

IT'S a classic case of a dog that took on more than it could chew. Spotting a baby squirrel on the ground, it moves in for a tasty snack ... but fails to spot the baby's mother watching from the nearby tree.

With all the skill of a Ninja warrior, the mother squirrel springs from the tree and lands on the dog's back.

Dodging the dog's powerful jaw and claws, she sinks her teeth into its neck. Yelping in pain, the startled dog frees her

baby, giving it just enough time to flee out of reach back up the nearby tree.

Dog and mother battle on the ground but the mother squirrel escapes to join her youngsters, no doubt giving it a lecture on being more careful next time.

And the unharmed dog is left looking confused at the base of the tree as the pair make good their escape.

Grey squirrels are born furless and with their eyes closed

and remain in the nest with their mother though this one may have tumbled from or been left behind after a first lesson in Squirrelism eat a range of foods forage such as bark, varieties of seeds and nuts types of fungi.

The photos first appeared on a US web and internet hit.

PC crackers? Pull the other

FOR most of us Christmas dinner would not be complete without a few cringe-worthy jokes from festive crackers.

But this year Britain's biggest cracker factory has ditched dozens of risque gags in favour of more politically-correct alternatives.

Out go old those about mother-in-laws, transvestites and animal cruelty, and in their place come a new selection guaranteed not to offend.

A spokesman for Swantex, based in Swanley, Kent, said the firm was "constantly vigilant" about changing attitudes.

He added: "You don't have to go back very far in the history of cracker jokes to find widely-used jokes which in today's eyes would be really inappropriate.

"That is why we go through this rigorous checking process

By Laura Clout

every year to make sure we are in touch with popular opinion."

The firm, which churns out 26 million crackers every Christmas, is predicting a bumper season this year with sales already up 21 per cent.

But not everyone thinks the new "safer" jokes will be a success. John Midgeley, co-founder of the Campaign Against Political Correctness, said: "Why on Earth can't people enjoy traditional jokes in their crackers rather than be forced to have less funny PC alternatives.

"Shouldn't Christmas be the one time people can be free from PC in their own home? It's completely crackers."

OPINION: PAGE 12

OLD JOKES

What is green and turns red at the flick of a button? A frog in a liquidiser.

Where can you find literature about Santa's assistants? The elf-help section.

What does a transvestite do for Christmas? Eat, drink and be Mary.

What does a mother-in-law call her broom? Basic transportation.

What would you call a drunk who works at an upholstery shop? A recovering alcoholic.

NEW JOKES

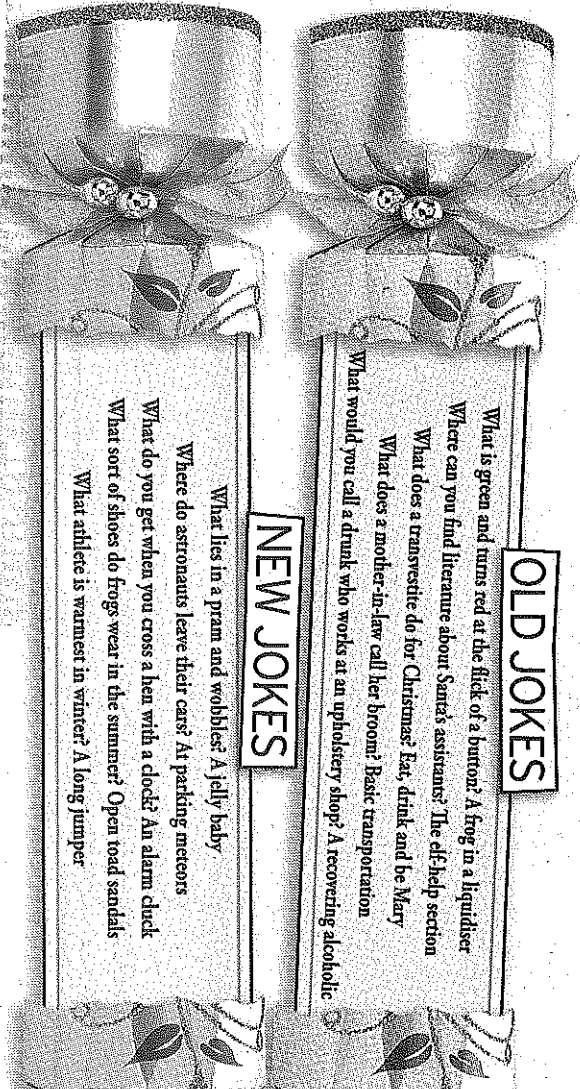
What lies in a pram and wobbles? A jelly baby.

Where do astronauts leave their cars? At parking moons.

What do you get when you cross a hen with a clock? An alarm clock.

What sort of shoes do frogs wear in the summer? Open toed sandals.

What athlete is warmest in winter? A long jumper.



ON THIS DAY
100 YEARS AGO

HEALTH TIP By Dr Rosemary Leonard

wash them in tap water. If

many people find contact

Forecast