## **Supporting Information**

for

# **Different Oxidative Addition Mechanisms for 12- and 14- Electron Palladium(0) Explain Ligand-Controlled Divergent Site Selectivity**

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### **I. Experimental Details**

### *A. General Materials and Methods*

NMR spectra were recorded at 298 K on a Bruker DRX 500 MHz (500.233 MHz for <sup>1</sup>H, 125.795 MHz for <sup>13</sup>C, 470.639 MHz for 19F) or a Bruker Ascend 400 MHz (400.130 MHz for 1H NMR, 100.613 for 13C). 1H and 13C NMR chemical shifts are reported in parts per million (ppm) relative to TMS, with the residual solvent peak used as an internal reference [<sup>1</sup>H NMR: CHCl<sub>3</sub> (7.26 ppm), C<sub>6</sub>D<sub>5</sub>H (7.16 ppm); <sup>13</sup>C NMR: CDCl<sub>3</sub> (77.16 ppm), <sup>13</sup>C NMR: C<sub>6</sub>D<sub>6</sub> (128.06 ppm)]. Multiplicities are reported as follows: singlet (s), doublet (d), doublet of doublets (dd), and multiplet (m). GC data were collected using a Shimadzu GC-2010 Plus with a flame ionization detector equipped with a SH-Rxi-5ms capillary column (15 m x 0.25 mm ID x 0.25  $\mu$ m df). GCMS data were collected with a Shimadzu GC-2030 paired with a Shimadzu GCMS-QP2020 NX and equipped with a SH-Rxi-5ms capillary column (30 m x 0.25 mm ID x 0.25 µm df). LC-MS analyses were performed on either an Agilent 6538 Q-TOF MS or a Bruker micro-TOF MS, both coupled to an Agilent 1290 Infinity UHPLC system. A 50 mm long Eclipse Plus C18 column (Agilent Technologies, Santa Barbara, CA; i.d. 2.1 mm, 1.8 µm particle size) was used for separation. A 6-minute gradient was used at a flow rate of 0.6 mL/min: 0-1 min 95% buffer A (100% H2O with 0.1% formic acid), followed by a gradient from 1-4 minutes of 5-95% buffer B (100% acetonitrile with 0.1% formic acid), 1 minute 95% buffer B, and returning to 95% buffer A for 1 minute. The mass spectrometers were operated in positive-ion mode with electrospray ionization.

Unless otherwise noted below, all commercially-obtained chemicals were used as received. (η3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Buindenyl)Pd(IPr)(Cl) was obtained from Umicore. *N*-heterocyclic carbene ligands IMes, SIMes, IPr, or SIPr were each obtained from Strem Chemicals or Sigma Aldrich. Unless otherwise noted, dichloroheteroarenes and arylboronic acid starting materials were obtained from Oakwood Chemical. Arylated pyridines **2a**, **2b**, **S2c**, **S4b**, and **S5b** were prepared as previously reported.1 1,4-Dioxane, potassium *tert*-butoxide, and palladium (II) chloride were obtained from Acros Organics. Potassium carbonate, triphenylphosphine, and tri-*tert*-butylphosphine, were obtained from Alfa Aesar. THF, toluene, and methanol were obtained from Fisher Scientific. *tert*-butyl bromide, diphenylphosphinoferrocene, tri-*o*-tolylphosphine, and tricyclohexylphosphine were obtained from Oakwood chemical. Tri-*n*-butylphosphine was obtained from Sigma-Aldrich. Palladium (II) acetate, trimethyl phosphine, Q-Phos, CyJohnPhos, and CataCXium A were obtained from Strem Chemical. Benzene was obtained from Beantown Chemical. For the purpose of Suzuki-Miyaura cross-couplings, THF was used as received from Fisher Scientific. 1,4- Dioxane required for Pd/dppf-mediated Suzuki-Miyaura cross-couplings was used as received from Acros Organics but kept under  $N_2$  prior to and during use.

Deuterated solvents (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, C<sub>6</sub>D<sub>6</sub>) were obtained from Cambridge Isotopes and stored over molecular sieves. Manual flash column chromatography was performed on SiliCycle silica gel 60 (40-63 µm particle size) and thin layer chromatography was performed on SiliCycle TLC plates pre-coated with extra hard silica gel 60  $F_{254}$ . Automated flash column chromatography was performed with a Biotage Selekt equipped with Biotage Sfär silica flash cartridges (20 µm particle size; 50 Å pore width) for normal phase separations, or Silica C18 cartridges (30  $\mu$ m particle size; 100 Å pore width) for reversed phase separations.

### *B. General Procedure for Suzuki Cross-Couplings*

*GC-Scale Reaction*s. The specified solids required in the Suzuki-Miyaura reactions were added to a 1-dram reaction vial in order of increasing mass: palladium catalyst (palladium source and free ligand) or precatalyst, the specified dihalopyridine substrate if solid (0.08 mmol, 1 equiv), arylboronic acid (0.08 mmol, 1.0 equiv), potassium carbonate or cesium carbonate, and then a stir bar. Liquid reagents were pre-measured by syringe and added in quick succession: benzene, THF, or 1,4-dioxane (0.32 mL, 0.25 M) via 1-mL syringe, followed by N<sub>2</sub>-sparged deionized water via 50-µL syringe. Note: dihalopyridine substrates were added last if liquid, via microliter syringe. A septum cap equipped with an  $N_2$ -ingas and outgassing needle was fastened to the 1-dram reaction vial and the headspace was sparged for 30-45 seconds. With continuous sparging, the vial was unscrewed from the septum cap and lowered while the cap was replaced with a PTFE-lined cap. The reaction was stirred vigorously at the specified temperature for the specified duration.

### *C. Ligand Screen with (cod)Pd(CH2SiMe3)2 (Table 1), [(*h*3-1-tBu-indenyl)Pd(Cl)]2, and Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub>*)

*Overview and Discussion*. The effect of phosphine sterics was evaluated in reactions in which free phosphine was combined with  $(cod)Pd(CH_2SiMe_3)_2$  (as shown in the manuscript, Table 1),  $[(\eta^{3}-1-iBu-indenyl)Pd(Cl)]_2$ , or Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub>. In addition, NHC ligands were evaluated in combination with (cod)Pd(CH<sub>2</sub>SiMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> or Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub>, or as part of a pre-formed complex with structure ( $\eta$ <sup>3</sup>-1<sup>-t</sup>Bu-indenyl)Pd(NHC)(Cl).

Overall, the steric trends were comparable for all Pd sources. However, in the conditions with  $Pd(OAc)_2$ , a dependence of selectivity and yield on L:Pd ratio was seen for some ligands that was not seen when using  $(cod)Pd(CH<sub>2</sub>SiMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>$ . This may reflect the ability of Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> to oxidize phosphines,<sup>2</sup> thereby leading to a much lower effective L:Pd ratio and a change in the nature of the active catalyst. Notably, when using  $PCy_3$  in combination with both Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> and  $[(\eta^{3}-1-tBu-indeny])Pd(Cl)]_2$ , selectivity switches for L:Pd = 1:1 compared to 2:1. This observation is consistent with prior evidence that PCy<sub>3</sub> can support both mono- and bisligated palladium<sup>3</sup> which are expected to give different selectivities. However, this effect is not seen when using  $(cod)Pd(CH_2SiMe_3)_2$ , and instead a slight preference for reaction at C4 is observed with both 5 and 10 mol % PCy3. This observation seems to suggest a higher concentration of monoligated Pd(PCy<sub>3</sub>) when using (cod)Pd(CH<sub>2</sub>SiMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> as the palladium source.







*<sup>a</sup>* Reactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. *b*Values in parentheses are minimum percent buried volumes obtained from the Kraken database.4 Percent buried volumes of NHCs reported for LAuCl complexes at a L–Au distance of 2.00 Å from reference 5.





26 2 **I** PCy3 (5) 23.4 37.9 3.5 1 : 1.6 27 Average **I** PCy3 (5) (30.2) 18.3 29.9 2.2 1 : 1.7 27 Average **I** PCy<sub>3</sub> (5) (30.2) 18.3 29.9 2.2 1:1.7<br>
28 1 **I** PCy<sub>3</sub> (10) 0.4 0.1 n.d. 4.0:1<br>
29 2 **I** PCy<sub>3</sub> (10) 0.4 0.1 n.d. 4.0:1 29 2 **I** PCy3 (10) 0.4 0.1 n.d. 4.0 : 1 30 Average **I** PCy<sub>3</sub> (10) (30.2) 0.4 0.1 n.d. 4.0:1<br>31 1 **I** PAd<sub>2</sub>(n-Bu)(5) 21.4 43.8 4.9 1:2.0 31 1 **I** PAd2(*n*-Bu) (5) 21.4 43.8 4.9 1 : 2.0 32 2 I PAd<sub>2</sub>(n-Bu) (5) 21.4 46.3 6.0 1:2.2<br>33 Average I PAd<sub>2</sub>(n-Bu) (5) (32.8) 21.4 45.1 5.5 1:2.1

34 1 **I** PAd<sub>2</sub>(*n*-Bu) (10) (32.8) 1.7 2.6 1.4 1:1.5<br>35 1 **I**  $P^tBu_3(5)$  24.6 43.1 6.2 1:1.7

39 1 **I** Q-Phos (5) 23.0 47.2 5.7 1:2.1<br>40 2 **I** Q-Phos (5) 23.2 49.4 6.9 1:2.1 40 2 **I** Q-Phos (5) 23.2 49.4 6.9 1:2.1<br>41 Average **I** Q-Phos (5) (47.6) 23.1 48.3 6.3 1:2.1 41 Average **I** Q-Phos (5) (47.6) 23.1 48.3 6.3 1:2.1<br>42 1 **II** IMes 31.6 39.7 1.7 1:1.3 42 1 **II** IMes 31.6 39.7 1.7 1 : 1.3

 $P<sup>t</sup>Bu<sub>3</sub>(5)$  24.6 43.1 6.2 1:1.7

 $P<sup>t</sup>Bu<sub>3</sub>(5)$  26.9 46.6 8.0 1:1.7<br> $P<sup>t</sup>Bu<sub>3</sub>(5)$  (36.3) 25.8 44.9 7.1 1:1.7

 $P<sup>t</sup>Bu<sub>3</sub>(10)$  (36.3) 18.6 31.4 3.5 1:1.7

 $(36.3)$  25.8 44.9 7.1 1:1.7

33 Average **I** PAd<sub>2</sub>(*n*-Bu) (5) (32.8) 21.4 45.1 5.5<br>34 1 **I** PAd<sub>2</sub>(*n*-Bu) (10) (32.8) 1.7 2.6 1.4

35 1 **I** Pt

36 2 **I**  $P<sup>t</sup>$ 

38 1 **I** P<sup>t</sup>

37 Average **I**<br>38 1 **I** 



*<sup>a</sup>* Reactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. *b*Values in parentheses are minimum percent buried volumes obtained from the Kraken database.4 Percent buried volumes of NHCs reported for LAuCl complexes at a L–Au distance of 2.00 Å from reference 5.

			$Pd(OAc)2$ (5 mol %) ligand (5-10 mol %)							
CI		<b>MeO</b>	$-B(OH)$ <sub>2</sub> (1 equiv)	СI			<b>PMP</b>	<b>PMP</b>		
'N СI		$K_2CO_3$ (3 equiv) $H2O$ (14 equiv)			$\ddot{}$ PMP		$+$ СI		N 2c	
			THF, 25 °C, 13 h	2a			2 <sub>b</sub>			
	entry	trial	ligand $(mod \%)$	$\%V_{\text{bur}}$ $(min)^b$	2a(%)	2b(%)	2c(%)	2a : 2b		
	$\mathbf{1}$	$\mathbf{1}$	$\overline{P}Ph_3(5)$		5.5	0.9	1.5	6.1:1		
	$\overline{\mathbf{2}}$	$\overline{2}$	PPh <sub>3</sub> (5)		6.4	0.6	1.6	10.7:1		
	3	Average	PPh <sub>3</sub> (5)	(28.2)	6.0	0.7	1.6	8.6:1		
	$\overline{\mathbf{4}}$	$\mathbf{1}$	PPh <sub>3</sub> (10)		64.6	0.4	n.d.	>99:1		
	$\overline{5}$	$\overline{2}$	PPh <sub>3</sub> (10)		64.6	0.4	n.d.	>99:1		
	6	Average	PPh <sub>3</sub> (10)	(28.2)	63.3	0.4	n.d.	>99:1		
	$\overline{7}$	$\mathbf{1}$	$P(o$ -tol) <sub>3</sub> (5)		20.8	10.4	1.8	2.0:1		
	8	$\overline{2}$	$P(o$ -tol) <sub>3</sub> (5)		20.5	10.7	1.7	1.9:1		
	9	Average	$P(o$ -tol) <sub>3</sub> (5)	(34.4)	20.7	10.6	1.8	2.0:1		
	10	$\mathbf{1}$	$P(o$ -tol) <sub>3</sub> (10)		7.2	4.1	1.0	1.8:1		
	11	$\overline{2}$	$P(o$ -tol) <sub>3</sub> (10)		10.2	5.9	1.7	1.7:1		
	12	Average	$P(o$ -tol) <sub>3</sub> (10)	(34.4)	8.7	5.0	1.4	1.7:1		
	13	$\mathbf 1$	PMe <sub>3</sub> (5)		2.8	0.2	n.d.	14.0:1		
	14	$\overline{\mathbf{2}}$	PMe <sub>3</sub> (5)		6.9	0.8	n.d.	8.6:1		
	15	Average	PMe <sub>3</sub> (5)	(22.1)	4.9	0.5	n.d.	9.8:1		
	16	$\mathbf 1$	PMe <sub>3</sub> (10)		8.3	0.9	n.d.	9.2:1		
	17	$\overline{2}$	PMe <sub>3</sub> (10)		6.9	0.6	n.d.	11.5:1		
	18	Average	PMe <sub>3</sub> (10)	(22.1)	7.6	0.8	n.d.	9.5:1		
	19	$\mathbf 1$	$P(n-Bu)_{3}(5)$		6.3	$1.0$	n.d.	6.3:1		
	20	$\overline{2}$	$P(n-Bu)_{3}(5)$		9.0	2.2	n.d.	4.1:1		
	21	Average	$P(n-Bu)_{3}(5)$	(24.2)	7.7	1.6	n.d.	4.8:1		
	22	$\mathbf 1$	$P(n-Bu)_{3}(10)$		5.1	0.7	n.d.	7.3:1		
	23	$\overline{2}$	$P(n-Bu)_{3}(10)$		6.3	1.0	n.d.	6.3:1		
	24	Average	$P(n-Bu)_{3}$ (10)	(24.2)	5.7	0.9	n.d.	6.3:1		
	25	$\mathbf{1}$	$PCy_3(5)$		11.5	16.0	2.0	1:1.4		
	26	$\overline{2}$	$PCy_3(5)$		9.6	15.7	1.6	1:1.6		
	27	Average	$PCy_3(5)$	(30.2)	10.6	15.9	1.8	1:1.5		
	28	$\mathbf 1$	$PCy_3(10)$		2.6	1.2	2.3	2.2:1		

Table S<sub>3</sub>. Ligand Screen with Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub><sup>a</sup>



*<sup>a</sup>* Reactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. *b*Values in parentheses are minimum percent buried volumes obtained from the Kraken database.4 Percent buried volumes of NHCs reported for LAuCl complexes at a L–Au distance of 2.00 Å from reference 5.

### *D. Influence of 6-Substituent on Selectivity with IMes (Scheme 2A) and IPr*



**Table S4.** Effect of 6-Substituent on Selectivity in Benzene (Scheme 2A)*<sup>a</sup>*



*<sup>a</sup>*Reactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. *<sup>b</sup>*Reaction run for 13 h.

entry trial -R **a** (%) **b** (%) **c** (%) **a** : **b** 1 1 H 36 47 4 1:1.3 2 2 H 49 38 5 1.3 : 1 3 Average H 43 43 4 1:1  $4^b$  1 CF<sub>3</sub> 34 56 11 1:1.5  $5<sup>b</sup>$  2  $CF_3$  34 60 14 1:1.8 6b Average CF3 34 58 12 1: 1.7 7 1 Me 23 56 11 1:2.4  $8$  2 Me 21 55 11 1:2.6 9 Average Me 22 56 11 1:2.5 **1**,  $R = H$ **15**, R = Me N´ `Cl Cl **PMP**-B(OH)<sub>2</sub> (1 equiv) N´ `Cl **PMP**  $K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>$  (3 equiv) R´N´N´Cl H<sub>2</sub>O (14 equiv) R´N´**PMP** R´N´Cl R THF,  $25 °C$  15.5 h N **PMP** R N CI R N PMP Cl **PMP**  $+$   $\sim$   $+$ (η3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(**IMes**)(Cl) (3 mol %) **a b c**

### **Table S5.** Effect of 6-Substituent on Selectivity in THF*<sup>a</sup>*

*<sup>a</sup>*Reactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. Unless otherwise noted, yields are GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. *<sup>b</sup>*Uncalibrated GC yields.

### *E. Influence of [2] on Selectivity with IMes (Scheme 2B), IPr, and PtBu3*

*Overview and Discussion*. The selectivity of (h3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(IMes)(Cl) is sensitive to the concentration of substrate **2** (Table S6). At higher [**2**], more reaction at C2 is seen, consistent with greater availability of **2** that can coordinate to Pd(IMes) leading to preferential reaction at C2 through a bisligated transition state **TS13a-IMes**.

For comparison, no change or only a slight change in selectivity is seen in analogous experiments using (h3-1 *t* Bu-indenyl)Pd(**IPr**)(Cl) (Table S7) and (cod)Pd(CH2SiMe3)2/**PtBu3** (Table S8). With both catalytic systems, DFT calculations predict that reaction at C4 is favored through monoligated PdL, but that *if* bisligated PdL(**2**) could react, it would prefer C2. For the former catalytic system, reaction of C2—Cl at Pd(IPr)(**2**) (**TS13a-IPr**) is calculated to be disfavored over the monoligated TS for reaction at C4 (**TS10b-IPr**) by 4.0 kcal/mol. In the latter system, reaction at C2 at Pd(P<sup>t</sup>Bu<sub>3</sub>)(2) is disfavored by 10.1 kcal/mol (see Figure 1 in the manuscript, compare **TS13a**-**PtBu3** to **TS10b-PtBu3**). These trends are consistent with the very slight sensitivity of the Pd/IPr system to [**2**], and the nonexistent sensitivity of the  $Pd/P<sup>t</sup>Bu<sub>3</sub>$  system to [ $2$ ].

### **Table S6.** Influence of [**2**] on Selectivity with IMes (Scheme 2B)*<sup>a</sup>*



aReactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. bDifference in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 298.15 K.

### **Table S7.** Influence of [**2**] on Selectivity with IPr*<sup>a</sup>*



aReactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. **bDifference** in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 298.15 K.

#### **Table S8.** Influence of [**2**] on Selectivity with PtBu<sub>3</sub>a



aReactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. bDifference in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 298.15 K.

#### *F. Selectivity Analysis of Substrates in Scheme 2C*

Cross-coupling reactions of the substrates in Scheme 2C were set up according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions using  $(\eta^3 - 1 - tBu$ -indenyl)Pd(IPr)(Cl) (3 mol%), K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (3 equiv), and deionized H<sub>2</sub>O (14 equiv) at 60 °C in THF with stirring for 12 h. Reaction outcomes were analyzed by GC and GCMS using *n*-undecane as an internal standard. Solvent was removed from the reaction vials under vacuum, then the crude solids were redissolved in CDCl3 or C6D6, filtered through celite, and analyzed by 1H NMR. The unconventional monoarylated products of each reaction in Scheme 2C were isolated and fully characterized as described below in Section G, or they were isolated and characterized previously.1 GC and 1H NMR signals present in the crude reaction mixtures were identified based on comparison to those of the isolated products. The GC retention times of the diarylated products were assigned based on their mass values obtained by GCMS analysis. Where relevant, NMR yields of minor products were calculated from NMR signal ratios relative to the major product, whose yield was determined by calibrated GC analysis.

The Pd/IPr-catalyzed Suzuki cross-coupling of 3,5-dichloropyridazine (**5**) favors reaction at C5 according to crude GC, GCMS, and 1H NMR analyses (ratio of **S5a** and **S5b** = 1 : 13.1 based on the ratio of signal integrations by 1H NMR (C6D6, 500 MHz, Scheme S1B). As discussed in the manuscript, the difference in LUMO coefficient between C3 and C5 is substantial, consistent with high selectivity for the C5-site.

**Scheme S1.** Suzuki reaction of 5 using a Pd/IPr catalyst. (A) GC chromatogram of the crude reaction mixture. (B) Relevant region of the <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of the crude reaction mixture.



The Pd/IPr-catalyzed Suzuki cross-coupling of 2,4-dichloropyridine (**2**) favors reaction at C4 according to crude GC, GCMS, and 1H-NMR analyses (ratio of **2a** and **2b** = 1 : 11.78 based on the ratio of signal integrations by 1H-NMR (CDCl3, 400 MHz, Scheme S2B), and 1 : 11.82 based on the ratio of calibrated signal integrations by GC, Scheme S2A). As discussed in the manuscript, the difference in LUMO coefficient between C2 and C4 is substantial, consistent with high selectivity for the C4-site.



**Scheme S2.** Suzuki reaction of **2** using a Pd(IPr) catalyst.

The Pd/IPr-catalyzed Suzuki cross-coupling of 2,3-dichloropyridine (**1**) favors reaction at the unconventional site C3 under the optimized system according to crude GC and GCMS analysis (ratio of **S1a** and **S1b** = 1 : 1.9 based on the ratio of signal integrations by 1H-NMR (CDCl3, 400 MHz, Scheme S3B). As such, the use of (η3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Buindenyl)Pd(IPr)(Cl) promotes reaction at the site distal to nitrogen, albeit in low selectivity. As discussed in the manuscript, the difference in LUMO coefficient between C2 and C3 is modest, thus the reaction is not as selective as the reactions of 2,4-dichloropyridine or 3,5-dichloropyridazine.



### **Scheme S3.** Suzuki reaction of **1** using a Pd(IPr) catalyst.

2,5-Dichloropyridine (**4**) favors reaction at C2 under the optimized system according to crude GC and GCMS analysis (ratio of S4b to S4a = 1 : 2.1 based on the ratio of signal integrations by <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, 400 MHz, Scheme S4B). As such, the use of (η3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(IPr)(Cl) does not enable unconventional selectivity with this substrate. As discussed in the manuscript, the difference in LUMO coefficient between C2 and C5 is very small (8% C2 and 10% C5), and thus it is likely that palladium is more strongly influenced by bond dissociation energies (which favor reaction at C2) than by LUMO coefficients.







### *G. Isolation and Characterization of Cross-Coupled Products (Table 1 and Scheme 2)*

*4-Chloro-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-6-methylpyridine (15a).* Compound **15a** was prepared according to a modified literature procedure.6 Palladium(II) acetate (4.5 mg, 0.02 mmol, 5 mol %), 1,1' bis(diphenylphosphino)ferrocene (14.8 mg, 0.2 mmol, 5 mol %), cesium carbonate (325.8 mg, 1 mmol 2.5 equiv) and *p*-methoxyphenylboronic acid (60.8 mg, 0.4 mmol, 1 equiv) were added to an ovendried 1-dram vial in a  $N_2$ -filled glovebox. The vial was sealed with a septum, removed from the glovebox, and 2,4-dichloro-6-methylpyridine (**15**, 64.8 mg, 0.4 mmol, 1 equiv), deionized water (50 µL, 2.8 mmol, 7 equiv), and 1,4-dioxane (1.6 mL) were added through the septum. The reaction was allowed to stir at 70 °C for 21 h. Purification by flash column chromatography ( $R_f = 0.63$  in 20% ethyl acetate in N Cl O

hexanes) provided a pure fraction of **15a** that was used for characterization and for preparing GC calibration curves. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, δ): 7.91-7.95 (m, 2H), 7.46 (d, *J* = 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 1.4 Hz, 1H), 6.96-7.01 (m, 2H), 3.86 (s, 3H), 2.58 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR (126 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, δ): 161.0, 159.9, 158.2, 144.7, 131.3, 128.6, 121.1, 117.3, 114.4, 55.6, 24.8. HRMS (ESI Q-TOF) m/z: [M]+ Calcd for C13H12ClNO 233.0607; Found 233.0615.

*2-Chloro-4-(4-methoxyphenyl)-6-methylpyridine (15b).* Compound **15b** was prepared according to the general procedure. An oven dried 1-dram vial was charged with a stir bar, ( $\eta$ <sup>3</sup>-1<sup>-t</sup>Buindenyl)Pd(IPr)Cl (8.4 mg, 0.012 mmol, 3.0 mol%), *p*-methoxyphenylboronic acid (60.8 mg, 0.4 mmol, 1 equiv), and potassium carbonate (165.8 mg, 1.2 mmol, 3 equiv). Dry degassed THF (1.6 mL), deionized water (100 µL, 5.6 mmol, 14 equiv), and 2,4-dichloro-6-methylpyridine (**15**, 64.8 mg, 0.4 mmol, 1

equiv) were added and the reaction mixture was sparged with  $N_2$ . The reaction was allowed to stir at 25 <sup>o</sup>C for 20 h. Purification was performed by reversed phase flash column chromatography with a 12 g C18 silica column, using an initial automated program comprising of a flow rate of 30 mL/min of water:acetonitrile (98:2 to 2:98) over 30 column volumes. When the product began eluting, the program was paused and reset to elute the analyte at 63% MeCN in water. After the elution, the initial program was resumed. Pure fractions containing **15b** were partitioned between dichloromethane and saturated brine. The organic layers were combined, dried over magnesium sulfate, and solvent was removed under reduced pressure affording a pure fraction of **15b** that was used for characterization and for preparing GC calibration curves. 1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl3, δ): 7.52-7.59 (m, 2H), 7.31 (d, *J =* 0.8 Hz, 1H), 7.24 (d, *J* = 0.8, 1H), 6.97- 7.02 (m, 2H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 2.57 (s, 3H) 13C{1H} NMR (126 MHz, CDCl3, δ): 161.0, 159.6, 151.4, 151.3, 129.5, 128.4, 119.5, 118.5, 114.7, 55.6, 24.4. HRMS (ESI Q-TOF) m/z: [M]+ Calcd for C13H12ClNO 233.0607; Found 233.0643.

N Cl

O



*2,4-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-6-methylpyridine (15c).* Compound **15c** was prepared according to a modified literature procedure.1 An oven dried 1-dram vial was charged with a stirbar, (3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(IPent)Cl (9.8 mg, 0.012 mmol, 3.0 mol%), *p*-methoxyphenylboronic acid (121.6 mg, 0.8 mmol, 2 equiv), and potassium carbonate (165.8 mg, 1.2 mmol, 3 equiv). Benzene (1.6 mL), water (100  $\mu$ L, 5.6 mmol, 14 equiv), and 2,4-dichloro-6methylpyridine (**15**, 64.8 mg, 0.4 mmol, 1 equiv) was added quickly and the vial was sparged

with N<sub>2</sub>. The reaction was allowed to stir at 25 <sup>o</sup>C for 20 h. Purification by flash column chromatography ( $R_f = 0.29$ ) in 20% ethyl acetate in hexanes) afforded **15c** as a white solid (86.6 mg, 64% yield). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>, δ): 8.02-7.97 (m, 2H), 7.64–7.58 (multiple peaks, 3H), 7.21 (d, *J* = 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.03-6.99 (m, 4H), 3.88 (s, 3H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 2.66 (s, 3H). Spectral data are consistent with those previously reported.7



*2-Chloro-3-(4-methoxyphenyl)pyridine (S1b).* Compound **S1b** was prepared according to the general procedure. An oven dried 1-dram vial was charged with a stir bar, ( $\eta$ <sup>3</sup>-1-<sup>*t*</sup>Bu-indenyl)Pd(IPr)Cl (8.4 mg, 0.012 mmol, 3.0 mol%), 2,3-dichloropyridine (**1**, 59.2 mg, 0.4 mmol, 1.0 equiv), *p*methoxyphenylboronic acid (60.8 mg, 0.4 mmol, 1.0 equiv), and potassium carbonate (165.8 mg, 1.2

mmol, 3 equiv). Benzene (1.6 mL) and water (100 µL, 5.6 mmol, 14 equiv) were added and the reaction was allowed to stir for 16 h. Purification by flash column chromatography on silica ( $R_f$  = 0.42 in 20% ethyl acetate in hexanes) provided **S1b** as white solid (21.9 mg, 25% yield). 1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl3, δ): 8.36 (dd, *J =* 4.8, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.65 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.41-7.37 (m, 2H), 7.29 (dd, *J =* 7.6, 4.8 Hz, 1H), 7.01-6.96 (m, 2H), 3.86 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>,  $\delta$ ): 159.8, 150.0, 148.2, 139.8, 136.9, 130.7, 130.0, 122.7, 114.0, 55.5. HRMS (ESI Q-TOF) m/z: [M]+ Calcd for  $C_{12}H_{10}C$  (NO 219.0451; Found 219.0454. The other regioisomer (the C2 monoarylated isomer **S1a**) has been previously reported,8 and its spectral data are distinct from those of product **S1b** reported here.

### *H. Time Trial for Suzuki Reaction of 2*

The Pd/IPr-mediated coupling of 2,4-dichloropyridine and *p*-methoxyphenyl boronic acid was monitored over a period of 155 min. Two identical reactions were set up in parallel according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions using 1-dram reaction vials with the following modifications. Each reaction was run on a 0.6 mmol scale with respect to the limiting reagents (2,4-dichloropyridine and *p-*methoxyphenylboronic acid). One vial was designated as a "control" (sealed with a PTFE-lined cap, no aliquots removed), and the other was equipped with a septum cap. An *n*-undecane internal standard was added to both vials prior to stirring and both were sparged with N2 prior to stirring. Aliquots were withdrawn from the second vial by syringe, diluted in ethyl acetate, and analyzed quantitatively by GC. The final aliquot at  $t = 155$  min gave results comparable to the control vial (entries  $5-6$  in Table S9), demonstrating that the periodic removal of aliquots did not significantly alter the course of the reaction.





**Figure S1.** Visual representation of product formation over time using Pd/IPr conditions for the Suzuki coupling of **2**.

Discussion: C4 over C2-selectivity remains constant after the first 15 minutes (Table S9 and Figure S1). The C2 monoarylated isomer **2a** might be somewhat more likely to undergo a second arylation than the C4-monoarylated isomer **2b** when a 1:1 ratio of electrophile and nucleophile is used. Both chloride and arylated pyridines (potential ligands for Pd) build up throughout the reaction, yet these factors are not expected to improve C4-selectivity based on our mechanistic understanding of selectivity. Although aliquot removal may alter the ratio of homogeneous to heterogeneous material within the reaction vial, the control vial closely resembles the second vial after 155 min indicating that this effect was not significant.

### *I. Evidence Against Multinuclear Speciation 1. Effect of Pd:L ratio*

Fairlamb et al. recently found that the selectivity of Pd/PPh<sub>3</sub>-catalyzed cross-coupling of 2,4-dibromopyridine is sensitive to the ratio of Pd:PPh<sub>3</sub>.9 This was interpreted as a change in catalyst speciation depending on the amount of ligand [i.e., predominantly mononuclear Pd at high  $[PPh_3]$  (2-4 equiv relative to Pd) and multinuclear Pd at low [PPh3] (<2 equiv relative to Pd)]. Fairlamb's results are summarized below (ratios approximated from Figure 1 of ref 9a). To highlight the significant effect of stoichiometry in Fairlamb's system, the differences in free energies of activation are also listed below. This value (∆∆G‡) represents the difference in the free energy barrier for reaction at C4 vs. C2 based on the reported experimental selectivity, and derived with the Eyring equation at 40 ºC (Fairlamb's reaction temperature).





<sup>a</sup>Product yields are estimated from Figure 1 of ref 9a. **b**Difference in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the estimated experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 313.15 K.

In contrast, we observe a negligible effect of metal to ligand ratio when additional free IPr or IMes is added to the reactions with (h3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(NHC)(Cl). In contrast to Fairlamb's system, the results in our system suggest that there is not a catalyst speciation change upon changing ligand quantity.







aReactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. bDifference in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 298.15 K.



	$(\eta^3 - 1 - t$ Bu-indenyl)Pd(IMes)Cl) $(3 \text{ mol } \%)$								
<b>IMes</b> (0-9 mol %)									
$\mathsf{C}$ <b>MeO</b> $B(OH)$ <sub>2</sub> (1 equiv) $K_2CO_3$ (3 equiv)						<b>PMP</b> $+$	$+$	<b>PMP</b>	
	$\overline{2}$		$H2O$ (14 equiv) benzene, 25 °C, 15.5 h	2a	<b>PMP</b>	N 2 <sub>b</sub>		<b>PMP</b> N	
entry	trial	<b>Added IMes</b> $(mod \%)$	Pd:IMes	2a(%)	2b(%)	$2c (\%)$	2a:2b	2 <sub>c</sub> $\Delta\Delta G^*$ (C4-C2) (kcal/mol) <sup>b</sup>	
$\mathbf{1}$	$\mathbf{1}$	$\mathbf{o}$	1:1	21.1	35.3	2.7	1:1.7	$-0.3$	
$\overline{\mathbf{2}}$	$\overline{2}$	$\mathbf{o}$	1:1	24.3	44.0	3.0	1:1.8	$-0.3$	
3	Average	$\mathbf 0$	1:1	22.7	39.7	2.9	1:1.7	$-0.3$	
$\overline{\mathcal{A}}$	1	1.5	1:1.5	26.3	54.0	4.9	1:2.1	$-0.4$	
5	$\overline{2}$	1.5	1:1.5	26.5	55.5	5.6	1:2.1	$-0.4$	
6	Average	1.5	1:1.5	26.4	54.8	5.3	1:2.1	$-0.4$	
$^7_8$	$\mathbf{1}$	3.0	1:2	27.1	55.0	5.0	1:2.0	$-0.4$	
	$\overline{2}$	3.0	1:2	28.8	55.9	5.1	1:1.9	$-0.4$	
9	Average	3.0	1:2	28.0	55.5	5.1	1:2.0	$-0.4$	
10	$\mathbf{1}$	4.5	1:2.5	26.6	54.3	3.8	1:2.0	$-0.4$	
11	$\mathbf{2}$	4.5	1:2.5	28.9	54.0	3.5	1:1.9	$-0.4$	
12	Average	4.5	1:2.5	27.8	54.2	3.7	1:1.9	$-0.4$	
13	1	9.0	1:4	24.8	48.4	2.5	1:2.0	$-0.4$	
14	$\overline{2}$	9.0	1:4	27.7	50.4	1.7	1:1.8	$-0.3$	
15	Average	9.0	1:4	26.2	49.4	2.1	1:1.9	$-0.4$	

aReactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. *bDifference* in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 298.15 K.

### *2. Effect of [Pd]*

The effect of catalyst loading on the selectivity of the Suzuki coupling using (h3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(IPr)(Cl) and (h3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(IMes)(Cl) was evaluated. If multinuclear species are involved in the C4-selective pathway, then changes in selectivity would be expected upon changing initial precatalyst concentration, since multinuclear

species would form more rapidly at higher [Pd]. However, using (h3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(IPr)(Cl), selectivity remains essentially constant from 0.5–10 mol % catalyst loading:

		$(n3-1-tBu-indenyl)Pd(IPr)Cl)$	$(0.5-10 \text{ mol } \%)$				
C <sub>l</sub> $\overline{2}$		<b>MeO</b> $B(OH)_{2}$ (1 equiv) $K_2CO_3$ (3 equiv) $H2O$ (14 equiv)		$+$ N <b>PMP</b>		<b>PMP</b> N	<b>PMP</b> $^{+}$ <b>PMP</b>
			benzene, 25 °C, 15.5 h	2a		2 <sub>b</sub>	2c
entry	trial	Pd mol %	$2a\ (\%)$	2b(%)	$2c (\%)$	2a : 2b	$\Delta\Delta G^*_{(C4-C2)}$ (kcal/mol) <sup>b</sup>
$\mathbf{1}$	$\mathbf{1}$	0.5	4.2	32.9	1.1	1:7.8	
$\overline{2}$	$\overline{2}$	0.5	5.0	40.6	1.8	1:8.1	
3	Average	0.5	4.6	36.8	1.5	1:8.0	$-1.2$
$\overline{4}$	$\mathbf{1}$	$\mathbf{1}$	4.4	36.0	1.5	1:8.2	
5	$\overline{2}$	$\mathbf{1}$	5.6	46.5	3.0	1:8.3	
6	Average	$\mathbf{1}$	5.0	41.3	2.3	1:8.3	$-1.3$
$\frac{7}{8}$	$\mathbf{1}$	3	8.1	69.0	6.0	1:8.5	
	$\overline{2}$	3	8.6	70.5	6.4	1:8.2	
9	Average	3	8.3	69.7	6.2	1:8.4	$-1.3$
10	$\mathbf{1}$	$\mathbf 5$	8.6	69.9	4.3	1:8.1	
11	$\overline{2}$	5	8.5	71.7	5.3	1:8.4	
12	Average	5	8.6	70.8	4.8	1:8.2	$-1.2$
13	$\mathbf{1}$	10	8.0	67.4	$3.8\phantom{0}$	1:8.4	
14	$\overline{2}$	10	8.2	71.3	5.0	1:8.7	
15	Average	10	8.1	69.4	4.4	1:8.6	$-1.3$

**Table S13.** Influence of [Pd] on Selectivity using IPr*<sup>a</sup>*

aReactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. bDifference in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 298.15 K.

With (h3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(IMes)(Cl) (below) the reaction is slightly less selective (more reaction at C2) at low catalyst loadings. This is consistent with our observation that, with Pd/IMes, more reaction at C2 is observed at higher 2,4-dichloropyridine concentration (*vide supra*). At lower catalyst loadings, the effective substrate:Pd concentration is higher, which can explain the slight influence of catalyst loading on selectivity.

### **Table S14.** Influence of [Pd] on Selectivity using IMes*<sup>a</sup>*



aReactions were conducted according to the General Procedure for GC-scale reactions. GC yields calibrated against undecane as an internal standard. bDifference in free energies of activation for reaction at C4 versus C2 calculated from the experimental product ratios using the Eyring equation at 298.15 K.

### *3. Comments on Reaction Color*

Under the standard conditions for C4-selective coupling catalyzed by  $(\eta^3 - 1 - tBu - indenyl)Pd(NHC)(Cl)$ , there is no visual indication of nanoparticle formation. Whereas reactions are reported to turn dark brown/black under Fairlamb's conditions<sup>9</sup> and under our previously reported ligand-free "Jeffery" conditions,<sup>1</sup> the reactions using (n<sup>3</sup>-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(NHC)(Cl) remain pale yellow throughout the duration of the experiment, as illustrated below:



**Figure S2**. Reactions catalyzed by  $(n^3-1-tBu-indeny)Pd(NHC)(Cl)$  remain pale yellow, giving no indication of nanoparticle formation.

### *II. Computational Details*

### *A. General Methods*

Calculations were performed with Gaussian 16.10 An ultrafine integration grid and the keyword 5d were used for all calculations. Geometry optimizations of stationary points were carried out in implicit solvent using the CPCM continuum solvation model<sup>11</sup> (THF) with  $MN15L^{12}$  LANL2DZ<sup>13</sup> for Pd, and 6-31+G(d) for all other atoms ("BS1"). Frequency analyses were carried out at the same level to evaluate the zero-point vibrational energy and thermal corrections at 298.15 K. The nature of the stationary points was determined in each case according to the appropriate number of negative eigenvalues of the Hessian matrix. Forward and reverse intrinsic reaction coordinate (IRC) calculations were carried out on the optimized transition structures to ensure that the TSs indeed connect the appropriate reactants and products.14 Multiple conformations were considered for all structures, and the lowest energy conformations are reported. It is worth noting that the lowest-energy π-complexes are not necessarily directly connected to the oxidative addition transition structures on the potential energy surfaces (i.e., in some cases the IRC calculations, in particular for reaction at C2, lead to different higher-energy  $\pi$  complexes than the lowest-energy structures reported). This factor is unimportant to the overall energetics, assuming that the barrier to interconverting  $\pi$ -complexes is low (e.g., by palladium ring-walking). Unless otherwise indicated, the final reported energies were obtained from single point energy calculations on the optimized geometries using MN15,15 the CPCM solvation model (THF), and a larger basis set (SDD<sup>16</sup> for Pd and 6-311++G(2d,p) for all other atoms, "BS2"). Gibbs free energy values are reported after applying Cramer and Truhlar's anharmonic correction to frequencies that are less than 100 cm-1.17 All thermodynamic quantities were computed with the GoodVibes code18 at 298.15 K, applying corrections for initial concentrations consistent with the optimized experimental conditions  $([Pd] = 0.0075 M$  and  $[2] = 0.25 M$ ). 3D images of optimized structures were generated with CYLview.<sup>19</sup> 3D images of molecular orbitals were generated with Avogadro.20

### *B. Benchmarking Calculations and Method-Dependence of TS13a-IMes Energetics 1. Geometry Optimizations*

The functional used for geometry optimizations (MN15L) was selected for several reasons. First, benchmarking calculations performed on (h3-1-*<sup>t</sup>* Bu-indenyl)Pd(NHC)(Cl) showed that, out of four functionals (MN15L, M06, B3LYP, and B3LYP-D3BJ), MN15L gave the lowest root mean square deviation (RMSD) for several key bond distances when compared to the published crystal structure.21

**Table S15.** MN15L gives the lowest error in bond distances when compared to a crystal structure.



tBu

\*root mean squared error for the 7 distances highlighted in red (includes Pd—C distances for each of the carbons of the 5-membered ring)

Furthermore, recent benchmarking studies on the performance of DFT functionals for computing bond energies of 3d transition metals concluded that "*…Overall, the best performing functionals are PW6B95, the MN15 and MN15-L functionals, and the double hybrid B2PLYP.*"<sup>22</sup>

Finally, in recent work on related systems (oxidative addition of chloroaryl triflates at  $Pd(O)L_n$ ), we found that MN15L gave the best correlation to experiment.23 Based on all of these considerations, MN15L was chosen as the functional for geometry optimizations.

### *2. Single Point Energy Calculations*

In choosing a functional for single-point energy calculations using a larger basis set, we first compared the predicted selectivity of Pd-IPr using 4 different functionals for single point energy calculations (MN15L, MN15, M06, and B3LYP-D3). All 4 functionals led to similar predictions (Table S16).

functional	<b>IPr</b> TS10a-IPr	IPr C TS10b-IPr	$\Delta\Delta G^{\ddagger}$ (TS10b-TS10a)	predicted C2:C4
MN15L	11.5	10.4	$-1.1$	1:6
<b>MN15</b>	13.8	12.1	$-1.7$	1:17
M06	10.0	8.7	$-1.3$	1:9
B3LYP-D3BJ	8.6	7.9	$-0.7$	1:3

**Table S16.** Effect of Functional on Predicted C2:C4 Selectivity with Pd(IPr)

*∆G‡ values in kcal/mol, measured from preceding pi complex. Calculations at the* 

*[functional]/6-311++G(2d,p)/SDD(Pd) // MN15L/6-31+G(d)/LANL2DZ(Pd) level of theory.*

We next evaluated several functionals for single point energy calculations on the lowest-energy TSs for reaction at C4 (monoligated, **TS10b-IMes**) and at C2 (bisligated, **TS13a-IMes**) using the ligand IMes. The numbers below are adjusted for initial concentration. Although the single point energy functional does not seem to matter very much when comparing **TS10a-IPr** and **TS10b-IPr** (Table S16 above), the relative energies of **TS10b-IMes** and **TS13a-IMes** were found to vary enormously with functional (Table S17). This is likely due to the crowdedness of **TS13a-IMes** and differences in how the functionals handle dispersion interactions.



**Table S17.** Effect of Functional on Predicted C2:C4 Selectivity with Pd(IMes)

*∆∆G‡ values in kcal/mol. Calculations at the [functional]/6-311++G(2d,p)/SDD(Pd) // MN15L/6-31+G(d)/LANL2DZ(Pd) level of theory.*

As shown above, most functionals predict that, with IMes, the C2 product should be favored, although the predicted selectivies with those functionals span 5 orders of magnitude. On the other hand, M06 predicts that the C4 product should be exclusively observed. Overall, the selectivity predicted with the hybrid functional MN15 provides results that are most consistent with the near 1:1 selectivity observed experimentally.

We next further evaluated some of these functionals in another crowded system where dispersion interactions would also be important. The energies of the minimum-energy transition structures for reaction at C2 and C4 with  $Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>$  were calculated (Table S18). Experimentally, the use of PPh<sub>3</sub> leads exclusively to the C2-functionalized product. As shown below, both MN15 and M06 provide predictions consistent with experiment for this system. However, MN15L fails to predict the very high experimental selectivity (predicted C2:C4 ~ 13:1, experimental >99:1).

Table S18. Effect of Functional on Predicted C2:C4 Selectivity with Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>.



*∆∆G‡ values in kcal/mol. Calculations at the [functional]/6-311++G(2d,p)/SDD(Pd) // MN15L/6-31+G(d)/LANL2DZ(Pd) level of theory.*

Notably, MN15 and MN15L give identical predictions for selectivity with Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, a much smaller system in which dispersion interactions are significantly less important (Table S19). The predicted ratio of  $C_2:C_4 = 3:1$  is similar to the experimentally observed selectivity of ~11:1.

### **Table S19.** Effect of Functional on Predicted C2:C4 Selectivity with Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>.



*∆∆G‡ values in kcal/mol. Calculations at the [functional]/6-311++G(2d,p)/SDD(Pd) // MN15L/6-31+G(d)/LANL2DZ(Pd) level of theory.*

Based on all of these benchmarking calculations, MN15 was chosen for the single point energy calculations in this manuscript, and is expected to provide the best accuracy especially when comparing structures with very different degrees of crowdedness.

### *C. Frontier Molecular Orbital Calculations (Figure 1, Figure 2, Scheme 2B)*

MO calculations were performed at the CPCM(THF)-MN15L/BS1 level of theory using the "pop=regular" keyword. The percent contribution of individual atoms to a given molecular orbital was calculated from the molecular orbital coefficients provided in the Gaussian output file. For a given MO, the absolute values of the coefficients for each atomic orbital of the carbon in question were summed. This sum was divided by the sum of the absolute values of the coefficients for each atomic orbital of all atoms in the molecule, and the result was multiplied by 100% to arrive at the %contribution of an individual carbon to that MO.

Graphical depictions of the LUMOs of **1**, **2, 4**, and **5** from Scheme 2B are provided in Figure S3 below. Figure S4 illustrates the HOMOs of monoligated Pd(IPr) and bisligated Pd(IPr)(2,4-dichloropyridine). The latter is distorted into the bent geometry that it adopts during oxidative addition (structure was obtained from **TS13b-IPr**). Analogous to the simple model complexes  $Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)$  and  $Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>$ , the HOMO of monoligated Pd(IPr) has  $\sigma$ symmetry while the HOMO of bisligated Pd(IPr)(2,4-dichloropyridine) has  $\pi$ -symmetry.



**Figure S3**. LUMOs of dichloroheteroarene substrates from Figure 2.



**Figure S4.** HOMOs of mono and bisligated Pd(IPr) complexes.

### *D. Higher Energy Transition Structures with Pd/IPr*

With monoligated Pd(IPr), only 3-centered mechanisms were located for oxidative addition at C4 of **1** (**TS10b-IPr**). Three different conformations were found, and the lowest energy one is reported in the manuscript. Attempts to find displacement mechanisms were unsuccessful, as the geometries optimized to 3-centered concerted structures instead. For reaction at C2, three different conformations of a 3-centered mechanism were located, and the lowest energy one is reported in the manuscript (**TS10a-IPr**). In addition, one structure representing a displacement-type mechanism was found (**STS10a2-IPr**, below). Its energy is higher than any of the conformations of the 3-centered mechanism (∆G‡ = 17.8 kcal/mol relative to pi complex **9-IPr**). Seven conformations of bisligated transition structures were located each for reaction at both C2 and C4, and the lowest energy conformation for reaction at each site is reported in the manuscript (**TS13a-IPr** and **TS13b-IPr**). All of the bisligated conformations represent displacement mechanisms, and no 3-centered concerted structures could be found at the level of theory used in this work.



**Figure S5.** Structure of a higher-energy nucleophilic displacement mechanism for oxidative addition of C2-Cl at monoligated Pd(IPr).

### *E. Higher Energy Pd(0) Structures with IPr and IMes*

As shown below, the lowest calculated coordination mode for Pd(0)(NHC) is the pre-oxidative addition pi complex.



**Figure S6.** Other coordination environments for Pd(NHC) are higher-energy than Pd(NHC)( $n^2$ -2).

### *F. Discussion About Selectivity-Influencing Factors Beyond PdL vs. PdL2*

Although  $L_2Pd$  vs. LPd seems to be the critical determining factor between a C2 vs C4 preference, there are also more subtle factors that influence the magnitude of that preference. Additional calculations were completed with phosphine ligands involving oxidative addition at monoligated  $Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)$ ,  $Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)$ <sub>2</sub>,  $Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)$ , Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, and Pd(P<sup>*t*</sup>Bu<sub>3</sub>). Reaction at PdL is unlikely for with PMe<sub>3</sub> and probably also PPh<sub>3</sub> (but see ref 24, in which monoligated  $Pd(PPh_3)$  is implicated during oxidative addition of PhBr). However, our calculations on (hypothetical) PdL illustrate some interesting differences between triarylphosphines, trialkylphosphines, and *N*-heterocyclic carbene ligands.

The more nuanced factors that influence the magnitude of C2 vs C4 preference seem to include:

(1) The nucleophilicity of PdL. This is related to the sigma-donicity of L, and is somewhat correlated with the energy of the HOMO for PdL. As shown in the table below, the predicted C4 selectivity of PdL trends with its HOMO energy.

PdL	calc. $\Delta\Delta G_{(C4-C2)}$ <sup>*</sup>	calc. selectivity	exp. selectivity	HOMO (eV)
	(considering only PdL,	(considering only PdL,	of PdL	
	kcal/mol) <sup>a</sup>	$C_2: C_4$ <sup>a</sup>	$(C_2 : C_4)$	
Pd(PPh <sub>3</sub> )	$+0.3$	2:1	$N/A^b$	$-0.218c$
Pd(P <sup>t</sup> Bu <sub>3</sub> )	$-0.9$	1:5	1:2	$-0.215$
Pd(PMe <sub>3</sub> )	$-1.4$	1:11	$N/A^b$	$-0.208$
Pd(IPr)	$-1.7$	1:18	1:10	$-0.207$
Pd(IMes)	$-2.3$	1:49	$N/A^b$	$-0.206$

**Table S20.** Correlation between Calculated Selectivity of PdL and HOMO Energy.

aCalculations performed at the CPCM(THF)-MN15/6-311++G(2d,p)/SDD(Pd)//CPCM(THF)-MN15L-6- 31+G(d)/LANL2DZ(Pd) level of theory. bUnder experimental conditions, reaction most likely occurs partly or completely through a bisligated Pd species, so it is not possible to assess the experimental selectivity of monoligated PdL. cGeometry optimization of Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>) failed to converge, so a single point energy calculation was performed on a Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>) fragment taken from a  $Pd(PPh_3)(2)$  pi complex.

(2) Whether a concerted or displacement mechanism is favored at C4 for PdL2. This seems to be related to both the sterics and the electronics of L, and is a topic of ongoing detailed research in our group. Maseras et al. have shown that the mechanism of oxidative addition of PhBr varies with ligand,<sup>25</sup> and similarly we have found that the lowest-energy mechanism of oxidative addition at C4—Cl of 2,4-dichloropyridine varies with ligand. For Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> and Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, a displacement mechanism is favored for reaction at C2-Cl. However, although Pd(PMe<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> also favors a displacement mechanism at C4—Cl, Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> reacts through a concerted mechanism at this position. This mechanistic difference may explain the exceedingly high C2 selectivity of  $Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>$ , although the reason for this mechanistic difference is still under investigation.





'd)//CPCM(THF)-MN15L-6 31+G(d)/LANL2DZ(Pd) level of theory.

The partial charges at Pd were computed for **TS13a-IPr** and **TS13b-IPr** at the CPCM(THF)-MN15/6- 311++G(2d,p)/SDD(Pd) level of theory. Palladium is *less positive* during the SN-type mechanism at C2 (**TS13a-IPr**) compared to at C4 (**TS13b-IPr**). This is consistent with nitrogen being more effective than carbon at stabilizing the building positive charge at Pd, and suggests that the reason for conventional C2-selectivity is more complicated than a simple comparison of C2—Cl vs C4—Cl bond strengths. This observation is consistent with a recent report by Leitch et al., in which conventional selectivity was found to correlate with more positive electrostatic potentials at the *ipso* carbon and with more negative potentials at an *ortho* carbon.26





### *G. Energies, Entropies, and Lowest Frequencies of Minimum Energy Structures*

<b>Structure</b>	E <sub>elec</sub>	$E_{elec} + ZPE$	H (Hartree)	S (cal	$\overline{G^b}$	$\mathbf{G}_{\text{corrected}}^c$	Lowest	$\overline{of}$ #
	(Hartree)	(Hartree)		$mol-1$	(Hartree)	(Hartree)	freq.	imag
				$K^{-1}$			$(cm^{-1})$	freq.
TS7a	-1280.102315	-1279.898129	-1279.881899	126.1	-1279.941812	-1279.939842	$-181.5$	$\mathbf{1}$
TS7b	-1280.098858	$-1279.894876$	$-1279.878312$	130.7	-1279.940397	-1279.936888	$-235.7$	$\mathbf{1}$
$\overline{\text{TS7c}}$	-1280.084978	$-1279.881161$	-1279.864742	126.9	$-1279.92503$	$-1279.923424$	$-221.5$	$\mathbf 1$
TS8a	-1741.005607	$-1740.687459$	-1740.663099	163.3	-1740.740705	$-1740.737083$	$-281.9$	$\mathbf 1$
TS8b	$-1741.011908$	-1740.693341	-1740.669092	162.4	-1740.746256	-1740.743024	$-201.9$	$\mathbf 1$
$\overline{2}$	$-1167.119851$	$-1167.050102$	-1167.042657	82.9	-1167.08032	-1167.08032	161.6	$\mathbf{o}$
$9-IPr$	-2453.730783	-2453.090513	-2453.049859	236.9	-2453.164034	-2453.155668	17.7	$\mathbf{o}$
TS10a-IPr	$-2453.707733$	$-2453.068584$	$-2453.028051$	238.4	-2453.142927	-2453.133659	$-135.7$	$\mathbf 1$
TS10b-IPr	-2453.710919	-2453.071466	-2453.031003	238.0	$-2453.145702$	$-2453.13641$	$-67.2$	$\mathbf 1$
11a-IPr	-2453.759276	$-2453.117221$	-2453.076806	235.8	$-2453.19044$	$-2453.182122$	18.6	$\mathbf{o}$
11b-IPr	-2453.761652	-2453.119249	$-2453.07897$	234.4	$-2453.191948$	$-2453.184179$	20.7	$\mathbf{o}$
12-IPr	-3620.866219	-3620.154355	-3620.106041	272.8	-3620.237269	$-3620.226248$	13.0	$\mathbf{o}$
TS13a-IPr	-3620.849928	-3620.138432	-3620.090361	274.3	-3620.222277	$-3620.210275$	$-210.2$	$\mathbf 1$
TS13b-IPr	-3620.838787	$-3620.127124$	-3620.079188	268.4	-3620.208319	-3620.199264	$-97.8$	$\mathbf 1$
14a-IPr	-3620.887865	-3620.175356	$-3620.126318$	281.3	-3620.261591	-3620.247962	12.9	$\mathbf{o}$
14b-IPr	-3620.893594	-3620.179807	-3620.131447	273.8	-3620.263159	$-3620.252016$	14.3	$\mathbf{o}$
<b>9-IMes</b>	-2218.108449	$-2217.641368$	$-2217.606774$	218.2	$-2217.712036$	$-2217.701551$	15.6	$\mathbf{o}$
<b>TS10a-IMes</b>	$-2218.086513$	$-2217.61977$	$-2217.585916$	211.1	-2217.687806	$-2217.679412$	$-125.2$	$\mathbf 1$
<b>TS10b-IMes</b>	$-2218.090094$	$-2217.623379$	-2217.589502	213.0	$-2217.692295$	$-2217.683132$	$-69.1$	$\mathbf 1$
11a-IMes	$-2218.146487$	$-2217.677853$	-2217.643676	212.7	-2217.746342	$-2217.73791$	15.1	$\mathbf{o}$
11b-IMes	$-2218.1467$	$-2217.678158$	-2217.643855	214.0	$-2217.747152$	-2217.738397	18.1	$\mathbf{o}$
$12$ -IMes	$-3385.24802$	-3384.710021	-3384.667679	250.7	-3384.788405	-3384.777506	18.6	$\mathbf{o}$
TS13a-IMes	-3385.236174	-3384.698285	-3384.656419	248.5	-3384.776068	-3384.76572	$-219.3$	$\mathbf 1$
TS13b-IMes	$-3385.225136$	-3384.686139	$-3384.644748$	243.6	$-3384.762106$	$-3384.753188$	$-138.5$	$\mathbf 1$
14a-IMes	-3385.299441	-3384.757995	-3384.71694	238.1	-3384.831658	$-3384.824454$	22.6	$\mathbf{o}$
14b-IMes	-3385.279344	-3384.738809	-3384.697088	247.2	-3384.816127	-3384.805721	10.2	$\mathbf{o}$
9-PtBu3	-2109.127974	$-2108.686909$	-2108.658464	177.2	-2108.744242	$-2108.74063$	25.2	$\mathbf{o}$
TS10a-	-2109.107486	-2108.666821	$-2108.638888$	175.0	-2108.723628	$-2108.720074$	$-94.2$	$\mathbf{1}$
PtBu <sub>3</sub>								
TS10b-	-2109.109484	$-2108.66843$	-2108.640664	172.9	$-2108.724422$	$-2108.721519$	$-34.0$	$\mathbf{1}$
PtBu <sub>3</sub>								
11a-PtBu3	-2109.149996	$-2108.707225$	-2108.678913	176.0	$-2108.764127$	-2108.760791	22.1	$\mathbf{o}$
$11b-PtBu3$	-2109.149804	$-2108.705979$	$-2108.677991$	174.0	$-2108.762247$	$-2108.759133$	31.5	$\mathbf{o}$
12-PtBu3	$-3276.258264$	-3275.746426	-3275.709597	220.8	$-3275.816112$	-3275.807834	15.9	$\mathbf{o}$
<b>TS13a-</b>	-3276.236964	$-3275.72466$	$-3275.688599$	216.5	$-3275.793088$	$-3275.785727$	$-218.9$	$\mathbf{1}$
PtBu <sub>3</sub>								
$\overline{\text{TS13b}}$	$-3276.221176$	-3275.709307	$-3275.673113$	216.2	$-3275.77742$	-3275.770766	$-43.5$	$\mathbf{1}$
PtBu <sub>3</sub>								
14a-PtBu3	$-3276.282445$	$-3275.767875$	$-3275.731461$	216.8	$-3275.836078$	$-3275.829157$	14.3	$\mathbf{o}$
$14b-PtBu3$	-3276.280225	$-3275.76592$	$-3275.72932$	220.2	$-3275.835525$	$-3275.827204$	16.9	$\mathbf{o}$

**Table S22.** Energies, Entropies, and Lowest Frequencies of Minimum Energy Structures*<sup>a</sup>*

*a*Energy values calculated at the CPCM(THF)-MN15/BS2//CPCM(THF)-MN15L/BS1 level of theory. 1 Hartree = 627.51 kcal mol-1. Thermal corrections at 298.15 K based on [Pd] = 0.0075 *M* and [**2**] = 0.25 *M*. *<sup>b</sup>*Solvent-corrected free energy given by G = Eelec + Gcorr, where Gcorr is the thermal correction to Gibbs free energy. *c*Solvent-corrected free energy given by G = Eelec + Gcorr\*, where  $G_{\text{corr}}$  is the thermal correction to Gibbs free energy obtained after applying Cramer and Truhlar's anharmonic correction.<sup>17</sup>

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