

Matildas one step closer to Olympics; Moon mission accomplished; Panthers pipped at post; and a hospital for kiwis.

That's what's making news, kid's style...

THE LOWDOWN

The Matildas' dream of playing at the upcoming Paris Olympics got just a little closer to reality at the weekend after the all-conquering girls in green and gold beat Uzbekistan by 3-0. Super cool striker Mary Fowler was among the Tillies who slotted a goal into the back of the net - meaning they will now play Uzbekistan in the second of two Olympic qualifiers in Melbourne on Wednesday night.

It's a big deal for the Matildas to qualify for Olympic competition. After their impressive performance at the World Cup in Australia last July and August, the Tildas are expected to have their best ever shot at winning an Olympic medal ... at the last Olympics in Tokyo in 2021, they came an impressive fourth in the competition - just missing out on the bronze medal. Thanks to their 3-0 defeat of Uzbekistan over the weekend - the Matildas only need to draw in Wednesday night's game to qualify for Paris. Fingers and toes and eyes crossed.

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Plastic ponchos over sequined outfits were the order of the day at Taylor Swift's Sydney concert on Friday night as the singer continued her takeover of the country.

With her boyfriend Travis Kelce in the crowd, Tay Tay braved Sydney's big storms to wow 81,000 screaming fans on Friday night – and then turned around and did it another two times on Saturday night and last night. The singer will perform her final Australian show in Sydney tonight - before flying to Singapore to perform - get this - six shows there. Now that is impressive... And look: because too much Tay Tay is apparently barely enough - we're excited to report that Christie and I have sat down to prepare a Squiz Kids Shortcut on everyone's favourite pop star ... including some fascinating stuff about her

grandmother .. it drops first thing tomorrow - complete with Classroom Worksheets. It's a love story baby - just say yes ...

SPIN THE GLOBE

Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops .. and today we've landed in New Zealand - just across the Tasman Sea - where the country's first ever kiwi hospital has been built.

The kiwi of course is the national bird of New Zealand - and a cuter ball of feathers you will go a long way to find. I've stuck a link to photos in today's episode notes.

Like all native wildlife, however, the kiwi can occasionally run into trouble when it comes up against human habitats and introduced specie predators. Kiwis were getting hit by cars, hunted by stoats - which are like ferrets and a big threat to kiwi populations - and even getting into strife by falling in backyard pools. The first patient, in fact, was a kiwi who got caught in a pool filter ... the doctors nicknamed him 'Splash'.

The new hospital in the Bay of Islands, means kiwis now have their very own facility to recover and rehabilitate before being released back into the wild.

Kiwi-tastic.

CCC

And a big Squiz Kids welcome to the hundreds of teachers who have signed up to receive our Classroom Companion since the beginning of the school year. That sound you just heard indicates that Christie, Squiz Kids very own fully qualified primary school teacher has created today's totally free curriculum-aligned worksheet ties to this news item - focussing on text sequencing. Get amongs it! And if you haven't already-sign up to Squiz Kids Classroom via our website: squizkids.com.au

SPACED OUT

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It's a long way to the Moon - and when you're a spaceship and you've taken the better part of a week to get there - flying out in space, being flung around by gravitational pulls - you're probably going to want a rest when you arrive.

Which might explain why Odie - the rocket - is currently lying on its side, it's head resting on a Moon rock - after making history late last week and becoming the first ever privately built and operated robot to make a soft landing on the moon.

In truth: it's more of a technical hitch that has seen Odie land on its side - but happily, it hasn't appeared to have stopped it from carrying out its research duties, with reports that even while lying down and having a little rest, Odie's radio signals are still working and solar panels are still collecting energy from the sun to operate the tools on board that are collecting valuable information from the far side of the Moon.

A reminder that even if things don't always work out exactly the way you want them to, where there's a will, there's a way. And yes, I've stuck some links to video of Odie in today's episode notes. You're very welcome.

SPORT TIME

A couple of big sporting moments over the weekend in the United Kingdom involving Aussies ... starting with the announcement by organisers of the London Marathon that starting this year, they will offer equal prize money for able-bodied and wheelchair athletes.

At previous marathons, able-bodied athletes got paid more in prize money than those who competed in a wheelchair - which is not really fair when you think about it, as completing a marathon - which is 42 kilometres - would be at least as hard as running it.

Aussie wheelchair athlete, the magnificent Madison de Rozario, who is a good chance to win the London marathon in April, described the decision as a game-changer.

Meanwhile: having an altogether less successful time of it in the UK at the weekend were the all-conquering Penrith Panthers, who were pipped at the post - which means lost at the last minute - to English club Wigan by 16-12 in the World Club Challenge - which saw England's top NRL team take on Australia's.

Never mind Panthers - you've got a whole NRL season ahead to redeem yourselves.

THE S'QUIZ

This is the part of the podcast where you get to test how well you've been listening ...

1. A hospital for what sort of bird has been set up in New Zealand?
2. Which country did the Matilda's beat in their Olympic qualifier over the weekend?

3. What's the nickname of the spaceship that just landed, on its side, on the Moon?

SHOUT OUTS

It's February 26 Fashion Week begins in Paris today daaahling ... time to get your best gear on and hit the catwalk ...

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow...

Jude from Glenmore park, Elly from Springvale, Tanushi from Girraween, Olivia from Castle Hill, Ostein from Arncliffe, Elijah from Somerton Park, Kaylen from Forster, Eamon from Sydney, Shawnveer (pronounced Shaun-veer) from Cobbitty, Girivansh from Forest Lake, Arielle from Cannon Hill, Dan from Dee Why, Indie from Leura and Lenny from Palm Beach.

Happy belated birthday to... Vinne, Zoe and Lily from Yass, Nikki from Chinchilla, Kathryn from Kardinya, George from Mosman, Henley from Gulgong, Jenna from Ballina, Georgie and Lexie from Sydney, Andrew, Shaun, Edward and Dylan from Castle Hill and Iris listening all the way over there in Brooklyn New York.

Classroom shoutouts today go to... class 6S and Mr Spencer from St. Andrew's Cathedral School in Sydney, class 6B with Ms Fernandes at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Springvale, class 3/4MS with Miss Smurthwaite and Mrs Moore at Hamilton North Public School in Newcastle, class 4/5M with Mrs McNabb at Albury West Public School and the year 3/4 class with Ms Seymour at Poynter Primary School in Duncraig.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Kiwi
2. Uzbekistan
3. Odie