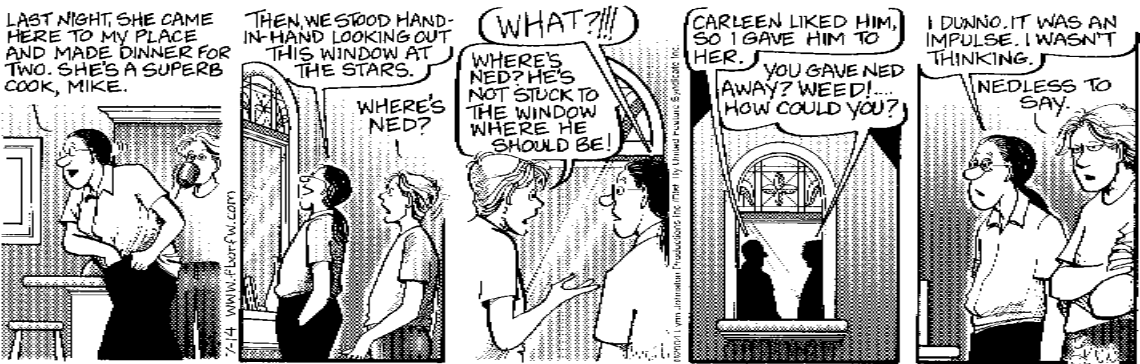
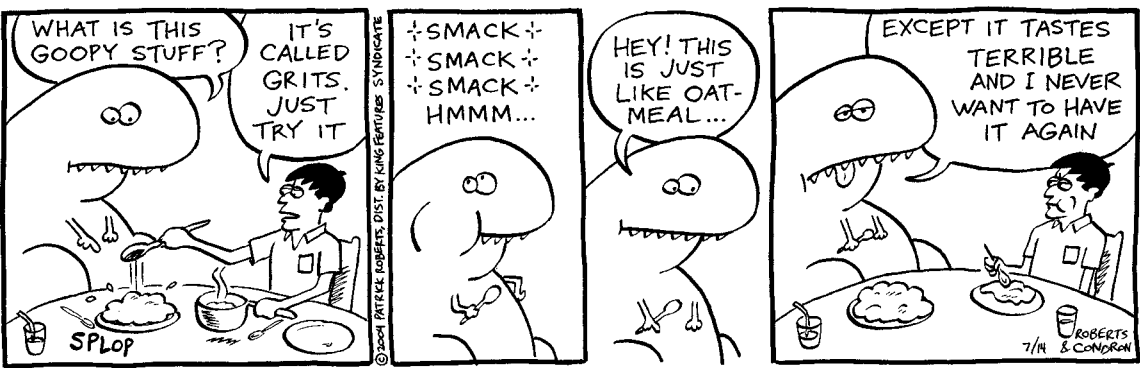


For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



Tod The Dinosaur • PR Condron



Garfield • Jim Davis



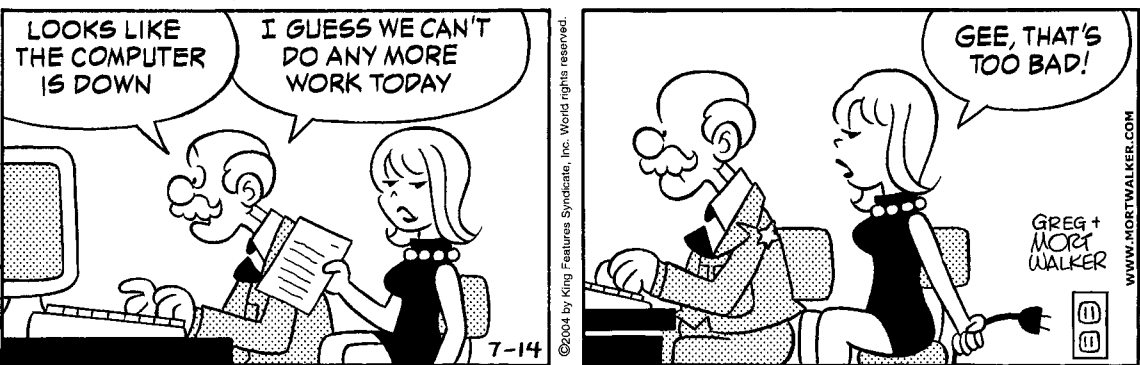
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Blondie • Chic Young



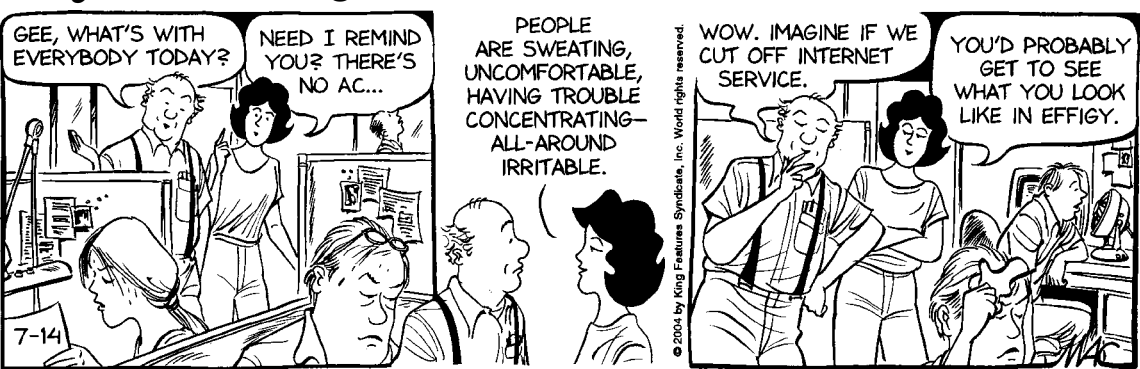
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Cryptoquip

KPRGVDVACG'P NBRRL HZ UJBS FLSITKY LTE
Y H N G H T W Y L S I
GCUZL RV TBP UKZ'P F M U Y H P H Y K Y , U J B
PRKRCACDR: "NCZZ, BPD'R V H W M K N I P L G G I E L
R T K R P U K R B K Z ! " T B P G I L S Z L V H G U .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN SHORT-ORDER COOKS HAVE A DISCUSSION WITH YOU, I RECKON THEY HASH IT OVER. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ASTRONOMER'S WITTY REPLY TO HIS PAL'S STATEMENT: "WELL, ISN'T THAT SPATIAL!"
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals T Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals L

Crossword

ACROSS

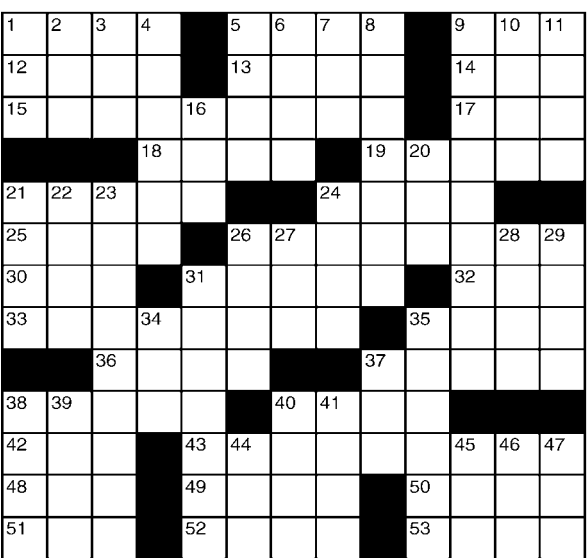
1 Fail to include
5 99 of the 101 Dalmatians
9 Unlikely trick-taker
12 Countenance
13 On
14 Scott Joplin's genre
15 NAFTA subject
17 The whole enchilada
18 Luna, for one
19 Big dipper?
21 Madison Avenue writers
24 "It's a Sin to Tell —"
25 Loathsome one
26 Nietzschean subject
30 Bob of CBS News
31 Surveyed pre-heist
32 Expert
33 Remodel
35 Weaponry

DOWN

36 Arrived
37 Hazzard family
38 Beautiful maiden
40 Facilitate a felony
42 Priestly vestment
43 Shoe style
48 Afternoon affair
49 On the briny
50 Immoderate revelry
51 Inheritor, often
52 Boys
53 Anger
4 Rained cats and dogs
5 Segment
6 Hexagonal state
7 Spacecraft compartment
8 Relieved
9 Distinguishing characteristic
10 Humpty's perch
11 Look lecherously
16 Great weight
20 Melody
21 Teensy bit
22 "David Copperfield" character

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 7-13



ACROSS

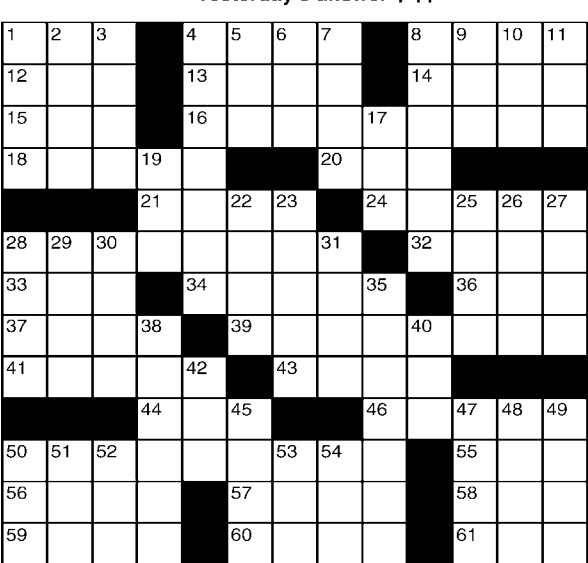
1 Chest protector
4 Shakespear's river
8 Daytona circuits
12 Indivisible
13 Actress Sorvino
14 Conception
15 High card
16 Silent partner?
18 Pang
20 Long lunch
21 "Spirit of '76" instrument
24 Inventor Nikola
28 Privation
32 Check
33 Mound stat
34 Rental sign
36 Request
37 Orange coat
39 Disapproving comment
41 Farewell

DOWN

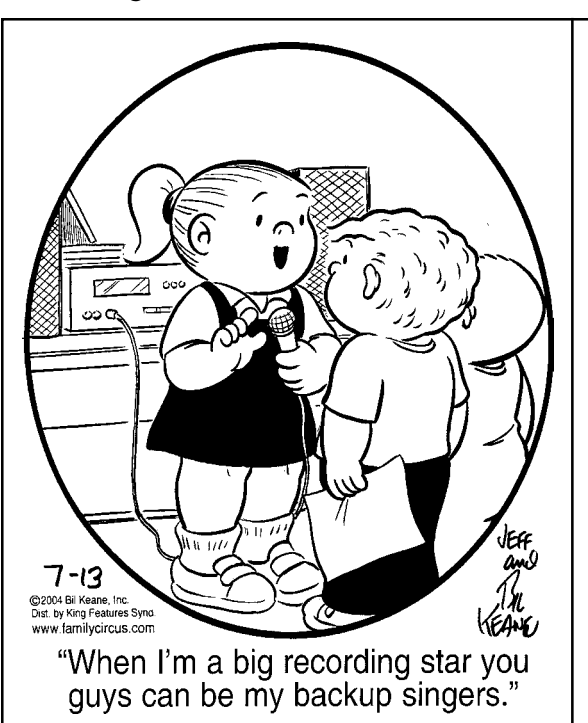
43 Tide type
44 Pompous one
46 Offspring
50 Buffoon
55 Sphere
56 Lotion additive
57 Confront
58 Way back when
59 Antelope's playmate
60 Genealogy chart
61 Understanding
3 "Cheers" order
4 Emily Dickinson's home
5 Through
6 Stick figure?
7 Kindergarten's breaks
8 Agile
9 Oklahoma city
10 Apiece
11 Clinton's instrument
17 So five minutes ago
19 Peculiar
22 "Oops!"
23 Home of La Scala

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 7-14



Family Circus • Bill Keane



Bridge

West dealer.
East-West vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ A 8 7
♥ 6 4 2
♦ K 5 3
♣ Q 9 7 3

WEST

♠ Q 10 5 4
♥ K J 5
♦ 2
♣ A K J 8 4

SOUTH

♠ K 3
♥ A 7 3
♦ A J 10 9 8
♣ 6 5 2

EAST

♠ J 9 6 2
♥ Q 10 9 8
♦ Q 7 6 4
♣ 10

The bidding:
West 1 ♣
North Pass
East 1 ♥
South 2 ♦

Opening lead — king of clubs.

Inferences and Deductions

There are lots of inferences a declarer can draw from the bidding and/or play of the cards, and those inferences often permit him to play a hand as though the opponents' cards were exposed.

Consider this case where West leads the king of clubs and continues with the ace and a low club, East ruffing dummy's nine and returning the eight of hearts.

Declarer goes up with the ace and must now find the right way to play the trumps to make the contract. He can play the A-K, hoping to catch the queen; he can play the ace, then continue with the jack and finesse; or he can lead a trump to the king and finesse on the way back.

Before South casts his ballot for one of these approaches, he should first try to assemble every clue that can help him make the right decision.

He knows for a certainty that West started with five clubs, and he can deduce from East's heart bid and West's three that East started with four hearts and West with three. Declarer can also deduce that the missing spades are divided 4-4, because if either defender had five spades, he would have bid them.

By putting all these inferences and deductions together, South can safely conclude that West started with five clubs, three hearts, four spades and, hence, He therefore plays a diamond to the king and finesses the jack on the way back. After drawing East's last trump, South crosses to dummy with a spade and discards a heart on the queen of clubs to make exactly three diamonds.

South dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ A Q J 6
♥ 6 4 2
♦ A K J
♣ 10 9 5

WEST

♠ 8 2
♥ J 5 3
♦ 10 8 6 3
♣ A K Q 4

EAST

♠ 10 9 7 5 4
♥ 10
♦ Q 7 4 2
♣ 8 7 6

SOUTH

♠ K 3
♥ A K Q 9 8 7
♦ 9 5
♣ J 3 2

The bidding:
South 1 ♥
West Pass
North 1 ♠
East 4 ♥

Opening lead — king of clubs.

An Exceptional Exception

Winning at bridge is more a question of how many mistakes you make rather than how often you make brilliant bids or plays. Mistakes can be made for any number of reasons, but most often they are due to the tendency of players to follow general rules blindly, instead of reasoning things out for themselves. Consider this deal where West was faced with the question of what to lead after cashing his A-K-Q of clubs. In practice, he led a spade, hoping to find his partner with the king, and South made the contract. West should have done better. He should have realized that not only was South likely to have the king of spades for his opening bid, but that even if East had the king, there was nothing to be gained by leading a spade at this point.

Instead, West should have led the four of clubs at trick four! After East ruffed with the ten, West's jack would have become the setting trick.

West should reason that not only is there a possibility that his partner has the ten of trumps — in which case leading the fourth club will beat the contract — but that nothing can be lost by leading a club no matter what East's trump holding is.

Thus, if East has, say, the lowest missing trump — the seven — South will be forced to overruff the seven with the eight in order to win the trick. The spade finesse — if South needs it to make the contract — will still have to be attempted. And if East has no trumps at all, then declarer — with seven hearts, the A-K of diamonds and the ace of spades — has 10 unassailable tricks. It is true that a defender rarely makes a play of the type recommended here because all players have been indoctrinated with the notion that one does not present declarer with the opportunity for a ruff-and-discard. However, in this situation it is known that declarer cannot gain a trick by the club lead. It therefore behooves West to put the four of clubs on the table at trick four.

Tomorrow: Stop, look and listen.
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