THE JOURNAL SATURDAY PUZZLE Edited by Mike Shenk

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Merger Mania | a cryptic puzzle by Emily Cox & Henry Rathvon

Ten of this puzzle's grid entries play a game of merger mania: they can be strung together into one big conglomerate of overlapping compound words. For example, the word units OFF, KEY, WORD, and PLAY would make the compound words: a. OFFKEY; b. KEYWORD; c. WORDPLAY; and d. PLAYOFF. "Merger" clues will give definitions for pairs of compound words, labeled by their positions in the sequence. So in this example, the clues might be "a-c Out-of-tune punning" (for a. OFFKEY and c. WORDPLAY) and "d-b Championship term used in a search engine" (for d. PLAYOFF and b. KEYWORD). The ten word units (each having 4 or 5 letters) may be written on the blanks below the grid, in the order that they're linked (so in the example, PLAY and OFF would be written in the two blanks flanking the letter d). Along with 19-Across, the normal Across and Down clue answers should facilitate

Across

1 Flop, as if reorganizing company (6)

entry of those parts in the grid.

- 6 Modifies a point in commercial pitches (6)
- 11 Client of Clarence Darrow sweeps (6)
- 12 Gather a hint about credit (6)
- 13 Performed hip-hop, engrossed in the sound (6)
- 14 Foremost clerics cover up censure (5)

- 16 Move slowly through occupied Germany (4)18 Admits everything with
- pained expressions (6)

 19 SEE INSTRUCTIONS

 22 Sweet broadcast that is in
- high definition (6)
 23 Jot the first nine letters in
- reverse (4)
- 25 Bats cool off (4)26 Rookie with nary a fault (6)
- 27 Shop tool garnering love
- and hate (6)
 28 Farm team engaged by Sox
- enemy (4) 29 Converted one aim: social
- instability (6)
 30 Writer from Argentina is
- tiresome about gravity (6) 31 Start of rare bird's lament (6)

Down

- 2 In company's debut, the guy had advanced slowly (6)
- 3 A Caledonian race site (5)
- 4 French artist's equal among royal retinue (7)
- 5 Zero earned run average, assuming pitcher works (5)
- 6 Wandering out near a person flying a balloon (8)

- 7 Tarry and stop, splitting jellied dish (9)
- 8 Songbird passing one cherry stone (5)9 Psychics gulping down
- ritual meals (6) 10 Wager about knucklehead's dog (6)
- 15 Stepping down in command, accepting second (9)
- 17 Guts bad, bad signs (8)
- 20 A few bears swimming to a place off the coast of Africa (3,4)
- 21 Taking request, obtain rubber seal (6)
- 22 Associate tramp with bishop around north (6)
- 24 Greek character wearing casual shirt is computer whiz (6)

Mergers

a-g Finance minor attraction

painting

- c-e Isolated place having no prejudice
- f-j Unexpectedly hit shore h-b Title bout withdrawal
- i-d Going with the current
- ► Get the solution to this week's Journal Saturday Puzzle in next Saturday's Wall Street Journal. Get pointers on solving clues and discuss this puzzle online at WSJ.com/Puzzles.