

AZED CROSSWORD 2663

SONDAGE

1 R. J. Heald: Use of lead perhaps means dog ignoring master needs training (*anag. less M; lead² = plummet for sounding*).

2 J. Vincent & Ms R. Porter: Damaging to turf? *This* excavation may reveal state of ground (*comp. anag.*).

3 N. Connaughton (Ireland): A pilot bore wings for Delta in air base (*D, a in song e; ref. Delta airlines*).

VHC

T. Anderson: Bairstow's chump to get dismissed by deviant practice – Stokes leads test probe (*S + (b)ondage; ref. recent controversial test dismissal*).

M. Barker: A dig one's suitably prepared? Heart of trial, this (*anag. less i*).

M. Barley: Rishi, heading for defeat after opposition vote shown as rising in such? (*no (rev.) + d in sage, & lit.*),

T. C. Borland: Rishi's number up, heading for defeat in poll (*no. (rev.) + d in sage*).

T. Coates: Test cut, both Bairstow and Tongue at first missing in Edgbaston ground (*anag. less B, T*).

Dr I. S. Fletcher: Stokes leading cricket side and not one saying test boring? (*S + on + (a)dage*).

G. I. L. Grafton: Sounding something like Clary, adopting terms of innuendo, spoken and implied (*o, n, d in sage; ref. Julian C.*).

S. D. Griew: Extremely busy agenda lacks a chance to explain how the land lies (*so + anag. less a*).

J. Grimes: I could panic sad government on threshold of election (*anag. incl. G, e, & lit.*).

P. W. Marlow: In this way, Labour gained with Rishi lately slipping in poll (*so + anag. less i*).

T. J. Moorey: Winning test, Cummins ultimately one defending Australia in terms of alleged cheating (*A in d g in s one; win = mine vt*).

Dr S. J. Shaw: What's initially sunk on Neolithic dig awaiting general excavation? (*first letters & lit.*).

P. L. Stone: Probing dangerous ground releasing traces of unhealthy radon (*anag. less u, r*).

R. C. Teuton: Dropping lead to investigate sea doing ... possibly this? (*anag. less i & lit.; lead^{1,2}*).

Ms S. Wallace: Opinion poll leads to new evidence about gendarmerie's discriminatory stance on rioting (*anag. of first letters*).

L. Ward (USA): Mark Twain's associated with this boy – a scruffy sort, congenial at heart (*son dag e; mark twain, term associated with sounding depths*).

A. J. Wardrop: Starting on new dig archaeologist gradually extends initially small-scale excavation (*first letters*).

T. West-Taylor: French sounding – not ruly – dangerously unruly (*anag. less ruly; ref. rioting in France*).

HC

P. B. Alldred, D. K. Arnott, D. & N. Aspland, C. J. Brougham, Mrs S. Brown, A. & J. Calder, H. Casson (USA), A. G. Chamberlain, C. A. Clarke, W. J. Dady, Ms L. Davis, W. Drever, R. Freeland, H. Freeman, A. Gerrard, R. Gilbert, G. Greenow, P. F. Henderson (New Zealand), J. Hood, L. M. Inman, P. Jenkinson (Switzerland), G. Johnstone, J. R. H. Jones (Spain), J. C. Leyland, M. Lloyd-Jones, M. Lunan, A. MacDougall, D. F. Manley, K. Milan, C. G. Millin, T. D. Nicholl, S. J. O’Boyle, C. Ogilvie, K. O’Keeffe, J. Pearce, W. Ransome, Dr J. B. Reid, N. Roper, T. Rudd, A. Shields, I. Simpson, Ms J. Sinfield, M. Sloman, P. A. Stephenson, Mrs A. M. Walden, R. J. Whale, D. Whisstock (Italy), A. Whittaker, K. & J. Wolff, R. Zara.

Comments

127 entries, the only mistakes I spotted being in two entries with SINKAGE for SONDAGE, which I didn’t feel I could accept. (I always aim to give you the definition for the clue word as close as possible to what’s in *Chambers*, picking one of the meanings listed if there are several.) Your favourite clue, of 14 mentioned, was ‘Harms body, one slashed terribly in neck – sign of triad?’ for CHORD SYMBOL. The general feeling seems to have been (a) that this was an unusually tough puzzle overall (which I can understand, given the high percentage of less common words), and (b) that the clue word was uninspiring, which I find it less easy to sympathize with. I thought its meanings and component letters would offer a reasonable range of possible treatments – easy to say, perhaps, when spared the task you faced.

A few entry words foxed some of you, principally FOUR, RAHU and TEAN. I hope the solution notes will have explained these adequately. I thought that my reference to Rahul Gandhi would be easy enough to spot, given that he is regularly in the news as a member of the most famous modern Indian political dynasty (though not on a par with his mother or his grandfather) and a target for Narendra Modi’s (jealous?) vindictiveness.

Advance warning that my annual family holiday next month will mean a slight delay in the announcement of both the competition results and the slip – no more than a week, I hope. We’re hoping that the tropical weather currently scorching the south of France and other Mediterranean countries doesn’t move north to affect Brittany.