



Synthesis of a heterometallic spiked tetrahedral cluster of ruthenium and nickel containing multiple hydrido ligands and its degradation to a tetrahedral NiRu₃ cluster

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ABSTRACT

A bimetallic spiked tetrahedral cluster of Ni and Ru, $\{Cp^*Ru(H)(\mu-H)_3\}-[Ni(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3]$ (**2**) ($Cp^* = \eta^5-C_5Me_5$), was synthesized by reaction of $Cp^*Ru(\mu-H)_4RuCp^*$ (**1**) with $Ni(cod)_2$ under an atmosphere of H_2 . Cluster **2** comprises monomeric (Cp^*RuH) and tetrahedral $\{Ni(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3\}$ fragments linked by three bridging hydrogen atoms. Although site exchange of hydrides between the (Cp^*RuH_4) and $\{Ni(Cp^*Ru)_3H_6\}$ moieties does not occur on the NMR time scale, incorporation of deuterium into the $NiRu_3$ fragment upon treatment of **2** with 1 atm of D_2 establishes that interfragment migration of hydrides does take place. Although reaction of **2** with ethylene results in the replacement of two hydrides in the spiked Ru center by an η^2 -ethylene ligand, reaction with cyclopentadiene results in the degradation of the pentanuclear skeleton to a tetrahedral cluster, $(CpNi)(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3$ (**4**) ($Cp = \eta^5-C_5H_5$), and a mixed-ligand ruthenocene, Cp^*CpRu (**5**).

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1. Introduction

The synergistic effect arising from the presence of two different transition metals in close proximity to one another often yields dramatic improvements in catalytic activity and selectivity compared to the parent metals [1–5]. Nickel is a widely available transition element that exhibits high catalytic activity in dry reforming of methane [6] and hydrogen production from biomass [7–12]. However, its use is often problematic, because of a propensity for carbon deposition and sintering at high temperatures. To improve durability, addition of a noble metal to a Ni-based catalyst has been examined intensively [13]. Among bimetallic Ni-based catalysts, those of Ni and Ru have been widely employed and exhibit outstanding performance in the methanation of CO [14–18], steam and dry reforming of methane [19–24], conversion of biomass into valuable chemicals [25–28], hydrolytic dehydrogenation of ammonia borane [29–33], and hydrogenation of 3-hydroxypropanal to 1,3-propanediol [34].

Known structures of Ni–Ru bimetallic particles include a homogeneous alloyed structure [22,24,35–41] and $Ru@Ni$ [31,32,42,43] and $Ni@Ru$ core–shell structures [18,29,30]. Although small particles of Ni and Ru can be dispersed separately on

mesoporous alumina [15], TiO_2 [16], HZSM-5 [27], and N-doped active carbon [28], the reducibility of Ni particles is significantly enhanced by the presence of neighboring Ru particles. The role of Ru is proposed to be the catalytic reduction of neighboring Ni^{2+} via hydrogen spillover. This fact suggests that the mobility of hydride at the Ni–Ru site is crucial for the enhanced reactivity of bimetallic Ni/Ru catalysts.

Since the synthesis of the first heterometallic Ni/Ru cluster, $Ru_3(CpNi)(\mu-H)(\mu_4-\eta^2-C^tBuH)(CO)_9$ ($Cp = \eta^5-C_5H_5$), by Sappa and co-workers [44], many Ni/Ru complexes of various nuclearities (Ni_2Ru [45,46], $NiRu_2$ [47], $NiRu_3$ [44–46,48–53], Ni_2Ru_2 [54], $NiRu_4$ [55–57], Ni_2Ru_3 [46,58], $NiRu_5$ [59,60], and Ni_3Ru_3 [61]) have been prepared from $Ru_3(CO)_{12}$ and its derivatives. These heterometallic clusters are ideal precursors in the preparation of bimetallic Ni/Ru catalysts of well-defined composition. In addition, the nature of the anisotropic Ni–Ru bond in the clusters and the properties of hydrides at the Ni–Ru edge can provide important information concerning the distinctive reactivity of Ni/Ru catalysts. However, examples displaying a Ni–H–Ru interaction remain limited [53].

Wolf and co-workers synthesized a paramagnetic Ru_2Ni complex, which includes Ni–H–Ru interaction with a linear $Ru^{II}-Ni^{II}-Ru^{II}$ arrangement, $(PR_3)_3Ru(\mu-H)_3Ni(\mu-H)_3Ru(PR_3)_3$ ($R = C_6H_4-4-Me$), by reaction of $[RuH_3(PR_3)_3]^-$ with $Ni(acac)_2$ [62]. The hydrido ligands were found by X-ray diffraction (XRD) to be

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much closer to the Ru atoms. The diminished covalent character of the Ni–H bonds has been supported by density functional theory (DFT) calculations, which produced estimated Wiberg bond index (WBI) values for the Ru–H and Ni–H bonds of 0.55 and 0.09, respectively.

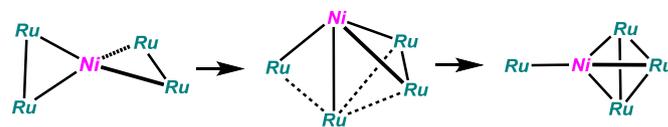
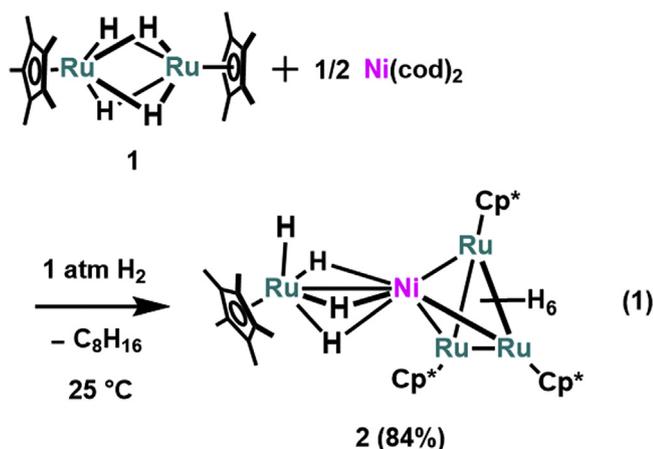
The Ni–H–Ru interaction also is relevant to the core structure of [NiFe] hydrogenase. Ogo and co-workers demonstrated that [(NiL)Ru(H₂O)(η⁶-C₆Me₆)²⁺ (L = N,N'-dimethyl-N,N'-bis(2-mercaptoethyl)-1,3-propanediamine) reacts with H₂ at ambient temperature to yield a monocationic μ-hydrido complex, [(NiL)(H₂O)(μ-H)Ru(η⁶-C₆Me₆)⁺, via heterolytic H₂ cleavage [63]. Neutron diffraction revealed the bridging hydrido ligand to lie closer to the Ru atom, which suggests a noncovalent interaction between Ni and the hydride. A similar structural feature was reported by Rauchfuss and co-workers in [(p-cymene)Ru(μ-H)(μ-pdt)Ni(dppe)]⁺ (pdt = 1,3-propanedithiolate) [64].

We previously reported synthesis of the heterometallic Ru/Pt cluster, {Cp*Ru(H)₂}₂Pt(μ-P^tBu₂)₂(μ-H)₂ (Cp* = η⁵-C₅Me₅), by reaction of Cp*Ru(μ-H)₄RuCp* (**1**) with Pt(P^tBu₃)₂ [65]. The unsaturated nature of **1** effectively drives formation of a heterometallic architecture and provides multiple hydrides on the resulting heterometallic skeleton. Nakajima et al. examined the photochemical reaction of **1** with {CpNi(CO)}₂ (Cp = η⁵-C₅H₅), which provided a tetrahedral cluster, (Cp*Ru)₂(CpNi)₂(μ₃-CO)₂ [66], albeit without a hydrido ligand. The absence of hydrides likely derives from the presence of CO, which can expel hydrides from the ruthenium centers. As an extension of our heterometallic polyhydrido cluster chemistry, we examined the reaction of **1** with non-carbonyl Ni species to construct a novel Ni/Ru skeleton with multiple hydrido ligands. In this article, we report the synthesis of a spiked tetrahedral Ru–NiRu₃ cluster containing multiple hydrides by reaction of **1** with Ni(cod)₂ (cod = 1,5-cyclooctadiene) and its degradation to a tetrahedral NiRu₃ cluster upon treatment with cyclopentadiene.

2. Results and discussion

2.1. Preparation of a pentanuclear Ru–NiRu₃ cluster

A novel diamagnetic pentanuclear NiRu₄ cluster, Cp*Ru(H)(μ-H)₃–Ni{Cp*Ru(μ₃-H)(μ-H)}₃ (**2**), was obtained by reaction of Cp*Ru(μ-H)₄RuCp* (**1**) with 0.5 equiv Ni(cod)₂ under 1 atm of H₂ (Eq. (1)). When the reaction was conducted under Ar, a mixture of several unidentified compounds was obtained. Thus, uptake of one molecule of dihydrogen appears to be essential for construction of the NiRu₄ skeleton.



Scheme 1. Proposed formation mechanism of the spiked tetrahedral Ru–NiRu₃ core of **2**.

Although the formation mechanism of **2** is unclear at present, the fact that neither (Cp*Ru)₃(H)₅ [67] nor (Cp*Ru)₄(H)₆ [68] is produced suggests that the Ru–NiRu₃ spiked tetrahedron is formed by assembly of two molecules of dinuclear Ru^{III}–Ru^{III} and one molecule of a Ni^{II} species, likely [NiH₂], formed in situ (Scheme 1). The NiRu₄ species, which presumably adopts a bow tie skeleton centered on the nickel ion, then rearranges to the Ru–NiRu₃ spiked tetrahedron via an edge-bridged tetrahedral intermediate. Adams and Zhang showed that a bimetallic edge-bridged tetrahedron of iridium and ruthenium undergoes skeletal rearrangement to a Ru–IrRu₃ spiked tetrahedron upon treatment with CO [69]. Raithby and co-workers synthesized a spiked tetrahedral Ru–Os₄ cluster upon addition of P(OMe)₃ to the trigonal bipyramidal Os₄Ru cluster, which was obtained by reaction of [Os₄(H)₂(CO)₁₂]²⁻ with [(η⁶-C₆H₆)Ru(MeCN)₃]⁺ [70].

The spiked tetrahedral Ru–NiRu₃ skeleton of **2** is unambiguously confirmed by XRD as shown in Fig. 1. The positions of the ten hydrido ligands were successfully established by Fourier synthesis. The metal core of **2** comprises a NiRu₃ tetrahedron with the Ni atom bonded to the [Cp*RuH] fragment through three bridging hydrides. The hydride in the [Cp*RuH] unit is coordinated to the Ru(4) atom in a terminal fashion. The remaining six hydrides are located with the NiRu₃ tetrahedron as μ- and μ₃-hydrides at each Ru–Ru edge and NiRu₂ face, respectively. The positions of hydrides in **2** are supported by DFT calculations as shown in Fig. 2.

Clusters adopting a spiked tetrahedral arrangement of five metal atoms are known [71–73]. Although all reported spiked tetrahedral

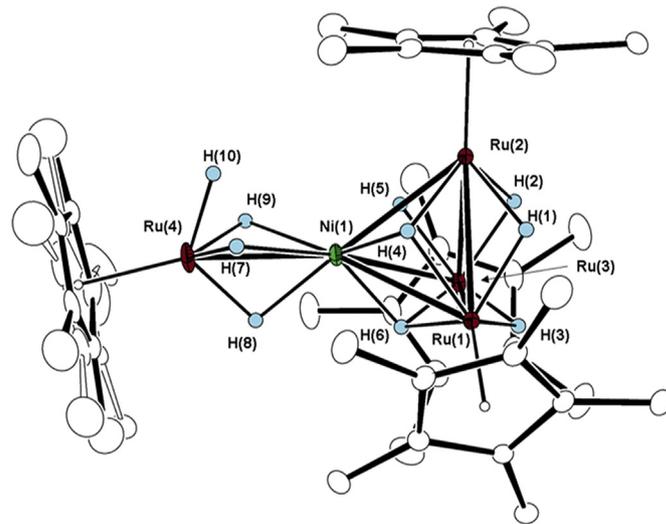


Fig. 1. Molecular structure and labeling scheme of **2** with thermal ellipsoids at 30% probability. Solvent molecule (1,4-dioxane) and hydrogen atoms in the Cp* groups were omitted for clarity. Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (deg): Ni(1)–Ru(1) 2.6744(4), Ni(1)–Ru(2) 2.6777(4), Ni(1)–Ru(3) 2.6690(4), Ni(1)–Ru(4) 2.4490(4), Ru(1)–Ru(2) 2.7921(3), Ru(1)–Ru(3) 2.7918(3), Ru(2)–Ru(3) 2.7896(3), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(2) 62.891(10), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(3) 62.998(10), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(4) 141.969(15), Ru(2)–Ni(1)–Ru(3) 62.896(11), Ru(2)–Ni(1)–Ru(4) 142.966(16), Ru(3)–Ni(1)–Ru(4) 143.851(15), Ni(1)–Ru(1)–Ru(2) 58.613(10), Ni(1)–Ru(1)–Ru(3) 58.408(9), Ru(2)–Ru(1)–Ru(3) 59.943(9), Ni(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(1) 58.496(9), Ni(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(3) 58.400(9), Ru(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(3) 60.024(8), Ni(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(1) 58.594(9), Ni(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(2) 58.704(10), Ru(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(2), 60.034(8).

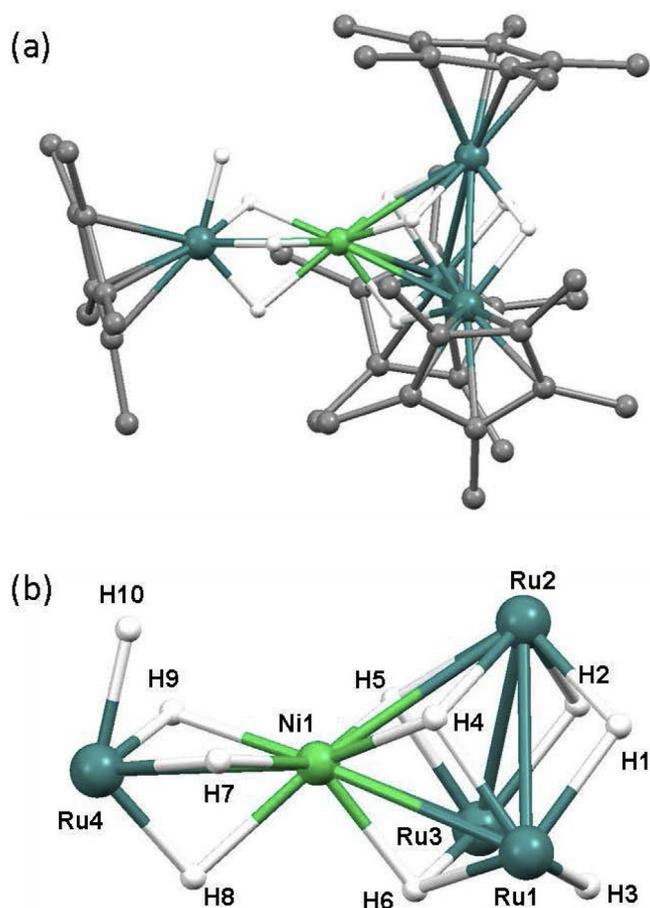
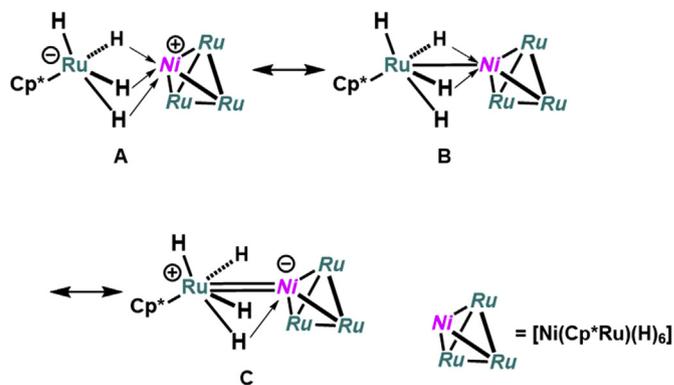


Fig. 2. (a) Optimized structure of **2** obtained by DFT calculations (ω B97XD/SDD (Ru, Ni), 6-31G(d) (C, H of Cp*), 6-311G(d,p) (H1–H10)), (b) Enlarged core view of **2**. Selected bond distances (Å): Ni1–Ru1 2.626, Ni1–Ru2 2.727, Ni1–Ru3 2.650, Ni1–Ru4 2.438, Ni1–H4 1.658, Ni1–H5 1.641, Ni1–H6 1.761, Ni1–H7 1.834, Ni1–H8 1.831, Ni1–H9 1.867, Ru1–Ru2 2.780, Ru1–Ru3 2.810, Ru1–H4 1.771, Ru1–H6 1.803, Ru2–Ru3 2.770, Ru2–H4 1.884, Ru2–H5 1.891, Ru3–H5 1.783, Ru3–H6 1.803, Ru4–H7 1.663, Ru4–H8 1.633, Ru4–H9 1.648, Ru4–H10 1.594.

clusters contain 76 valence electrons, the sum of the valence electrons of **2** is 72. Thus, **2** is electron deficient by four electrons relative to an electron precise configuration.

As mentioned below, the structural parameters of the NiRu₃ moiety in **2** are similar to those of isostructural (CpNi)(Cp*Ru)₃(μ₃-H)₃(μ-H)₃ (**4**), which adopts a saturated tetrahedral structure containing 60 valence electrons. Assuming that the 18-electron [Cp*RuH₄][−] fragment in **2** serves as an ancillary ligand of the 54-electron [Ni(Cp*Ru)₃(μ₃-H)₃(μ-H)₃]⁺ unit, it should behave in a manner similar to an anionic six electron donor ligand such as Cp[−]. Structure **A**, in which six electrons are supplied by σ-coordination of three Ru–H bonds to the Ni center, can be formally represented as one of the three resonance forms in Scheme 2.

In structure **A**, there is no bonding interaction between Ni(1) and Ru(4) despite the unusually short interatomic distance of 2.4489(4) Å. The Ni(1)–Ru(4) distance is considerably shorter than the unbridged Ni–Ru bond length in Tp[#]Ni–RuCp(CO)₂ (2.512(1) Å) (Tp[#] = hydrotris(4-bromo-3,5-dimethylpyrazolyl)borato), which exhibits a 32-electron configuration [74]. A plausible explanation for the short distance is that the two metal nuclei are tightly linked by the three bridging hydrides. Wolf and co-workers detected no direct electronic interaction between the Ru and Ni atoms in (PR₃)₃Ru(μ-H)₃Ni(μ-H)₃Ru(PR₃)₃ (R = C₆H₄-4-Me) based on DFT calculations, although the interatomic distance is extremely short



Scheme 2. Schematic explanation of the interaction between the [Cp*RuH₄] and [Ni(Cp*Ru)₃(H)₆] fragments in **2**.

(2.42172(18) Å) [62].

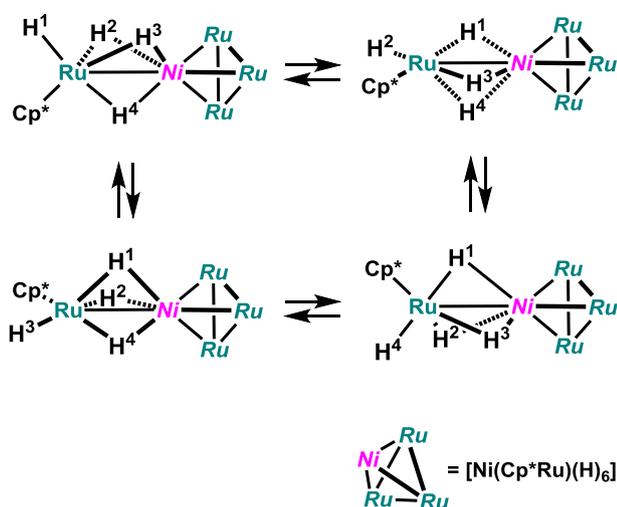
The Ru–H distances of the bridging hydrides at the Ru(4)–Ni(1) vertex (Ru(4)–H(7) 1.61(5) Å, Ru(4)–H(8) 1.58(4) Å, Ru(4)–H(9) 1.57(5) Å) are significantly shorter than the Ni–H distances (Ni(1)–H(7) 2.15(5) Å, Ni(1)–H(8) 1.76(4) Å, Ni(1)–H(9) 1.95(5) Å). XRD analysis does not provide intrinsically accurate structural data regarding hydrogen atoms bonded to a transition metal. However, the hydrogen atoms involved in the Ni–H–Ru interaction lie much closer to the Ru atom despite the larger covalent radius of Ru relative to that of Ni (Ru, 1.25 Å; Ni 1.10 Å).

The unsymmetrical coordination of the μ₃-hydrides at the spiked Ni–Ru vertex is reproduced in the optimized structure by DFT calculation: Ru4–H7 1.663 Å/Ni1–H7 1.834 Å, Ru4–H8 1.633/Ni1–H8 1.831, Ru4–H9 1.648 Å/Ni1–H9 1.867 Å. Natural orbital bond (NBO) analysis shows that the WBI value of the Ru–H bond (average 0.61) is much greater than that of the Ni–H bond (average 0.14) and is comparable to the value of the terminal Ru–H bond (0.66). These results are consistent with resonance form **A** in Scheme 2 and are similar to the structural features of previously reported Ni–H–Ru interactions [62–64].

The Ni(1) atom in the NiRu₃ tetrahedron lies nearly above the center of the Ru₃ plane defined by Ru(1), Ru(2), and Ru(3). The three Ni–Ru bonds in the NiRu₃ unit are almost identical in length: Ni(1)–Ru(1) 2.6744(4) Å, Ni(1)–Ru(2) 2.6777(4) Å, Ni(1)–Ru(3) 2.6690(4) Å. These values are greater than the unbridged Ni–Ru distances in (CpNi)Ru₃(μ-H)₃(CO)₇{PPh₂CH₂CH₂Si(OEt)₃}₂ (average 2.560 Å), although the Ru–Ru distances in **2** (average 2.791 Å) are slightly shorter than the hydrido-bridged Ru–Ru distances in the same NiRu₃ cluster (average 2.879 Å) [75]. The Ni–Ru bond in the tetrahedral NiRu₃ moiety of **2** is lengthened likely owing to the presence of a μ₃-hydride, whereas the doubly bridged Ru–Ru bonds are shortened compared to the singly bridged Ru–Ru bond in (CpNi)Ru₃(μ-H)₃(CO)₇{PPh₂CH₂CH₂Si(OEt)₃}₂.

Brivio and co-workers reported the XRD structure of an anionic NiRu₃ cluster, [NiRu₃(μ₃-H)(CO)₉(μ-CO)₃][−], which is the only example of a structurally determined μ₃-hydride on a NiRu₂ face [53]. The Ni–(μ₃-H) distance in the Brivio's complex (1.85(7) Å) is slightly greater than the Ru–(μ₃-H) lengths (1.73(6), 1.80(6) Å). In contrast, the Ni–(μ₃-H) distance in **2** (average 1.69(4) Å) is shorter than the average Ru–(μ₃-H) distance (1.80(4) Å). The 0.11 Å difference is consistent with the difference in the covalent radii. This feature is reproduced by DFT calculations, which yield WBI values of 0.28 for Ru–(μ₃-H) and 0.19 for Ni–(μ₃-H). Thus, the μ₃-hydrides on the NiRu₂ face appear to be coordinated to the three metal centers in an almost symmetrically manner, unlike the μ₃-hydrides at the spiked Ni–Ru vertex.

The ¹H NMR spectrum of **2** recorded at −80 °C displays Cp*



Scheme 3. Rapid rotation of $[\text{Cp}^*\text{RuH}_4]$ around the Ni–Ru axis.

signals at δ 2.11 and 1.79 ppm with an intensity ratio of 3:1. This indicates that the spiked (Cp^*RuH_4) moiety rotates rapidly within the NMR time scale, producing a time averaged C_3 structure. The four hydrides attached to Ru(4), which resonate at δ –14.19, are also equivalent at -80°C . This result indicates that the rotation of the (Cp^*RuH_4) moiety proceeds via the interconversion of hydrides between terminal and bridging positions as shown in Scheme 3.

Two singlets derived from the hydride ligands in the NiRu_3 unit are observed at δ –12.41 and –16.06 ppm at -40°C with equal intensities. The signals broaden with increasing temperature and become buried beneath the base line at 40°C (Fig. 3). This spectral behavior is caused by site exchange of hydrides between the μ_3 - and μ -positions on the NiRu_3 tetrahedron. The activation parameters of this structural conversion are estimated by spectral simulation to be $\Delta H^\ddagger = 15.5 \pm 0.3 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$ and $\Delta S^\ddagger = 7.0 \pm 1.0 \text{ cal mol}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$.

The shape of the (Cp^*RuH_4) hydride signal does not change as a function of temperature. This indicates that site exchange of

hydrides between (Cp^*RuH_4) and $\{\text{Ni}(\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru})_3\text{H}_6\}$ does not occur within the NMR time scale.

All hydrido ligands of **2** are deuterated when the cluster is treated with 1 atm of D_2 at 25°C . However, the deuteration ratio at each position is different. Although 70% of the hydrides are deuterated in the spiked (Cp^*RuH_4) moiety after 48 h, the deuteration ratio reaches only 15% in NiRu_3 . The slow exchange on the NiRu_3 center suggests that deuterium atoms are incorporated exclusively into the spiked Ru center and migrate to the NiRu_3

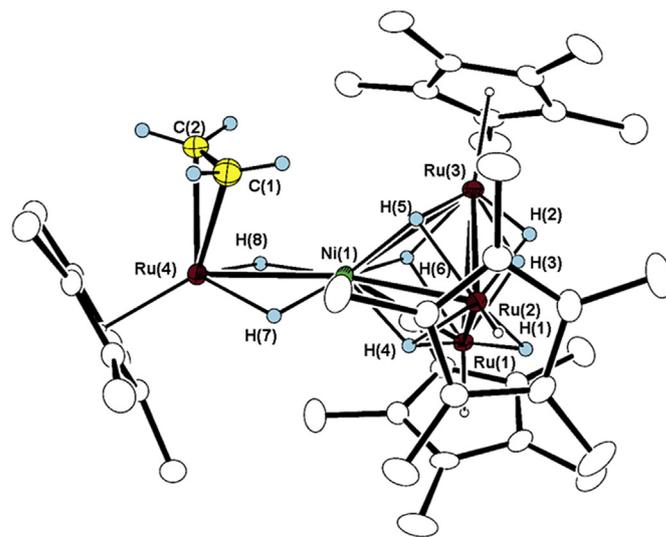


Fig. 4. Molecular structure and labeling scheme of **3** with thermal ellipsoids at 30% probability. A solvent molecule (*n*-hexane) and hydrogen atoms of the Cp^* groups are omitted for clarity. Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (deg): Ni(1)–Ru(1) 2.6798(3), Ni(1)–Ru(2) 2.6580(3), Ni(1)–Ru(3) 2.7351(3), Ni(1)–Ru(4) 2.5412(3), Ru(1)–Ru(2) 2.8009(3), Ru(1)–Ru(3) 2.7607(3), Ru(2)–Ru(3) 2.7886(3), Ru(4)–C(1) 2.163(3), Ru(4)–C(2) 2.158(3), C(1)–C(2) 1.391(5), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(2) 63.297(8), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(3) 61.295(9), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(4) 147.365(13), Ru(2)–Ni(1)–Ru(3) 62.252(9), Ru(2)–Ni(1)–Ru(4) 136.479(14), Ru(3)–Ni(1)–Ru(4) 145.514(13), Ni(1)–Ru(1)–Ru(2) 57.971(8), Ni(1)–Ru(1)–Ru(3) 60.339(8), Ru(2)–Ru(1)–Ru(3) 60.181(7), Ni(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(1) 58.732(8), Ni(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(3) 60.229(8), Ru(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(3) 59.195(7), Ni(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(1) 58.366(8), Ni(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(2) 57.518(8), Ru(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(2), 60.624(7).

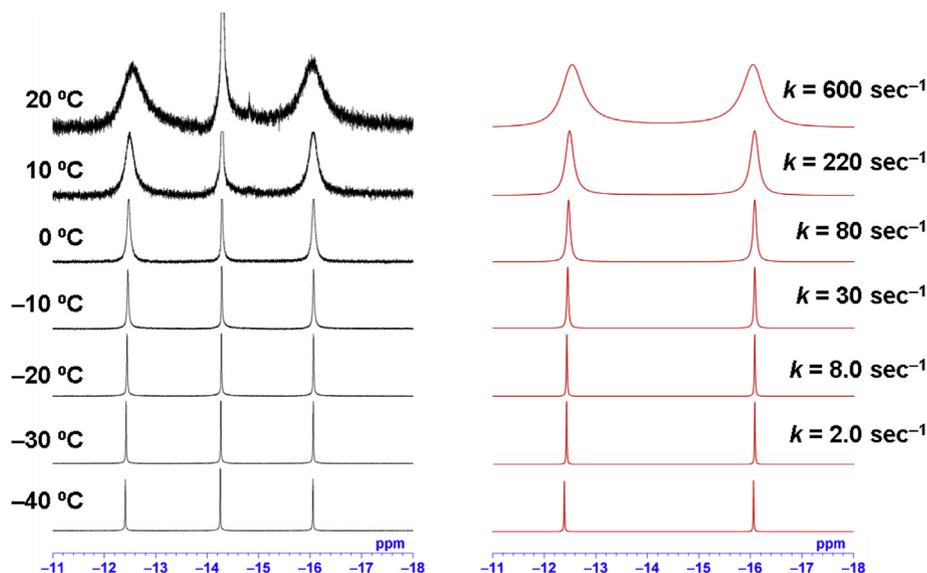
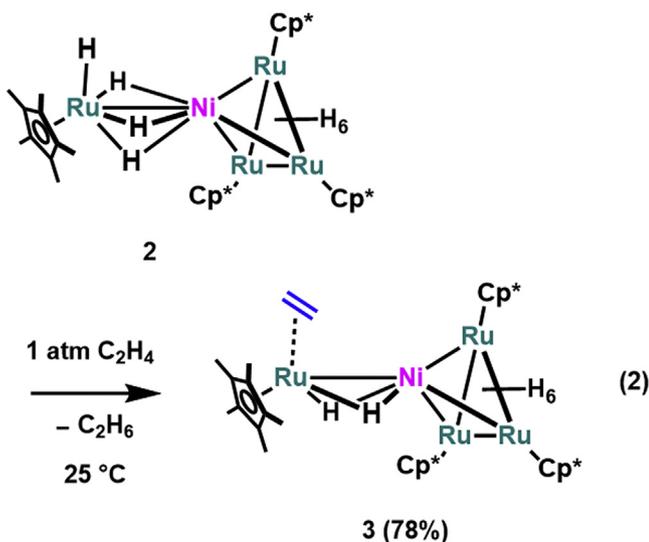


Fig. 3. (left) Variable temperature ^1H NMR spectra of the hydride region of **2** (400 MHz, THF-d_6). (right) Simulated spectra represent the site exchange between μ_3 - and μ -hydrides on the NiRu_3 moiety.

moiety. Variable temperature NMR experiments establish the rate of the hydride migration between $(\text{Cp}^*\text{RuH}_4)$ and $(\text{NiRu}_3\text{H}_6)$ to be much less than the NMR time scale. Although a path involving direct reaction of D_2 at NiRu_3 is not excluded, the fact that $(\text{Cp}^*\text{Ni})(\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru})_3(\mu_3\text{-H})_3(\mu\text{-H})_3$ (**4**) does not react with D_2 at 25°C strongly suggests that hydride migration from the spiked Ru center to the NiRu_3 moiety is slow.

The proposal that the spiked Ru atom acts as a reaction site in **2** is supported by the reaction of **2** with ethylene, which yields $\{\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru}(\mu\text{-H})_2(\text{C}_2\text{H}_4)\}-\{\text{Ni}(\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru})_3(\mu_3\text{-H})_3(\mu\text{-H})_3\}$ (**3**) that contains an η^2 -ethylene ligand at the spiked Ru atom (Eq. (2)). Complex **2** reacts with 1 atm of ethylene at 25°C in 48 h with elimination of two hydrides as ethane, as confirmed by a singlet at δ 0.80 ppm. Treatment of **3** with 1 atm of H_2 at 25°C regenerates **2** with eliminating ethane, although the reaction is extremely slow (5% in 24 h).



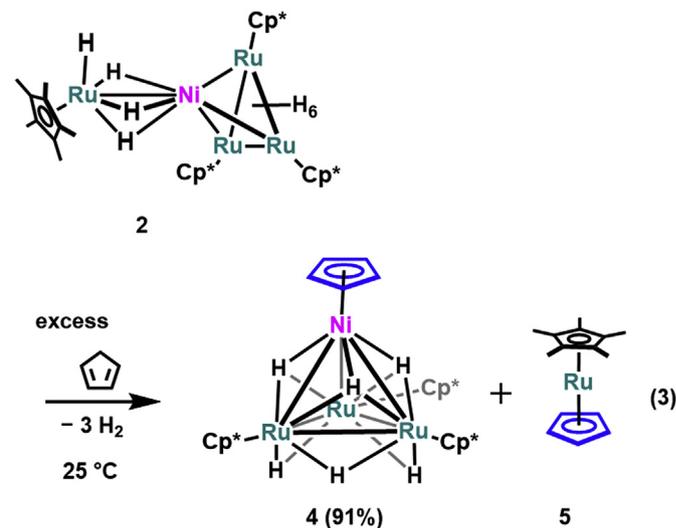
The XRD structure of **3** demonstrates that the ethylene molecule is coordinated to Ru(4) in an η^2 fashion (Fig. 4). The C(1)–C(2) bond length (1.391(5) Å) is similar to that in $\{\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru}(\text{C}_2\text{H}_4)\}_2\text{Pt}(\mu\text{-P}^t\text{Bu}_2)_2(\mu\text{-H})_2$ (1.398(5) Å) [65]. The number of hydrides bridging Ni(1) and Ru(4) decreases from three to two upon incorporation of ethylene, which slightly increases the Ni(1)–Ru(4) distance from 2.4490(4) Å in **2** to 2.5412(3) Å. Unsymmetrical coordination of H(7) and H(8) at the Ni(1)–Ru(4) site is still observed in **3** (Ru(4)–H(7) 1.59(3) Å/Ni(1)–H(7) 1.70(3) Å, Ru(4)–H(8) 1.67(3) Å/Ni(1)–H(8) 1.74(3) Å). Other structural parameters, primarily within the NiRu_3 unit, are similar to those of **2**.

The ^1H NMR spectrum of **3** also contains Cp^* signals at δ 2.11 and 1.76 ppm with an intensity ratio of 3:1, which indicates that **3** retains a pseudo C_3 structure in solution. This likely occurs by rotation of the $\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru}(\text{C}_2\text{H}_4)(\text{H})_2$ unit around the Ni(1)–Ru(4) axis. The signals arising from the μ_3 - and μ -hydrides in the NiRu_3 center are equivalent at 25°C , indicating that site exchange of hydrides between the two positions occurs as in **2**.

2.2. Preparation of a tetrahedral NiRu_3 cluster

Reactions of **2** with dienes were examined to explore the influence of the neighboring Ni atom on transformations of the substrate coordinated to the spiked Ru atom. Only a mixture of unidentified products was obtained upon reaction with isoprene. However, reaction of **2** with cyclopentadiene proceeds cleanly to

yield a tetrahedral cluster, $(\text{CpNi})(\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru})_3(\mu_3\text{-H})_3(\mu\text{-H})_3$ (**4**), accompanied by formation of a mixed ligand ruthenocene, Cp^*CpRu (**5**) (Eq. (3)).



We previously observed that **5** is formed upon thermolysis of the diruthenium $\mu\text{-}\eta^2\text{:}\eta^2\text{-cyclopentadiene}$ complex, $\{\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru}(\mu\text{-H})_2(\mu\text{-}\eta^2\text{:}\eta^2\text{-C}_5\text{H}_6)\}$ [76]. Formation of **5** in Eq. (3) is fully consistent with $\mu\text{-}\eta^2\text{:}\eta^2\text{-coordination}$ of cyclopentadiene at the spiked Ni–Ru vertex, whereas no intermediate containing a bridging hydrocarbyl ligand at the Ni–Ru edge is observed.

A single crystal for XRD analysis was obtained from a cold toluene solution of **4**. The structure of **4** is shown in Fig. 5a. The positions of six hydrides were successfully determined by Fourier synthesis as seen in the NiRu_3 moieties in **2** and **3**, that is, three μ -hydrides and three μ_3 -hydrides. Their locations are also supported by DFT calculations illustrated in Fig. 5b.

As found in the NiRu_3 moiety of **2**, the three Ni–Ru lengths in **4** are nearly equal (2.6714(4)–2.6932(4) Å) and of comparable value to those of **2** (average 2.67 Å) and **3** (average 2.69 Å). The Ru–Ru distances range from 2.8086(3) to 2.8211(3) Å and also are similar to those of **2** (average 2.79 Å) and **3** (average 2.78 Å). The tendency that the Ni–($\mu_3\text{-H}$) bond lengths are shorter than the Ru–($\mu_3\text{-H}$) lengths is also observed in **4** (average Ni–($\mu_3\text{-H}$) 1.64 Å; average Ru–($\mu_3\text{-H}$) 1.87 Å).

The Ni–Ru and Ru–Ru distances are well reproduced in the optimized structure (average Ni–Ru, 2.678 Å; average Ru–Ru 2.826 Å). The Ni–($\mu_3\text{-H}$) and Ru–($\mu_3\text{-H}$) distances in the optimized structure are estimated to be 1.70 and 1.83 Å, respectively. The values are comparable to those optimized for **2** (Ni–H 1.69 Å, Ru–H 1.82 Å). The WBI values for these bonds are estimated to be 0.27 and 0.22, respectively, which suggests symmetrical coordination of the μ_3 -hydrides at the NiRu_2 face.

Two sharp hydride signals are observed at δ –12.92 and –17.27 ppm in the ^1H NMR spectrum of **4** recorded at -70°C . The resonances broaden with increasing temperature similar to the hydride signals in **2** (Fig. 6). The estimated activation parameters of the spectral change based on spectral simulations are $\Delta H^\ddagger = 14.6 \pm 0.2 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$ and $\Delta S^\ddagger = 9.8 \pm 1.0 \text{ cal mol}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$. The values are comparable to those observed for **2** ($\Delta H^\ddagger = 15.5 \pm 0.3 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$, $\Delta S^\ddagger = 7.0 \pm 1.0 \text{ cal mol}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$).

The sum of the valence electrons in **4** (60-electron) is precisely the number expected for a tetrahedral cluster, which makes **4**

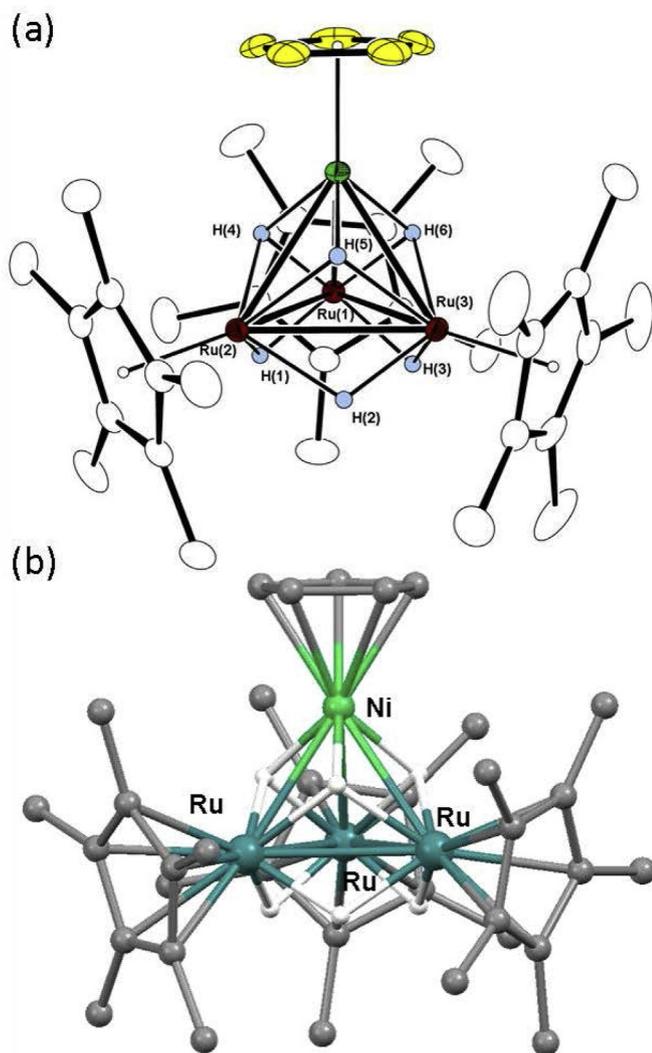


Fig. 5. (a) Molecular structure and labeling scheme of **4** with thermal ellipsoids at 30% probability. Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (deg): Ni(1)–Ru(1) 2.6926(4), Ni(1)–Ru(2) 2.6932(4), Ni(1)–Ru(3) 2.6714(4), Ru(1)–Ru(2) 2.8086(3), Ru(1)–Ru(3) 2.8176(3), Ru(2)–Ru(3) 2.8211(3), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(2) 62.864(9), Ru(1)–Ni(1)–Ru(3) 63.372(9), Ru(2)–Ni(1)–Ru(3) 63.452(9), Ni(1)–Ru(1)–Ru(2) 58.578(9), Ni(1)–Ru(1)–Ru(3) 57.947(8), Ru(2)–Ru(1)–Ru(3) 60.188(7), Ni(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(1) 58.558(9), Ni(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(3) 57.898(8), Ru(1)–Ru(2)–Ru(3) 60.063(7), Ni(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(1) 58.681(9), Ni(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(2) 58.650(9), Ru(1)–Ru(3)–Ru(2), 59.748(7). (b) Optimized structure of **4** obtained by DFT calculations (B3PW91/SDD (Ru, Ni), 6–31G(d) (C, H of Cp* and Cp), 6–311G(d,p) (H1–H6)). Selected bond lengths (Å): Ni–Ru1 2.677, Ni–Ru2 2.684, Ni–Ru3 2.674, Ru1–Ru2 2.824, Ru1–Ru3 2.828, Ru2–Ru3 2.826.

thermally stable. Complex **4** does not decompose upon heating at 80 °C for at least 24 h and, unlike **2**, does not exhibit H/D exchange under 1 atm D₂. These results indicate that reductive elimination of hydrides from **4**, which would produce a vacant site at the NiRu₃ center, does not occur readily. Partial rupture of the tetrahedral skeleton leading to formation of a butterfly structure, which is another means of generating a vacant site, may be prevented by strong bonding of the μ₃-hydrides to the three metal nuclei.

Lavigne and co-workers synthesized a closely related 60-electron NiRu₃ cluster, (CpNi)Ru₃(CO)₉(μ-H)₃, by reaction of Ru₃(CO)₁₂ with [CpNi(μ-CO)]₂ under 1 atm of H₂ [51]. Sappa and co-workers showed that (CpNi)Ru₃(CO)₉(μ-H)₃, unlike **4**, undergoes deuterium exchange upon heating under a D₂ atmosphere despite its saturated configuration [77]. They also observed (CpNi)Ru₃(CO)₉(μ-H)₃ to fragment readily upon heating in a N₂ atmosphere. These results

suggest that H/D exchange in (CpNi)Ru₃(CO)₉(μ-H)₃ occurs via partial breaking of the tetrahedral skeleton, most likely by cleavage of an unsupported Ni–Ru bond.

In contrast, the Ni–Ru bonds in **4** are supported by μ₃-hydrido ligands. Although the μ₃-hydrides suppress degradation of the cluster skeleton, they make it difficult to generate a vacant site via Ni–Ru bond cleavage. Therefore, it is anticipated that reactivity will be improved by removing a μ₃-hydride from the NiRu₃ frame. Protonation of a hydrido complex followed by reductive elimination of dihydrogen is often employed to generate a coordinatively unsaturated species. Protonation of **4** was thus examined, but the reaction resulted in degradation of the NiRu₃ skeleton and produced a cationic triruthenium complex, [Cp*Ru(μ-H)₂]₃⁺ [67].

3. Conclusion

In summary, a novel bimetallic spiked tetrahedral cluster of Ni and Ru, {Cp*Ru(H)(μ-H)₃}–{Ni(Cp*Ru)₃(μ₃-H)₃(μ-H)₃} (**2**), was synthesized by reaction of Cp*Ru(μ-H)₄RuCp* (**1**) with Ni(cod)₂ under a H₂ atmosphere. The structural parameters of the tetrahedral fragment in **2** are very similar to those of the 60-electron NiRu₃ tetrahedron, (CpNi)(Cp*Ru)₃(μ₃-H)₃(μ-H)₃ (**4**). This property suggests that the spiked [Cp*RuH₄][−] fragment acts as a six-electron donor to the NiRu₃ unit. [Cp*RuH₄][−] can provide six-electrons to the Ni center through σ-coordination of the Ru–H bonds. Unsymmetrical coordination of the μ-hydrides at the spiked Ni–Ru vertex in a manner similar to reported Ni–H–Ru interactions [62–64] is supported by DFT calculations.

The spiked Ru atom acts as a site for reaction with D₂, ethylene, and, presumably, cyclopentadiene. Deuterium is incorporated into the NiRu₃ moiety of **2** although the tetrahedral NiRu₃ complex **4** does not react with D₂. Although the rate of the site exchange is slow on the NMR time scale, the migration of hydride between the (Cp*RuH₄) and {Ni(Cp*Ru)₃(H)₆} fragments could be a model of a hydrogen atom spillover in bimetallic Ni/Ru catalysts.

Reaction of **2** with cyclopentadiene displaces the spiked (Cp*RuH₄) fragment and form the tetrahedral NiRu₃ tetrahedral cluster, **4**, exclusively. Complex **4** resists H/D exchange with D₂, likely because of its precise 60-electron configuration and the presence of μ₃-hydrides on each NiRu₂ face. We are continuing to study the reactivity of **2** toward other unsaturated hydrocarbons and the synthesis of reactive NiRu₃ species derived from **4** by dihydrogen removal from the cluster core.

4. Experimental

4.1. General procedures

All compounds were manipulated using standard Schlenk and high-vacuum-line techniques under an atmosphere of argon. Dehydrated toluene, acetonitrile, and hexane used in this study were purchased from Kanto Chemicals and stored under an atmosphere of argon. 1,4-dioxane was dried over LiAlH₄ and stored under an argon atmosphere. Monomeric cyclopentadiene was obtained by the cracking of dicyclopentadiene. C₆D₆ and THF-*d*₈ were dried over sodium–benzophenone ketyl and stored under an atmosphere of argon. Dichloromethane-*d*₂ was dried over phosphorus pentoxide and stored under an argon atmosphere. Ni(cod)₂ was purchased from Aldrich and stored under an argon atmosphere. Other reagents were used as received. Diruthenium tetrahydrido complex, Cp*Ru(μ-H)₄RuCp* (**1**), was prepared according to the published method [78]. ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on Varian INOVA-400 and Varian 400 MR spectrometers. ¹H NMR spectra were referenced to tetramethylsilane as an internal standard. ¹³C NMR spectra were referenced to the natural-

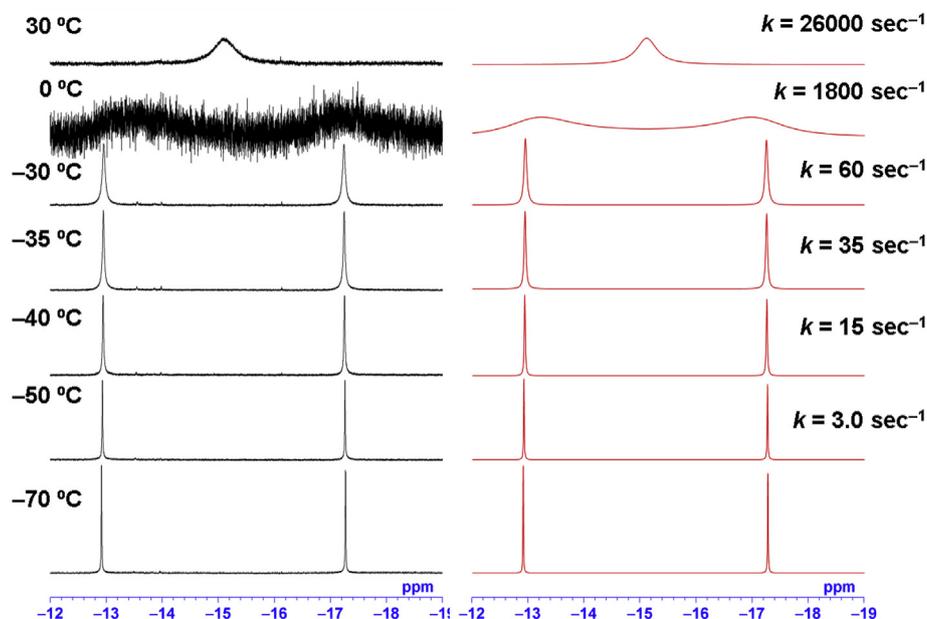


Fig. 6. (left) Variable temperature ^1H NMR spectra of **4** showing the hydride region (400 MHz, THF-d_8). (right) Simulated spectra.

abundance carbon signal of the solvent employed. Elemental analyses were performed on a PerkinElmer 2400II CHN analyzer.

4.2. Variable temperature NMR studies and simulations

Variable-temperature NMR studies were performed in NMR tubes equipped with a J. Young valve using a Varian INOVA-400 Fourier transform spectrometer. The NMR simulations for the temperature-dependent hydride signals of **2** and **4** were performed using gNMR v5.0.6.0 (2006, Ivory Soft) via an iterative parameter search upon the exchange constants, k , which was the rates for the site-exchange of hydrides between the μ_3 - and μ -positions. The rate constants accurately modeled the experimental spectra at each temperature. The activation parameters ΔH^\ddagger and ΔS^\ddagger were determined from the plot of $\ln(k/T)$ versus $1/T$. Estimated standard deviations (σ) in the slope and y intercept of the Eyring plot determined the error in ΔH^\ddagger and ΔS^\ddagger , respectively. The standard deviation in ΔG^\ddagger was determined from the formula: $\sigma(\Delta G^\ddagger)^2 = \sigma(\Delta H^\ddagger)^2 + [T\sigma(\Delta S^\ddagger)]^2 - 2T\sigma(\Delta H^\ddagger)\sigma(\Delta S^\ddagger)$.

4.3. X-ray diffraction studies

Single crystals of **2**, **3**, and **4** for the X-ray analyses were obtained directly from the preparations described below and mounted on nylon Cryoloops with Paratone-N (Hampton Research corp.). Diffraction experiment was performed on a Rigaku R-Axis RAPID imaging plate diffractometer with graphite-monochromated Mo-K α radiation ($\lambda = 0.71069 \text{ \AA}$). Cell refinement and data reduction were performed using the PROCESS-AUTO program [79]. Intensity data were corrected for Lorentz-polarization effects and for numerical and empirical absorption. The structures were solved by the direct method using SHELXT-2018/1 and further refined with the SHELXL-2016/6 program package [80,81]. All non-hydrogen atoms were found by a difference Fourier synthesis and were refined anisotropically. The refinement was carried out by least-squares methods based on F^2 with all measured reflections. For **2**, the Cp* group attached to the Ru(4) atom was disordered with 62%:38% occupancy. The cocrystallized 1,4-dioxane was disordered over two sites with 62%:38% occupancy. The enhanced rigid-bond

restraint (SHELX keyword RIGU) was applied to the disordered Cp* group and the 1,4-dioxane molecule [82]. The metal-bound hydrogen atoms in **2**, **3** and **4** were found by the difference synthesis and refined isotropically. Hydrogen atoms in the 1,4-dioxane molecule cocrystallized with **2** could not be located. Crystal data and results of the analyses are listed in Table S1 in the Supplementary Material. The CIF data of **2**, **3**, and **4** are deposited in the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Center with the deposition numbers of 1886670 (**2**), 1886671 (**3**), and 1886672 (**4**).

4.4. Computational details

DFT calculations were carried out at the ω B97XD level for **2** and B3PW91 level for **4** in conjunction with the Stuttgart/Dresden ECP [83] and associated with triple- ζ SDD basis sets for Ru and Ni [84]. For H and C of the Cp* and Cp groups, 6-31G(d) basis sets were employed. For metal-bound hydrogen atoms, 6-311G(d,p) basis sets were employed. No simplified model compounds were used for the calculations. Initial geometries for the optimization were based on the crystallographically determined structure of **2** and **4**. Calculations were performed using the Gaussian 16 software suite [85]. The molecular structures were drawn using the GaussView version 6.0 program [86]. Frequency calculations at the same level of theory as geometry optimizations were performed on the optimized structure to ensure that minima exhibit only positive frequency. Information on the atom coordinates (xyz files) for all optimized structures are given in the Supplementary Material.

4.5. Preparations

4.5.1. $\{\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru}(\text{H})(\mu\text{-H})_3\}-\{\text{Ni}(\text{Cp}^*\text{Ru})_3(\mu_3\text{-H})_3(\mu\text{-H})_3\}$ (**2**)

A 300 mL Schlenk tube was charged with **1** (0.418 g, 0.877 mmol), Ni(cod) $_2$ (0.123 g, 0.448 mmol). After the flask was cooled at -78°C by a dry ice/methanol bath, toluene (50 mL) was added. After the flask was degassed at -78°C , 0.1 MPa of dihydrogen was introduced. The solution was warmed to 25°C by removing the flask from the cooling bath. The solution was vigorously stirred for 3 days at 25°C . The color of the solution changed from dark-red to deep green. After concentrating the solution

under reduced pressure, the solution was passed through a short alumina pad to remove a Ni powder. The filtrate was then dried under reduced pressure. A 0.376 g amount of $\{Cp^*Ru(H)(\mu-H)_3\}-\{Ni(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3\}$ (**2**) was obtained as a crystalline black solid (0.371 mmol, 85% based on **1**). A black single crystal including one molecule of 1,4-dioxane was obtained from the cold 1,4-dioxane solution of **2** stored at 0 °C. 1H NMR (400 MHz, THF- d_8 , –80 °C): δ –16.02 (s, 3H, μ - or μ_3 -H in the $NiRu_3$ moiety), –14.19 (s, 4H, RuHNi and RuH in the Cp^*RuH_4 moiety), –12.35 (s, 3H, μ - or μ_3 -H in the $NiRu_3$ moiety), 1.79 (s, 15H, C_5Me_5), 2.11 ppm (s, 45H, C_5Me_5). $^{13}C\{^1H\}$ NMR (100 MHz, THF- d_8 , 25 °C): δ 12.7 (C_5Me_5 in the Cp^*RuH_4 moiety), 13.3 (C_5Me_5 in the $NiRu_3$ moiety), 92.3 (C_5Me_5 in the $NiRu_3$ moiety), 93.3 ppm (C_5Me_5 in the Cp^*RuH_4 moiety). Anal. Calcd for $C_{40}H_{70}NiRu_4$: C, 47.38; H, 6.96. Found: C, 47.37; H, 6.97.

4.5.2. Reaction of **2** with 1 atm of D_2

An NMR tube equipped with a Teflon valve was charged with **2** (5.0 mg, 4.9 μ mol) and THF- d_8 (0.4 mL). After the NMR tube was degassed with a liquid N_2 bath, 1 atm of D_2 was introduced. The NMR tube was kept at 25 °C. The 1H NMR spectrum recorded after 48 h showed the signals derived from isotopomers of **2**. The ratios of deuteration at each hydride signal were calculated based on the differences of the signal intensities from those recorded before introduction of D_2 and estimated at 18%, 71%, and 11% for the signals at δ –12.41, –14.26, –16.06 ppm.

4.5.3. $\{Cp^*Ru(\mu-H)_2(\eta^2-C_2H_4)\}-\{Ni(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3\}$ (**3**)

A 50 mL Schlenk tube was charged with **2** (48.8 mg, 48.1 μ mol) and toluene (5.0 mL). After the flask was degassed by the freeze-pump-thaw cycle two times, 0.1 MPa of ethylene was introduced at 25 °C. The solution was vigorously stirred for 2 days at 25 °C. The color of the solution changed from deep green to dark green. After the solvent was removed under reduced pressure, the resulting solid was extracted with 10 mL of hexane. The solution was then concentrated to ca. 5 mL under reduced pressure and stored at –30 °C. Drying the precipitate under reduced pressure afforded 38.5 mg amount of **3** as a black chunk (37.0 μ mol, 77%). A black single crystal including one molecule of hexane was obtained from the cold hexane solution of **3** stored at –30 °C. 1H NMR (400 MHz, C_6D_6 , 25 °C): δ –16.09 (s, 2H, RuHNi in the $Cp^*Ru(C_2H_4)H_2$ moiety), –14.68 (br, 6H, μ - and μ_3 -H in the $NiRu_3$ moiety), 1.76 (s, 15H, C_5Me_5), 2.11 (s, 45H, C_5Me_5), 2.23 ppm (br, 4H, C_2H_4). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, C_6D_6 , 25 °C): δ 11.0 (q, $J_{CH} = 125$ Hz, C_5Me_5 in the Cp^*RuH_4 moiety), 13.0 (q, $J_{CH} = 127$ Hz, C_5Me_5 in the $NiRu_3$ moiety), 24.8 (t, $J_{CH} = 154$ Hz, C_2H_4), 88.8 (C_5Me_5 in the Cp^*RuH_4 moiety), 91.9 ppm (C_5Me_5 in the $NiRu_3$ moiety). Anal. Calcd for $C_{42}H_{72}NiRu_4$: C, 48.51; H, 6.98. Found: C, 48.34; H, 7.38.

4.5.4. $(CpNi)(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3$ (**4**)

A 50 mL Schlenk tube was charged with **2** (0.116 g, 0.114 mmol) and toluene (10 mL). Cyclopentadiene (0.10 mL, 1.19 mmol) was added to the solution via syringe at 25 °C and the solution was vigorously stirred for 16 h at 25 °C. The color of the solution changed from deep green to dark green. After the volatile materials were removed under reduced pressure, the resulting solid was sensed by 10 mL of acetonitrile two times to remove resulting cyclopentadiene and Cp^*CpRu . Dryness in vacuo gave **4** as a purple solid (87.9 mg, 0.105 mmol, 91%). A purple single crystal of **4** was obtained from the cold toluene solution of **4** stored at –30 °C. 1H NMR (400 MHz, THF- d_8 , –70 °C): δ –17.27 (s, 3H, μ - or μ_3 -hydride), –12.92 (s, 3H, μ - or μ_3 -hydride), 2.04 (s, 45H, C_5Me_5), 5.20 ppm (s, 5H, C_5eH_5). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, THF- d_8 , 25 °C): δ 13.2 (q, $J_{CH} = 126$ Hz, C_5Me_5), 89.7 (d, $J_{CH} = 173$ Hz, C_5H_5), 90.1 ppm (C_5Me_5). Anal. Calcd for $C_{35}H_{56}NiRu_3$: C, 50.12; H, 6.73. Found: C, 49.92; H, 7.12.

4.5.5. Reaction of $(CpNi)(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3$ (**4**) with 1 atm of D_2

An NMR tube equipped with a Teflon valve was charged with **4** (5.0 mg, 6.0 μ mol) and THF- d_8 (0.4 mL). After the NMR tube was degassed with a liquid N_2 bath, 1 atm of D_2 was introduced. The NMR tube was kept at 25 °C. However, no detectable changes were observed in the 1H NMR spectrum recorded at –60 °C after 72 h.

4.5.6. Protonolysis of $(CpNi)(Cp^*Ru)_3(\mu_3-H)_3(\mu-H)_3$ (**4**)

An NMR tube equipped with a Teflon valve was charged with **4** (6.0 mg, 7.2 μ mol), CD_2Cl_2 (0.4 mL), and hexamethylbenzene as an internal standard. After an excess amount of $HBF_4 \cdot Et_2O$ was added to the solution with a micro syringe (ca. 70 equiv), 1H NMR spectrum of the solution was recorded. The 1H NMR spectrum showed the disappearance of **4** accompanied by the exclusive formation of $\{[Cp^*Ru(\mu-H)_2]_3\}^+$ in 83%. $\{[Cp^*Ru(\mu-H)_2]_3\}^+$: 1H NMR (400 MHz, CD_2Cl_2 , 25 °C): δ –11.22 (s, 6H, RuH), 1.98 ppm (s, 45H, Cp*).

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jorganchem.2018.12.016>.

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