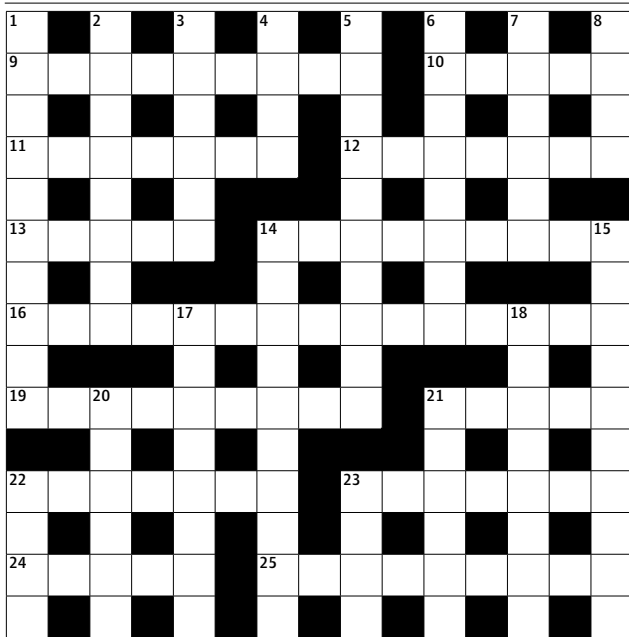


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 25,397 set by Crucible

Across

- 9** Delivery as English test player got out protecting century ... (9)
10 ... to this hook? (5)
11 United Nations geek backed new 25 (7)
12 Guy somersaulting in nude shocked 25 (7)
13 Penny-pinching meal's great (5)
14 Strikers would be the same at Lord's, taking credit for pressure (9)
16 Part of Wells' canon's new habiliments hide varicose vein (3,9,3)
19 Tête-à-tête at Murrayfield, special summit about awful mud (9)
21 Police about to upset anthem (5)
22 Laughed and left editor pursuing endless subject of 13 5 (7)
23 Promote original article in French (7)
24 Intrigues sometimes conceal suspect (5)
25 Sadly not many of us save the FT – it's impersonal (9)

Down

- 1** Sex in Esquire's spread needs ... (10)
2 ... story trashing pop with Kylie changing sides (5,3)
3 Guardian's chasing peculiar kite (6)

- 4** Zealot insists original nation starts here (4)
5 Was it issued by trendy judge with smarm? (10)
6 Irish hero once managed to pen touching lines (8)
7 Block scurrilous items about celebrity's bottom (6)
8 Dull report in Thursday's daily's leader (4)
14 Proper men ring first (10)
15 Mavis's lad G. Hurst trained at West Ham (4,6)
17 25 different means to involve the French (8)
18 Strikers here in union fight (8)
20 Rakes over government crooks (6)
21 Tolpuddle man: "It's my right to protect skill" (6)
22 17 organised groups for what 13 5 does (4)
23 Total failure following cut (4)

Solution No. 25,396

B	R	A	S	S	Y	S	C	A	B	I	O	U	S	
O	L	U				O	A	P	A					
W	A	L	E	S	H	A	N	D	C	R	E	A	M	
S	I	H	O	D	C	N	O							
P	L	A	T	I	T	U	D	E	H	Y	E	N	A	
R	N		S	S	A	D	N							
I	N	C	A	N	D	E	S	C	E	N	T			
T	E	E	C	E	A	A	S							
			F	A	I	L	I	N	G	L	I	G	H	T
O	P	R	E	D										
D	R	I	L	L	A	G	I	T	A	T	I	O	N	
E	E	Y	N	N	P	T	D							
S	T	R	U	M	M	I	N	G	P	E	T	R	A	
S	C	A	N		A	E	R							
A	B	E	D	N	E	G	O	F	L	O	R	I	D	