

Non-Serious 3NT

Exploring major suit slam with minimum values

Ted Bartunek and I had a hand at the December Sectional at Fircrest playing 2/1. Ted opened **1♠** in 2nd seat holding **♠AQ8743 ♥A42 ♦63 ♣Q9**. The bidding went **1♠** (P) **2♦** (P) **2♠** (P) **3♠**. How do you show your minimal hand with no slam interest other than make a **Fast Arrival** jump to **4♠**?

When you know you have at least an 8-card fit in a major suit, it isn't likely that you want to play 3NT so a 3NT bid isn't a serious offer to play 3NT, hence the name **Non-Serious 3NT** or sometimes **Frivolous 3NT**. The 3NT bid tells partner, I'm on a minimum with no slam interest.

Here's an excellent description <http://www.bridgewebs.com/brunton/page47.html>

Ted bid 3NT which I alerted, and explained that he had a minimum with no slam interest, and that I could bid game or try for slam.

I held **♠K96 ♥75 ♦AKQJ975 ♣8**, so slam was possible with a heart control, and decent spades. The bidding then went (P) **4♣** (P) **4♥** (P) **4NT** (P) **5♠** (P) **6♠**. My **4♣** and Ted's **4♥** showed 1st or 2nd round controls in clubs and hearts. Opponent's didn't ask about our control bids, but our Convention Card shows **Italian Controls** which we explain as 1st or 2nd round controls, Ace, King, Singleton, or Void. West led the **T♦** from T8 allowing Ted to make **7♠**.

This is from the site above:

“What if hearts are agreed?

“Now you can still use 3NT non-serious, but it makes a cue bid of **3♠** obligatory if you have it. Whether you are serious or not. If you don't have it, you make a non-serious 3NT bid or serious **4♣** cue bid (which denies the spade control). If partner is the one who makes the ambiguous **3♠** cue bid, then it is you who decides to bid the non-serious 3NT or make a serious cue.

“An alternative approach, and my **preferred method**, is to have a "non-serious **3♠**" bid, where 3NT acts as a cue bid of spades. When hearts are trumps, a bid of **3♠** says nothing about spades, it just says you are non-serious. A direct bid of 3NT therefore shows a serious hand and a control in spades.”

The advantages of the **Non-Serious 3NT** then are:

- Opener limits his hand with a minimum so no control bids are made if Responder has no slam interest giving the opponents less information.
- Opener's control bids after a major suit is agreed as trump show extra values, and slam interest so Responder is encouraged to show controls.

I should note, that on this hand in an Open Pairs field of 23 pairs, 4 got to **6♠** (3 making 7), 3 got to **6♦** 1 got to 3NT, the remaining 15 were in **4♠** or **5♠**.