

Basketball madness in the US; Demon Hunters conquer the Oscars; the croc that hunted our ancestors; and the search for future Olympians

Hello and welcome to Squiz Kids Today ... your fresh take on what's happening in the world around you.

I'm Christie Kijurina -

It's Wednesday, March 18

In Squiz Kids Today ... Basketball madness in the US; Demon Hunters conquer the Oscars; the croc that hunted our ancestors; and the search for future Olympians

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

THE LOWDOWN

How old will you be in 2032? And what do you think you'll be doing? Because in seven years' time, the 2032 Brisbane Olympic Games and the 2032 Summer Paralympics will be held right here in Australia — and the search for athletes to compete in them has officially begun.

The Australian Institute of Sport has launched a nationwide talent search, with some of Australia's top athletes helping to spread the word and get involved in the program.

The idea is to find young Australians who might not even know they've got Olympic or Paralympic potential yet. Testing sessions will be held around the country for people aged roughly 13 to 23 — and you don't need to already be an elite athlete.

Instead, the AIS is looking for natural ability — things like speed, strength, coordination and reaction time — and then matching those traits to sports where athletes are most likely to succeed. It's the same kind of system that has helped uncover talent in the past — turning everyday kids into elite athletes.

So while most of us are still figuring out what we'll be doing in 2032... some of Australia's future Olympians might just be getting their start right now. We'll pop a link where you can find out more in the episode notes.

<https://www.ausport.gov.au/talent>

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 the United States, where one of the biggest sporting events of the year has just tipped off... March Madness!

It’s officially called the National Collegiate Athletic Association Basketball Tournament — The NCAA is the organisation that runs sport between American universities. And this is a giant knockout basketball tournament featuring the best university teams from across the country.

Now here’s something that might surprise Australian kids: in the United States, college sport is a really big deal. Universities have huge stadiums, massive crowds, and games broadcast on national television. Many of the country’s best athletes play for their university first before going professional. Think Michael Jordan or Steph Curry.

The men’s tournament features 68 teams, and March Madness is famous for “Cinderella teams” — small universities that suddenly beat the big teams and make an unexpected run through the tournament. And there’s also a huge women’s tournament happening at the same time, where top teams like the University of Connecticut Huskies are chasing the championship.

Over the next three weeks, the tournaments will shrink from dozens of teams down to just one men’s champion and one women’s champion with much of the nation awaiting the results... which is why Americans call it... March Madness.

ANCIENT EARTH

Long before humans ruled the planet, rivers were ruled by ambush predators. Animals that wait... perfectly still... before suddenly striking.

Now, researchers studying fossils in Ethiopia say one of those predators may have been hunting our ancient ancestors.

They've identified a previously unknown crocodile species called *Crocodylus lucivenator* — which translates to “Lucy’s hunter.” The name comes from Lucy, one of the most famous early human ancestor fossils ever discovered.

Lucy, was found in 1974. She belonged to a species called *Australopithecus afarensis* and lived in East Africa more than three million years ago, when early humans had begun walking upright but still shared their world with powerful predators.

This crocodile could grow up to 4 to 5 metres long — that’s about 13 to 16 feet, roughly the length of a small bus.

That made it the top predator in the rivers and wetlands where Lucy’s species lived.

Scientists say if Lucy or her family came down to the water for a drink... there’s a very good chance something like this crocodile was waiting nearby.

The ancient Earth was a dangerous place!

POP CULTURE CORNER

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As if defeating GwiMa wasn’t enough ... as if protecting the hon-moon wasn’t a big enough achievement – KPop Demon Hunters Rumi, Mira and Zoey swept the pool at the 98th Academy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles on Monday - making history for their homeland of Korea.

The movie won best animated feature - a first for Korea - the song Golden won the Oscar for best song - and its performance during the star-studded ceremony brought the house down.

Also bringing the house down and making a little bit of Oscars history was the film maker Autumn Durald Arkapaw ... who was honoured for her cinematography work on the movie Sinners.

Cinematography is the art of using light, landscape, movement and composition to tell a story in film - it’s an incredible art form. And on Monday, Autumn became the first woman AND the first Black person in the history of the Oscars to win the important award.

During her speech, she asked every woman in the auditorium to stand up - saying she wouldn’t have been there if it wasn’t for them.

Goosebumps.

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. In which year will the Olympics and Paralympics be held in the Australian city of Brisbane?
2. What phrase is used to describe small universities that suddenly beat the big teams during March Madness? Hint - named after a Disney princess
3. The newly identified crocodile species is called *Crocodylus lucivenator*... what does 'lucivenator' mean?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Wednesday, March 18 ... Today is Global Recycling Day — a day that reminds us that many of the things we throw away still have value.

Instead of thinking of old bottles, cans and paper as *waste*, the idea is to think of them as resources that can be turned into something new.

Your challenge today: before you toss something in the bin... check if it can go in the recycling instead and if it's bottles or cans, maybe make yourself some bin-coin too!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today... Tyler from Forest Lake, Charlotte from Rosewood, Crystal from Gladstone, Rumani from Kogarah, Elwood from Arncliffe, Marco from Cheltenham and Arthur from Mount Riverview.

Belated shoutouts go to... Nala from Warnervale, Maeve from Croydon and Arsh from the Central Coast.

Classroom shoutouts go to... year 4/5 class with Ms Amy and Ms Lazarus at Cowandilla Primary School, class 6MC with Ms McKelvey at Yarrabilba Primary School, class Honolulu 4 with Miss Hanson at Banks Public School in St Clair, class 5/6 senior Nielsons with Miss Praed at Avoca State School and the students with Miss Fagan, Mr Edwards and Miss Austin at Bullarah Public School.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. 2032
2. Cinderella Teams
3. Lucy hunter

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you want a shout out - or, if you're after a classroom shout out- drop us a line at squizkids@thesquiz.com.au or fill out the form on our website.

Well - that's all we have time for. Thanks for listening to Squiz Kids Today - we'll be back again tomorrow.

In the meantime ... get out there and have a most excellent day ... over and out.