

## Fly, Getting Sad On A Fair Amount Of Alcohol? (10)

K. S. Sarkaria

1. The worthy editors of our (mainly political) newspapers are every bit as sanctimonious and smug – and just as likely to admit their mistakes – as our esteemed politicians. Only the crosswords in their dailies deserve our serious attention.

Thanks to some serious time thus spent, I can now, on most days, do the ‘quicks’ of *The Times of India*, *The Hindustan Times* or *The Tribune* quickly enough.

*ToI* carries (in its *Times of Chandigarh* section) the extremely popular DAILY CROSSWORD of the *Chicago Tribune*. The reprographic process used gives a faithful copy, only shrunk so much – perhaps to save on ‘valuable space’? – that reading the minute numbers in the boxes can be hard. However it is worth this effort: the daily dose of knowledge, wisdom or wit that I’ve gleaned by decoding this beautiful puzzle has often made my day! Till recently, *ToI* used to lag behind the original by some weeks, but today’s (June 25, 2008) puzzle is the latest. Solving it, I have just worked out that:

Local poet = Carl Sandburg,  
Local sobriquet = City of the big shoulders,  
Local collection = Chicago poems.

*Memo.* I should ask our daughter Mallika (she writes poetry, and graduated from the University of Chicago two years ago) and son Manpreet (now with us, he starts his first job in Chi next month) whether they know about Carl Sandburg, and that ‘windy city’ is also the ‘city of the big shoulders’ because of a poem which he wrote.

*HT* carries (in its *HT City* section) the GUARDIAN’S QUICK CROSSWORD – which is witty and in the Queen’s English – but with a huge time lag, and recycles its old and limited stock a lot. Also, they re-typeset the original, often quite sloppily – at times the clues don’t even pertain to the grid shown – but one can argue that these typos only make it wittier and more challenging than the original? Anyway, *HT* has never seen the need to apologize for these repeated mistakes.

Chandigarh’s very own, *The Tribune*, carries on all seven days (in its main section) a QUICK CROSSWORD. Though unpretentious and austere – it takes no liberties with words, neither does it attempt to be witty – it is surprisingly good. Quite frugally, it makes do with only a few grids, and can be challenging on days when the whites are in four parts, linked to each other only in the middle. *The Tribune* does not give us any clue as to the provenance or authorship of this puzzle (but I would guess that it is probably an Indian with an excellent command of precise English). What makes this reticence even more mysterious is that *The Sunday Tribune* carries another crossword, for children, but in this case the name of its authoress is prominently displayed. Also, unlike the puzzle of which I am talking, this juvenile puzzle is available on-line.

2. We subscribe, at any given time of the year, to 2 out of 4 newspapers: the 3 named above, and the *Indian Express*. The choice is Minni's, and changes, more or less at random, after every 6 months or so. For the last 3 months, it has been *ToI* and *IE*.

The *Indian Express* has a CROSSWORD of its own (in *Mindsquare* of *SimpliCity* in *Chandigarh Newslines* section) but this time it is a 'cryptic'. The *IE* too has no qualms about running its crossword, which is about the most creative thing in it, without any attribution. (As against this, all four newspapers do give the names, sometimes even the mug shots, of the experts contributing the usual trivial tripe to their op-ed pages and columns.) On Sundays, the cryptic clues are accompanied by alternative and very easy 'quick clues' for the same grid. Unfortunately, these are made up by a person who is very limited (outside of cricket) so he makes a real hash of it.

Recently, *IE* stopped giving the cryptic clues altogether on weekdays, and replaced them with these Sunday horrors. Equally suddenly, and again without a word of explanation, the cryptic was restored after a week or two. Taking this unnerving episode to be an omen of the impending extinction of this charming puzzle, I decided to preserve my efforts of the next 12 weekdays. These are displayed on the next 4 pages.

A cryptic is a completely different kettle of fish, and those with a natural talent for these puzzles are wired quite differently from me. However, with a lot of effort, and even more luck, I was able to solve the puzzle four days running, from Monday, April 21, 2008 through Thursday, April 24, 2008. The next day I failed miserably, but as you can see from the scans, my luck returned on Saturday, and then continued to hold through the next week. In fact, Monday through Thursday of that week was a total breeze. The puzzle set on each of these dates coincides with the puzzle set seven days before! Once again, in keeping with the hoary traditions of journalism as practiced in India, the editor in question saw no reason to offer an explanation, let alone an apology, for this lapse.

For beginners to cryptics, here are 4 clues with answers, from each of these 12 – er, 8 – puzzles. If you can't see the rationale, my scribblings in that scan might help.

From the puzzle of 21/04/08 (or its duplicate on 28/04/08):

Quite satisfied with what spring holds? (4,7) = Well content  
Word that is coined for an eccentric person (6) = Weirdo  
It doesn't allow English doctor on Greek ship (7) = Embargo  
A closure arranged in a roundabout way (8) = Carousel

From the puzzle of 22/04/08 (or its duplicate on 29/04/08):

Introductory letter (7) = Initial  
An explanation of an attitude no longer held ? (10) = Exposition  
Man out in storm reaching peak (8) = Mountain  
African oil refined in America (10) = California

"Simplicity" from Chandigarh, New Delhi  
The Indian Express Monday April 21, 2008

# MIND SQUARE

## CROSSWORD 1259

### Across

- 1 His merchandise will not be free (5,6)
- 9 It doesn't allow English doctor on Greek ship (7)
- 10 The popularity of fashion (5)
- 11 Lowland farewell (4)
- 12 She has yet to meet her match (8)
- 14 The club for swinging types (6)
- 16 It's knitted for a milk producer (6)
- 18 The takings to pass on to somebody else? (8)
- 19 It ends movement of cash on delivery article (4)
- 22 It's less in the total returned (5)
- 23 Asian defeat is not from unusual (7)
- 24 Quite satisfied with what spring holds? (4,7)

### Down

- 2 Bella's wrong name tabby (5)
- 3 GM upsets a clergyman (4)
- 4 They may advance or stop if ordered (6)
- 5 Loans saved can make a move (8)



- 6 Converting heights into parts (7)
- 7 Don't let the others inherit - I'll see to it (5,2,2,2)
- 8 They're used by late entrants (6,5)
- 13 A closure arranged in a roundabout way (8)

- 15 Exploding grenade produces disorder (7)
- 17 Word that is coined for an eccentric person (6)
- 20 A giant constellation (5)
- 21 Stake boat (4)

## SOLUTIONS 1258

- |               |               |                  |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| Across:       | 27 Kid-napped | 7 Taper          |
| 1 Danish blue | 28 Sweep days | 8 Market         |
| 6 Item        | 29 Rose       | 9 Teachers       |
| 10 Pique      | 30 Anemometer | 14 Farmer-worker |
| 11 Ill temper |               | 16 Olympiad      |
| 12 Hands off  |               | 18 President     |
| 13 Carve      | Down:         | 20 Sharpen       |
| 15 Actions    | 1 Dope        | 21 Macadam       |
| 17 Steeped    | 2 No quarter  | 23 Tides         |
| 19 Martyrs    | 3 Speed       | 25 Epsom         |
| 21 Mastery    | 4 Britons     | 26 Spar          |
| 22 On tap     | 5 Uplifts     |                  |
| 24 Accredited |               |                  |

22/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE

## CROSSWORD 1260

### Across

- 1 Introductory letter (7)
- 4 Incident on Orient Express? (5)
- 7 Nobleman almost ahead of time (4) *early*
- 8 Making a loss, paid in settlement (8)
- 10 Measures not intended to be taken seriously (5,5)
- 12 Excessive fondness for female without attachment (6)
- 13 Brings back games and increases keenness (6)
- 15 African oil refined in America (10)
- 18 End of an academic period in America (8)
- 19 Indicate a suitable victim (4) *vs*
- 20 Revolutionary type of linen (5)
- 21 Cost in what was once sound English money (7)

### Down

- 1 Thought the end of evil highly desirable (5)
- 2 Angry when equipment is dropped in water (8)
- 3 Hang around and see it turn up again (6)



- 4 An explanation of an attitude no longer held? (10)
- 5 Yet it's difficult for busy people to take it (4)
- 6 Agrees to put the lot in bonds (7)

- 9 Not against change that means making no move (10)
- 11 Man out in storm reaching peak (8)
- 12 Excavate almost everything with the fingers (7)
- 14 Time taken by a secretary (6)
- 16 It's over a foot (5)
- 17 I get smuggled out of Middle Eastern country (4)

## SOLUTIONS 1259

- |                |                 |                  |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Across:        | 22 Minus        | 6 Eighthths      |
| 1 Slave trader | 23 Routine      | 7 Leave it to me |
| 9 Embargo      | 24 Well content | 8 Pearly gates   |
| 10 Vogue       |                 | 13 Carousel      |
| 11 Vale        | Down:           | 15 Derange       |
| 12 Spinster    | 2 Label         | 17 Weirdo        |
| 14 Indian      | 3 Vera          | 20 Orion         |
| 16 Jersey      | 4 Troops        | 21 Punt          |
| 18 Turnover    | 5 Advances      |                  |
| 19 Coda        |                 |                  |

23/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE

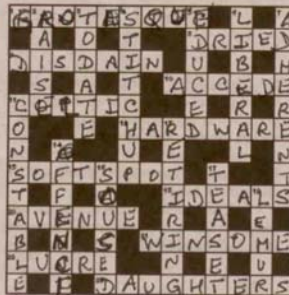
## CROSSWORD 1261

### Across

- ✓ 8 Queer togs strangely incongruous (9)
- ✓ 8 Doctor to die in agony having no water left (5)
- ✓ 9 It's said wildly in now to show contempt (7)
- ✓ 10 One is about a month in arrears. Agree? (6)
- ✓ 11 Cross at having another European in charge (6)
- ✓ 12 Computer equipment difficult to wear out (8)
- ✓ 15 Kindly feeling not hard to place (4,4)
- ✓ 18 Ladies who reform become perfect examples (6)
- ✓ 20 Place to meet after a drive (6)
- ✓ 21 Attractive alternative to losing all the matches (7)
- ✓ 22 Money is a bait that takes many in (5)
- ✓ 23 Close relations in The Guards perhaps (9)

### Down

- ✓ 2 Beams are said to be put up (5)
- ✓ 3 Hitherto why boys may want to meet girls (2,4)
- ✓ 4 Puts out for repair (6,2)



- ✓ 5 Possibly deduce it's extracted (6)
- ✓ 6 Free translation of braille (7)
- ✓ 7 The followers stand here when assembled (9)

- ✓ 11 He painted pictures of the country policeman (8)
- ✓ 13 Withdrawing again losing interest (8)
- ✓ 14 Transgression produces resentment (7)
- ✓ 16 So accustomed to being in a pickle (6)
- ✓ 17 Unusual Eastern taste shown in china service (3,3)
- ✓ 19 Spirit rises after the French animal appears (5)

## SOLUTIONS 1260

- |                |              |              |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Across:        | 18 Terminus  | 5 Easy       |
| 1 Initial      | 19 Mark      | 6 Tallies    |
| 4 Event        | 20 Lenin     | 9 Stagnation |
| 7 Earl         | 21 Expense   | 11 Mountain  |
| 8 Disposal     |              | 12 Digital   |
| 10 Light verse | Down:        | 14 Minute    |
| 12 Dotage      | 1 Ideal      | 16 Ankle     |
| 13 Strops      | 2 Irrigate   | 17 Iran      |
| 15 California  | 3 Loiter     |              |
|                | 4 Exposition |              |

24/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE CLEANS

## CROSSWORD 1262

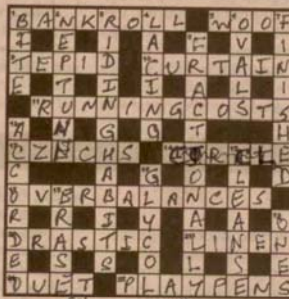
### Cryptic Clues

#### Across

- 1 Two things aviators may do for a wad of cash (8)
- 5 Dog's barking leads to court fine (4)
- 9 Back to favourite I'd found not so hot (5)
- 10 Close of play (7)
- 11 The expenses of being an athlete? (7,5)
- 13 Oral tests in European subjects (6)
- 14 Cleric upset a group of people (6)
- 17 Loses equilibrium about amounts that remain (12)
- 20 Shuffling cards it is necessary to be vigorous (7)
- 21 Succession of emperors maybe with new clothes (5)
- 22 Only one cannot play it (4)
- 23 Small games enclosures (8)

#### Down

- 1 Be about it and get a snack (4)



- 2 Writer comes up with a melody for big star (7)
- 3 Customs that suit many a horseman (6,6)
- 4 Not effect of a severe beating (6)
- 6 Not rounds used in an erratic salvo (5)
- 7 Is he going in to discover it's all over? (8)

- 8 Any call for it means changes in part (12)
- 12 A hundred bound to be granted (8)
- 15 Is listed to enter the church subject to absolution (7)
- 16 Used as antifreeze in exceedingly cold winters (6)
- 18 Take out bearings after a time (5)
- 19 Persons of honest heart (4)

## SOLUTIONS 1261

- |              |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Across:      | 20 Avenue    | 5 Educ'd     |
| 1 Grotesque  | 21 Winsome   | 6 Liberal    |
| 8 Dried      | 22 Lucre     | 7 Adherents  |
| 9 Disdain    | 23 Daughters | 11 Constable |
| 10 Accede    |              | 13 Retiring  |
| 11 Celtic    | Down:        | 14 Offence   |
| 12 Hardware  | 2 Raise      | 16 Soused    |
| 15 Soft spot | 3 To date    | 17 Tea set   |
| 18 Ideals    | 4 Stitch up  | 19 Lemur     |

25/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE

## CROSSWORD 1263

### Cryptic Clues

#### Across

- 1 Telephone hire makes hair curl (7)
- 5 A Russian twice pockets gold (5)
- 8 Fashion model glad to win first prize (4,5)
- 9 Draw string? (3)
- 10 Staple food? (4)
- 12 Confirms what Goldilocks found (5,3)
- 14 Vessel - showing its nationality? (6)
- 15 People count (6)
- 17 A particular form of dislike (8)
- 18 Stay in a castle (4)
- 21 In life eventually it has to be paid (3)
- 22 They can fix a way in, improperly sold on air (9)
- 24 Recluse brings unity between left and right (5)
- 25 Scent's indispensable quality (7)

#### Down

- 1 On the one hand quite justified (5)
- 2 Nothing possessed by the penniless (3)
- 3 Floppy disc I'm into that (4)



- 4 Brought to order it turned and passed on (6)
- 5 Night flies may be seen hanging around in them (8)
- 6 Turned up to see about our set's repair (9)
- 7 Cases for getting out the sash (7)

- 11 Change of scene may put a fresh complexion on it (9)
- 13 Respect in which a variety of corn dies (8)
- 14 Loud, all one can take in and totally grim (7)
- 16 Doctor got out of bed in a bad mood (6)
- 19 Dad set out with stick (5)
- 20 Where lies our responsibility (4)
- 23 One given a new name (3)

## SOLUTIONS 1262

- |             |              |                |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| Across:     | ances        | habits         |
| 1 Bankroll  | 20 Drastic   | 4 Lacing       |
| 5 Wool      | 21 Linen     | 6 Ovals        |
| 9 Tepid     | 22 Duet      | 7 Finished     |
| 10 Curtain  | 23 Playspens | 8 Fractionally |
| 11 Running  |              | 12 Accorded    |
| costs       | Down:        | 15 Cleanse     |
| 13 Czechs   | 1 Bite       | 16 Glycol      |
| 14 Circle   | 2 Neptune    | 18 Erase       |
| 17 Overbal- | 3 Riding     | 19 Ones        |

26/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE

## CROSSWORD 1264

### Cryptic Clues

#### Across

- 1 Cheese of unusual hue is bland (6,4)
- 2 Part of the White Man's Burden in detail (4)
- 3 It sounds like the height of resentment (5)
- 4 Surflines shall need to moderate (3,6)
- 12 Don't contact workers in their free time (5,3)
- 13 Number feel concern about cut (5)
- 15 Devils brought before a judge (7)
- 19 Soaked in the deepest concoction (7)
- 19 Presumably they had good reasons for being late (7)
- 21 Control may rest in the wrong position (7)
- 22 Place to hang the bath plug is available (2,3)
- 24 Believe Bill has surplus wealth (8)
- 27 Hijacked, so named to be brought to book (9)
- 28 A vast expanse to have to clean (5)
- 29 A girl in the pink (4)
- 30 Wind instrument (10)

#### Down

- 1 A stupid fellow might sniff it (4)
- 2 Victor may show it when inclement (2,7)



- 1 The rate at which oceans rise (5)
- 2 No tribes out East may be UK citizens (7)
- 3 Elevate one from being pointlessly spiteful (7)
- 4 Get thinner and lighter (5)

- 8 When goods are sold out (6,4)
- 9 Masters the conversion of hectares (8)
- 14 His boss gets outside jobs for him (10)
- 16 Games period (6)
- 18 Queen's occupation of the chair (9)
- 20 Give a bite to (6)
- 21 Pitch of the road (7)
- 23 Diets must change with the times (5)
- 25 New poems about old salts (5)
- 26 Train for boxing in the yard (4)

## SOLUTIONS 1263

- |                |             |                |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Across:        | Keep        | 5 Belfies      |
| 1 Ringlet      | 21 Fee      | 6 Retroussé    |
| 5 Boris        | 22 Doormats | 7 Sheaths      |
| 8 Gold medal   | 24 Loner    | 11 Chameleon   |
| 9 Tie          | 25 Essence  | 13 Consider 14 |
| 10 Tack        | Down:       | Fearful        |
| 12 Bears out   | 1 Right     | 16 Morose 19   |
| 14 Flagon      | 2 Nil       | Paste          |
| 15 Census      | 3 Limp      | 20 Onus        |
| 17 Aversion 18 | 4 Tidied    | 23 Ian         |

Monday 28/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE

## CROSSWORD 1265

### Cryptic Clues

#### Across

- 1 His merchandise will not be free (5,6)
- 9 It doesn't allow English doctor on Greek ship (7)
- 10 The popularity of fashion (5)
- 11 Lowland farewell (4)
- 12 She has yet to meet her match (8)
- 14 The club for swinging types (6)
- 16 It's knitted for a milk producer (6)
- 18 The takings to pass on to somebody else? (8)
- 19 It ends movement of cash on delivery article (4)
- 22 It's less in the total returned (5)
- 23 Asian defeat is far from unusual (7)
- 24 Quite satisfied with what spring holds? (4,7)

#### Down

- 2 Bella's wrong name tab (5)
- 3 Girl upsets a clergyman (4)
- 4 They may advance or stop if ordered (6)
- 5 Loans saved can make a move (8)



- 6 Converting heights into parts (7)
- 7 Don't let the others inherit - I'll see to it (5,2,2,2)
- 8 They're used by late entrants (6,5)
- 13 A closure arranged in a roundabout way (8)

- 15 Exploding grenade produces disorder (7)
- 17 Word that is coined for an eccentric person (8)
- 20 A giant constellation (5)
- 21 Stake boat (4)

## SOLUTIONS 1264

- |                |               |                  |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| <b>Across:</b> | 27 Kid-napped | 7 Taper          |
| 1 Danish blue  | 28 Sweep      | 8 Market days    |
| 6 Item         | 29 Rose       | 9 Teachers       |
| 10 Pique       | 30 Anemometer | 14 Farmer worker |
| 11 Ill temper  |               | 16 Olympiad      |
| 12 Hands off   |               | 18 President     |
| 13 Carve       | <b>Down:</b>  | 20 Sharpen       |
| 15 Actions     | 1 Dope        | 21 Macadam       |
| 17 Steeped     | 2 No quarter  | 23 Tides         |
| 19 Martyrs     | 3 Speed       | 25 Epsom         |
| 21 Mastery     | 4 Britons     | 26 Spar          |
| 22 On tap      | 5 Uplifts     |                  |
| 24 Accredited  |               |                  |

29/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE

## CROSSWORD 1266

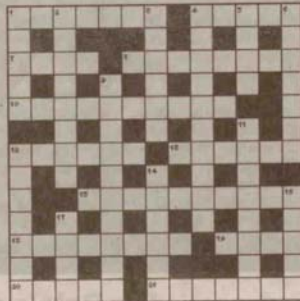
### Cryptic Clues

#### Across

- 1 Introductory letter (7)
- 4 Incident on Orient Express? (5)
- 7 Nobleman almost ahead of time (4)
- 8 Making a loss, paid in settlement (8)
- 10 Measures not intended to be taken seriously (5,5)
- 12 Excessive fondness for female without attachment (6)
- 13 Brings back games and increases keenness (6)
- 15 African oil refined in America (10)
- 18 End of an academic period in America (8)
- 19 Indicate a suitable victim (4)
- 20 Revolutionary type of linen (5)
- 21 Cost in what was once sound English money (7)

#### Down

- 1 Thought the end of evil highly desirable (5)
- 2 Angry when equipment is dropped in water (8)



- 3 Hang around and see it turn up again (6)
- 4 An explanation of an attitude no longer held? (10)
- 5 Yet it's difficult for busy people to take it (4)

- 6 Agrees to put the lot in bonds (7)
- 9 Not against change that means making no move (10)
- 11 Man out in storm reaching peak (8)
- 12 Excavate almost everything with the fingers (7)
- 14 Time taken by a secretary (6)
- 16 It's over a foot (5)
- 17 I get smuggled out of Middle Eastern country (4)

## SOLUTIONS 1265

- |                |                 |                  |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>Across:</b> | 22 Minus        | 6 Eighths        |
| 1 Slave trader | 23 Routine      | 7 Leave it to me |
| 9 Embargo      | 24 Well content | 8 Pearly gates   |
| 10 Vogue       |                 | 13 Carousel      |
| 11 Vale        | <b>Down:</b>    | 15 Derange       |
| 12 Spinster    | 2 Label         | 17 Weirdo        |
| 14 Indian      | 3 Vera          | 20 Orion         |
| 16 Jersey      | 4 Troops        | 21 Punt          |
| 18 Turnover    | 5 Advances      |                  |
| 19 Coda        |                 |                  |

30/4/2008

# MIND SQUARE

## CROSSWORD 1267

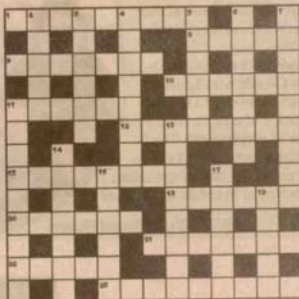
### Cryptic Clues

#### Across

- 1 Queer togs strangely incongruous (9)
- 8 Doctor to die in agony having no water left (5)
- 9 It's said wildly in a row to show contempt (7)
- 10 One is about a month in arrears. Agree? (6)
- 11 Cross at having ancient European in charge (6)
- 12 Computer equipment difficult to wear out (8)
- 15 Kindly feeling not hard to place (4,4)
- 18 Ladies who reform become perfect examples (6)
- 20 Place to meet after a drive (6)
- 21 Attractive alternative to losing all the matches (7)
- 22 Money is a bait that takes many in (5)
- 23 Close relations in The Guards perhaps (9)

#### Down

- 2 Beams are said to be put up (5)
- 3 Hitherto why boys may want to meet girls (2,4)



- 4 Puts chit out for repair (6,2)
- 5 Possibly deduce it's extracted (6)
- 6 Free translation of braille (7)

- 7 The followers stand here when assembled (9)
- 11 He painted pictures of the country policeman (9)
- 13 Withdrawing again losing interest (8)
- 14 Transgression produces resentment (7)
- 16 So accustomed to being in a pickle (6)
- 17 Unusual Eastern taste shown in china service (3,3)
- 19 Spirit rises after the French animal appears (5)

## SOLUTIONS 1266

- |                |               |              |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Across:</b> | 15 California | 4 Exposition |
| 1 Initial      | 18 Terminus   | 5 Easy       |
| 4 Event        | 19 Mark       | 6 Tallies    |
| 7 Earl         | 20 Lenin      | 9 Stagnation |
| 8 Disposal     | 21 Expense    | 11 Mountain  |
| 10 Light verse | <b>Down:</b>  | 12 Digital   |
| 12 Dotage      | 1 Ideal       | 14 Minute    |
| 13 Strops      | 2 Irrigate    | 16 Ankle     |
|                | 3 Loiter      | 17 Iran      |

May 1, 2008

MINDSQUARE

CROSSWORD 1268

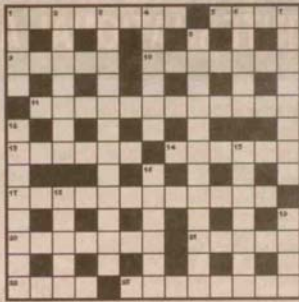
Cryptic Clues

Across

- 1 Two things aviators may do for a wad of cash (8)
- 5 Dog's barking leads to court fine (4)
- 9 Back a favourite I'd found not so hot (5)
- 10 Close of play (7)
- 11 The expenses of being an athlete? (7,5)
- 13 Oral tests in European subjects (6)
- 14 Cleric upset a group of people (6)
- 17 Loses equilibrium about amounts that remain (12)
- 20 Shuffling cards it is necessary to be vigorous (7)
- 21 Succession of emperors maybe with new clothes (5)
- 22 Only one cannot play it (4)
- 23 Small games enclosures (8)

Down

- 1 Be about it and get a snack (4)



- 2 Writer comes up with a melody for big star (7)
- 3 Customs that suit many a horseman (6,6)
- 4 Not effect of a severe beating (6)

- 6 Not rounds used in an erratic salvo (5)
- 7 Is he going in to discover it's all over? (8)
- 8 Any call for it means changes in part (12)
- 12 A hundred bound to be granted (8)
- 15 Is listed to enter the church subject to absolution (7)
- 16 Used as antifreeze in exceedingly cold winters (6)
- 18 Take out bearings after a time (5)
- 19 Persons of honest heart (4)

SOLUTIONS 1267

- |              |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Across:      | 20 Avenue    | 21 Educated  |
| 1 Grottesque | 8 Winsome    | 22 Liberal   |
| Dried        | Lucre        | 7 Adherents  |
| 9 Disdain    | 23 Daughters | 11 Constable |
| 10 Accede    |              | 13 Retiring  |
| 11 Celtic    | Down:        | 16 Offence   |
| 12 Hardware  | 2 Raise      | Soused       |
| 15 Soft spot | 3 To date    | 17 Tea set   |
| Ideals       | 4 Stitch up  | 19 Lemur     |

May 2, 2008

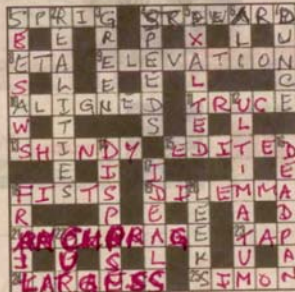
MINDSQUARE

CROSSWORD 1269

Cryptic Clues

Across

- ✓ 1 Point to Mrs Grundy and shoot! (5)
  - ✓ 4 Attendant in a mess that's official of course? (7)
  - ✓ 8 When letter from Greece is supposed to arrive? (3)
  - ✓ 9 Ennoblement for the architect? (9)
  - ✓ 10 Leading off in file (7)
  - ✓ 11 Brief return to eastern armistice (5) → 13
  - ✓ 13 Quiet during day without a lot of noise (6)
  - ✓ 15 New deed includes it when revised (6)
  - ✓ 18 Doubled fighting power (5)
  - ✓ 19 Stupidly dim male may present a problem (7)
  - ✓ 21 Northern city road (9)
  - ✓ 23 Either way, it's a light touch (3) → 24
  - ✓ 24 Bounty, and it's a big ship (7) → 25
  - ✓ 25 Is set back by my French name (5)
- Down
- ✓ 1 Toys for unbalanced children? (7)
  - ✓ 2 Dismayed Israelite produces the facts to be faced (9)



- ✓ 3 Ecologically inexperienced (5)
- ✓ 4 Rates at which the sea comes up on board (6)
- ✓ 5 High and mighty (7)
- ✓ 6 Name written in italics (3)

- ✓ 1 He's capped, but not for brilliance (5)
- ✓ 2 The final demand in dispute (9)
- ✓ 4 Arrange to get rid of (7)
- ✓ 6 The piper starts late, showing no feeling (7)
- ✓ 7 Naughty ladies men dream of (6)
- ✓ 8 Easily shattered by loud abuse (5)
- ✓ 20 Vegetables are running out of water, we hear (5)
- ✓ 22 Dog used in security (3)

SOLUTIONS 1268

- |               |               |              |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Across:       | 19 Chaotic    | 6 Elope      |
| 1 Sand castle | 21 Outside    | 7 On the     |
| 8 Croup       | 22 Arras      | rocks        |
| 9 Dragoon     | 23 Collection | 8 Correction |
| 10 Roister    | Down:         | 13 Glacial   |
| 11 Teeth      | 2 Adoring     | 15 Ontario   |
| 12 Engage     | 3 Depot       | 16 Accede    |
| 14 Arbour     | 4 Adders      | 18 Antic     |
| 17 Tiara      | 5 Traitor     | 20 Avast     |

Saturday DISPATCH 3/5/2008

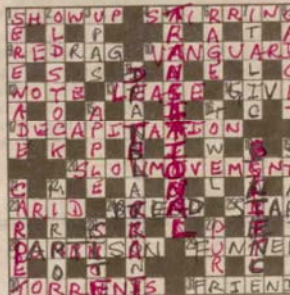
MINDSQUARE

CROSSWORD 1270

Cryptic Clues

Across

- ✓ 1 Appear to cause public embarrassment (4,2)
  - ✓ 4 Prison clique causing trouble (8)
  - ✓ 9 Pivotal article in communist paper (3,3)
  - ✓ 10 Front vehicle needs protection (8)
  - ✓ 12 A minute mark (4)
  - ✓ 13 Document you take from a letter (5)
  - ✓ 14 Hand over the church keys (4)
  - ✓ 17 A capital loss (12)
  - ✓ 20 Unsuitable piece of music for a quickstep? (4,8)
  - ✓ 23 In a way I am in need of irrigation (4)
  - ✓ 24 Roll of money? (5)
  - ✓ 25 Point the sailor steers by (4)
  - ✓ 28 Not all is given to an adherent (8)
  - ✓ 29 Fire escape on board ship (6)
  - ✓ 30 Hills with internally by floods (8)
  - ✓ 31 Have an ally in red perhaps (6)
- Down
- ✓ 1 Play to the balcony (8)
  - ✓ 2 Gun part that's been in the gunsmith's too long? (3,5)



- ✓ 3 It could kill, though not down as a poison (4)
- ✓ 5 List on a train sets out details for changing (12)
- ✓ 6 The night time for fashion (4)
- ✓ 7 Name one dreadfully biased female (6)

- ✓ 8 Wrongly tagged labour-saving device (6)
- ✓ 1 An executive order (5,7)
- ✓ 5 Fruit - monkey consumes peel but not the core (5)
- ✓ 6 Wiper for one who can't spell too well (5)
- ✓ 18 Condemn in just a few words (8)
- ✓ 19 Caused alarm to go off in the van (8)
- ✓ 1 It's bogged by the metre but worn out by the foot (6)
- ✓ 2 Beauty consultant goes to the wall (6)
- ✓ 26 Call for view to be expressed (4)
- ✓ 27 How to express satisfaction at a stroke (4)

SOLUTIONS 1269

- |             |              |              |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Across:     | 19 Dilemma   | 5 Exalted    |
| 1 Sprig     | 21 Anchorage | 6 All        |
| 4 Steward   | 23 Tap       | 7 Dunce      |
| 8 ETA       | 24 Largess   | 12 Ultimatum |
| 9 Elevation | 25 Simon     | 14 Dispose   |
| 10 Aligned  | Down:        | 16 Deadpan   |
| 11 Truce    | 1 Seesaws    | 17 Ideals    |
| 13 Shindy   | 2 Realities  | 18 Frail     |
| 15 Edited   | 3 Green      | 20 Leeks     |
| 18 Fists    | 4 Speeds     | 22 Cur       |

From the puzzle of 23/04/08 (or its duplicate on 30/04/08):

Queer togs strangely incongruous (9) = Grotesque  
Spirit rises after the French animal appears (5) = Lemur  
Ladies who reform become perfect examples (6) = Ideals  
Kindly feeling not hard to place (4,4) = Soft spot

From the puzzle of 24/04/08 (or its duplicate on 01/05/08):

Loses equilibrium about amounts that remain (12) = Overbalances  
Two things aviators might do for a wad of cash (8) = Bankroll  
Cleric upsets a group of people (6) = Circle  
Any call for it means changes in part (12) = Fractionally

From the puzzle of 25/04/08 ('the one that got away'):

Confirms what Goldilocks found (5,3) = Bears out  
Respect in which a variety of corn dies (8) = Consider  
Fashion model glad to win first prize (4,4) = Gold medal  
Dad set out with sticks (5) = Paste

From the puzzle of 26/04/08:

Surliness I shall need to moderate (3,6) = Ill temper  
It sounds like the height of resentment (5) = Pique  
Presumably they had good reasons for being late (7) = Murders  
Victor may show it when inclement (2,7) = No quarter

From the puzzle of 02/05/08:

Is set back by my French name (5) = Simon  
Stupidly dim male may present a problem (7) = Dilemma  
Vegetables are running out of water, we hear (5) = Leeks  
The piper starts late, showing no feeling (7) = Deadpan

From the puzzle of 03/05/08:

List on a train sets out details for changing (12) = Transitional  
Wrongly tagged labour saving device (6) = Gadget  
Unsuitable piece of music for a quickstep? (4, 8) = Slow movement  
Condemn in just a few words (8) = Sentence

3. The above April-May period is par for the course for *Mindsquare*. On 18/06/08, I think I got all the answers for that day's Crossword 1309, but I'm not sure, because the Solutions printed the next day do not pertain to 1309's grid. On the other hand, on 23/06/08, I was able to verify that I had solved the previous day's puzzle, but this time, I was unable to attempt Crossword 1313 of that day, because the lengths of the printed clues do not fit the accompanying grid. Ditto for Crossword 1314 of 24/06/08.

Nevertheless, my skills are steadily improving. I have nothing to crib about yesterday's – it is June 26, 2008 now – Crossword 1315 (except that, once again, no apology or explanation was given by the concerned editor for the previous two days' lapses) and I didn't do badly at it either. Some friends – Sandeep, P.P. and J.P. – were over for dinner, so I was not able to take the customary second look at this puzzle before nodding off, but (I am an early riser) I did mop it off in the morning. Or at least that's what I thought. However, unlike a careful student taking an examination, I did not recheck my answers, and felt like kicking myself when I later found out that – of course! – *Service chiefs?* (4,7) = *Head waiters*, not my (distinctly second-best) *Head pastors*. So I got only 24½ out of 25 on yesterday's puzzle.

An editor might bristle with righteous anger at the suggestion that he had marred a puzzle by not giving the correct grid: 'Stop whining and make the grid yourself, I only made the puzzle more interesting!' And he would have some reason on his side too. After all, assuming that the clues are of a correctly composed puzzle, there is at least one, and at most finitely many, compatible grids to consider. So one should be able to work out the puzzle, only it can take more time. I once worked out, but not 'quickly,' the *grid-less version* of a Guardian's Quick Crossword that appeared in the *Hindustan Times* of November 13, 2007. I was so pleased that I have kept the scrap of paper on which I wrote down my solution ever since. Its scan is given on the next page. I've lost the clues but you can have fun playing puzzle-setter and make your own funny clues.

Indeed, it might be interesting to dispense with clues also! That is, the task could be to *find all grids of a given size such that the types and lengths of its words form a given sequence*. Here, a **grid** means a centrally symmetric square of 0's (blacks) and 1's (whites) such that, by starting at any 1, and moving only one square up/down or left/right to another 1, it is possible to reach all the 1's; and by a **word** we mean a maximal horizontal (type h) or vertical (type v) string of 1's of length at least two. For example, the size 13 grid of the next page (which *HT* forgot to print on 13/11/2007) has 25 words whose types and lengths form the sequence {h6, v7}, {v7}, {v9}, {h5, v5}, {v7}, {v6}, {h6}, {h6}, {h4}, {h8}, {v9}, {h11}, {v7}, {v7}, {v7}, {v6}, {h8}, {v5}, {h4}, {h6}, {h6}, {h5}, {h6}. Is this the only such grid, if not how many, and which?

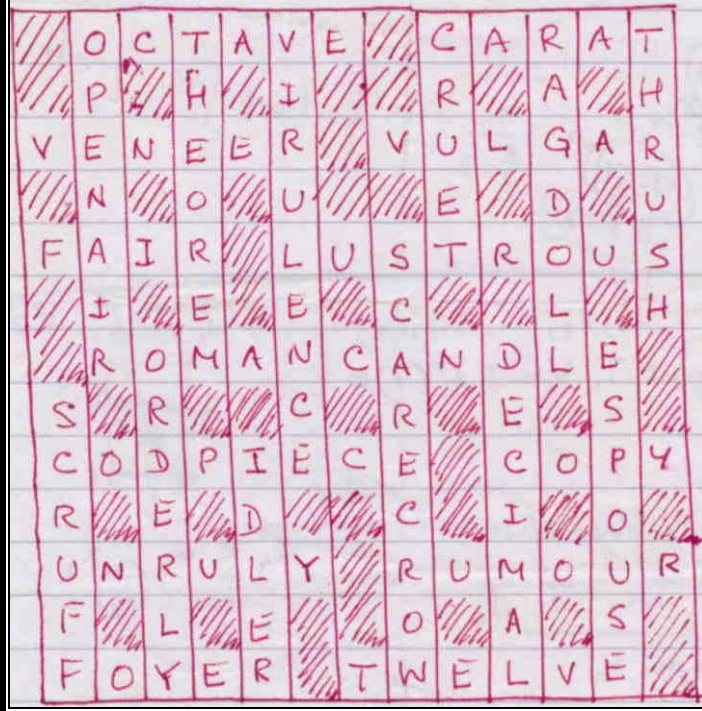
Thus there are combinatorial questions about crosswords not requiring any language skills, the reason advanced by some who prefer Su Doku. I too am intrigued by Su Dokus, but mainly because I feel they exemplify an interesting homology which I am struggling to define satisfactorily. However, I find solving an individual Su Doku quite boring – as compared to solving a crossword – because of the inherent predictability: one can always grind it out, only it takes some more time if the difficulty rating is higher.



HT (w/o grid)

13/11/2007

From the desk of



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