SYNLETT Spotlight 74

N-Tosyl Imines

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This feature focuses on a reagent chosen by a postgraduate, highlighting the uses and preparation of the reagent in current research

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Introduction

N-Tosyl imines are versatile synthetic intermediates in organic synthesis.¹ These are activated imines where the limitations of aldimine functionality such as low electrophilicity of azomethine carbon and the tendency of enoliz-

able imines to undergo deprotonation rather than addition can be circumvented.^{2,3} They are used in olefination reactions and various C–C bond forming reactions.

Preparation

N-Tosyl imines can be prepared⁴ by the reaction of aldehyde, *p*-toluene sulfonamide and sodium *p*-toluene sulfinate in aqueous formic acid, and subsequent treatment of the generated sulfonamide sulfone intermediate with sodium bicarbonate (Scheme 1).

Scheme 1 R = Aliphatic/aromatic

Abstracts

(A) The reaction of diethyl benzene sulfinyl methylphosphonate with *N*-tosyl imine in the presence of a catalytic amount of NaH (20 mol%) at 70 °C gives substituted (*E*)- α -benzene sulfinyl vinylphosphonates in 68–85% yields.⁵

(B) The aza-Baylis–Hillman reaction of *N*-tosylimine with phenyl vinyl ketone gives the double aza-Baylis–Hillman adduct in good yields with excellent stereoselectivity in the presence of Lewis base DABCO⁶ in THF.

(C) Reaction of *N*-tosylimines having proximal chelating groups with crotyl bromide and indium in aqueous media give α -crotylation products stereoselectively with *syn* selectivity.⁷

(D) Monocarbonyl iodonium ylides generated in situ from (*Z*)-(2-acetoxyvinyl) iodonium salts via an ester exchange reaction with EtOLi undergo alkylidene transfer reactions to *N*-tosyl imine yielding 2-acyl aziridines in good yields.⁸

(E) Dengs et al. have used *N*-tosyl imines to prepare functionalized pyrrole derivatives. This approach is based on nucleophilic condensation of an α -diazo- β -ketoester or an α -diazo- β -ketoester with *N*-tosyl imine followed by Rh(II)-catalysed diazodecomposition.⁹

(F) Treatment of alkenylzirconocene chloride complexes to *N*-tosylimines in the presence of [RhCl(COD)]₂ (2 mol%) catalyst in dioxane at room temperature gives allylic amine derivatives in excellent yield.¹⁰ This is the first example of the catalytic addition reactions of alkenyl zirconocene chloride complexes to aldimine derivatives.

(G) The formation of a 1,4-dipole from isoquinoline and dimethyl acetylene dicarboxylate (DMAD) and its trapping by phenyl isocyanate, diethyl mesoxalate and dimethyl azodicarboxylate were reported by Huisgen,¹¹ the utility of this reaction for the synthesis of six-membered heterocycles has not been explored so far. Nair et al.¹² have reported that the 1,4-dipole derived from isoquinoline and DMAD has been shown to react readily with *N*-tosyl imines resulting in the diastereoselective synthesis of 2*H*-pyrido[2,1-*a*]isoquinoline derivatives.

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