

The case of the missing devil; Operation Mozzie takes off; AFL's Hawks fans in fake photo drama; and the World Cup's unlikely hero.

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

I'm Bryce Corbett

It's Thursday, June 4 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... The case of the missing devil; Operation Mozzie takes off; AFL's Hawks fans in fake photo drama; and the World Cup's unlikely hero.

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

THE LOWDOWN

They seek her here, they seek her there - those zookeepers, they seek her everywhere..

But Mary, the Tassie Devil has disappeared - and all of the Gold Coast is on alert wondering if maybe one of the scariest little Aussie animals there is is going to show up in their backyard.

I'm talking about the great escape by Mary the Tasmanian Devil from the Paradise Country wildlife sanctuary in Queensland, Australia.

The drama began early on Tuesday morning, when zookeepers went to her enclosure to feed Mary and her Tassie Devil buddy Mavka .. only to discover that Mary had escaped.

Disappeared. Flown the coop. Done a runner.

CCTV footage inside the Paradise Country sanctuary from 4am that same morning showed Mary running around the park - scampering here and there for a bit - before running up a road and out of sight.

Zookeepers believed she had somehow taken an - and I quote - ‘abnormally large leap’ - to jump the fence of her enclosure. What a clever girl!

Park rangers launched an immediate search - with sniffer dogs and drones - even searching late into the night using thermal imaging cameras to try and capture the nocturnal critter in the bush.

But at the time of recording this podcast - she was still on the run.

People who live nearby the wildlife sanctuary have been told to be on the lookout for Mary – and warned not to approach her if discovered. With her being a wild animal and all.

I don’t know about you - but I’d be keeping my doors locked and my pets inside.

And how would you know if Mary was in your garden? Tassie Devils screeches sound like this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW27vpK4ALQ&t=12s>

Not the sort of sound you want to hear down the bottom of your backyard in the dead of night ...

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, Mexico, and Canada - where the FIFA World Cup is about to kick off, and the world’s biggest sporting event has an unlikely new hero.

If you think of the best known mens’ footballers in the world right now, you think Kylian Mbappé, Ousmane Dembélé or Jude Bellingham ... the name Tim Payne hasn’t really figured among them.

Until now, that is.

The Kiwi defender has seen his social media followers go from a modest 5,000 to a ridiculous 4.2 million after an Argentinian influencer plucked Payne from obscurity and named him as the Player of the Tournament for the upcoming World Cup - which kicks off in all three countries the US, Mexico and Canada this time next week.

Why did he choose Tim Payne? Because he was the ‘least known footballer in the world’ and the Argentinian king maker wanted to find a player who was modest and simple enough to “represent us all, no matter their nationality’.

What does New Zealander, Payne think about all of this?

He’s flattered, if a bit confused by all the attention.

And what’s the name of the New Zealand men’s soccer team? That would be the All Whites ..

Because having 4.2 million strangers suddenly interested in him is all-white with Tim Payne (DAD JOKE ALARM) – ah, my old friend, the dad joke alarm ... it’s been a while.

WEIRD SCIENCE

—

Now, I don’t know about you - but there have been many moments in my life when I have scratched a mozzie bite or slapped dead a mozzie that’s been feasting on my blood - and thought to myself: what is the point of these critters? They really just exist to annoy me ..

But it turns out they have a higher purpose – after a bunch of scientists in the United States prepare to release a swarm of mosquitoes - some 32 million of them, to be exact - which have been specifically bred to wipe out some of the worst diseases in the world.

Normal mosquitoes are responsible for spreading some of the nastiest diseases the world has known - including dengue fever and malaria.

This swarm of special mosquitoes however carry a special bacteria that kills the diseases that live inside normal mosquitoes. So by sending out this swarm of special mozzies to interact and breed with normal mozzies - it’s hoped that we can start to control and maybe even wipe out these diseases.

Genius!

NEWSHOUNDS

Every Thursday, Squiz-E the Newshound pops into Squiz Kids HQ to report back on fishy things he’s sniffed out on the internet ... how goes it Squiz-E? Have you had a good week? (SQUIZ-E Howl) ... pleased to hear it.

Now let's see ... what's gotten Squiz-E's attention this week? A-ha — it would be a fake photo operation that has been targeting fans of the AFL team the Hawthorn Hawks.

A couple of weeks ago, social media posts appeared online appearing to show Marvel Stadium on fire .. .with flames licking the roof and black smoke billowing out of it.

The accompanying posts describes a blaze breaking out the Hawks' home ground - with fans being forced to flee in terror.

Except the whole thing is AI-generated. The image is not real, the post is fake news - and the whole thing has been created by a group of people in Vietnam - who are known for creating this sort of disinformation - and who clearly need to do more research - because Marvel Stadium is not even the Hawks' home ground.

Now - lots of people have seen these stories and clicked on the link to find out more - only to be taken to a trick website with more fake information.

It's yet another reminder why we should always do as Squiz-E tells us in the Newshounds media literacy program .. say it with me .. "STOP, THINK and CHECK' - before believing everything we see online.

And if you're interested in your class joining the more than 4,500 who have already signed up to access the free Newshounds classroom resource - hop on over to squizkids.com.au .. thanks Squiz-E - you've done it again!

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Which pesky insect are scientists planning to use to try and wipe out diseases like dengue fever?
2. What is the name given to the New Zealand men's national soccer team?
3. What's the name of the Tasmanian Devil that escaped from a Queensland wildlife sanctuary earlier this week?

SHOUTOUTS

It's Thursday, June 4, .. today is International Corgi Day - so if you have a corgi, give it some love today ... it's also National Hug Your Cat Day in the United States - which I think should pretty much be everyday, non?

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

Rosalie from Shoalhaven Heads, Agnes from Ripley Valley, Charlotte from Heidelberg West, Estrella from Strathfield, Seth from Kapunda and Eduardo, Dieter and Aaron all from Palmerston.

Belated shoutouts go to...

Classroom shoutouts go to... class K1 with Mrs Webster and class 2/3 with Miss Kelly at Cudal Public School, the grade 4 classes with Ms Hill, Ms Bougoure (pron Boo-Goor) and Ms Weir at Saint Aidan's School in Corinda and class 6 Spirit with Mr Shaw at Holy Spirit Catholic School in Bray Park.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Mosquitoes .. also accept mozzies
2. All Whites
3. Mary

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you'd like a shoutout, or if you want a classroom shoutout... 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 with the Kids v Adults Weekly News S'quiz .. .

.

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