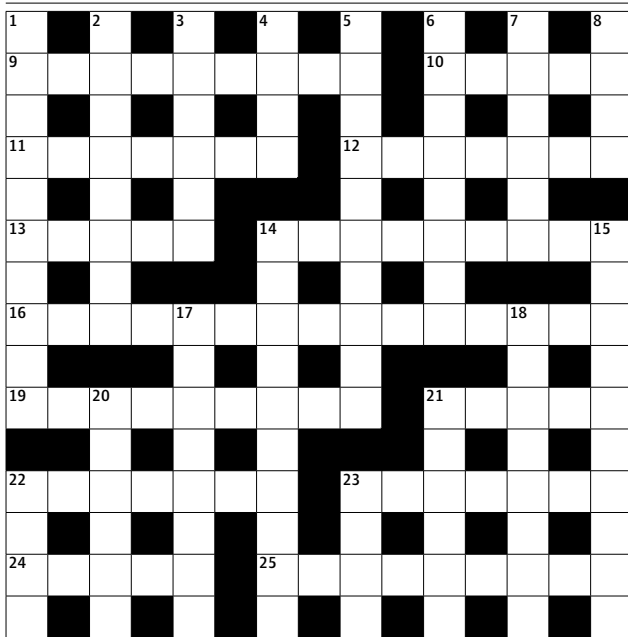


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 25,923 set by Qaas

Across

- 9** Aggressive, fiery smash takes point with winner (2-3-4)
10 A coalition party's current excuse for failure (5)
11 Henry is entering bike race? The French might be prickly (7)
12 Bill enters rambling races and walks (7)
13 Romney's upset to squander Republican capital (5)
14 A tiny bit sweet, hard to swallow: alternately a lollipop? (9)
16 It pays to be ill (8,7)
19 Birds, we sense, get excited about love and little weight (4,5)
21 Seaside town not fashionable, nor good value (5)
22 Make a noise with this awfully long note (7)
23 Might he use claw to grab wench's bottom? (7)
24 Sullen from a vitamin deficiency? (5)
25 Smell of deer and cologne? Go away to freshen up! (9)

Down

- 1** ITV screens "101 Turning Twisting Messi Tricks" (10)
2 Armstrong's conclusion after cyclist loses halo: "I cycle nice and clean" (8)
3 Fairly fair? (6)
4 Computer network: electronic pathway (4)

- 5** Clear foul: Luxembourg tripped Bale! That one could remember (10)
6 Maybe Boycott is in, so can't bowl over (8)
7 Ambassador carries identification with duke's name concealed (6)
8 Long for fabulous story to be narrated without a lisp? (4)
14 Soldiers must seek order without hesitation (10)
15 Early birds found here at Cheshire mill (10)
17 What's up after the Sun's daily circulation dips? (5,3)
18 Old 13's distant object (8)
20 Scots say low gravities, they might raise the spirits (6)
21 Gastropod with half a shoe? (6)
22 Flies beware being caught up in these (4)
23 Policeman gives up port and finally solves cases (4)

Solution No. 25,922

