

## THE PUZZLER

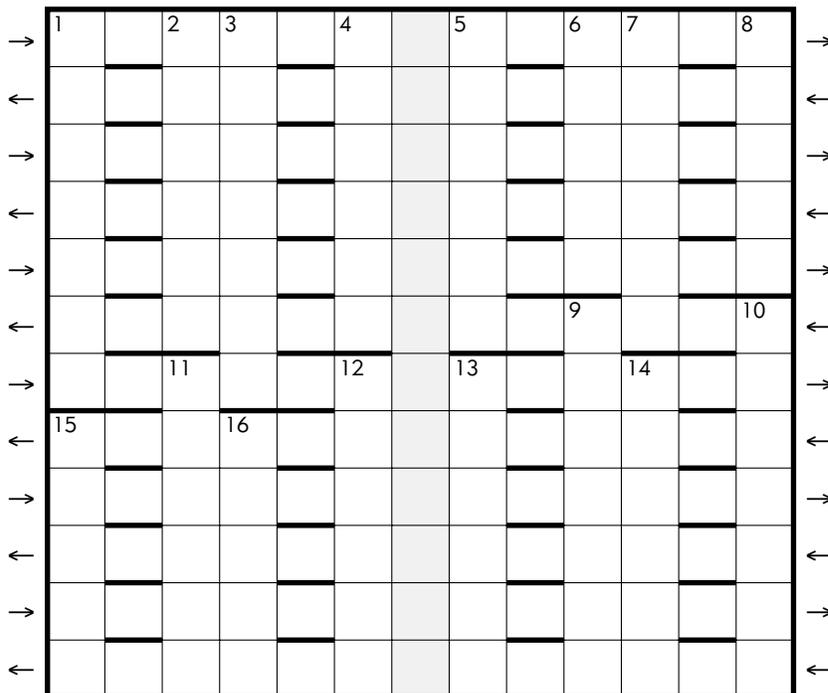
BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

### Obstacle Course

Answers to Across clues run in order back and forth through the grid continuously from the top left square to the bottom left square, changing direction with each new row.

Scattered along the way are twelve obstacles, in the form of letters from twelve Down entries that don't mesh with twelve of the Acrosses. These hurdles must be jumped (i.e., skipped); taken in the order in which they're encountered, they form a self-identifying phrase. The unclued shaded entry running down the middle of the grid, far from presenting obstacles, should be helpful in overcoming them. Seven clue answers are capitalized.

*Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. An introduction to clue-solving may be found online at [www.theatlantic.com/issues/puzzclue.htm](http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/puzzclue.htm).*



### ACROSS

- A back-and-forth line running into difficult obstacle on a course (6)
- A racer at the front, in problem-solving course, running epic race (8)
- Long time chasing after brass vessel (7)
- Letters from pro-American drifter (6)
- Searched around popular joint (8)
- Select wrong glue to reset (6,3)
- The lions disturbed cow (8)
- Stand, fall, and go overboard (6)
- Mindful of danger about storm, promise to satisfy customers (8)
- Villain and second fiddle (7)
- Guide adjusted a case, packing a yak (9)
- Journalist's beau admitting plot (9)

- Sign on silent cuckoo (6)
- Spanish region's following past models (8)
- Wild shout receiving one senior bluesman (4,4)
- Troubles starting with green fish organs (5)
- Left jerk in headquarters next to a part of Germany's border (6,3)
- Native of northern France right in back at the racecourse (6)
- Crackpot, we learn, sees piece of publicity (4,7)

### DOWN

- Manuscript penned by one who despises rodent (7)
- In Buddhist school room's front half, I concentrate (4,2)
- Old-fashioned, bow when accepting some tea (7)
- Frowned-on behaviors involving unlimited rum cakes for breakfast? (6)

- Got down to earth about play, though (6)
- Run after guy with fruit (5)
- Schedule a grand finale with hoopla at the finish (6)
- Provide temporary space for a plant with showy leaves (5)
- Convenience store ultimately is located in attraction (7)
- Polish religious symbol, something symbolically crossed (7)
- Left petition in a duplicated state (6)
- Cook piece of bacon before hike (6)
- Accepting acknowledgment, I regret to say farewells (6)
- Holds dear so dear gets repositioned (6)
- Old bit of spun yarn (5)
- O'Neil reformed... honest! (2,3)