

Sonny side up by Derrick Browne

Alphonse "Sonny" Moyses wrote extensive articles on the virtues of playing in a 4-3 fit. Even those who are less enamoured with these "Moysian" fits need to know how to play them:

NORTH			
S AQ543			
H 7			
D Q98			
C J942			
WEST		EAST	
S T92		S KJ87	
H QJ6		H 9532	
D 5432		D K6	
C Q63		C AK8	
SOUTH			
S 6			
H AKT84			
D AJT7			
C T75			
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	1C	1H
Pass	1S	Pass	2D
All pass			

If three rounds of clubs are cashed and the S10 then led through dummy's honours, the SA is taken. If declarer cashes the A-K of hearts then ruffs a heart, the missing honours fall so trumps are then drawn by leading the DQ for the finesse. Making ten tricks.

As usual, declarer should not seek to ruff in the hand with longer trumps. If a spade is ruffed, South no longer has enough trumps to draw West's last trump. Note that the 4-2 break is the most common when missing six cards in a suit.

NORTH			
S 643			
H A92			
D AQ54			
C AKQ			
WEST		EAST	
S AKQJT		S 952	
H 85		H 7643	
D T97		D KJ63	
C 742		C 85	
SOUTH			
S 87			
H KQJT			
D 82			
C JT963			
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1D	Pass	1H
1S	2S	Pass	3C
Pass	3H	Pass	4H
All pass			

North bid the enemy suit to force to game. Notrumps is hopeless because of the lack of a spade stopper so the partnership settled on the Moysian.

West starts with the obvious lead of three top spades. How should declarer plan the hand?

To keep the 4-card trump holding intact, declarer should avoid ruffing the third round of spades, preferring to discard the diamond (this is a sure loser anyway – given West's failure to open, the DK must be offside, so the finesse is slated to lose).

At trick four, West leads the D10, won by dummy's ace. Next, the HA and HK are cashed. Declarer could draw the remaining trumps but then there would be no entry left to the South hand for later, once the A-K-Q of clubs have been unblocked.

Cashing the A-K-Q of clubs now won't work either, because there are still trumps out so the third round will surely be ruffed. What is the solution?

Cash just two clubs, hoping for the normal 3-2 break. Then play trumps. On the last round, jettison North's remaining club. Now the three club winners can be led from hand, and the contract rolls home with ten tricks.