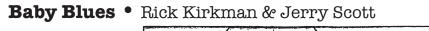


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## **Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



### **Blondie** • Chic Young



### Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



## Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters





# favors one child Dear Dr. Brothers: I am a member of a play-

group for toddlers, and we meet at each other's homes. Last week we were at the home of a woman I don't know very well. She had a little boy and I have a little girl, both almost 3 years old. She spent the whole time criticizing her son and making him "behave," while fawning over my child. What do you make of this? - M.T.

Dear M.T.: The mom's behavior would have made almost anyone nervous. While we like to see all children treated equally, they very seldom are. Parents play favorites, teachers play favorites, and even toddler playgroup parents play favorites. What seems different about this is the fact that instead of trying to spotlight her own child, the mom chose to make an example of him.

Let me speculate on where she was coming from. Let's say her child is a bit difficult. Perhaps she already has been kicked out of another playgroup because her son doesn't behave. So she would be bending over backward to make sure that doesn't happen again. She identified you as the most likely to be her friend – or perhaps you were the most intimidating! It's not a good thing to do to her son, but you can help her to relax. Comment on something good about her son - it sounds like he probably could use a boost to his self-esteem. With your lead, his mom may follow.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My child is a talented, elite athlete. He is only 10 years old but has been competing at the highest level. Naturally, this takes a lot of training, traveling, etc. Now he is starting to complain about missing his friends, who are starting to have outings to the movies, etc. He also said the boys were making fun of his sport, not a traditional "macho" one. What can I do to make sure he keeps his eye on the ball? – B.L.

Dear B.L.: I'm sure you are very proud of your son's accomplishments. I know that competition at the elite level is sometimes cutthroat, and I imagine he has learned a lot about handling pain and disappointment, staying motivated and showing good sportsmanship. So, whether he keeps his eye on the ball or not, I'm sure the years spent have been worthwhile, and no one can ever take that away from him. You probably have sacrificed much as well, as elite athlete moms do.

But let's just say it's a new ballgame now. It's a time when he will be changing rapidly - including his body, which may no longer be perfect for his sport. More importantly, if he loses his motivation because he wants other interests you might need to see this as a positive development. Perhaps it's even time to get involved in schoolsponsored sports - as a natural athlete, he probably could succeed and find new excitement in a whole different sport on a more casual level. But my question is: Could YOU give up the elite athlete circuit? Cut your son some slack, and enjoy him no matter what.

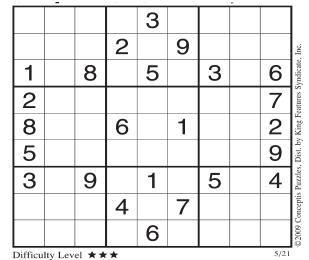
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## Family Circus • Bil Keane



"...then my mommy said to daddy, We'll get rid of all the junk around this place.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green



This is a logic-based num-

ber placement puzzle. The goal is to enter a number, 1-9, in each cell in which each row, column and 3x3 region must contain only one instance of each numeral. The solution to the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

2	5	1	6	4	3	8	9	7	
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6	2	9	4	3	5	7	8	1	
8	4	3	2	7	1	9	5	6	
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4	9	5	8	1	2	6	7	3	
1	7	8	3	6	4	5	2	9	
Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/20									

## Cryptoquip

XPOJ DPVD ITO VAACOFJI SONFJ DZCL DPZNO DSFRFVC P 0 🏵 CFON. F XZTCL NVO RVSJFNPOL DPO DSTDP. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MASKED GUY RIDING AROUND ON HORSEBACK COLLECTING PAST-DUE DEBT PAYMENTS: THE LOAN RANGER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals T

## Sally Forth • Greg Howard

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## Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



#### Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott





## Bridge • Steve Becker

West dealer North-South vulnerable. NORTH ♠ Q 6 ♥ K 9 5 2 ♦ K 6 4 WEST EAST ▲ K J 9 7 4 2 ♥ 7 6 3 ♠ 10 3 ♥ 4 • O 10 : • J 9 8 7 **♣**K Q J 9 8 4 2 SOUTH **♦** A 8 5 **♥** A Q J 10 8 ♦ A 3 2 ♦10 6 The bidding: West South East Pass 4♥ Pass Pass Opening lead - king of clubs

#### A Bitter Pill to Swallow

"What can defeat me?" is a question every declarer should ask himself as he embarks on the play of any hand. Here is a striking example that illustrates the wisdom of asking this question before proceeding with the play.

South reached four hearts on the sequence shown, and West led the king of clubs. Declarer played the ace, ruffed by East, who then returned a diamond.

Declarer won with the ace, drew trumps and led a low spade toward the queen. He was hoping West had the king, in which case he could later discard a diamond loser from dummy on his ace of spades. But after the queen lost to East's king, South had to go down one, losing a spade, a diamond and two clubs.

However, declarer could and should have made the contract. He neglected to apply the principle espoused above. The fatal misstep occurred at trick one, when South should have ducked West's king, knowing from the bidding that there was an excellent chance the club ace might be ruffed. If West then continued with the queen, dummy would duck again, and if West played still another club, declarer would duck once more and ruff in his hand.

These three plays would enable South to maintain the 10 tricks he had started with -- five trumps, a spade, two diamonds, a club and a spade ruff in dummy. He would lose only two clubs and a spade, eventually discarding his diamond loser on the club ace.

Before making a play from dummy at trick one, South should ask himself: "What can possibly go wrong?" In the present instance, given West's three-club bid, the danger of playing the club ace should be apparent.

The next step in the process follows almost automatically -- 10 tricks can be maintained by the simple expedient of letting West win the first two club tricks.

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## **Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

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