## 3D Crossword August 2019 Newsletter 8

This edition covers the following items:

1. Review of the August 3D Crossword
2. July Extra 3D Crossword reminder
3. Review of the August 3D Crossword

June crossword designed and clued by Qaos The winner of this months puzzle was Anthony Stevens of Beverly.

The rubric read fit solutions jig-saw wise where they will go into the grid. Directions are across, down or away. Clues with thematic answers do not have a definition. Clues are presented in alphabetical order of their solutions. (there is more than one way to present the grid)

Because a high proportion of clues have to be solved before it is possible to tackle any grid entry it is usually fair that at least a sprinkling of clues should be relatively straightforward to solve. This proved to be the case and after my first session I had 18 (66\%) solved. A second session much later in the month yielded another 6 answers leaving 3 outstanding. l'll come back to these.

I start by identifying what square 1 may contain. Although there are 3 answers beginning with T it cannot be a T because we need T's to start other answers later. Likewise, although there are 4 A answers, not an A, because there a lots of A endings to require A starters. It could be an E but generally these are needed in abundance separately in the crossword so I plump for the remaining option a $P$. The nuisance is that 2 of my unsolved clues lead to $P$ answers which might be the required answers at 1 . Eventually I get an answer to clue 18 (British Rapper) by much internet searching PLAN B is his name which suits the clue perfectly. But I didn't really solve it. By way of compensation I did cold solve this week's picture clue.

I conclude that with all the P starters PUPAE might fit 1 d with two P starters at grid box 10. Now there is much trial and error. Eventually I sorted out the middle layer and BATIS emerged as a solution to Clue 5 (another lovely clue but one that eluded me until I was force-fed) with the bonus that we have a final bird to fit the theme. The top layer fell next and then the completed grid shortly after, sans PLING at 2d. So what is pling; an exclamation mark. Ah! no! foiled by the ultimate deceit the exclamation mark is the definition.

Eric feared that this crossword might prove too easy, there was more than enough in it to keep me fully engaged.

## 3D Crossword July Solution



As the rubric strongly suggested this was a jigsaw crossword with more than one correct solution. This arises in part because, as many of you spotted, EAGLE and EAGRE are interchangeable. But other variations are possible and our resident expert postulated 12 acceptable solutions. I believe that Nora actually received 7 variations


GREBE; an iceberg reflected in the mirror gives GREBECI ("iceberg" backwards) minus Cl (101 in Roman numerals).

> July jigsaw crossword with a bird theme. Set by Qaos grid by Qaos

## Solutions and Clue Explanations for the June 3D Puzzle

The yellow clues are of a type (birds) and have no definitions

| ANSWER | CLUE | EXPLANATION |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| AKEPA | 7ac Held by brake pads (5) | Hidden | 1 |
| AMBLE | 7d Fit to take in mile walk (5) | A(M)BLE | 2 |
| ARGUS | 13ac Refined sugar (5) | (SUGAR)* | 3 |
| ASSET | 9d Benefit of retired woman (5) | TESSA< | 4 |
| BATIS | 14ac Squirrels are diurnal, but a $\qquad$ nocturnal (5) | BAT IS | 5 |
| EAGLE | 15ac Dog without lead (5) | (b)EAGLE | 6 |
| EAGRE | 15aw Bore everyone after game regarding England's openers (5) | First letters | 7 |
| EGRET | 19ac Show remorse when topless (5) | (r)EGRET | 8 |
| ENTER | 8d Record key (5) | DD | 9 |
| EVENT | 17aw First Lady books engagement (5) | EVE + NT | 10 |
| GREBE | 18ac Good beer is fermented (5) | $\mathrm{G}+(\mathrm{BEER}) *$ | 11 |
| GREER | 16aw Odd girl, always a feminist (5) | $G(i) R(1)+E^{\prime} E R$ | 12 |
| INGLE | 5d Lacking sides, vest is for the fire (5) | (s)INGLE(t) | 13 |
| INGOT` | 11aw Bar serving other sandwiches (5) | Hidden | 14 |
| NOSES | 12aw Sun issue recalled over drug features (5) | $\begin{aligned} & (S+S O N)< \\ & \text { NOS (E) S } \end{aligned}$ | 15 |
| PASTA | 1aw Late-afternoon food (5) | PAST + A | 16 |

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| PIPIT | 1ac About 3.14 + 3.14? Tricky <br> starter (5) | PI + PI + T(ricky) | 17 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| PLAN B | 10aw British rapper following idea <br> A? (4,1) | Rapper = PLAN B | 18 |
| PLING | 2d Author discards king first! (5) | KIPLING minus K,I; Def is "!", | 19 |
| PRIDE | 2aw After parking, travel with <br> satisfaction (5) | P + RIDE | 20 |
| PRION | 10ac Son escapes from jail (5) | PRI(s)ON - s | 21 |
| PUPAE | 1d Pea soup off, so spurned by <br> immature creatures (5) | (PEA soup)* - so | 22 |
| SLANG | 4d Confessed to stealing Latin <br> jargon (5) | S(L)ANG | 23 |
| SWIFT | 4ac Quick! (5) | DD | 24 |
| TASTE | 6d Sense of style? (5) | DD | 25 |
| TENSE | 3d Anxious time in grammar (5) | DD | 26 |
| TETRA | 3aw Exotic treat for fish (5) | (TREAT)* | 27 |

## July 3D Solvers Comments

These birds of a feather certainly needed an effort to bring them together! I almost gave up on fitting them into the grid as there seemed so many options. But a closer look gave the clue that all those beginning with "P" must be at the top in order to come down and all as across/away. They then fell into place more easily than I expected. A nice extra challenge! SB

Please find attached my stab at the July challenge, which was most enjoyable - until I had to try and fit my answers into the grid!! At least l've remembered to submit this, unlike the June effort over which I pored for many precious days and hours, and then forgot to send!! SF

Brilliant! PLANB was my breakthrough moment RE
I began with PLANB and BATIS which had limited entry cells. I knew BATIS from an African birdwatching holiday. Cold solved all bar PLING which I found by entering P?I?G on a website. I couldn't see why this was right until I took off the KI and saw the "!" Much enjoyed this which went together without too much sorting out. Luckily I was restricted to access, down and away as back and up might have been to taxing. I liked Frank's reflected ice-berg minus the CI too. Now onto Sirius' sphere PD

Is this the first 3D carte blanche? Can't remember one before this one. Very difficult to work out what belongs where, and I'm surprised to know that there's more than one way to fill the grid. Excellent puzzle PLING! Do the numbers 1-19 mean anything? JM (there have been a number of extras that have been jigsaw puzzles but it is the first standard monthly of this sort ED)

Quite a challenge to fit in the grid - but I do like the jigsaw crosswords HK \& CC
Loved this one - just hard enough and I always enjoy jigsawing the answers into the final solution. PLING - great clue! GB

EAGLE and EAGRE seem interchangeable. Don't envy you having to sort out all the permutations. ML

Finding the answers was straightforward it was fitting them in to the grid that I found d difficult. Eventually I found I had to concentrate on the 1st, 3rd and 5th letters and that helped ME

A couple of incorrect answers made the jigsaw impossible. Proceeding from PRION/TENSE/ NOSES all came right in the end. A few birds l've not come across before, nor PLING, despite a life in IT MJ

This was extremely hard. Not so much in solving the clues, but fitting it into the grid correctly was a major task. Thankfully I didn't waste too much time trying to jigsaw the words together until I had most of the clues answered, and the more answers I had the easier the unanswered in-between clues became - often the first letter was certain. Thank goodness for having clues in alpha order of answer - that provides a lot of help. So with 20/27 answers I began to try jigsawing them together - there were just too many options. Then I laid out all the crossing letters - the 1st, 3rd and 5th letter of each known answer to see which I was missing from the unanswered clues. My reasoning was that each crossing letter appears in 3 answers, so where I had less than a multiple of 3 that letter must also be in one of positions $1,3,5$ in the missing answers. That helped a little bit to tease out the final answers but the main thing it showed was that there were three letters that only appeared in 1 of the 27 crossing cells: B N and particularly R. I say "particularly" R because that did not appear as a 1st letter : One 3rd and two 5th EGRET, ENTER and GREER, and there are only 3 cells where such a 3rd, 5th, 5th could go in the cube -although ENTER and GREER could swap in each case so there are 6 possibilities - all deliver a T in the bottom-most cell - the cell which is the antipode to Cell 1 . So I put that in with great delight. Then came to a grinding halt. I was trying to put the other triplets of crossing words I had ("N" Noses, teNse, prioN; and "B" Batis, amBle, planB) in the grid against the "R" triplet. Nothing I tried seemed to logically fit and it seemed I got impossible combinations on the grid whatever I did. The number of possible combinations were enormous and statistical gods were against me. In the end I solved all 27 answers before getting any more than that bottom "T" in the grid. Last one in was Pling - by that time I knew it must be P-I-G but the [ki]PLING wordplay and the definition just as the "!" was the hardest thing in the clues. Finally, on the 6th of 6 different ways of putting in the "R" triplet plus the goodness knows how many ways possible to put in the " B " triplet, something came right and the rest slotted-in in a rush. AJR

Here's my entry for July which I almost failed to complete owing to an inability to find an answer for Day 13. (Yes, 13 of all numbers - did it start with a G or an I?) Consequently I was, to a worrying extent, shooting in the dark. But to my very good fortune it all finally fell into place even without this answer .
One might say, a very single/t piece of luck! GS
Just a quick note (because I feel bad about missing last month's) that I really did spend a lot of time on this month's jigsaw, but I just couldn't crack it. I solved all but two clues on the first pass, but having worked out where the across, down and away solutions should be distributed, came to several dead-ends in the grid-filling. Pretty frustrating, but maybe I should have joined Adam's hint group. I've never done a jigsaw crossword before, and I get the sense that I'm missing an obvious key that's staring me in the face. (I also can't see how EAGRE and EAGLE can't be interchangeable wherever they are in the grid, but perhaps I've misunderstood the gist or got one of those wrong.)

Anyway, I did enjoy solving the clues, and look forward to better luck with Mr Sirius next month. (Although I currently feel anything but stardust and golden!) MLJ

## 2. July Extra 3D Crossword

Just a reminder that you have until midnight on the 11th August to complete Sirius's spherical 3D crossword. It is a delight particularly if you warm to the theme as I did.

## Alan Goddard



## June Extra 2019 Sirius

## June Extra Design Challenge

We had not seen a solid spherical crossword grid until Sirius came up with one after staring at a decoration on a Christmas tree.

A spherical Sirius 3D puzzle is pending subject to recovery from a heart operation.

The June Extra challenge is to complete the grid with your own choice of words and at least 3D directions. Please supply a word list. Feel free to amend/develop the diagram.

The winner as judged by Sirius will receive a copy of the latest Chambers Standard Reference Dictionary or another reference book at a similar price.

Please return by midnight of July 31st to:
Calendar Puzzle
68 West Lane
Thornton
Bradford
Bd13 3JB
Or scan and email to:
sirius@calendarpuzzles.co.uk

## 3D Crossword August Supplementary 2019 Newsletter 8.1

This edition covers the following items:

1. Review of the July Extra 3D Crossword
2. Results of the June Extra Challenge
3. Update on the 3D Project

## 1. Review of the July Extra 3D Crossword

The July extra crossword was designed and clued by Sirius The winner of the puzzle was John Minter of Telford.

The rubric read this is a themed puzzle with time sensitivity. The solid spherical format is new and we would value feedback. Solutions of the two highlighted clues are related. Good luck and have fun! Best wishes Sirius

Well I thoroughly enjoyed solving the first spherical puzzle. It was made doubly enjoyable as I solved it whilst watching the very match it celebrated; the England v Australia World Cup semi final.

The grid itself was a masterpiece of conceptual thinking. A, and I don't say this lightly, touch of genius from Sirius. It wasn't until I read the instructions that the real difference, that going north or south, as well as east or west resulted in the completion of a full circle. This is the (entirely new) USP unique selling point - that the spherical grid brings to 3D grid design.

The cricket theme was right up my street. I solved KLEPTOMANIAC very early and after pondering its entry for a while realised what was necessary. Similarly with COLIN COWDREY. I loved the ROOOOOOT clue and, of course, the NO BALLS clue. The ROOOOOOT clue in particular is a classic 'quirky’ Sirius clue, perhaps not entirely Ximenean but entirely justified by its fit with the theme, its common use when Root is batting and the fun it brings to the puzzle. The related highlighted EOIN and FINCH clues were also both excellent and well signposted with the matching coloured photograph

The solution to clue 8 "I DON'T LIKE CRICKET....." was superbly worked into the grid. Interestingly there are two solutions to clue 9; the anagram of "WET TRIO" - WROTE IT and WRITE TO which I got wrong to start with and eventually resolved when it clashed with the entry of COLIN. To finish I can't resist a reminder of a gem of a clue, wonderfully concise and appropriately thematic: Clue 24 Silly mid-off? (3) for DIM


This first hyper spherical 3D crossword celebrated the occasion of the semifinal encounter between England (\& Wales) and Australia in the Cricket World Cup 2019 played at Edgbaston, 11th July. The puzzle was published at www.calendarpuzzles.co.uk the day before, 10.07.2019.

England won by 8 wickets.


Morgan blue and Finch yellow

## July Extra 2019 Extra CLUES \& EXPLANATIONS

| 1 | EMOTION | 1d Eg alarm caused by final bit of late movement (7) | E + MOTION |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 2 | LEE | 3N Old Brett's slippery one reversing (3) | EEL > LEE | Old v fast bowler for Australia |
| 3 | KLEPTOMAN IAC | 4N Magpie perhaps out to peck animal (12) | (TO PECK)* MANIAC |  |
| 4 | COLIN COWDREY | $5 S$ Legendary MCC member of Lords left in silver cattle wagon according to hearsay $(5,7)$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { CO(L)IN + COW+ } \\ & \text { "DRAY" } \end{aligned}$ | Whose initial were MCC also a made a life peer. |
| 5 | RO00000T | 6di,2di-3,10d-2 Batty Yorkshire chap and Aussie on pair with licence to kill time (8) | $\begin{aligned} & \mathrm{ROO}+\mathrm{OO}+\mathrm{OO}+ \\ & \mathrm{T} \end{aligned}$ | England captain Joe Root is paid homage by crowds with Rooooooooo ... |
| 6 | CLOUT | 7di Hit century and left old hat behind (5) | C + L + OUT |  |
| 7 | E COLI | 8di Eek! Indian's kipper inaccurately reported to cause Delhi Belly perhaps $(1,4)$ | Approx homophone "Indian's kipper" "Eek Kholi" | Indian skipper Kholi |
| 8 | I DON’T <br> LIKE CRICKET I LOVE IT | 9W,9di,9E-2 Rollicking elite knock: vitriolic tide's forced adjustment in Bloody Tourists' line by $\mathrm{l} / 100$ ? (1,4,4,7,1,4,2) | (ELITE KNOCK VITREOLIC TUIDE)* l/100 looks like $1 / 100$ but it is the letter 'L' in lower case symbolising pone litre $=1000 \mathrm{cc}$ This is highly unfair. Sirius holds out saying he wanted a clue that would become more easily solved when a number of letters appeared in the grid. Otherwise many other clues would be very easy to solve. The well known line appears in 'Dreadlock Holiday' on the LP 'Bloody Tourists' by 10 cc . |  |
| 9 | WRITE TO | 11di Communicate (four letters perhaps) with wet trio (slips) $(5,2)$ | (WET TRIO)* |  |
| 10 | KANTELE | 12di Kneel at playing Finnish instrument (7) | (KNEEL AT)* |  |
| 11 | KNEE | 12N One bends in direction of leg glance perhaps (4) |  |  |
| 12 | EOIN | 13S-4 Skip through video: 'In the Covers' (4) | Hidden | England's Irish captain |
| 13 | CENTAVO | 14di Once VAT is dealt with, little money is left (7) | (ONCEVAT) |  |

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| 14 | EIRE | 15N-4 2's reportedly dryer country <br> (4) | "airer" |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 15 | AIRTIME | 16di A1 merit perhaps for length <br> of six? (7) | (A1 MERIT) |  |
| 16 | FINCH | 17S Dicky Bird in Wizard of Oz? (5) | Oz = Australia <br> wizard vevery <br> good player <br> which FINCH is <br> Double meaning | Aussie captain |
| 17 | NO BALLS | 18W Cowardly bowling? (2,5) | slang |  |
| 18 | BAILS | 19di Archer defending this wooden <br> pair gets one out of jail (5) | Illustration of <br> one meaning and <br> another |  |
| 19 | SLIPS | 20di Men in field in bloomers <br> waiting for a tickle (5) | Illustration of <br> one meaning <br> containing <br> another | Reference to TMS <br> and Brian Johnson |
| 20 | SHOTS | 20W Nips for a slash outside corridor, <br> goes aerial and drives off! (5) | One meaning and <br> 3 examples of <br> another (cricket <br> shots) |  |
| 21 | ORION | 21di After escapes in the 3rd and <br> 5th, rocking Roy stars in celestial <br> display (5) | OR(b)I(s)ON |  |
| 22 | MOOS (4) | 22W Latter-day night-watchman's <br> not about to get caught at Cow <br> Corner? (4) | Patrick Moore'2 <br> MOO(re)S |  |
| 23 | ODI | 23di-3 Mid-off smothers return to <br> get match (3) | >IDO |  |
| 25 | STAKE | 24di Silly mid-off? (3) <br> 25N Second catch makes one pale <br> (5) | S + TAKE |  |

## July Extra Spherical Crossword - Solvers Comments

The grid was interesting. The east and west directions were easy to follow. The north and south would have been difficult without the colours. The lines going up and down split some of the segments which is confusing MP

Cricket theme from top line but only ECOLI solved. Then world cup lid from "time sensitivity" Last in Finch - a clever clue. Enjoyed the whole puzzle but N-S lines very hard to follow. Be good to have more of these. DM

The grid for the extra is just spherical - if it were hyper-spherical it would have had a fourth dimension in addition to N-S, E-W, and diametric. With the World Cup being on, it wasn't hard to realise what was going to be the theme, so I had no problems in completing it once

I remembered that N-S answers may run through the poles. ( The colouring of the cells was very helpful in keeping in the right track for them). PM

I thought the extra 3D concept in this one - bringing Northerly and Southerly directions into play - was very good. And of course, the theme of a Global World Cup fitted the diagram really well. I think there could have been more "over-the-top" or "under-the-bottom" answers, for my liking. KLEPTOMANIAC and COLINCOWDREY and FINCH were great. Whereas LEE and EOIN and KNEE and EIRE all finished at a pole. Mind you, could you have fitted in many others that went through a pole, I wonder ... ? I wasn't sure about 5 (6di etc): ROOOOOOT. How many Os should there be in ROOOOOOT ? But, in the spirit of the whole thing, it guess it worked. It took me ages to understand the word play behind 6 (7di). "Hit century and left old hat behind". "old hat" is intended to indicate OUT - that's the bit I didn't see for ages. A general comment, which applies to most 3D grids: I speak as a well-sighted person; I've worn glasses for nearly 45 years (since I was 10) and I don't really have any vision issues when they're on. But I find it hard to follow the course of answers in some of the grids. I do like the concept of colours to lead the eye (eg COLINCOWDREY in light yellow, and KLEPTOMANIAC in deeper yellow. But I would find it easier if blocked cells were coloured in black, rather than the brown (as in this one) or blue or red that gets chosen. HE

This was a good mental orienteering exercise. The vertically circular clues give a very satisfying 3D effect. My cricketing knowledge was also pushed to the limit. I suspect Sirius had great fun setting this puzzle. I'm not sure if I've got days 6 and 19 right. I can't figure out where the U comes from in CLOUT, and I'm not sure what the definition is in day 19. SCION fits, but l'm not sure how to parse it. Something to do with grafting? JT

Even with the colour coding I found it difficult to put the right letters in the right cells. Lots of tip-ex used but I think it's right now. Coincidentally they were playing dreadlock holiday on the radio earlier so I had 8 in my head. I wonder what non cricket fans made of 5 . AW

We loved this! A timely theme that suited our interests. We particularly enjoyed 5, 17, 19 and especially 7 and were delighted to see 8 . N\&SI

Who says women are no good at thinking in 3D. Loved this puzzle with some great clues especially day 17 def. of coward. Perhaps a missed opportunity for day 5. Loved the format. PD (sorry couldn't read all the comment Ed)

This innovative solid spherical was an interesting and innovative variation on the3D format. Yet another clever contribution from sirius. CH

Excellent. Did the idea come to Sirius whilst he was under anaesthetic. I even had a conversation at work about 'nightwatchman'. RE

This might be a struggle for those not following the game. Construction of 18 to 20 puzzling MJ

ECOLI - I have just embarked on the fascinating-looking Global July Extra - assuming that it has a strong connection with the Cricket World Cup, so I wanted to try it on the day of the final ! - and a possible typo in 7 (8di) caused me to giggle ......it should be "Indian skipper", shouldn't it, rather than "Indian's kipper" ? Or is there an extra level of indirection or "sounds like" being employed here, that is too sophisticated for my straightforward brain. HE

It took a little while to work out how to continue the words over the top and down the other side, but the colours helped a lot! It all works splendidly - congratulations! Very satisfying to solve. I definitely had fun, as Sirius hoped. Clue 20, however remains a mystery as far as the cryptic corridor is concerned (not to mention the aerial?) SB

Entry attached. Interesting theme and some first class clues, but I was very unsure about the Dicky bird and the slash outside, so a little bit of guesswork there! I found the layout a little tricky and tended to lose my bearings round the poles! JP

Trying to redeem a few busy months with the July Extra. Not exactly the specialist subject for a Scot and a German, but what a fabulously clever grid, with so much themed content. A Sirius masterpiece! AR

## 2 Results of the June Extra Challenge

First a reminder of the challenge:


## June Extra 2019 <br> Sirius

June Extra Design Challenge
We had not seen a solid spherical crossword grid until Sirius came up with one after staring at a decoration on a Christmas tree.

A spherical Sirius 3D puzzle is pending subject to recovery from a heart operation.

The June Extra challenge is to complete the grid with your own choice of words and at least 3D directions. Please supply a word list. Feel free to amend/develop the diagram.

The winner as judged by Sirius will receive a copy of the latest Chambers Standard Reference Dictionary or another reference book at a similar price.

[^0]Then the judgement:
Adam Saille who writes the monthly hints and tips contribution has taken on the task of judging the June extra crossword setting challenge.

## June Extra 2019 - Sirius - Spherical Competition

Not a job I was expecting I have to say. There you are, sat in the garden, considering the herbaceous border accompanying your second Pimms of the day, then *BOOM* you're suddenly judging the spherical 3D Crossword grid compilation competition.

Of course, this all came about following news of the most worrying lapse in the health of our founder, Eric Westbrook, who has rightly heeded medical advice and will take some well earned rest and recuperation. Hopefully this will afford us a Sirius firing on all cylinders in the future, but for now, the substitutes are on the pitch / lunatics have taken over the asylum / enter metaphor of choice as appropriate.

Now, when Eric performs his judgements for the annual World Championship, he provides a detailed critique, entry by entry that gives a rationale before leading Oscar-like towards the big 'reveal'.

I'm afraid I'm going to do something a little different, in that I'm going to talk in more general terms about the competition, the challenges and some of the solutions presented by entrants, in part, because I do not want to 'spoil' the opportunity for the 3D Crossword Calendar team to use these excellent grids (possibly with modification), as puzzles in the future.

So, enough preamble, let's get to it...!

## THE PROBLEM

The grid is spherical in nature, inspired by a Christmas bauble we are told. The rubric provides only the bare bones of the challenge, namely:-
"The June Extra challenge is to complete the grid with your own choice of words and at least 3D directions. Please supply a word list. Feel free to amend/develop the diagram."

We are provided with a grid in seven layers comprising 103 cells. The complexity here is how to cope with the 'poles' and the immediate layers. Resolution of this question which was tackled by a range of methods was often the key to the overall success of an entry.

## THE APPROACHES

Sirius led the way with his July Extra completion of the spherical grid. In that puzzle, entries looped over the poles, while layers 2 and 6 were unchecked. The middle layer also has double unchecked ('unch') letters in every radial.

When I tackled the problem, I inserted rings in layers 2 and 6, while joining a ring in the middle to eliminate the unch problem.

The entries broadly fell into three categories (some of which used more than one of):-

-     - Ignore the poles entirely
-     - Leave layers 2 and 6 without radials (and therefore unchecked except for the central core)
-     - Modify the grid to accommodate additional rings, or provide 'alternative letters' down the central column.


## THEMES AND CRITERIA

In the annual competitions in the past, significant weight has rightly been given to the proportion of the grid covered by thematic material. This is of course a factor in this competition too, but the ingenuity of covering the grid with legitimate words or phrases was given more prominence, given the additional constraints of the format. In addition, average word lengths were also considered important, as it is far easier to cover a grid in 3s and 4s, but this would not make for a viable or interesting puzzle. The entries ranged from 5.1 to 6.2 in this regard, which was very commendable given the issues involved.

Themes chosen perhaps understandably focussed on the planet-like appearance of the diagram, although some equally convincing entries used the available space to accommodate an otherwise unconnected theme of their choosing.

Finally, points were also awarded for the accuracy and completeness of the word-list and accompanying directions. Some benefitted from delaying their entries to utilise the E-W notation adopted in the Sirius July Extra, while others stuck with the Clockwise/Anti-clockwise notation we have seen used effectively in cylindrical dial puzzles.

## THE JUDGEMENT

At one level, the judging was complicated by the variety of techniques used to complete the task, plus the fact that all of the grids received (possibly with some modification) could be readily converted to a full future 3D Crossword puzzle, all being rated at least Highly Commended. Many congratulations to all entrants that stepped up to the challenge and made this judging as entertaining and challenging as it was.

Applying the criteria above, I was able to home in on two designs in particular, both of which took different approaches. One had an extraordinarily high thematic content (having benefitted from a fairly wide-ranging word pool to draw upon), while the other used multiple letters in the central core to blend a theme through three books that I know well.

However, there has to be a winner and sadly a list of runners-up.
It will probably be of limited consolation, but I awarded the best runners-up position to Garry Strippling - congratulations on a cracking and very novel entry.

Which means that the high thematic content of the grid won the day, so the winning entry for the June Extra 2019 Spherical competition was submitted by Nick and Sarah Inglis. Many congratulations indeed to them.

## Adam Saille. Adamsaille3D@gmail.com

## 3. Update on the 3D Project

Nora wrote on 6th August that Eric's health had failed and that he was very unwell. Adding that Eric hates to let down our 'wonderful solvers' and apologises if you have emailed him without acknowledgements but he has archived the large number he has received in the last few days and will respond to them if and when he can.

Please do continue to send in your puzzle submissions as normal to:
sirius@calendarpuzzles.co.uk, calendarpuzzles@btinternet.com, nora.boswell@btinternet.com,
or by post to Calendar Puzzles, 68 West Lane, Thornton, Bradford, BD13 3JB.

I will continue to mark them, lucky winners will continue to receive prizes and the team will do their best to ensure that we continue to the high standard Eric has set.

Nora wrote again on 9th August to say that she thought you would like to know that she had copied and pasted your many lovely messages of support for Eric into single emails (so that he is not faced with a huge inbox) and he is very appreciative of your kind thoughts.

Eric's team has every intention of not only seeing the 2019 calendar through, but we are already well advanced in preparations for the 2020 version, too.(l hope to be able to give a more comprehensive update in the September newsletter Ed).

Eric has given us some amazing help towards this end but from now on, to allow him to have the rest he needs, please would you send any 3D related emails via me to forward on to the appropriate member of the team at the above addresses. Where appropriate the team will set up their own lines of communication depending on their area of expertise.

Alan Goddard<br>Newsletter Editor (alangoddard100@gmail.com)


[^0]:    Please return by midnight of July 31st to: Calendar Puzzle
    68 West Lane
    Thornton
    Bradford
    Bd13 3JB
    Or scan and email to:
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