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# Synthetic Communications: An International Journal for Rapid Communication of Synthetic Organic Chemistry

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/lsyc20

# Ruthenium Catalyzed Oxidation of 1,2-Diols to 1,2-Diketones Using Bromamine-T as an Oxidizing Agent

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To cite this article: Suman L. Jain , Vishal B. Sharma & Bir Sain (2005) Ruthenium Catalyzed Oxidation of 1,2-Diols to 1,2-Diketones Using Bromamine-T as an Oxidizing Agent, Synthetic Communications: An International Journal for Rapid Communication of Synthetic Organic Chemistry, 35:3, 465-469, DOI: <u>10.1081/SCC-200048974</u>

To link to this article: <u>http://dx.doi.org/10.1081/SCC-200048974</u>

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## Ruthenium Catalyzed Oxidation of 1,2-Diols to 1,2-Diketones Using Bromamine-T as an Oxidizing Agent

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**Abstract:** A variety of 1,2-diols were selectively oxidized to their corresponding 1,2-diketones with bromamine-T using  $RuCl_3 \cdot xH_2O$  as catalyst in alkaline acetonitrile/water (1:1) medium. The reaction was pH dependent (pH 8.4), and at higher pH the rate of the reaction decreased significantly.

Keywords: Bromamine-T, 1,2-diketones, 1,2-diols, oxidation, ruthenium chloride

The oxidation of 1,2-diols to the corresponding 1,2-diketones has been reported by  $RuCl_2(PPh_3)_3$  catalyzed hydrogen transfer,<sup>[1]</sup> 4-MeO-TEMPO,<sup>[2]</sup> 4-PhCO<sub>2</sub>-TEMPO-electrolysis,<sup>[3]</sup> (4-AcNH-TEMPO)-OTs-TsOH,<sup>[4]</sup> H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>-[C<sub>5</sub>H<sub>5</sub>N-(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>5</sub> CH<sub>3</sub>[PO<sub>4</sub>(W(O)(O<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>]<sub>4</sub>],<sup>[5]</sup> and O<sub>2</sub>-Co(acac)<sub>3</sub>-*N*-hydroxyphthalimide.<sup>[6]</sup> Recently Khurana et al.,<sup>[7]</sup> reported the use of *N*-bromosuccinimide as an efficient reagent for this transformation, but bromination as the side reaction particularly in substituted hydrobenzoins was noticed. In continuation to our studies on oxidation,<sup>[8–12]</sup> herein we report a simple and convenient method for the oxidation of 1,2-diols (1) to 1,2-diketones (2) in near quantitative yields with bromamine-T as oxidant and ruthenium trichloride as the catalyst (Scheme 1).

Received in India September 29, 2004

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$$\begin{array}{c|c} R-CH-CH-R' \xrightarrow{\text{bromamine-T, }RuCl_3.xH_2O} & R-C-C-R\\ I & I\\ OH & OH & acetonitrile/water (1:1), pH 8.4 & O & O\\ 1 & (80 \ ^0C) & 2 \end{array}$$

Scheme 1.

Oxidation of 1,2-diols (1) with catalytic amount of ruthenium trichloride in acetonitrile/water (1:1) at 80°C using bromamine-T with substrate/bromamine-T under alkaline pH (8.4) provided  $\alpha$ -diketones (2) in almost quantitative yields. These results are summarized in Table 1. Hydrobenzoins in general were found to be more reactive than aliphatic diols and required lesser reaction time for their oxidation. Hydrobenzoins containing electron-donating groups were by far the most reactive substrates (Table 1).

The reaction was found to be highly dependant upon the pH of the reaction medium. At neutral pH, the oxidation of hydrobenzoin was found to be very slow and the reaction completed in 6 h while at pH 8.4 the same could be completed within 45 min. At higher pH (9–11), the rate of the reaction slowed down,<sup>[13]</sup> and after 12 h the reaction was incomplete. After several experimental investigations with respect to choice of solvents, 1:1  $H_3$ CN- $H_2O$  was found to be most efficient.

In the absence of the Ru-catalyst the oxidation of hydrobenzoin to benzil did not take place after 12 h, however, with addition of 0.5 mol % ruthenium trichloride to the reaction mixture the transformation occurred in 45 min.

We have developed a very simple and efficient method for the oxidation of 1,2-diols to 1,2-diketones with bromamine-T/ruthenium system under mild reaction conditions.

#### **Typical Experimental Procedure**

To a stirred solution of hydrobenzoin (1 mmol, 214 mg) in alkaline (pH 8.4) acetonitrile/water (1:1) mixture (5 mL), RuCl<sub>3</sub>·xH<sub>2</sub>O (1 mg, 0.5 mol%) was added and heated at 80°C for 45 min. The progress of the reaction was monitored by TLC (SiO<sub>2</sub>) using benzene/ethyl acetate (9:1) as eluent. After completion of the reaction, solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure and the residue dissolved in dichloromethane. The dichloromethane layer was washed twice with water and dried over anhydrous sodium sulphate followed by evaporation. The residue was purified on silica gel using ethyl acetate/hexane (1:4) as eluent to yield benzil (199 mg, 95%) which was identified by comparing the physical and spectral data with those of authentic sample.

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 $Yield^b$ 95 97 95 96 92 96 97 time (min) Reaction 20 45 10 15 12  $\infty$ Ś N(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> OCH σ Ę Product =0 =0 =0 =0 =0 0 :0 C H<sub>3</sub>CO -H<sub>3</sub>CO-H (CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>N σ N(CH<sub>3</sub>)2 OCH он он CH-C HO HO Substrate но но CH-CHон он он он ΗO ф ф CH-CH CH-CH CH-CH CH-CH ΗÇ H<sub>3</sub>CO-( H<sub>c</sub>CO H<sub>3</sub>C (CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>N-Entry Ś 9 3 ~  $\sim$ 4

**Table 1.** Oxidation of 1,2-diols with bromamine-T using RuCl<sub>3</sub>  $\cdot$  xH<sub>2</sub>O as catalyst<sup>a</sup>

### Ruthenium Catalyzed Oxidation of 1,2-Diols to 1,2-Diketones

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Yield<sup>b</sup> 90 92 85 80 80 <sup> $\alpha$ </sup>Reaction conditions: Substrate/Bromamine-T (1:2), RuCl<sub>3</sub>·xH<sub>2</sub>O (0.5 mol%), Acetonitrile/water(1:1), pH 8.4. at 80°C. <sup>b</sup>Isolated yields. time (min) Reaction 25 55 25 30 99 NO2  $CH_3(CH_2)_{12}C - C (CH_2)_{12}CH_3$ CH<sub>3</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>14</sub>C-C (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>14</sub>CH<sub>3</sub> U Product Ū =0 =0 =0  $\overline{\mathbb{C}}$ 2 S  $NO_2$ CH<sub>3</sub> (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>14</sub>CH-CH (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>14</sub>CH<sub>3</sub> CH<sub>3</sub> (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>12</sub>CH-CH (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>12</sub>CH<sub>3</sub> σ сі он он Substrate Ċ ho ho ÓH ÓH ÓH ÖH HO HO O<sub>2</sub>N-Entry  $\infty$ 10 12 6 Ξ

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Table 1. Continued.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We are thankful to the director, IIP, for his kind permission to publish these results. Suman L. Jain a'nd Vishal B. Sharma are thankful to CSIR, New Delhi, for the award of research fellowships.

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