SPOTLIGHT

SYNLETT Spotlight 192

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

Al–NiCl₂·6H₂O: A Mild and Efficient System for Selective Reduction of Functional Groups in Organic Synthesis

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Introduction

The most common broad-spectrum reducing agents are metal hydrides like LiAlH₄, NaBH₄, DIBAL-H, and 9-BBN. Apart from this, some hydrogenation catalysts have been investigated in order to find conditions under which a given group will be reduced chemoselectively.¹ Metal-metal-salt binary systems such as Al-NiCl₂·6H₂O·THF,² Al-SbCl₃ or Zn-SbCl₃,³ Fe-NiCl₂·6H₂O·THF,⁴ or Sm-

 $NiCl_2 \cdot 6H_2O \cdot THF^5$ have long been used as reducing agents for many functional groups.

Reagents based on aluminum find wide application in organic synthesis.⁶ The Al–NiCl₂· $6H_2O$ system is a high-light in current organic chemistry due to its selectivity, mild reaction conditions, easy handling, low cost, and convenient isolation process.

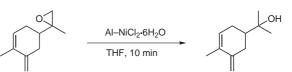
Abstracts

(A) Chemoselective reduction of a-enones: a,β -Unsaturated carbonyl compounds give saturated ketones upon treatment with Al-NiCl₂·6H₂O. Aromatic aldehydes and ketones are smoothly reduced to the corresponding alcohols. Isolated double bonds, esters, aliphatic aldehydes, and ketones remain unaffected by this reagent.⁷ (B) Reduction of nitroarenes to amines: Sarmah et al. showed that aromatic nitro compounds are reduced to the corresponding amines efficiently under neutral and mild conditions. Short reaction times and a simple work-up procedure make this a versatile reagent.⁸

(C) Conversion of oxiranes into alcohols:

Ring opening of the oxiranes takes place from the less hindered side of the epoxides, thereby giving the highest-substituted alcohols. An exception is the case of styrene oxide, where 1-phenyl-ethanol is the major product. α , β -Epoxy ketones remain unaffected under these reaction conditions.²

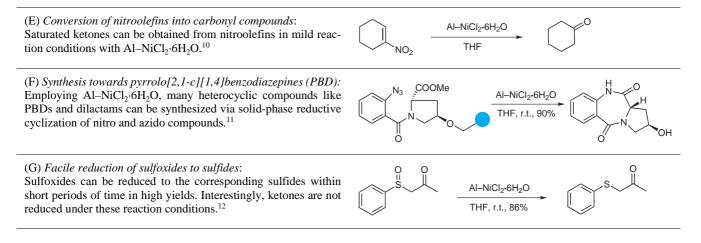
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(D) Addition to electron-deficient alkenes:

The Al–NiCl₂·6H₂O redox couple promotes the addition of per(poly)fluoroalkyl iodides to per(poly)fluoroalkyl-substituted ethenes, giving the corresponding addition–elimination products in moderate yields.⁹

 $CIC_{8}F_{16}I+CH_{2}=CHCF_{2}C_{5}F_{10}CI \xrightarrow{AI-NiCl_{2}\cdot 6H_{2}O}{MeCN,} CIC_{8}F_{16}CH_{2}CH=CFC_{5}F_{10}C$



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