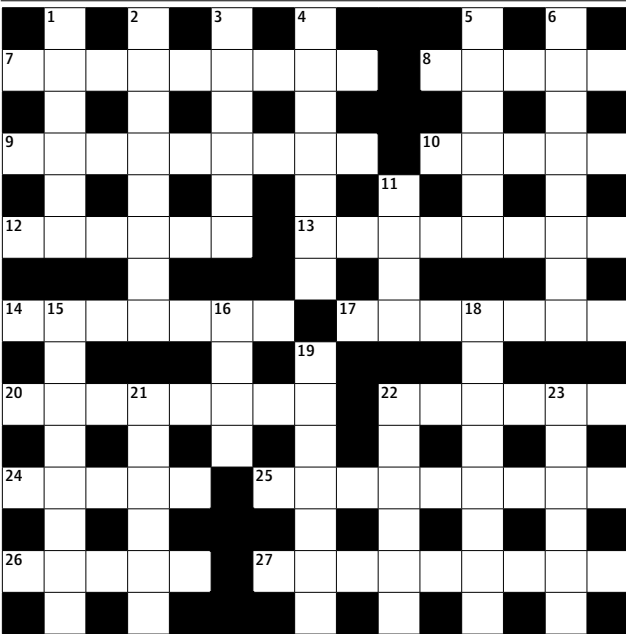


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 26,072 set by Rufus

Across

- 7 "Man" is clue; perhaps solution is "male" (9)
- 8 Immediately available for cash (5)
- 9 Is in a better position to speak off the cuff (9)
- 10 Instrument is changing pitch (5)
- 12 Amusement park fails to open – how dishonest! (6)
- 13 Basis for action? (8)
- 14 Complaint results from French gent leaving umbrella unfurled (7)
- 17 A play on words? (7)
- 20 Had odd recurrent racket from attachment (8)
- 22 Judge the fools will accept direction (6)
- 24 Opening joke (5)
- 25 It may be a mistake to express despair in public (9)
- 26 Fights for the best theatre seats (5)
- 27 Cordial and unusually endearing (9)

Down

- 1 Supplier of drinks acquired weapon during Prohibition (6)
- 2 Create novel about graduate to cause irritation (8)
- 3 Talented leading counsel at the bar (6)

- 4 Dance all beginners should take at a time (3-4)
- 5 Part of army base is run down (6)
- 6 Given credit for having made headway (8)
- 11 An Oxford street drunk (4)
- 15 Pull beneath the waves (8)
- 16 Deposited a pound when on benefit (4)
- 18 Discerns anomaly, so renders null and void (8)
- 19 Jack given lines for wrongdoing (7)
- 21 Avoid giving points to champ (6)
- 22 Progressed rapidly in skill, being thorough (6)
- 23 Man answered her riddle (6)

Winners of prize puzzle 26,065

