

Starship explosion a big win; Italy on top of rugby world; the alligator in the swimming pool; and the vet who wears a fox mask.

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

THE LOWDOWN

It's a podcast laden with lessons today as we start with the news that another SpaceX Starship has exploded during a test flight.

Over the weekend, SpaceX scientists sent another Starship rocket up into the Earth's atmosphere to test the rocket that will soon be transporting humans back to the Moon.

It flew high up into the sky - to a height of 233 kilometres - and started to come back down to Earth, for a planned splashdown in the Indian Ocean - but exploded in mid-air before it got there.

Now it's important to note there was no one aboard the test flight.

And while an exploding spaceship might sound like a bad outcome - and certainly it wasn't ideal - scientists were yesterday calling it a success.

So how can that be?

Because it was the longest test flight the Starship had ever done. It flew to the highest altitude a Starship had ever flown and along the way, lots and lots of really useful information was gathered which will be really helpful for the next test flight.

Because that's how experiments work - and that's how some of the most important discoveries in history were made .. by failing. Because with each failure, if we're smart, we learn lessons that will eventually lead us to succeed.

And so - as we speak - the clever scientists are back at the drawing board, making the necessary adjustments to their grand space exploration experiment so that within the next couple of years they'll be able to safely send humans up onto the Moon.

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Speaking of happy outcomes: and Western Australia was celebrating over the weekend after a family of seven who had gone missing on a lonely desert track were found alive and well.

The family had left in a 4WD from Kalgoorlie earlier in the week, but never arrived at their destination. It turned out their car had gotten bogged on a muddy road after flooding rains meant the region received more than 6 months worth of rain in 24 hours. Yikes.

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 York, in the United States - where a friendly alligator has been removed from a pool where he used to swim with kids.

Albert the 340 kilogram alligator was seized by local authorities at the weekend after they decided it was probably unsafe for him to be living in a suburban backyard pool - where kids were occasionally invited in to swim.

Poor old Albert is blind in both eyes - and had been with his owner for over 30 years - but the swimming with kids thing finally tipped it over the edge. Probably for the best.

Albert has been moved to a temporary animal sanctuary while authorities work out where he can go to spend a gentle alligator retirement.

And kids: it should go without saying: if you see a swimming pool with an alligator in it - no matter how friendly it seems - probably best not to jump in.

SPORT TIME

Let's see - so far today we've learned that failure is a big part of succeeding, that you should probably not swim in a swimming pool that has an alligator in it, and now we turn to the world of sport for our final lesson of the podcast. And that lesson comes to us from the sport of rugby and the nation of Italy.

The Six Nations rugby tournament has just finished - when all of the best rugby playing nations of Europe compete against one another. Italy is a country where rugby isn't played all that much - and for the longest time - they were the wooden spooners in the competition - which is what we call the team that comes last.

But yesterday morning, they pulled off a stunning victory against Wales which saw them come second last in the comp - and the celebrations were epic.

So why, you might ask, would you celebrate coming second last?

Because as any one who have ever played in a team that loses week after week will know - it's really really hard to run out on the pitch and keep trying. But that's how you get better. And every loss - no matter how demoralising - teaches us lessons and builds something called

resilience - which is a fancy word for having the guts to keep going even when it feels like all is lost.

Forza Italia! Congratulations Italy ... you're second last in the world of European rugby - but on top of the world for it.

ANIMAL KINGDOM

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And so it's back to the United States we go - where a vet has started to wearing a fox mask to help rear a baby fox that was found in an alley. Baby foxes are called cubs, or pups - because they look just like baby dogs when they are born. This particular pup had been abandoned and handed in to a local vet who quickly bought a furry fox mask on Amazon and started wearing it whenever she fed the bub.

Why? Because, as she explains in the video I've linked to in today's episode notes, when the cub opens its eyes to see who's feeding it, she wants it to see a fox, not a human - so that it can be released back into the wild more easily.

Apparently zookeepers in China who look after pandas do similarly - dressing up as pandas whenever they have to go into the panda enclosure - so that the wild animals don't become too accustomed to - or dependent on - humans.

Oh - and if you watch that video to the end you'll be treated to the cutest thing you'll see all week - which is the sight and sound of a fox giggling. You're welcome.

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. What's the name of the alligator in New York that's been swimming with kids?
2. What's the name of the SpaceX rocket that didn't quite make it back down to earth?
3. Which country did Italy beat this weekend to come second last in the Six Nations rugby tournament?

SHOUT OUTS

It's March 18 Today is Global Recycling Day .. so make sure you separate your waste properly today!

It's also a very special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... George from Vermont South, Leo from Tempe, Spencer from Farrah, Chloe from Ryde, Alistair from Sunshine Coast, Marco from Cheltenham, Sarah from Oatley, Penelope from Sydney, Brierley from Mt Isa, Julia from Warrnambool, Aubree from Cardiff South, Sarah from Ashmont, Tane from Dee Why, Chloe and Erin from Darwin and Mara listening over in Los Angeles, USA.

Belated shout outs go to... Ema from Springfield, Artie from Wagga Wagga, Penelope from Balmoral, Alannah from Echuca, Grace from Sandfly, Andre from Horsley Park and Teddy from North Bondi.

Classroom shoutouts today go to... class 3/4B and Mrs Boyle at Abbotsford State School, class 4KB with Mrs Kotian and Mrs Burton at Pymble Ladies College, class 5/6M and Mr Meesen at Mandama Primary School, class 1/2B and Ms Bartlett at Northern Bay College in Brisbane, class 4A and Miss Norris at Berwick Fields Primary School, class ALC3 with Miss Finn and Mrs Jackson at North Lakes High School in San Remo, class 5/6 with Miss Lewis at Millfield Public School in Cessnock and lastly

a happy birthday for yesterday to Mr Guy at Mansfield State School - it was great to meet you and 5A on Friday.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Albert
2. Starship
3. Wales