

**Gwyneth Walker**



**MATCH POINT**

for Orchestra

*Gwyneth Walker*  
**MATCH POINT**

**Duration:**  
6 minutes

**Instrumentation:**  
2 fl 2 ob 2 cl 2 bsn 4 hn 2 tpt 3 tbn tuba 3 perc strings

**Notes:**

MATCHPOINT is a musical dramatization of a tennis point. Tennis balls are dropped onto the drums, brass players mute their instruments with yellow tennis balls and the conductor conducts a mock rally with a tennis racquet! Appropriate attire is suggested. . .

**Performance History:**

Premiered by the Wallingford Symphony  
June 29, 1985 Wallingford, CT

**Subsequent Performances:**

The Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra  
The Little Orchestra Society of New York  
(featuring Billie Jean King – 'tennis virtuoso')  
The Vermont Symphony Orchestra  
The Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra  
The Farmington Symphony

**Memorable Quote:**

*"I love it! Actual enjoyment in the concert hall, and the music was good! This is wonderful fun!"*

Panel of Judges  
Composers Guild National Competition  
(upon awarding MATCH POINT First Prize,  
Instrumental Category)

I. TUNING UP  
II. ANTICIPATION  
III. THE POINT  
IV. MARCHE TRIOMPHANTE

*Duration: 6 Minutes*

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## Performance Notes

**Match Point** is a musical dramatization of a tennis point. It is suggested that the conductor wear tennis clothes, or at least a tennis hat. Orchestra players may also wear tennis clothing such as wristlets, headbands, tennis hats and/or sneakers. The conductor must be prepared to conduct the last two movements (“**The Point**” and “**Marche Triomphante**”) with a tennis racquet.

Hints of tennis strokes are marked in the score to be used at the discretion of the conductor. For example, the Percussionists and string players are asked to transform their performance gestures into forehand and backhand strokes. And, any other modifications of playing techniques (perhaps invented by the orchestra members) to approximate a game of tennis would be welcome.

If the conductor happens to be a tennis player, he/she may add additional tennis flourishes as desired. However, it is not necessary that the conductor play tennis. A short consultation with a tennis player (of any level of ability!) should provide sufficient preparation for performance.

Required equipment includes:

A bag of yellow tennis balls — *for dropping on drums and  
muting brass*

Several ice cubes and a glass — *for the ending*  
tennis racquet(s) — *for the conductor*

# Match Point

Gwyneth Walker

## I. TUNING UP

Conductor walks onto stage carrying tennis racquet(s) and other tennis equipment, if desired. Orchestra tunes to oboe or concertmaster. Conductor listens to tension of racquet strings, “tunes up” racquets, tries out batons, limbers up, ad lib.

## II. ANTICIPATION

### Drammatico

tennis balls dropped onto drums (let bounce and roll into audience)

Timpani\* *repeat ad lib.*

Percussion *p misterioso* low Tom-Tom *repeat ad lib.*

Bass Drum *repeat ad lib.* *p misterioso*

\*Timpani and Percussion: In preparation for dropping balls, extend arm outward at shoulder height and drop ball from there, visible to the audience.

**A** with subdued excitement ♩ = 80

anxiously

Fls. *p*

Obs. *p*

Clars. *p* *a2*

Bsns. *a2* *p*

Horns *a3 muted* *p*

2.3&4

Tpts. *muted\** *a2* *p*

Tf & B *muted\** *p*

3

Timp. *(more balls dropped)* *cresc. sempre più*

Perc. *(more balls dropped)* *cresc. sempre più*

*(more balls dropped)* *cresc. sempre più*

**A** with subdued excitement ♩ = 80

"backhand"

"forehand"

Vlns. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *long bowing motion...* *follow through* *(follow through)* *sim.*

Bass *long bowing motion...* *follow through* *(follow through)* *sim.*

\*with brightly-colored tennis balls, if possible

accel. ..... **B** ♩ = 108

Fls.

Obs.

Clars.

Bsns.

Horns

Tpts.

Trbs.

Timp.

Perc.

accel. ..... **B** ♩ = 108

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

Match Point

\*with brightly-colored tennis balls, if possible

Fls. *mf excitedly* *excitedly*

Obs. *mf excitedly* *excitedly* *mf excitedly*

Clars. *sf* *p*

Bsns.

Horns *p echo*

Tpts. *p echo*

Trbs. *p echo*

Timp.

Perc.

Vlns. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Bass *f*

*All Strings: pizz., with long "follow-through"*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score, page 4. It features woodwind, brass, and string parts. The woodwinds (Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons) have melodic lines with dynamic markings like *mf excitedly* and *excitedly*. The brass (Horns, Trumpets, Trombones) play a rhythmic pattern marked *p echo*. The strings play a pizzicato accompaniment with a long follow-through, marked *f*. The percussion parts are empty. The score is written in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature.

**C**

Fls.

Obs.

Clars.

Bsns.

*mf* ominously

Horns

*mf* open (a3)

Tpts.

Trbs.

Timp.

Perc.

Tom-Tom

*mf*

**C**

Vlns.

*arco* in a sultry manner

*mf* in a sultry manner

Vla.

*arco* in a sultry manner

*mf* in a sultry manner

Vlc.

*arco*

*mf* ominously

Bass

*arco*

*mf* ominously



with anticipation

Fls. *sfp* *mf*

Obs. *sfp* *mf*

Clars. *sfp* *mf*

Bsns. *sfp* *mf*

Horns *open* *mf* 3

Tpts. *open* *mf* 3

Trbs. *open* *mf* 3

Timp. *mf* 3

Perc. Snare Drum *mf* 3

to Triangle

with anticipation


Vlns. *f* pizz., with "follow-through" *arco* *mf* in a sultry manner

Vla. *f* pizz., with "follow-through" *arco* *mf* in a sultry manner

Vlc. *div.* *f* *mf*

Bass *f* *mf*

This page of a musical score, page 7, features a variety of instruments. The woodwind section includes Flutes (Fls.), Oboes (Obs.), Clarinets (Clars.), and Bassoons (Bsns.). The brass section consists of Horns, Trumpets (Tpts.), and Trombones (Trbs.). The percussion section includes Timpani (Timp.), Percussion (Perc.), and Triangle. The string section includes Violins (Vlns.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), and Bass. The score is written in a key signature of two flats and a 4/4 time signature. It contains complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Dynamic markings such as *mf* and accents are used throughout. The page concludes with a section labeled "Match Point".

accel. into FRENZY .....  //

Fls.

Obs.

Clars.

Bsns.

Horns

Tpts.

Trbs.

Timp.

Perc.

Conductor exchanges baton for tennis racket

accel. into FRENZY .....  //

Vlins.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

*gliss. ad lib.*

# III. The Point

**D** Moderato ♩=96

Conductor observes (lob)

Follow back-and-forth rally (popping sounds) with instrument elevated for the audience to see.

Picc. *mf* 3 3 3  
Fl.1  
Obs.  
Clars.  
Bsns.

Follow back-and-forth rally (popping sounds) with instrument elevated for the audience to see.

H&Bns  
3&4  
Tpts.  
Ttr&2  
3

Timp.  
Perc.

**D** Moderato ♩=96

Vlins. rally to the net volleys observe lob—look up rally  
Vla.  
Vlc.  
Bass

\* "pop" of finger against inside of cheek (or similar sound)

\*\*light "thud" of foot on floor

**E**

*accel.* .....

Picc.  
Fl.1  
Obs.  
Clars.  
Bsns.

Horns  
Tpts.  
Trbs.

Timp.  
Perc.

**E**

*accel.* .....

both at net

Vlns.  
Vla.  
Vlc.  
Bass

Conductor "winds up" for... overhead smash  $\text{♩} = 108$

Picc.  $f$

Fl.1  $f$

Obs.  $a2$   $f$

Clars.  $a2$   $f$

Bsns.  $a2$   $mf$

Horns

Tpts.

Trbs.  $a2$   $mf$

Timp.  $tr$   $mf$

Perc. Crash Cymbals  $f$  to Snare Drum

Vlins.  $\text{♩} = 108$   $f$

Vla.  $f$

Vlc.  $f$

Bass



G

Picc. *mock-heroically*

Fl.1 *mock-heroically*

Obs. *mock-heroically*

Clars. *f* *a2* *tr*

Bsns. *f* *a2* *tr*

Horns

Tpts.

Trbs.

Timp. *(forehand)* *tr* *(forehand)* *Bb to Db*

Perc. *to Crash Cymbals* *Glockenspiel* *f*

Vlins. *f* *mock-heroically* *div.* *tr* *unis.*

Vla. *f* *mock-heroically* *tr*

Vlc. *arco* *f* *mock-heroically* *div.* *tr* *unis.*

Bass



This page of a musical score features the following instruments and parts:

- Picc.**: Piccolo flute, playing a trill.
- Fl.1**: First flute, playing a trill.
- Obs.**: Oboe, playing a trill.
- Clars.**: Clarinet, playing a trill.
- Bsns.**: Bassoon, playing a trill.
- Horns**: Horn section, playing chords with accents.
- Tpts.**: Trumpets, playing chords with accents.
- Trbs.**: Trombones, playing chords with accents.
- Timp.**: Timpani, playing a trill.
- Perc.**: Percussion, playing a trill.
- Vlns.**: Violins, playing a trill.
- Vla.**: Viola, playing a trill.
- Vlc.**: Violoncello, playing a trill.
- Bass**: Double bass, playing a trill.

Key performance markings include *tr.* (trill), *div.* (divisi), *arco* (arco), *f* (forte), and *unis.* (unison). The score is written in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature.

H

Musical score for the first system, featuring Piccolo, Flute 1, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, Timpani, and Percussion. The score includes various musical notations such as trills, triplets, and dynamic markings. The woodwinds and strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while the brass instruments provide harmonic support. The percussion section includes Crash Cymbals and a Triangle.

H

Musical score for the second system, featuring Violins, Viola, Violoncello, and Bass. The score includes various musical notations such as trills, triplets, and dynamic markings. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while the woodwinds and brass instruments provide harmonic support. The percussion section includes Crash Cymbals and a Triangle.

*rit.* ..... **I Lazily** ♩ = 80

The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes Piccolo, Fl. 1, Obs., Clars., Bsns., Horns, Tpts., Trbs., Timp., Perc., and Triangle. The second system includes Vlns., Vla., Vlc., and Bass. The music features a 4/4 time signature and a tempo of 80 beats per minute. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present at the beginning of the first system. The Piccolo, Fl. 1, and Obs. parts have a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes. The Clars. part has a similar melodic line with a triplet. The Bsns., Horns, Tpts., and Trbs. parts have a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Triangle part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a crescendo to *f*. The Vlns., Vla., Vlc., and Bass parts have a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes and a glissando marking. The Vlns. part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a crescendo to *p*. The Vla. part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a crescendo to *p*. The Vlc. part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a crescendo to *p*. The Bass part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a crescendo to *p*. The score is marked with *ad lib.* (ad libitum) and *unis.* (unison) markings.

All players relax by sitting  
back in chair and saying "Ahhh!"

Picc. Ahhh!

Fl.1 Ahhh!

Obs. Ahhh!

Clars. Ahhh!

Bsns. Ahhh!

Horns Ahhh!

Tpts. Ahhh!

Trbs. Ahhh!

Timp. Ahhh!

Perc. Ahhh!

Vlins. Ahhh!

Vla. Ahhh!

Vlc. Ahhh!

Bass Ahhh!

*mf*

*mf* very lazily *p*

*tr*

*p*

Ice Cubes  
dropped into empty glass

*div.*