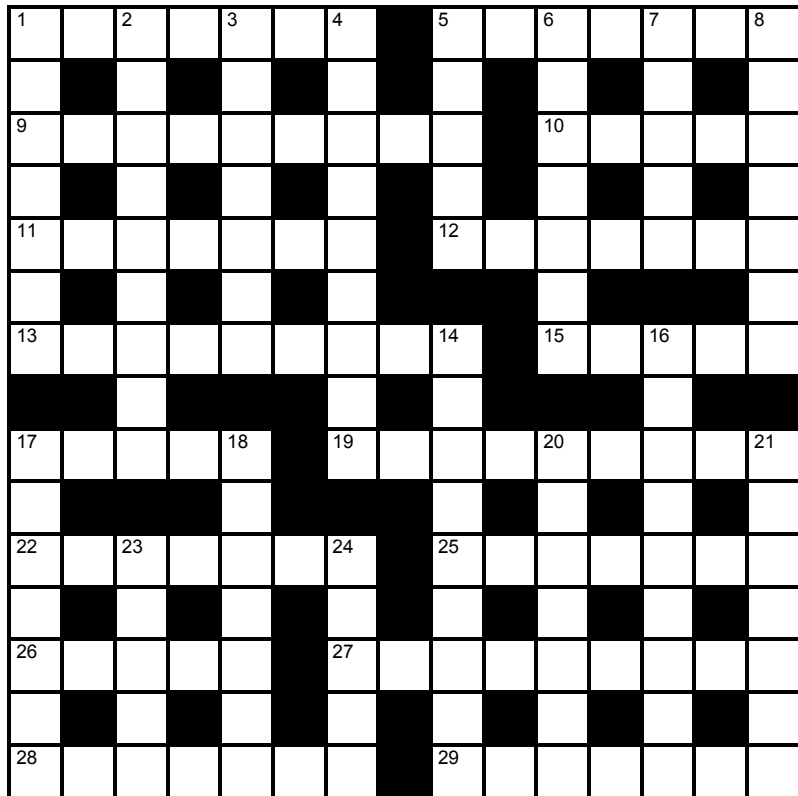


A Puzzle by Gazza

Across

- 1** Moves to retain nucleus of Countdown in planned programmes (7)
- 5** Defective hearing? Not I - it's the wind (7)
- 9** Worship a dancing latin duo (9)
- 10** Assassin took out henchman in jail (5)
- 11** Cultivated a plot (7)
- 12** Skipping regular reunion forums can be harmful (7)
- 13** Sign that nothing's wrong after detective comes across suspicious joint (9)
- 15** Degenerate graduate tucking into Mars? (2,3)
- 17** Track the leader in training (5)
- 19** Pretty young thing, easy to catch for a lark? (5,4)
- 22** Reserve's second time back in shape (7)
- 25** Win over the French follows mini-defeat initially around the end of March (7)



- 26** Here in parts of Canada the monarch appears more distant (5)
- 27** Pinched and scratched (9)
- 28** Charm old actress after golf (7)
- 29** A theologian, hampered by short sight, say, gets upset (7)
- 3** Totals are up or I'm a Dutchman (7)
- 4** Daughter's in inspired form and ready to iron (4-5)
- 5** Patch of copper (5)
- 6** Vice supremo's going down (7)
- 7** Eth's beloved party's musical theme (5)
- 8** Foreign dailies communicated effectively (7)
- 14** I stalk two crooked power units (9)
- 16** Black broadcast from irrational boyfriend (5,4)
- 17** Gingerbread group's first placement (7)
- 18** Stop me getting back to save try (7)
- 20** Gave proceeds to journalist (7)
- 21** Spanish Dragons' Den - a Sun fabrication? (7)
- 23** Board provides late news of European rights (5)
- 24** Channel cover-up threw establishment (5)

Down