

Aussie gold rush at Games; Mobile phone alert day; tracking vulnerable koalas; and China's yak cloning program.

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 27 - Aussie gold rush at Games; Mobile phone alert day; tracking vulnerable koalas; and China's yak cloning program.

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

THE LOWDOWN

And it's been a gold rush for Australia at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games over the weekend - with the Aussie anthem on high rotation as our athletes cleaned up in the pool, on the track and on the gymnastics floor.

Last night, Australia was riding high at the top of the medal tally with 12 gold, 5 silver and 6 bronze medals - with England second place with 3 gold, seven silver and 5 bronze.

It was gold-a-palooza in the pool for the Aussies with six gold medals snatched on Day 1 and another 6 claimed on Day 2.

The sweetest victory? That belonged to Sam Williamson in the men's 100m breaststroke. Sam suffered a crushing leg injury last year which meant he was unable to walk. But following hard work, determination and a lot of tears of frustration - he's now a Commonwealth Games gold medallist. Squiz Kids Salutes you, Sam!

And a big Squiz Kids Salute to our women's gymnastics team - who were yesterday celebrating their gold medal .. a victory that was made all the sweeter for the fact Georgia Godwin was part of the team .. Georgia missed out on qualifying for the Paris Olympics because of an injury to her Achilles tendon - but fought back to become Australia's most decorated female gymnast in Games history ... decorated doesn't mean someone has painted her - but that she's won the most medals...

Hard work and determination, kids. No matter the obstacles you have to overcome. Nothing can replace it.

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If your mobile phone starts blaring an emergency signal at 2pm today - do not be alarmed!

Your phone - and every phone in the country - will be part of an emergency signal test, the first of its kind as the government rolls out a new national warning system called AusAlert.

It's basically a way to get an emergency message to every person in Australia who owns a phone - which is practically everyone, with recent government stats suggesting 97 percent of Australians owned or used a mobile.

The emergency alert would be used in future for fires or floods or health emergencies where authorities need to get a message to people urgently.

So - at 2pm today - even if the phone is on silent or do not disturb - every mobile in the country is going to start bleating. Consider yourself warned ..

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 Spain and France - where a quarter of a million people have been evacuated from homes and holiday spots as wildfires burn across the region.

Smoke was last night blanketing the major French city of Bordeaux in the south where some 200,000 residents of the city and neighbouring regions have been told to leave their homes and seek shelter , while a state of emergency was declared in Spain as fires surrounded the capital city, Madrid.

It's been a long, hot summer already in Europe - with heatwave conditions in large parts of a continent that usually enjoys mild summers. The Spanish Prime Minister yesterday pointed the finger at climate change for creating conditions that led to the wildfires.

Fires have also been burning across Greece and Italy in a season that's been marred by fire activity.

Squiz Kids listeners in those countries: stay safe - we're thinking of you.

WEIRD SCIENCE

In a far-away place called Tibet - high in the Himalaya mountain ranges - the locals rely on a most curious animal for pretty much everything.

It's called a yak - and it's a sort of wild ox that lives in high altitudes and has big horns and a wild shaggy coat to keep it warm.

Tibetan farmers rely on yaks for wool, meat, milk and to help them plow fields. Yak fat is also used as a butter, to light lamps - and even as a moisturiser. So - you know - a pretty handy animal.

Now Chinese scientists have started a program to clone Tibetan yaks .. they're using DNA science to create yak clones that are more resilient to the harsh winter conditions and which grow faster and bigger.

Cloning is a new science - with some companies looking to try and use it to bring back extinct species like the woolly mammoth and Tasmanian tiger. Think Jurassic Park ...

Unsurprisingly: it's a science that is controversial, to say the least - with some questioning the ethics of messing with nature ...

Ethics? That's the study of what's right and wrong - a branch of something called philosophy See? The things you learn on this podcast ...

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Still in the animal world - and closer to home - a program to attach solar-powered monitoring collars to koalas in the wild is helping researchers preserve koala populations under threat.

The program in Brisbane has seen animal conservationists capture vulnerable koalas and attach the collars meaning they can more easily locate them and intervene quickly when a problem arises.

Before the collar program, locating koalas high in the trees was a time-consuming process. But it's now hoped by giving them a new hi-tech necklace - they'll be better able to help them, more quickly, when something goes wrong.

Solar-powered tracking collars — it's the new koala fashion accessory of the season ...

Q+A ANDY GRIFFITHS Q&A

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Hands up if you've ever read an Andy Griffiths Treehouse book? Or one of his You + Me series of books?

Then you'll be as excited as we are that he is joining the podcast to any questions you might have for him.

We've extended the deadline for questions until the end of the week - because he's just so popular.

So - to hear yourself on Squiz Kids, to ask a question of Australia's leading kids' author and to go into the draw to win a signed book pack from the man himself - send your questions quicksticks to squizkids@thesquiz.com.au

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There are prizes for the best questions, including a signed Andy Griffiths book pack—but you'll need to be quick. Entries close next week, so get those gigantic thinking caps on!

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. Aussie gymnast Georgia Godwin missed out on the Paris Olympics after suffering an injury to what tendon ... named after a Greek demigod.
2. The Commonwealth Games are taking place in which Scottish city?
3. Name the place in the world starting with T, high in the Himalaya mountain range, where yaks are being cloned.

SHOUTOUTS

It's Monday, July 27 – today is Bagpipe Appreciation Day ... which is good timing, given that the Commonwealth Games are taking place in Scotland, the spiritual home of bagpipes ..

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today and tomorrow... Esther from Yass, Albie from Maiden Gully, Alison from Brighton, Leland and Spencer from Bradbury, Adrianna from Oran Park, James from Geebung, Florence from Lane Cove West, Evie from Melbourne and Harriet from Balgowlah Heights.

Belated shoutouts go to ... Ishaan and Echo from Gumdale, Hugo from Maroubra and Ella from Campbelltown.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Achilles
2. Glasgow
3. Tibet

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 a brand new Squiz The World as we pay a visit to the country of Spain ... they're on top of the world since they won the FIFA World Cup - but what do you really know about this country that's home to the second most spoken language in the world?

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