannon Gary Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas 75962, United States; orcid.org/ 0000-0003-0576-5822
- Michael L. Neidig University of Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627, United States; University of Oxford, Oxford OX1 3QR, United Kingdom; orcid.org/0000-0002-2300-3867

Complete contact information is available at: https://pubs.acs.org/10.1021/jacs.3c05790

Author Contributions

¹B.L.G. and Y.-N.W. contributed equally to this work. All authors have given approval to the final version of the manuscript.

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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