

Fab Four remain in World Cup semis; Japan's bear problem; Neil the Seal heads back to sea; and the world's fastest spider.

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 Monday, July 13 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Fab Four remain in World Cup semis; Japan's bear problem; Neil the Seal heads back to sea; and the world's fastest spider.

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

THE LOWDOWN

And then there were four ...

After four weeks of competition - meanings four weeks of late nights and early mornings for Aussie fans - the FIFA World Cup has come down to the semi finals with four teams left to fight it out for the golden trophy.

That's a lot of fours ...

And the final four are England, Argentina, France and Spain ... after a weekend of dramatic quarter final action that saw crowd favourites Norway knocked out and fellow tiny country, Switzerland, come close to defeating the defending champs, Argentina.

Breakout star of the tournament Erling Haaland and his merry band of Norwegian vikings did their valiant best to topple England yesterday, finally losing 2 goals to one - despite a controversial disallowed goal to Norway and the freaky intervention of a spider cam cable which may have helped England score one of its goals.

Argentina meanwhile simply wore poor little Switzerland down, winning 3-1 after a late flurry of goals in extra time.

Those two semis followed Spain beating Belgium and France edging out Morocco earlier in the weekend.

With the end of Norway's World Cup streak comes disappointment for the country's 5 million inhabitants - but also for the millions of others around the world who got caught up in viking fever ... with one Norwegian sports expert explaining the country's approach to sports .. saying "at the end of the day, we are not interested in winning as much as we're interested in learning" ...

And to celebrate the world being briefly Norwegian this World Cup - we're publishing our special Squiz The World episode on Norway tomorrow - in this podcast feed, first thing ..

You know what else you missed while you were on school hols last week? That would be NAIDOC Week - celebrating the history and achievements of Australian's Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people ...

The theme this year was Deadly at 50 - 'cos it's been 50 Years since hte first NAIDOC week -

And among the activities last week was the announcement of nominees for this year's NAIDOC Awards ... with a special shout out to the Murri School in suburban Brisbane - nominated in the education category for the great work it does connecting indigenous kids to their culture ... Squiz Kids Salutes you!

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 Japan – where the bear problem is getting worse by the day.

We've talked before in this podcast about how more and more of Japan's wild black bears have started wandering into towns and cities.

Experts are now starting to join the dots between Japan's shrinking population and the bear's boldness in wandering into human habitats.

According to them: with Japan's population getting smaller, there are lots of abandoned homes on the outskirts of some Japanese towns – houses that sit right next to forest where bears live.

And without any humans to compete with - bears have started moving in - taking over the outskirts of these towns and sometimes wandering into places where humans are.

And you thought your next door neighbours were a handful - imagine having a bunch of bears next door – Goldilocks eat your heart out.

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Residents of a small town on the coast of Tasmania are breathing a sigh of relief as Neil the Seal hauled himself back into the ocean earlier this week - leaving behind a trail of destruction.

The 5 year-old, 1000 kilogram elephant seal became a social media sensation over the past couple of weeks as he lumbered through the streets of Dunalley - south of Hobart - knocking over fences, chowing down on traffic cones and taking a particular dislike of marker poles alongside Dunalley's streets.

Neil's visit to the Tasmanian town has become an annual event. Elephant seals will usually return to the place they were born. For now though, Neil is believed to be back on his way out into the vast Southern Ocean where he will spend the next six months at sea - eating and getting as fat as he can. How good ..

And if you think 1000 kilograms is a whole lot of seal - get this: Neil is only a teenage and once fully grown is expected to weigh around 5,000 kilograms ...

They're going to have to build some stronger fence poles ...

BIGGEST, FURTHEST, LONGEST

There are so many super cool critters in Australia - it's almost not fair to the rest of the world.

And now one of our very own insects has just staked it's claim to be the fastest spider on the planet.

I'm talking about huntsmen .. the long-legged, hairy-bodied, big-fanged Aussie spider found in gardens, bathrooms and bedrooms all up and down the east coast of Australia.

The ones that are harmless to humans - mostly - but freak out tourists and make visitors to our fair country run for the hills when they see them.

Scientists in the UK have measured the speed of a bunch of spiders from around the world and found that the brown huntsman moves fastest - at up to 13 km/h ..

Now - that might not sound all that fast if you think about a car travelling at that speed .. but when the critter in question is making a dash across your bedroom floor or wall - heading straight for you - that's light-speed fast on the terrifying scale.

Am I right?

Q+A ANDY GRIFFITHS Q&A

—

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Neil the Seal currently weighs about 1,000 kg ... how heavy is he expected to weigh when he is a full grown adult?
2. How many kilometres an hour has the huntsman spider been clocked at?
3. Name the team that World Cup favourite Erling Haaland plays for?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Monday, July 13 – tomorrow is an important holiday in France, Bastille Day - which is their national day with lots of fireworks ... good timing given the convincing win the French had over the Wallabies on Saturday night - but the less said about that the better
//

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Mario from West Albury, Joanna from Derrimut, Jordan from Mansfield and Oliver from Belmont.

If you celebrated a birthday over the recent break, your shoutout was featured in our Road Trip Quiz episodes released each Friday during the holidays. If you missed the cut-off, send us an email and we'll happily give you a belated birthday shoutout. A special belated happy birthday to Shari from Tanilba Bay, Georgia from Parkinson, Olivia K from Forest Lake, Chloe from Vermont South, Isla (pron Eye-la) from Leura, Zoe from Franklin and Jack and Otis from Yarrawonga.

Classroom shoutouts are back next week! If you'd like us to give your class a shoutout, ask your teacher or a parent to send us an email with your school, class and teacher's name or complete the shoutout request form on our website.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. 5,000
2. 13 km/h
3. Norway

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 our special Squiz The World episode on Norway ... because today, we are all honorary vikings ..

.

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