

Both girls checked the snitch over with keen eyes and wands, and eventually stepped back, handing it to Boris. “It’s clean,” Angelina confirmed. “Professional standard, not tampered with that I can see.”

“C’est bon. We are good to play,” Adrienne agreed, grinning. They stepped back to join their friends in the crowd.

“Seekers, take your places.”

Harry stood between Cedric and Fleur, with Viktor on Cedric’s other side. He grinned at them, adrenaline coursing through his body. This was going to be *epic*.

“Eyes closed please!” Harry squeezed his eyes shut, feeling his pulse in his ears, keeping his breathing steady as Boris announced he was releasing the snitch. The crowd was near-silent, listening to him count down. It was nothing like the seeker’s match Harry had against Charlie in the summer. He thought their audience might be more invested in this than in the Triwizard tasks themselves.

“Three...two...one...” The whistle blew and Harry took off, shooting high up into the sky and immediately looking around for any glimpse of gold. The other three seekers did the same, swooping in fast loops around their makeshift pitch. Harry didn’t bother trying to tail any of them; when there were three potential opponents, it wasn’t worth putting all his eggs in one basket. He’d never played seeker against more than one person before, and he was intrigued to see how it would end up.

He ducked beneath Fleur, who was flying in the opposite direction as him. All thought of the audience had gone right out of his mind, his only focus the snitch.

All of a sudden, he saw Cedric change course abruptly. Harry automatically went after him, not willing to take the chance that it was a fake-out — he’d made the right choice, seeing a tiny flash of gold up ahead. He leaned in flat on his broom, willing it to go faster, corkscrewing under Cedric to get the upper hand. Above him, Viktor appeared, and Fleur wasn’t far behind him. The snitch veered sharply to the left, and there was almost a four-seeker pile-up as they all changed course to follow it. Harry inched forward, feeling other people close in around him, but he was *almost* there... his hand closed around cool metal.

“First point goes to Harry Potter of Hogwarts!”

He’d caught the snitch. He grinned to himself, seeing Cedric scowl playfully as he slowed down, the chase over. Harry turned to fly back to the starting point, handing the snitch over to Boris.

Fourteen more rounds to go.

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By round thirteen, the competition was getting intense, but none of the seekers were showing signs of tiring. Viktor was in the lead with four points, while Harry and Fleur both had three,