



A puzzle with two valid solutions. Friday's headlines will reveal which one is correct.

Across

- 1** A dot-com career girl arranged medical procedure (17)
9 Hospital gowns - or where they're kept? (9)
12 Rings charges (5)
14 Partly rewarded if Yorkshiremen provide enlightenment (5)

- 15** Drink last of retsina, spill absinthe (3)
16 Winners of 48a take half of 15a with burrito, so confused (6)
18 Essence of fake English-like mustard (4)
19 "50/50 UK's going backwards" - headcase (5)

- 22** Sticks notice at this place second (7)
25 Losers of 48a make a meal of 16a's leftovers (6)
26 Bearded folk in embroidered war vests. (7)
27/13/47/23 Bowler provides advice, gesture of acknowledgment (3,2,3,3)
29/43/37/40A Taking risk once, in a skin-tight arrangement (7,2,4,3)
31 Reaction - or container for one? (6)
32 Naval vessel, semi-automatic, oddly buoyant (7)
35 Rough up 36d, taking nothing? That's cruel! (5)
37 See 29
39 Sumptuous railway after ten in Irish band follow student (6)
40 See 29
42 Who is that offering a lift? (5)
45 Families initially cultivated land around northern Scotland (5)
46 Way to music box is all ups and downs (9)
48 Why big day for American independence might be big day for British independents this year? (2,7,8)

Down

- 1** Cover musical style following new composition (6)
2 Unsettling sounds, like great lake (5)
3 Sharp sweet (4)
4 Indicate start of ball (3)
5 Go under, start losing 60% before editor placed deposit elsewhere (8)
6 They measure light refreshment (6)

- 7** Depend? Not entirely! (4)
8 Rich guy smell (4)
10 Union, around fifty, describes victorious leader of 16a (5)
11 Starmer has received enquiries initially about border of origami region (5)
13 See 27 across
16 Fall out of line, star pig, drunk, separating threads (7)
17 Way to calculate support after turning, for example, Los Angeles? (7)
18 Tangled mess, jotted King, abolishing vigorous activity (7)
20 Timespan in a thousand can? It's nail-biting stuff! (7)
21 Oban drops letter, flustered, before monarch? Former leader of 25a did a fair bit of this (7)
23 See 27 across
24 Dark events follow drama after Brexit anguish finally ends (7)
28 In favour of - or getting paid to say so? (3)
30 Less innocent, sounds golden (8)
33 Packaging puts up a fight (5)
34 Chambers found in Bermuda Triangle (5)
36 Inventor about to pry around papers (6)
38 Belittle as average-sounding (6)
40 Mesopotamian, one after artists infiltrate intelligence (5)
41 Some pale crushed linen (4)
42 Suspend change without limits (4)
43 See 29 across
44 Reptilian footwear (4)
47 See 27 across