

The Crusader's clues

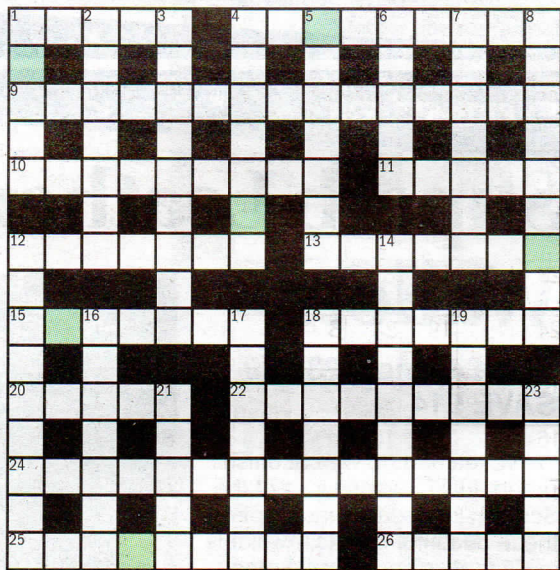
ACROSS

- 1 Powder line added to IV (5)
- 4 A country song has caught on because it's taking sides (5,4)
- 9 A linguist's sure thing? (8,7)
- 10 Cool designer turned away from talked loudly (9)
- 11 Porcelain mug partly level (5)
- 12 Watch dial boasting original function (7)
- 13 A band a singer paid back is grateful (7)
- 15 Drink central to every other pork dish (7)
- 18 Head to turn out in support of (4,3)
- 20 An assortment of taupe pieces to finish off (3,2)
- 22 Figure sheep leaving a fold chase game (9)
- 24 Ragged hem sort of hot and stylish, to be honest (5,4,3,3)
- 25 Try again, like backward student getting practice (9)
- 26 Short tease having a change of heart (5)

DOWN

- 1 Craze some rate soon wanes (5)
- 2 Bad aim snide leader insults (7)
- 3 Turf's fixed with iron bolts (4,3,2)
- 4 Conductor caught out had to be beheaded! (7)
- 5 This couple disliked one (2-3-2)
- 6 Spies having to take leaders around a room (5)
- 7 Time taken by a Chinese book burning (7)
- 8 Great man turning new cutting tool cuts tree (9)
- 12 Petition given to another poor tyrant (9)
- 14 Alkie ordered snifter at once (4,1,4)
- 16 City opposing opening of Orthodox Church (7)
- 17 Stories restarted end up being about quarterback (7)
- 18 Small immolations produced less soot (7)
- 19 More hair present being cut (7)
- 21 Runner going round and round unfinished city (5)
- 23 He claims primroses face a tree (5)

Cryptic clues from our knight, and quick clues from his squire, lead to the same answers in the Crusader's Sunday joust



The Squire's clues

ACROSS

- 1 Baking powder (5)
- 4 Republic in Central America (5,4)
- 9 Determiner in grammar (8,7)
- 10 Composure (9)
- 11 Bone ___ (5)
- 12 Abide by (7)
- 13 Indebted (7)
- 15 Large plate (7)
- 18 Go towards (4,3)
- 20 Consume entirely (3,2)
- 22 Symbol of a five-pointed star (9)
- 24 Speak bluntly (5,4,3,3)
- 25 Dry run (9)
- 26 Abrupt (5)

DOWN

- 1 Dwindles (5)
- 2 Affronts (7)
- 3 Takes off (4,3,2)
- 4 ___ ray (7)
- 5 This or that person (2-3-2)
- 6 Space or room in a roof (5)
- 7 Prickling (7)
- 8 2004 Oliver Stone film (9)
- 12 Subjugating ruler (9)
- 14 With alacrity (4,1,4)
- 16 City of ancient Syria (7)
- 17 Sounds such as gunshots (7)
- 18 Negligible (7)
- 19 Additional (7)
- 21 Capital of Bihar, India (5)
- 23 Leaf representing Canada (5)

For your chance to WIN £100 read down the letters in the highlighted squares to reveal the mystery word.

TO ENTER CALL: 0904 161 1610

and leave your answer and details, or text SXCRRUS followed by a space, your answer, name and address details to 84915 or send your grid containing the answer in the shaded squares to: Sunday Express Prize Crossword, December 20, PO Box 12578, Sutton Coldfield B73 9BT. Competition closes Thursday, December 24 at 23:59pm.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

Winner will be selected at random from all correct entry routes after the closing date. Calls cost £1.50 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1.50 plus your standard network rate. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390.

LAST SUNDAY'S SOLUTION: Across: 1 Claim, 4 Guardians, 9 Breaking through, 10 Excusable, 11 Skier, 12 Rescind, 13 Prosaic, 15 Drastic, 18 Install, 20 Epsom, 22 Upper hand, 24 Prognostication, 25 Ridiculed, 26 Tiger. Down: 1 Cable, 2 Apercus, 3 Makeshift, 4 Gone bad, 5 Antwerp, 6 Dares, 7 Alumina, 8 Spherical, 12 Red pepper, 14 Observant, 16 Abscond, 17 Counsel, 18 Implied, 19 Amazing, 21 Manic, 23 Donor.
Prize word: Caldera

*SP: Spoke - Helpline 0333 202 3390