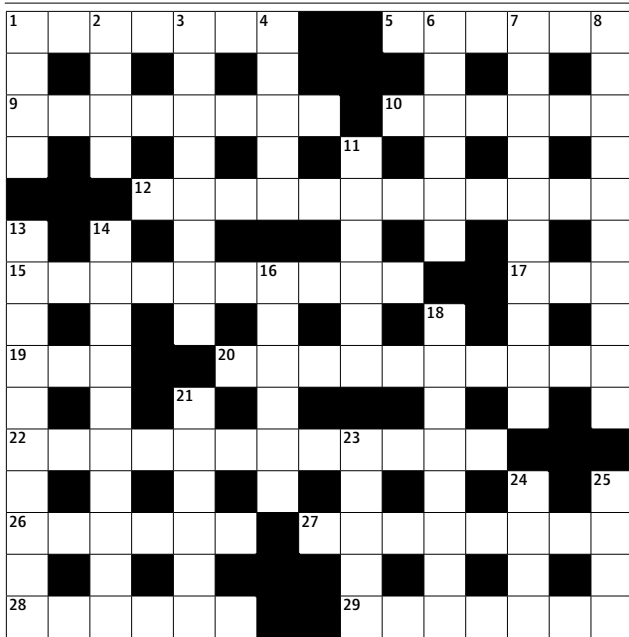


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 25,177 set by Paul

Across

- 1 Large chap backing female – as female (7)
- 5 Thingummy making parties from the left and right sigh (6)
- 9 Attempt to pinch bottom (Widdecombe's bottom), worthless stuff (8)
- 10 Marilyn's husband, he with a literary tale? (6)
- 12 Nelson's ultimate ally, hot maid misbehaving? (4,8)
- 15 Farrier starts to ride stallions, every steed wrapped by Father Christmas, perhaps? (10)
- 17 Back a turn (3)
- 19 Well, the answer should _ here (3)
- 20 One drugged in myth, some years on consuming flower to save time (5,5)
- 22 Actor offering setter flower (7,5)
- 26 Running, I did so backwards – ouch! (2,1,3)
- 27 Filth repulsed in broadcast, commanding attention (8)
- 28 Hardy novel about capital of Ireland – or of somewhere else? (6)
- 29 Hot dog filled with hot cat? (7)

Down

- 1 Engagement ring ripped from rampant toad, marriage's ending? (4)
- 2 See 3

- 3,2 Letters mixed up in this anagram of "Paul has to be the foremost of pillocks!" (8,4)
- 4 Raid Scrabble tiles J, A, Z, Z, I, L – what wouldn't one give _ ? (5)
- 6 Old star not widely accepted as deity (8)
- 7 Single European into poet, his artistic interest superficial? (10)
- 8 Dutch in Rhodes (or abroad) (3,7)
- 11 One opens gold sweet (6)
- 13 Hosiery primarily confiscated by officer in dissolute cabinet (10)
- 14 Cash here in place of order for butterfly (10)
- 16 Weed obscuring duck, work to see bird (6)
- 18 Love: it comes up in county as loyalty (8)
- 21 You overlooking partners? Past it and still on the shelf? (6)
- 23 Bulb may be wasted (3,2)
- 24 Biblical character among people, a harlot (4)
- 25 Mix porridge here (4)

Solution No. 25,176

