**Total Synthesis of (±)-Maoecrystal V**

**Significance:** Maoecrystal V was isolated in 2004 by Sun from the Chinese herb *Isodon eriocalyx*. Both the congested framework and biological inhibition against HeLa cells (IC$_{50}$ = 60 nm) has made maoecrystal V a worthy target for the synthetic community.

**Comment:** Key steps involve the formation of the seven-membered ring via a rhodium-catalyzed O–H insertion to give H. The pentacyclic system was completed by use of a Wessely oxidative acetoxylation followed by an intramolecular Diels–Alder reaction in which L was the major product.

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