

The background of the entire page is a faded, artistic illustration of a Quidditch match. Several players in dark robes are seen flying on brooms over a green field. The scene is dynamic, with brooms trailing smoke and players in various positions. The overall tone is purple and blue, giving it a magical, ethereal feel.

Even Ron would tell anyone who'd listen about the time he'd almost hit a hang glider on Charlie's old broom. Everyone from wizarding families talked about Quidditch constantly. Ron had already had a big argument with Dean Thomas, who shared their dormitory, about soccer. Ron couldn't see what was exciting about a game with only one ball where no one was allowed to fly. Harry had caught Ron prodding Dean's poster of West Ham soccer team, trying to make the players move.

Neville had never been on a broomstick in his life, because his grandmother had never let him near one. Privately, Harry felt she'd had good reason, because Neville managed to have an extraordinary number of accidents even with both feet on the ground.

Hermione Granger was almost as nervous about flying as Neville was. This was something you couldn't learn by heart out of a book — not that she hadn't tried. At breakfast on Thursday she bored them all stupid with flying tips she'd gotten out of a library book called *Quidditch Through the Ages*. Neville was hanging on to her every word, desperate for anything that might help him hang on to his broomstick later, but everybody else was very pleased when Hermione's lecture was interrupted by the arrival of the mail.

Harry hadn't had a single letter since Hagrid's note, something that Malfoy had been quick to notice, of course. Malfoy's eagle owl was always bringing him packages of sweets from home, which he opened gloatingly at the Slytherin table.

A barn owl brought Neville a small package from his grandmother. He opened it excitedly and showed them a glass ball the size of a large marble, which seemed to be full of white smoke.

"It's a Remembrall!" he explained. "Gran knows I forget things — this tells you if there's something you've forgotten to do. Look, you hold it tight like this and if it turns red — oh ..." His face fell, because the Remembrall had suddenly glowed scarlet, "... you've forgotten something ..."