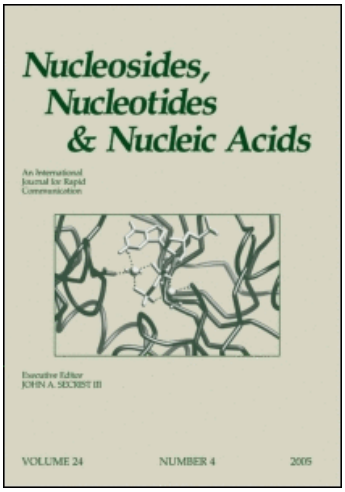

Nucleosides, Nucleotides and Nucleic Acids
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713597286

Novel Lewis Acid-Catalyzed Rearrangement of a Sugar-Base Hybrid to Afford an Anhydronucleoside

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To cite this Article Jung, Michael E. , Castro, Claire and Khan, Saeed I.(1998) 'Novel Lewis Acid-Catalyzed Rearrangement of a Sugar-Base Hybrid to Afford an Anhydronucleoside', Nucleosides, Nucleotides and Nucleic Acids, 17: 12, 2383 — 2387
To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/07328319808004325
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07328319808004325

NUCLEOSIDES & NUCLEOTIDES, 17(12), 2383-2387 (1998)

NOVEL LEWIS ACID-CATALYZED REARRANGEMENT OF A SUGAR-BASE HYBRID TO AFFORD AN ANHYDRONUCLEOSIDE

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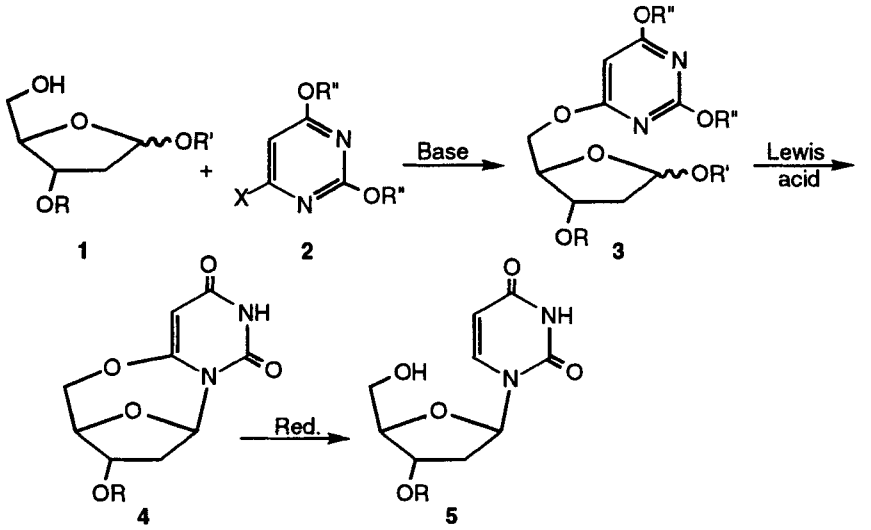
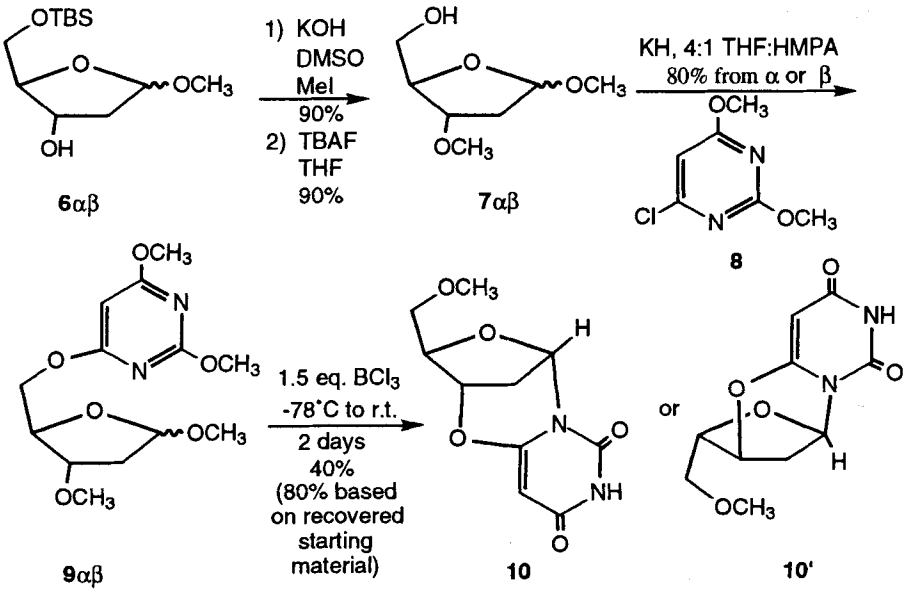
ABSTRACT: Treatment of the sugar-base hybrid **9** with boron trichloride at low temperature for 40 h affords the 6,3'-anhydro-2'-deoxyuridine **10** in 40% yield (80% based on recovered **9**) via a novel structural rearrangement.

During the course of studies aimed at developing an intramolecular Vorbrüggen coupling of sugar-base hybrids joined at the 5-position of the sugar and the 2-position of the base to generate, after hydrolysis, only the desired β-anomers of 2'-deoxynucleosides,[4,5] we examined the preparation and cyclization of the sugar-base hybrid **3** in which the deoxyribose component **1** was added to a 6-halo-2,4-dialkoxypyrimidine **2**. We hoped that intramolecular coupling could be effected in the presence of a suitable Lewis acid catalyst to produce, after aqueous workup, the 6,5'-anhydro barbituric acid nucleoside **4**.



1 2 3 4 5

These are important modified nucleosides themselves as well as potential intermediates for the synthesis of normal pyrimidine nucleosides. Reduction (or hydrolysis-reduction) of the vinyl ether of **4** could give the desired 2'-deoxyuridine **5**.[6] We now report a novel Lewis acid-catalyzed rearrangement of a sugar-base hybrid such as **3** which produced an unexpected 6,3'-anhydronucleoside in fair yield.



The two O^6,5'-bridged precursors **9αβ** were prepared separately from the known[7] methyl ribosides **6αβ** as follows. Methylation (KOH, DMSO, MeI, 90%) afforded the methyl ether which was desilylated (TBAF, THF, 90%) to give each of the methyl ribosides **7αβ**.[8] Formation of the anion with base and addition of the commercially available 6-chloro-2,4-dimethoxypyrimidine **8** gave the desired sugar-base hybrids **9αβ**. A variety of Lewis acids (TMSOTf, TBSOTf, $SnCl_4$, $TiCl_4$, Et_2AlCl) were ineffective at promoting

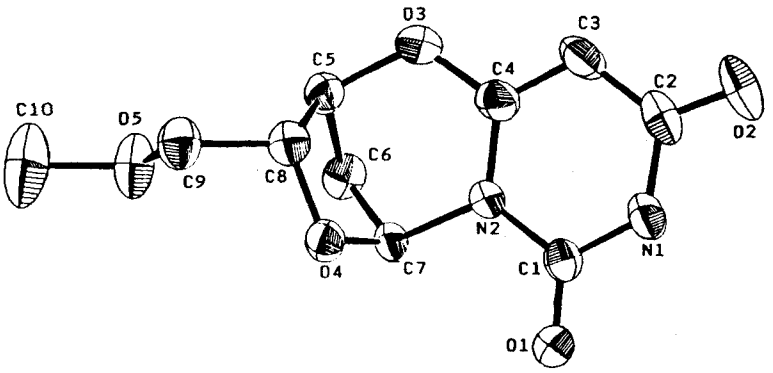
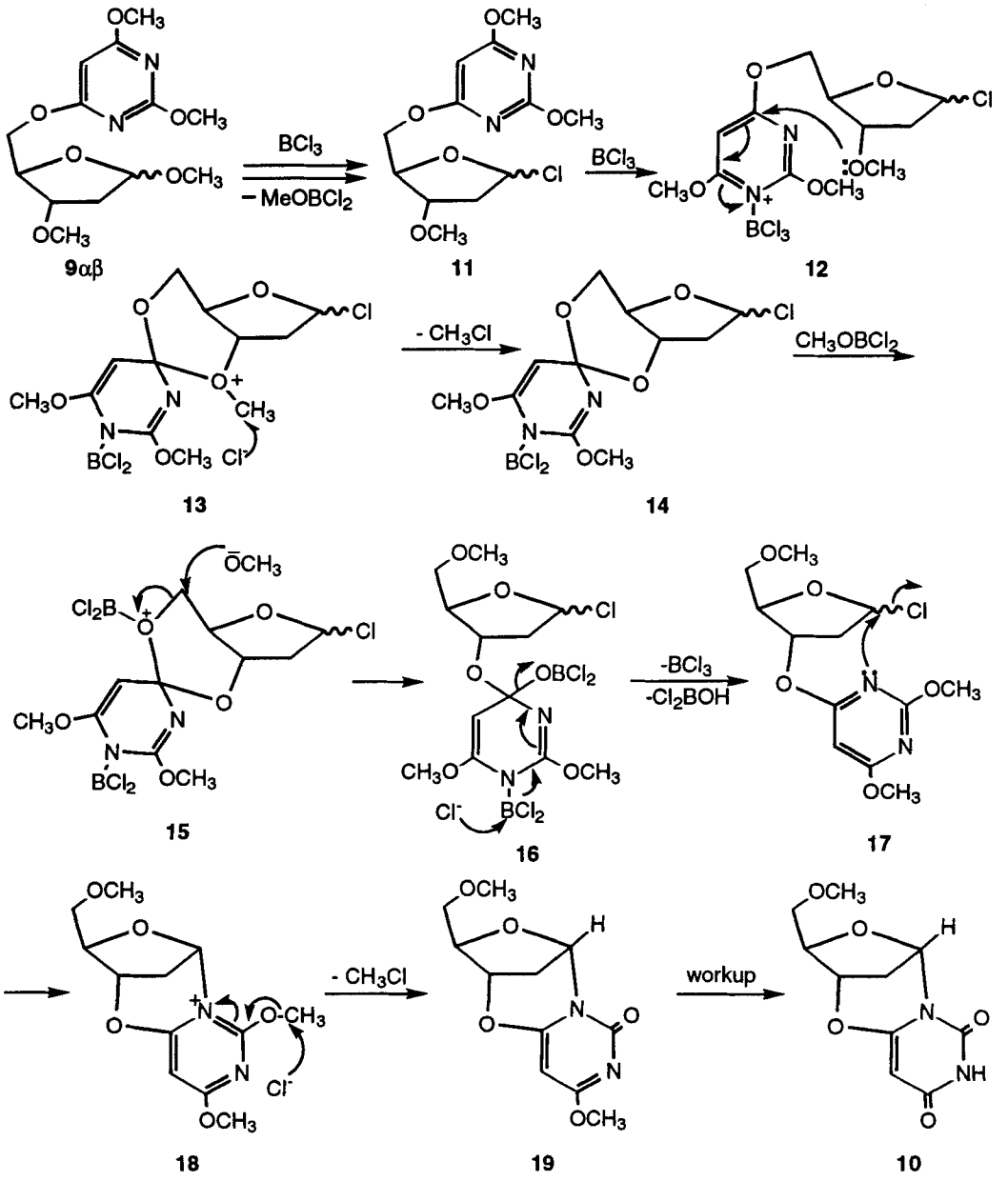


FIG. 1



Scheme

cyclization. Anomerization and/or hydrolysis of the methyl riboside were the only processes observed. However, when either anomer of **9**αβ was treated with boron trichloride, the crystalline anhydro compound **10** was isolated in 40% yield along with 50% of recovered anomerized starting material and some minor unidentified adducts. The surprising structure of **10** was suggested by its ^{1}H NMR spectrum which showed the 3'-proton at low field [δ 5.05 (1H, d, J = 0.8, 2.9 Hz] and the 5'-protons at much higher field [δ 3.57 (1H, dd, J = 3.4, 10.9 Hz) and δ 3.39 (1H, dd, J = 4.6, 10.8 Hz)], which implied that the substituent on the 3'-oxygen was electron withdrawing while that on the oxygen at 5' was not. The structure was proven conclusively by an x-ray crystal structure (Figure 1). Unfortunately, the poor quality of the crystal did not allow us to identify which enantiomeric form of **10** had been produced. However the compound isolated was optically active $[\alpha]_D^{25}$ = +21.3 (*c* 1.4, $CHCl_3$) and we believe that **10** is a more reasonable structure than **10'** because that structure would require inversions at both C-3 and C-4, which would be very difficult to explain.

The probable mechanism for the formation of **10** is shown in the Scheme, namely an intramolecular transfer of the base to the 3'-oxygen followed by cyclization. Conversion of the anomeric methoxyl group to chloride **11** presumably occurs first. Activation of the pyrimidine ring by boron trichloride **12** leads to attack by the 3' methoxy to afford the salt **13** which can lose methyl chloride to generate the spirocyclic orthoamide **14**. Activation of the bridging oxygen with methoxyboron dichloride would give an intermediate salt **15** which would react with methoxide to afford the 5'-methoxy compound **16**. Rearomatization of the pyrimidine would produce the sugar-base hybrid linked at the 3'-position of the sugar **17**. Final intramolecular glycosidation would give **18** which on loss of methyl chloride would furnish the methyl imidate of the product **19** or its regioisomer.[9] Hydrolysis on workup would then produce the observed product **10**. There are other possible pathways, e.g., formation of the 5'-chloro compound which could afford the 5'-methoxy compound via an internal displacement of the type suggested by Horowitz.[10] Obviously the reaction could also take place by an intermolecular process although that seems less likely.

In summary we have shown that a O^6,5'-bridged sugar-base hybrid **8** is converted with boron trichloride into the 6,3'-anhydro-2'-deoxyuridine **9** in 40% yield (80% based on recovered starting material) via an unusual structural rearrangement. We will report soon the use of 3'-linked base-sugar hybrids for the stereospecific preparation of only the desired β-anomers of 2'-deoxynucleosides by an internal Vorbrüggen process.[9]

Acknowledgment: We thank the National Institutes of Health (GM 47228) for generous financial support.

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1) American Chemical Society Arthur C. Cope Scholar, 1995.
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7) Ichikawa, Y.; Kubota, H.; Fujita, K.; Okauchi, T.; Narasaka, K. *Bull. Chem. Soc. Jpn.* **1989**, *62*, 845.
8) The procedure for forming **7**αβ involved addition of powdered KOH to a solution of the methyl ribosides **6**αβ and MeI in DMSO and stirring at ambient temperature for 5h. Desilylation was effected by the normal technique (TBAF and the silyl ether were stirred together in THF for 1.5 h at ambient temperature). The proton NMR spectra of **7**αβ corroborate their structures, e.g., the OH proton of **7**β is a dd (J = 9, 3.3 Hz) coupled to the two C5 protons, and therefore no shift of the TBS group from the oxygen at C3 to that at C5 occurred during the base-promoted methylation. We thank the referee for suggesting that possibility.
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Received 2/10/98
Accepted 6/26/98