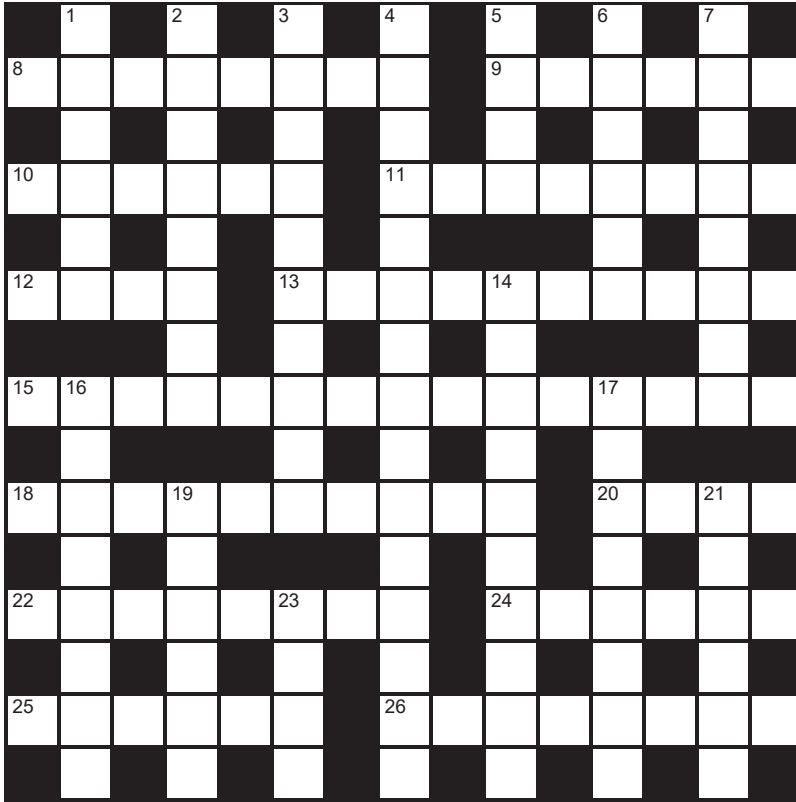


CROSSWORD

No 16,759 Set by MONK



ACROSS

- 8** Spring evening cut short, almost (4-4)
9 Smack rugby player (6)
10 Nick needs spades to break overturned earth (6)
11 Grip compound securing molar that's lost cap (8)
12 Oil extracted from skinned sole (4)
13 Bodyguard intercepting unnamed buddy, causing sorrow (10)
15 Versatile sort of sailor getting sod all after working (4-2-3-6)
18 Conviction that number one is positive (4-6)
20 Dickensian character rejected grand fool
22 Bird eaten by black tailless cat somewhere in Kings (8)
24 Fear defeat, ultimately by an own goal (6)
25 Join by contributing to *A Year in Provence* (6)
26 Against having a battle, in the soup (8)

DOWN

- 1** Harry Bishop breaks plates (6)
2 Down to reserve parliamentary report (4,4)
3 Scrap stuff associated with sci-fi novel (10)
4 Clue – mostly hateful he-men canned feminist analysis (3,6,6)
5 Get lost mule picked up (4)
6 Hood of hearse regularly removed in kerfuffles (3-3)
7 Think about demoting Germany and Spain – bravo (4,4)
14 Trying giant, clumsy without charm (10)
16 Rogue charged in a dock after taking heroin (8)
17 Reception from mountain over northern heath (8)
19 Paid for US agent, extremely taken aback when nabbed (6)
21 Dark, unopened icy house, extremely musty (6)
23 Barge over national emblem (4)

JOTTER PAD

Solution 16,758

