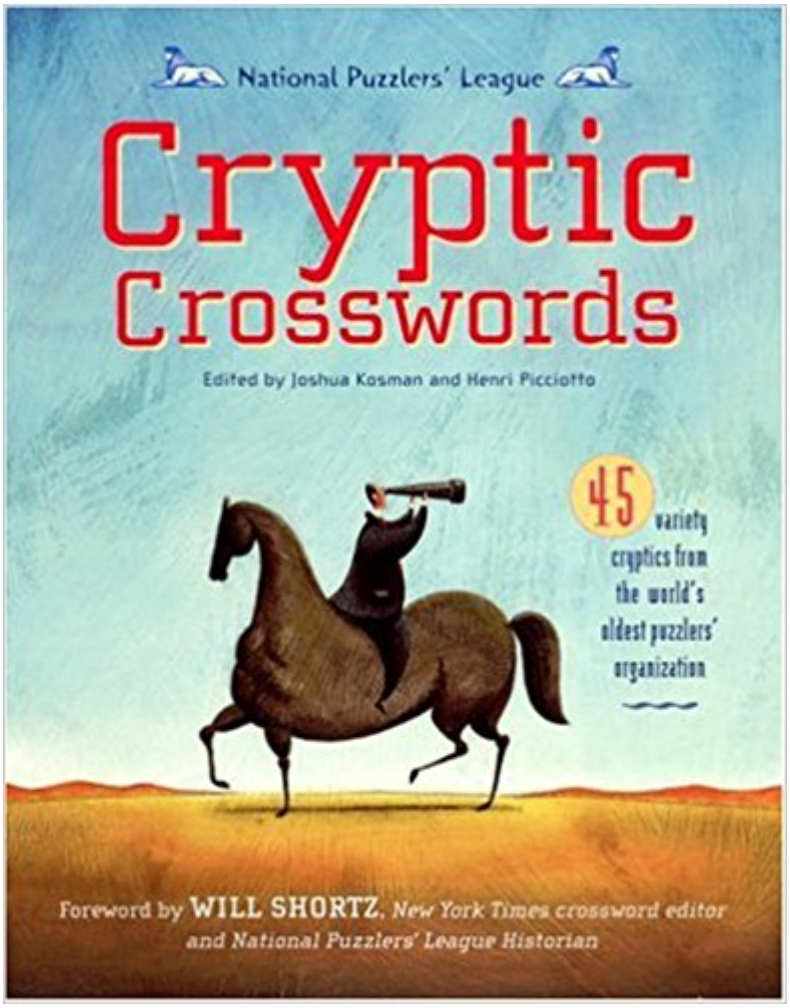
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National Puzzlers' League Cryptic Crosswords (Other)



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Synopsis

The National Puzzlers' League (NPL) was founded in 1883 and is the oldest puzzlers' organization in the world. For over 100 years, crosswords and other word puzzles that appear in the NPL's monthly magazine, The Enigma, could be enjoyed only by NPL members. Now, for the first time, a selection of the league's favorite cryptic crosswords is available in book form for puzzle fans everywhere to enjoy.Unlike "regular" crossword puzzles, each clue in a cryptic crossword has two parts--one that's straightforward and one that involves one or more types of wordplay--and part of the fun is determining which part is which and what type of wordplay is involved.For example, "Shoestring allowances lead to tears (11)" is a cryptic clue for LACERATIONS. The straightforward part of the clue is "tears," which is a definition for LACERATIONS. The wordplay part of the clue is "Shoestring allowances" which can be expressed as LACE + RATIONS which "lead to" LACERATIONS. The number in parentheses tells you the number and length of the answer words--in this case, it's one 11-letter word.Another example, with a different type of wordplay is "Rearrange, rearrange ram's front (9)" which is a cryptic clue for TRANSFORM. "Rearrange" is a straightforward definition of TRANSFORM and "rearrange ram's front" tells you to rearrange, or anagram, the nine letters in "ram's front" giving you the nine-letter word TRANSFORM.One of most fascinating things about cryptics is that the clues are a combination of tremendous creativity and imagination, on one hand, and strict, formal rules, on the other.This book contains 45 variety cryptics from members of the NPL, many of them by distinguished puzzle authors, as well as a foreword by Will Shortz, the New York Times crossword editor and the NPL's official historian[PuzzleMeter: DifficultyÃ¢â ¬â •Very Difficult; StyleÃ¢â ¬â •Contemporary]

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Joshua Kosman, a classical music critic, and Henri Picciotto, a math teacher and consultant, edit the cryptic crosswords for the Engima, the monthly publication of the National Puzzlers' League. They both live in the San Francisco area.

These are not cryptics for the beginner, nor for the faint of heart. Puzzles constructed by cruciverbalists for cruciverbalists! But if a good, fair challenge is your thing, it's a great set of puzzles. [Makes me miss the Tough Cryptics magazine.]

This is a collection of cryptic crosswords written by members of the National Puzzlers' League and expertly edited by Kosman and Picciotto for publication in that organization's monthly puzzle magazine, The Enigma.These are very well done, but probably beyond the level that a beginner would comfortably enjoy. (A beginner would do well to get a copy of Cox & Rathvon's "Handbook of Cryptic Crosswords".) They also are "variety" cryptics, meaning that in addition to the cryptic-style clues, there is an additional "gimmick" the solver must suss out and use to solve the puzzle completely. The puzzle will describe a pointer to the kind of gimmick used.Every clue is a clever little puzzle in its own right, so cryptics give a special feeling of exhilaration as they are solved.

Great book! Most of the cryptics are bar-style (variety); a few are black-and-white. The creativity of the constructors is mind-blowing. The puzzles are considerably more difficult than those in Harper's and The Atlantic. (There were a couple I couldn't finish, and that never happens to me with Harper's/Atlantic.) I sure hope that this is volume 1 and that more volumes are ahead.

There is no need to buy this book. You can get the entire book for free online on the National Puzzlers' League website in pdf format.

Collected from "The Enigma," the monthly publication of the National Puzzlers' League, these puzzles, from many different constructors, all conform to the League's high standards of fairness and accuracy. Solvers used to the puzzles in "Harper's" and "The Atlantic Monthly" will feel right at home here.

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