

Acetonitrile activation in di-iron μ -carbyne complexes: synthesis and structure of the cyanomethyl complex $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CNMe}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$

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Abstract

Reactions of $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{NCMe})(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ ($\text{R} = \text{Me}$, **2a**; CH_2Ph , **2b**; 2,6- $\text{Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3$ **2c**) with LiBu^n afford the corresponding cyanomethyl complexes $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3a-c**), presumably *via* deprotonation and rearrangement of the coordinated acetonitrile. Likewise, the benzylnitrile complex $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})(2,6\text{-Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3)\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{NCCH}_2\text{Ph})(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ yields $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})(2,6\text{-Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3)\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}(\text{CN})\text{Ph})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3d**). The X-ray molecular structure of **3a** has shown the expected stereogeometry and significant asymmetry of the bridging ligands. Deprotonation and rearrangement of the coordinated MeCN is not observed in the thiocarbonyl complex $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CSMe})(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{NCMe})(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ (**5**) in spite of the similarities with **2a-c**. However, compound **4** readily reacts with $\text{Li}_2\text{Cu}(\text{CN})\text{R}_2$ ($\text{R} = \text{Me}, \text{Ph}$) to form the thiocarbene complexes $[\text{FeFe}\{\mu\text{-C}(\text{R})\text{SMe}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**6a-b**), with displacement of the acetonitrile ligand.

Keywords: Acetonitrile, Carbyne complexes, thiocarbene complexes, Crystal structure, dinuclear

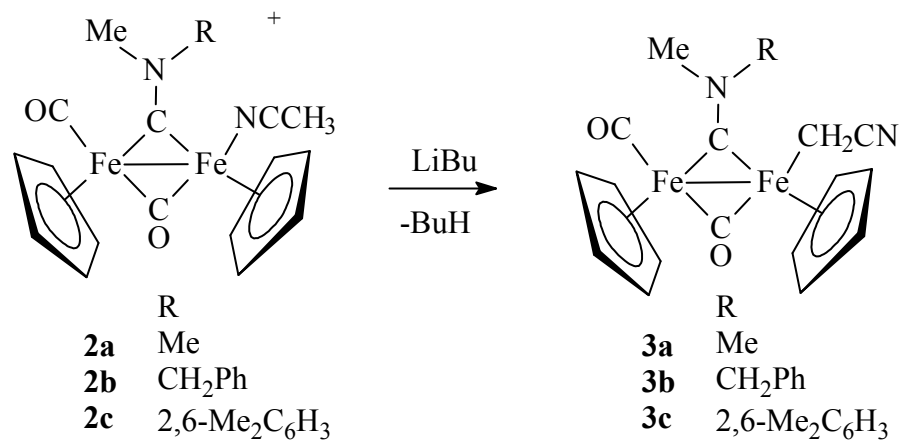
1. Introduction

Metal coordinated nitriles are generally considered substitution labile ligands. Therefore nitrile-containing complexes have been often considered equivalent for the coordinatively unsaturated species, thus providing convenient precursors in organometallic syntheses and catalysis [1]. Examples include the diruthenium complexes $[\text{Ru}_2(\mu\text{-CH}_2)_n(\text{CO})_{3-n}(\text{NCMe})(\text{Cp})_2]$ ($n = 1, 2$), in which the presence of acetonitrile has been proven crucial in order to induce C-C coupling reactions of the alkylidene ligand with unsaturated hydrocarbons and diazoalkanes [2]. We have recently shown that replacement of CO by MeCN in the diiron μ -aminocarbyne complexes $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ ($\text{R} = \text{Me}$, **1a**; CH_2Ph , **1b**; 2,6- $\text{Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3$ **1c**) results in a significant change in the reactivity pattern towards nucleophiles [3]. Addition of cyanide or hydride anions is known to occur at the carbyne carbon of **1a-c**, affording the alkylidene compounds $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-C}(\text{CN})\text{N}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]$ and $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CO})_2\{\text{C}(\text{H})\text{N}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]$, respectively [4]. By contrast, the corresponding acetonitrile complexes $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{NCMe})(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ (**2a-c**) react with H^- and CN^- leading to the displacement of MeCN with formation of $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-H})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]$ and $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$, respectively [3]. Likewise, it has been shown that acetonitrile can be easily replaced by phosphines in the complexes $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CNMe}_2\}_2(\text{CO})(\text{NCMe})(\text{Cp})_2](\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3)_2$ [5].

In spite of their lability coordinated nitriles can themselves undergo nucleophilic addition [6]. Here we report on the reactions of type **2** complexes towards carbon nucleophiles which are also strong bases. Our results indicate that, in these conditions, nitrile ligands, activated by metal coordination, undergo deprotonation and an unusual rearrangement to cyanomethyl complexes.

2. Results and discussion

The reactions of compounds **2a-c**, in thf at $-10\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, with butyl-lithium afford the corresponding cyanomethyl complexes $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3a-c**) (scheme 1), which have been isolated in good yields after column chromatography.



Scheme 1

The structure of **3a**, ascertained by an X-ray diffraction experiment, is shown in Figure 1 and relevant bond lengths and angles are reported in Table 1. The general stereogeometry is that expected and elements of interest are the asymmetries of the bonding interactions around the non equivalent iron centers. The Fe₂C₂ diamond is characterized by a short Fe-Fe interaction [2.502(1) Å] and a significant bending around the Fe-Fe diagonal [28.4(2)°]. The cyanomethyl ligand, acting as a pure σ donor, generates a higher electronic saturation at Fe(1) than Fe(2), to which a terminal CO ligand is bound. The charge accumulation is spread through an increased back-donation to the accepting orbitals on μ-CO and μ-CNMe₂ ligands. In fact both ligands exhibit asymmetric bonding mode with shorter distance from the electron richer Fe(1) than Fe(2). In addition the asymmetry is more pronounced for the better π-acceptor μ-CO than μ-CNMe₂ [Fe(1)-C(O) 1.852(3), Fe(2)-C(O) 2.003(3) against Fe(1)-C(NMe₂) 1.843(2) and Fe(2)-C(NMe₂) 1.886(3) Å]. These features are strictly equivalent to those already reported and discussed in the stereochemically similar molecules containing terminally bonded acyl ligands: [Fe₂{μ-CN(Me)(CH₂Ph)}(μ-CO)(CO){C(O)th}(Cp)₂] (th = C₄H₃S) [7] and [Fe₂(μ-CNMe₂)(μ-CO)(CO){C(O)Buⁿ}(Cp)₂] [8]. For a more complete comparison we can cite the slight asymmetry found for the bridging ligands in the cation [Fe₂(μ-CNMe₂)(μ-CO)(CO)(CNCH₃)(Cp)₂]⁺ [9a] and the symmetric geometries of the species [Fe₂(μ-CNMe₂)₂(CO)₂(C₅H₄Me)₂]²⁺ [9a] and [Fe₂(μ-CNMe₂)(μ-H)(CO)₂(Cp)₂] [3].

Concerning the Fe-C(alkyl) distance [2.068(3) Å] it is expectedly far longer than the Fe-C(carbonyl) one [1.749(3) Å] but substantially in line with the sum of the covalent radii of Fe [1.25 Å, taken from the actual Fe-Fe distance] and C(sp³) [0.77 Å].

One comment on the Fe-C(alkyl) distance [2.068(3) Å] that is expectedly far longer than the Fe-C(carbonyl) one [1.749(3) Å] but substantially in line with the sum of the covalent radii of Fe [1.25 Å, taken from the actual Fe-Fe distance] and C(sp³) [0.77 Å].

The IR spectra of **3a-c**, in CH₂Cl₂ solution, exhibit one terminal and one bridging carbonyl absorption (e.g. at 1955 and 1787 cm⁻¹ for **3a**) and a ν(CN) band at about 2191 cm⁻¹. The ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra show two signals of the same intensity for the non-equivalent Cp groups of **3a** (at 4.76, 4.64 and 88.9 87.1 ppm, respectively). Likewise each of the N-bonded methyl groups gives rise to a singlet resonance. The two hydrogens of the CH₂CN group are also non-equivalent and originate two upfield shifted doublets (at -0.59 and -1.85 ppm). The NMR spectra of **3b-c**, which contain the asymmetrically substituted μ-CN(Me)R (R = CH₂Ph, 2,6-Me₂C₆H₃), indicate the presence of two isomers in solution. These isomeric forms, which are usually found in complexes of the type [M₂{μ-CN(Me)R}(μ-CO)(CO)(L)(Cp)₂] (M = Fe, Ru) and indicated as α and β isomers [3, 8-10], are due to the different orientation of R and Me with respect to the non equivalent Fe atoms. The major features, in the ¹³C NMR spectrum of **3a-c**, are the characteristic low field signal of the bridging carbyne carbon (at 333 ppm for **3a**) and the upfield shifted resonance of the metal bonded cyanomethyl carbon (at -23 ppm for **3a**). In order to ascertain whether the above described reaction could be extended to other coordinated nitriles containing acidic α-hydrogens, the benzylnitrile derivative [Fe₂{μ-CN(Me)(2,6-Me₂C₆H₃)}(μ-CO)(CO)(NCCH₂Ph)(Cp)₂][SO₃CF₃] (**2d**) was prepared and treated with BuLi. As expected, the reaction afforded [Fe₂{μ-CN(Me)(2,6-Me₂C₆H₃)}(μ-CO)(CO){CH(Ph)CN}(Cp)₂] (**3d**), which was isolated in about 68% yield. The characterization of **3d** has been straightforward since its spectroscopic properties resemble those of **3c** and indicate the presence of one single isomeric form. Complexes **3a-d** have also been obtained upon treatment of **2a-d** with NaH, although in lower yield. Other bases like NaOH, NEt₃ have been used in place of RLi but failed to accomplish the transformation described in scheme 1. Finally we have investigated the reactions of **2c** with organocopper reagents of the type Li₂Cu(CN)R₂ (R = Me, Ph), which are weaker bases compared to organo-lithium reagents but have been proven very effective in making C-C bonds at dinuclear μ-carbyne complexes [8, 10, 11]. Compound **2c** readily reacts

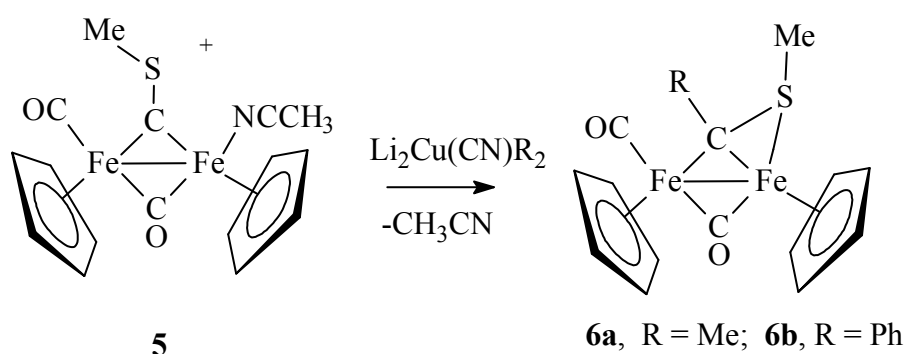
with $\text{Li}_2\text{Cu}(\text{CN})\text{R}_2$ in THF solution (at $-10\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$), affording several products which we were unable to identify, except for $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})(2,6\text{-Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3)\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ [3], and trace amounts of **3c**.

The formation of compounds **3a-c** presumably occurs via deprotonation of the coordinated acetonitrile followed by an unusual rearrangement to cyanomethyl derivative probably because the carbon atom results more basic than nitrogen. Proton abstraction from acetonitrile, as well as from NCCH_2Ph , is not surprising, in view of the acidic character of the $\alpha\text{-C-H}$, enhanced by metal coordination, and of the strong basicity of organolithium reagents. For example low-valent hydrido ruthenium phosphine complexes have been found to act as effective catalysts for the condensation of nitriles with carbonyl compounds, by $\alpha\text{-C-H}$ activation [12]. In very few cases removal of a proton from coordinated MeCN is followed by intramolecular rearrangement. Examples include $[\text{Mo}_2\text{Cp}_2(\mu\text{-SMe})_3(\text{MeCN})_2]\text{BF}_4$ in which deprotonation of one MeCN initiates its intramolecular condensation with the second acetonitrile ligand yielding $[\text{Mo}_2\text{Cp}_2(\mu\text{-SMe})_3\{\mu\text{-N}=\text{C}(\text{CH}_3)\text{CH}_2\text{CN}\}]$ [13], and the heterodinuclear $[\text{RhOs}(\text{CO})_3(\text{NCMe})(\mu\text{-H})(\text{dppm})_2]^{2+}$, which has been reported to react with $\text{LiC}\equiv\text{CPh}$ affording the acetylide complex $[\text{RhOs}(\text{C}\equiv\text{CH})(\text{CO})_3(\text{dppm})_2]$ and the cyanomethyl complex $[\text{RhOs}(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{CO})_3(\text{dppm})_2]$ [14]. The latter reaction strongly resembles the one we have found, since a cyanomethyl group resulted from the deprotonation of a coordinated acetonitrile ligand.

Although the intramolecular mechanism above depicted seems reasonable, one cannot exclude the possibility that the reaction occurs by release of acetonitrile from **2a-c**, deprotonation of the acetonitrile solvent, followed by attack of the resulting acetonitrilide. However this seems to be ruled out by the fact that MeCN release from **2a-c** is a relatively slow process. The rate of acetonitrile exchange was qualitatively evaluated by observing the decrease in intensity of ^1H NMR signal of the bound MeCN (at 1.95 ppm) and corresponding increase of the free MeCN immediately after preparation of a CD_3CN solution of **2a**, at room temperature. Under these conditions, $\text{CH}_3\text{CN} - \text{CD}_3\text{CN}$ exchange requires about 50 min to be completed. In another experiment **3a** was prepared by treatment of **2a** with BuLi in a THF solution containing a tenfold amount of CH_3^*CN (^{13}C carbon enriched, 99%). Compound **3a**, which was obtained after usual workup, did not show any significant increase of intensity in the resonance of the iron bonded methyl carbon, suggesting that the overall mechanism is intramolecular.

In view of the fact that the bridging thiocarbonyl complex $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CSMe})(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ (**4**) and the aminocarbonyl complexes $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ (**1**) have exhibited a comparable reactivity with respect to carbon nucleophiles [11], we decided to synthesize the acetonitrile derivative of **4** and investigate its reactions with organo-lithium reagents. The synthesis of $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CSMe})(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{NCMe})(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ (**5**) parallels that of **2a-c**; in both cases replacement of CO with MeCN is promoted by Me_3NO . Like **3a-c**, compound **5** shows in its ^1H NMR spectra that exchange between coordinated NCMe and CD_3CN solvent requires several minutes to be completed. Nevertheless the reaction with BuLi has failed to produce the expected cyanomethyl complex $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CSMe})(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$, generating extensive decomposition of **5**.

By contrast, treatment of **5** with $\text{Li}_2\text{Cu}(\text{CN})\text{R}_2$ results in a regiospecific nucleophilic addition leading to the formation of $[\text{FeFe}\{\mu\text{-C}(\text{R})\text{SMe}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (R= Me, **6a**; Ph, **6b**) (scheme 2). Compounds **6** have been purified by column chromatography, and identified by comparison of their spectroscopic properties with those published [11].



Scheme 2

These results are to be compared with those reported for the corresponding reactions of $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CSMe})(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ **4** with $\text{Li}_2\text{Cu}(\text{CN})\text{Me}_2$, which afforded a mixture of $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-C}=\text{CH}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]$, $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-C}(\text{SMe})\text{Me}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})_2(\text{Cp})_2]$, and $[\text{FeFe}\{\mu\text{-C}(\text{Me})\text{SMe}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**6a**), the latter being formed in about 12% yield [11]. In a similar manner, **6b** has been previously obtained, as minor product, from **4** and $\text{Li}_2\text{Cu}(\text{CN})\text{Ph}_2$ [11]. Therefore the presence of the acetonitrile ligand in **5** makes the addition of organocopper more selective, favoring exclusively the formation of the bridging thiocarbene complexes **6a-**

b, with the sulfur atom coordinated to one of the Fe atoms, which is a rather common coordination mode for thio- and dithioalkylidene ligands in dinuclear complexes [15].

A plausible pathway for the formation of **6a-b** consists of a nucleophilic addition at the bridging carbyne carbon, followed by intramolecular displacement of the NCMe ligand by the S atom of the SMe group. However an alternative mechanism based on an initial displacement of acetonitrile by the carbon nucleophile, followed by migration of the alkyl ligand to the bridging carbyne carbon, should not be ruled out, in view of the fact that analogous rearrangements have already been observed [11, 15c].

3. Experimental details

3.1. General

All reactions were carried out routinely under nitrogen using standard Schlenk techniques. Solvents were distilled immediately before use under nitrogen from appropriate drying agents. Glassware was oven-dried before use. Infrared spectra were recorded on a Perkin-Elmer 983-G spectrophotometer, ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra on a Varian Gemini 300. Unless otherwise stated, NMR signals due to trace amounts of second isomeric form are italicized. All the reagents were commercial products (Aldrich) of the highest purity available and used as received. [Fe₂(CO)₄(Cp)₂] was from Strem and used as received. Compounds [Fe₂{μ-CN(Me)R}(μ-CO)(CO)(CH₃CN)(Cp)₂]SO₃CF₃ (R = Me **2a** R=CH₂Ph **2b**, Me₂C₆H₃ **2c**) [3, 9] and [Fe₂(μ-CSMe)(μ-CO)(CO)₂(Cp)₂]SO₃CF₃ (**4**) [16] were prepared as described in the literature.

3.2. Synthesis of [Fe₂{μ-CN(Me)2,6-Me₂C₆H₃}(μ-CO)(CO)(NCCH₂Ph)(Cp)₂]SO₃CF₃ (**2d**)

Compound [Fe₂{μ-CN(Me)(2,6-Me₂C₆H₃)}(μ-CO)(CO)₂(Cp)₂]SO₃CF₃ (**1c**) (250 mg, 0.40 mmol) and benzonitrile (70 mg, 0.60 mmol) in THF (10 ml) were treated with anhydrous Me₃NO (30 mg, 0.40 mmol) and the mixture was stirred for 60 min. Filtration on a Celite pad and removal of the solvent gave a brown residue that was washed with petroleum ether (b.p. 40-60°C) and crystallized from CH₂Cl₂ layered with n-pentane at -20°C yielding **2d** as a brown microcrystalline solid (255 mg, 90%). Analysis. Found: C, 52.66; H, 4.16%. C₃₁H₂₉F₃Fe₂N₂O₅S requires: C, 52.41; H, 4.12%. IR (CH₂Cl₂) ν_{max}(cm⁻¹) 1988vs and 1821s

(CO). NMR: δ_{H} (CDCl_3): 7.39-6.90 (8 H, m C_6H_5 and C_6H_3), 5.11, 5.02 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.43, 4.33 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.71, 4.45 (3 H, s, NMe), 3.91 (1 H, d, CH_2Ph , $J_{\text{AB}} = 18$ Hz), 3.68 (1 H, d, CH_2Ph , $J_{\text{AB}} = 18$ Hz), 2.67, 2.65, 1.85 and 1.76 (6 H, s, $\text{Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3$). δ_{C} (CDCl_3): 339.3, ($\mu\text{-C}$), 265.3 ($\mu\text{-CO}$), 212.1, (CO), 148.9-128.7 (C_6H_5 and $\text{Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3$), 89.6, 89.5, 88.3, 87.4 (Cp), 55.6, 54.6 (NMe), 26.1, 24.1 (CH_2Ph), 19.3 and 17.5 ($\text{Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3$).

3.3. Synthesis of $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CNMe}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3a**)

Compound **2a** (207 mg, 0.38 mmol) in THF (15 ml) was stirred with BuLi (0.40 mmol) for 30 min. Removal of the solvent and chromatography on an alumina column with CH_2Cl_2 as eluent gave a green fraction, which afforded dark-green crystals of **3a** (85 mg, 57%). Analysis. Found: C, 51.68; H, 4.70%. $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{18}\text{Fe}_2\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$ requires: C, 51.81; H, 4.61%. IR (CH_2Cl_2) $\nu_{\text{max}}(\text{cm}^{-1})$ 2191w (CN), 1955 vs and 1787s (CO). NMR: δ_{H} (CDCl_3): 4.76 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.64 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.33 (s, 3 H, NMe), 4.08 (s, 3 H, NMe), -0.59 (1 H, d, $J_{\text{AB}} = 14$ Hz, CH_2CN) and -1.85 (1 H, d, $J_{\text{AB}} = 14$ Hz, CH_2CN). δ_{C} (CDCl_3): 332.7 ($\mu\text{-C}$), 268.0 ($\mu\text{-CO}$), 215.6 (CO), 131.8 (CN), 88.9, 87.1 (Cp), 53.4, 50.8 (NMe) and -22.9 (CH_2CN).

3.4. Synthesis of $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{CH}_2\text{Ph}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3b**), $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})(2,6\text{-Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3)\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3c**) and $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})(2,6\text{-Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3)\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})\{\text{CH}(\text{Ph})\text{CN}\}(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3d**)

Complexes **3b-d** were obtained from **2b-d**, respectively, following the same procedure described for the synthesis of **3a**.

3b: (64%). Analysis. Found: C, 58.61; H, 4.73%. $\text{C}_{23}\text{H}_{22}\text{Fe}_2\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$ requires: C, 58.76; H, 4.72%. IR (CH_2Cl_2) $\nu_{\text{max}}(\text{cm}^{-1})$ 2191w (CN), 1955 vs and 1788s (CO). NMR, α and β isomers in about 1:1 ratio: δ_{H} (CDCl_3): 7.47 (m, 5 H, Ph), 6.36, 5.73, 5.50, 5.42 (2 H, d, $J = 16$ Hz, CH_2Ph), 4.79, 4.70, 4.67, 4.57 (10 H, s, Cp), 4.11, 3.89 (3 H, s, NMe), and -0.57, -0.61, -1.64, -1.65 (2 H, d, CH_2CN). δ_{C} (CDCl_3): 336.2 ($\mu\text{-C}$), 267.5 ($\mu\text{-CO}$), 215.4 (CO), 136.6-127.4 (Ph and CN), 89.2, 89.0, 87.1 (Cp), 70.9, 68.5 (CH_2Ph), 50.9, 48.0 (NMe) and -21.7 (CH_2CN).

3c: (52%). Analysis. Found: C, 59.61; H, 4.97%. $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{24}\text{Fe}_2\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$ requires: C, 59.53; H, 5.00%. IR (CH_2Cl_2) $\nu_{\text{max}}(\text{cm}^{-1})$ 2192w (CN), 1954 vs and 1786s (CO). NMR: δ_{H} (CDCl_3):

7.43-6.90 (m, 3 H, Ph), 4.78, 4.75 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.63, 4.53 (3 H, s, NMe), 4.32, 4.19 (5 H, s, Cp), 2.67, 2.14 (6 H, s $Me_2C_6H_5$), -0.31 (1 H, d, $J_{AB} = 14$ Hz, CH_2CN), and -1.64 (1 H, d, $J_{AB} = 14$ Hz, CH_2CN). $\delta_C(CDCl_3)$: 338.8 ($\mu-C$), 267.9 ($\mu-CO$), 215.8 (CO), 134.1-128.9 ($C_6H_3Me_2$ and CN) 89.4, 87.1 (Cp), 51.8 (NMe), 19.2, 18.2 ($C_6H_3Me_2$) and -22.5 (CH_2CN) ppm.

3d: (68%). Analysis. Found: C, 64.35; H, 5.05%. $C_{30}H_{28}Fe_2N_2O_2$ requires: C, 64.31; H, 5.04%. IR (CH_2Cl_2) $\nu_{max}(cm^{-1})$ 2186w (CN), 1951 vs and 1787s (CO). NMR: $\delta_H(CDCl_3)$: 7.30-7.04 (3 H, m, Ph), 4.84 (3 H, s, NMe), 4.53 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.30 (5 H, s, Cp), 2.65, 2.26 (6 H, s $Me_2C_6H_5$), and -0.37 (1 H, s, $CH(Ph)CN$). $\delta_C(CDCl_3)$: 337.9 ($\mu-C$), 267.4 ($\mu-CO$), 217.1 (CO), 146.9-124.4 (C_6H_5 and $Me_2C_6H_3$), 89.9, 87.9 (Cp), 52.9 (NMe), 19.3, 18.4 ($Me_2C_6H_3$) and 1.7 ($CH(Ph)CN$).

3.5. Synthesis of $[Fe_2(\mu-C_SMe)(\mu-CO)(CO)(NCMe)(Cp)_2] SO_3CF_3$ (**5**)

A solution of $[Fe_2\{\mu-C_SMe\}(\mu-CO)(CO)_2(Cp)_2] SO_3CF_3$ (**4**) (180 mg, 0.34 mmol) in MeCN (15 ml) was treated with anhydrous Me_3NO (26 mg, 0.35 mmol) and the mixture was stirred for 60 min. Filtration on a Celite pad and removal of the solvent gave a brown residue that was washed with petroleum ether (b.p. 40-60 °C) and crystallized from CH_2Cl_2 layered with n-pentane at -20 °C yielding brown crystals of **2** (151 mg, 81%). The solid contained small amounts of the di-acetonitrile complex $[Fe_2\{\mu-C_SMe\}(\mu-CO)(NCMe)_2(Cp)_2]SO_3CF_3$ (8%, estimated from 1H NMR signal integration). IR (CH_2Cl_2) $\nu_{max}(cm^{-1})$ 1805s (CO). NMR: $\delta_H(CDCl_3)$: 4.73 (10 H, s, Cp), 3.86 (3 H, s, SMe) and 1.95 (6 H, s, NCMe) ppm. $\delta_C(CD_2Cl_2)$: 423.6 ($\mu-C_SMe$), 271.6 ($\mu-CO$), 131.1 (MeCN), 87.7 (Cp), 34.9 (SMe) and 4.4 (MeCN). Pure samples of **1a**, which gave satisfactory elemental analysis, were obtained by repeated crystallization. Analysis. Found: C, 37.15; H, 3.02%. $C_{17}H_{16}F_3Fe_2NO_5S_2$ requires: C, 37.32; H, 2.95%. IR (CH_2Cl_2) $\nu_{max}(cm^{-1})$ 2005vs and 1834s (CO). NMR: $\delta_H(CDCl_3)$: 5.12 (5 H, s, Cp), 5.05 (5 H, s, Cp), 3.77 (3 H, s, br, SMe) and 1.95 (3 H, s, NCMe) ppm. $\delta_C(CD_2Cl_2)$: 447.0 ($\mu-C_SMe$), 260.2 ($\mu-CO$), 209.8 (CO), 132.0 (MeCN), 90.1 (Cp), 89.5 (Cp), 36.5 (SMe) and 4.6 (MeCN,).

3.6. Synthesis of $[FeFe\{\mu-C(Me)SMe\}(\mu-CO)(CO)(Cp)_2]$ (**6a**) and $[FeFe\{\mu-C(Ph)SMe\}(\mu-CO)(CO)(Cp)_2]$ (**6b**)

A solution of $\text{Li}_2\text{Cu}(\text{CN})\text{Me}_2$ prepared from dry CuCN (45 mg, 0.5 mmol) and LiMe (1.0 mmol) in THF (8 ml) at $-60\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ was added to a solution of **5** (257 mg, 0.47 mmol) in THF (10 ml) at $-60\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$. The mixture was warmed to room temperature, stirred for an additional 30 min, and filtered on an alumina pad. Evaporation of the solvent and chromatography of the residue on an alumina column with 1:1 CH_2Cl_2 -petroleum ether (b.p. $40\text{-}60\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$) as eluent, gave a brownish-green fraction. Crystallization from CH_2Cl_2 layered with n-pentane yielded **6a** (89 mg, 51%). Analysis. Found: C, 48.44; H, 4.62%. $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{16}\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_2\text{S}$ requires: C, 48.42; H, 4.33%. IR (CH_2Cl_2) $\nu_{\text{max}}(\text{cm}^{-1})$ 1935vs and 1757s (CO). NMR: δ_{H} (CDCl_3): 4.58 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.44 (5 H, s, Cp), 4.03 (3H, s, Me) and 1.53 (3 H, s, SMe) ppm. δ_{C} (CDCl_3): 276.5 (μ -CO), 217.6 (CO), 185.5 (μ -C) 85.9, 83.2 (Cp), 35.9 and 23.9 (CH_3).

6b was prepared as described for **6a**, by reacting **5** (190 mg, 0.35 mmol) with $\text{Li}_2\text{Cu}(\text{CN})\text{Ph}_2$ (0.35 mmol). Yield 91mg, 60%. Complex **6b** was identified by comparison of its spectroscopic properties with those reported in the literature [11].

3.7. X-ray crystallographic study of **3a**

Crystal data and details of the data collection for complex $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CNMe}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3a**) are given in Table 2. The diffraction experiments were carried out at room temperature on a fully automated Enraf-Nonius CAD-4 diffractometer using graphite-monochromated $\text{Mo-K}\alpha$ radiation. The unit cell parameters were determined by a least-squares fitting procedure using 25 reflections. Data were corrected for Lorentz and polarization effects. No decay correction and no absorption correction were applied. The positions of the metal atoms were found by direct methods using the SHELXS 86 program [16] and all the non-hydrogen atoms located from difference Fourier syntheses. Twofold orientational disorder of one of the Cp ligands [bound to Fe(1)] around the metal-ring axis was detected and the site occupation factors were refined for this ligand, yielding the values 0.54 and 0.46, respectively. The hydrogen atoms of the methyl and methylene groups were located from successive Fourier-difference maps but were added in calculated positions. The final refinement on F^2 proceeded by full-matrix least-squares calculations (SHELXL 97) [17] using anisotropic thermal parameters for all the non-hydrogen atoms. The cyclopentadienyl the methyl and the methylene H atoms were assigned an isotropic thermal parameter 1.2, 1.3 and 1.5 times U_{eq} of the carbon atoms to which they were attached.

4. Supplementary material

Crystallographic data for the structural analysis have been deposited with the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre, CCDC No. 174241 for **3a**. Copies of this information can be obtained free of charge from the Director, CCDC, 12 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK (fax: +44-1233-336033; e-mail: deposit@ccdc.cam.ac.uk or [www: http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk)).

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Table 1

Selected bond length (Å) and angles (°) for [Fe₂(μ-CNMe₂)(μ-CO)(CO)(CH₂CN)(Cp)₂] **3a**

Fe(1)-Fe(2)	2.502(1)	C(2)-N(2)	1.299(3)
Fe(1)-C(1)	1.852(3)	N(2)-C(3)	1.456(5)
Fe(2)-C(1)	2.003(3)	N(2)-C(4)	1.463(4)
Fe(1)-C(2)	1.843(2)	Fe(1)-C(6)	2.068(3)
Fe(2)-C(2)	1.886(3)	C(6)-C(7)	1.425(5)
C(7)-N(1)	1.142(5)	C(1)-O(1)	1.160(4)
C(5)-O(2)	1.147(4)	Fe(2)-C(5)	1.749(3)
Fe(2)-C(Cp)(av)	2.12	Fe(1)-C(Cp)*(av)	2.10
Fe(1)-C(1)-N(2)	140.2(2)	N(1)-C(7)-C(6)	176.4(4)
Fe(2)-C(2)-N(2)	135.4(2)	C(3)-N(2)-C(4)	114.0(3)
Fe(1)-C(1)-O(1)	145.7(3)	C(2)-N(2)-C(3)	122.9(3)
Fe(2)-C(1)-O(1)	133.3(3)	C(2)-N(2)-C(4)	123.1(3)

* Main image (see experimental)

Table 2

Crystal data and diffraction experimental details for $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CNMe}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3a**)

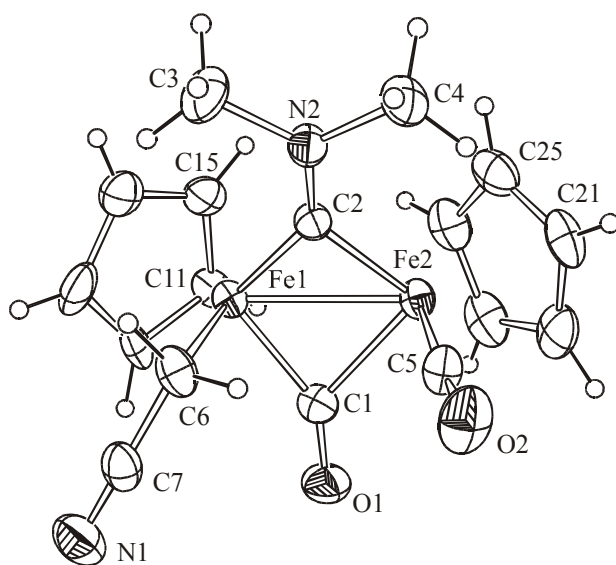
Formula	$\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{18}\text{Fe}_2\text{F}_4\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$
M	394.03
Temperature, K	293(2)
Wavelength, Å	0.71073
Crystal symmetry	Monoclinic
Space group	$C\ c$ (No. 9)
a , Å	16.779(3)
b , Å	7.470(2)
c , Å	14.509(1)
α , °	90
β , °	114.18(3)
γ , °	90
Cell volume, Å ³	1659.0(5)
Z	4
D_c , Mg m^{-3}	1.578
$\mu(\text{Mo-K}\alpha)$, mm^{-1}	1.758
$F(000)$	808
Crystal size, mm	0.13 x 0.15 x 0.20
θ limits, °	2.5-30
Reflections collected	4827($\pm h, +k, \pm l$)
unique observed reflections [$F_o > 4\sigma(F_o)$]	2418 [R(int) 0.04]
Goodness of fit on F^2	1.06
Absolute structure parameter	0.09(2)
$R_1(F)^a$, $wR_2(F^2)^b$	0.0239, 0.0522
Weighting scheme	$a = 0.0222$, $b = 0.000$
Largest diff. peak and hole, e.Å^{-3}	0.34 and -0.29

$$^a R_1 = \sum ||F_o| - |F_c| / \sum |F_o|.$$

$$^b wR_2 = [\sum w(F_o^2 - F_c^2)^2 / \sum w(F_o^2)^2]^{1/2} \text{ where } w = 1 / [\sigma^2(F_o^2) + (aP)^2 + bP] \text{ where } P = (F_o^2 + 2F_c^2)^3$$

Figure caption

Figure 1. ORTEP drawing of $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CNMe}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$ (**3a**) (thermal ellipsoids are drawn at 30% probability).



For Table of Contents Use Only

Acetonitrile activation in di-iron μ -carbyne complexes: synthesis and structure of the cyanomethyl complex $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CNMe}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{Cp})_2]$

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The acetonitrile complexes $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{NCMe})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ ($\text{R} = \text{Me}, 2,6\text{-Me}_2\text{C}_6\text{H}_3, \text{CH}_2\text{Ph}$) react with LiBu^n , yielding the cyanomethyl compounds $[\text{Fe}_2\{\mu\text{-CN}(\text{Me})\text{R}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]$ via deprotonation and rearrangement of the acetonitrile ligand. Compound $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CNMe}_2)(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CH}_2\text{CN})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]$ has been structurally characterized. By contrast the reactions of $[\text{Fe}_2(\mu\text{-CSMe})(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{NCMe})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]\text{SO}_3\text{CF}_3$ with organo-copper reagents afford the μ -alkylidene complexes $[\text{FeFe}\{\overline{\mu\text{-C}(\text{R})\text{SMe}}\}(\mu\text{-CO})(\text{CO})(\text{Cp})_2]$ ($\text{R} = \text{Me}, \text{Ph}$) with displacement of the acetonitrile ligand.

