A preparation of bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-one by sequential Michael reactions.

Shirley Muniz Machado*, Felipe César Sousa e Silva, Gil Valdo José da Silva
Dep. de Química, Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras de Ribeirão Preto, Universidade de São Paulo,
Avenida Bandeirantes n° 3900, 14040-901, Ribeirão Preto-SP, Brazil

* Tel.:+55 (016)-36023879  Fax:+55 (016)-36024838  e-mail: shirleymma@pg.fclrp.usp.br
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**INTRODUCTION**

Bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-ones are efficient starting materials for the synthesis of natural products. Bicyclic compounds are traditionally synthesized through Diels-Alder reactions; these bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-ones have been synthesized using cross-conjugate dienes derived from cyclohexenones.

We report here some experimental results in which the bicyclic system was obtained by reaction of an enolate with methyl vinyl ketone, indicating that it could be the result of two sequential Michael additions.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

As part of an ongoing synthetic study, we directed our attention to the reaction between the cross-conjugated enolate and methyl vinyl ketone as a Michael acceptor (Scheme 1) for the preparation of the intermediate. However, under these reaction conditions we obtained only the bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-one 4, as a mixture of diastereoisomers (Scheme 1), resulting from two sequential Michael additions.

**Scheme 1: Sequential Michael additions of cyclohex-2-enone 1.**

Comparing this result with others described in the literature we can conclude what the cyclization is favored either by the absence of a strong steric hindrance (R=H) (Scheme 1) and by increase in bond energy that accompanies the transformation of a π-bond to a σ-bond.

This opens the possibility to convert 1,3-diketones into bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-ones through two sequential Michael additions, because 1,3-diketones can be easily converted to enones without β-substituents.

According to scheme 2 the intermediate 1 can be easily obtained from 5,5-dimethylcyclohexane-1,3-dione (5), a readily available starting material.

For this purpose dimedone (5) was converted to intermediate 6 by esterification followed by reduction with LiAlH₄, furnishing the enone 1. Treatment of enone 1 with LDA and MVK provides the bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-one (4a and 4b (1:1)).

**Scheme 2: Synthesis of bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-one (4) from the dimedone (5).**

**CONCLUSION**

The sequential Michael addition of MVK to cross-conjugate enolates is a convenient and rapid alternative to Diels-Alder reactions for the preparation of bicyclo[2.2.2]octan-2-ones.

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**REFERENCES**