START TO FINISH

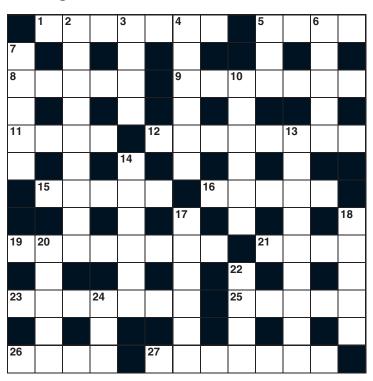
In this crossword, each answer begins and ends with the same letter.

ACROSS

- 1 Struggling for breath (7)
- 5 Besides, otherwise (4)
- 8 Large bird of prey (5)
- 9 Short break in play (4-3)
- 11 Twist (in string or wire) (4)
- 12 Strongest (8)
- **15** Bereaved wife (5)
- 16 ____ with, tolerate (3,2)
- 19 Consistent, or without a join (8)
- 21 Budget supermarket chain (4)
- 23 Country bordering Switzerland (7)
- 25 Expanse of land (5)
- 26 Nipple-end of a baby's bottle (4)
- 27 Converted to plain language (7)

DOWN

- 2 Don't Cry for Me ____, song from Evita (9)
- 3 Sneaky look (4)
- 4 Thought, idea (6)
- 5 Female sheep (3)
- 6 Garden pests (5)
- 7 Hunts for (5)
- 10 Double-size champagne bottle (6)
- 13 Clarify (9)



- 14 Hair-curler (6)
- 17 Gain freedom (6)
- 18 Small privileged group (5)
- **20** Avoid (5)
- 22 ____ von Bismarck, German Chancellor between 1871 and 1890 (4)
- 24 Junky goods (3)

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