Young Olympians shine in Africa; the rise of mountain robots; a pretend year on Mars ends; and birds behaving boldly!

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, November 4

In Squiz Kids Today …. Young Olympians shine in Africa; the rise of mountain robots; a pretend year on Mars ends; and birds behaving boldly!

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

THE LOWDOWN

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Fifty hours of travelling. That's more than two whole days getting from Australia to Senegal in West Africa. You'd want a seriously good supply of snacks… But for 41 young Australian athletes, something pretty special was waiting at the other end: the Youth Olympic Games!

The Youth Olympics are like the teenage edition of the Olympics, bringing together some of the world's best young athletes to compete for their countries. Everyone competing is 17 or younger, and some are just 14, so they're not that much older than you! The Games kicked off on October 31 and run until November 13. They're only the fourth Summer Youth Olympics ever, and the first Olympic sporting event ever held in Africa.

Australia's team is competing in 16 sports, and leading the Aussies into the opening ceremony were our proud flag bearers, coastal rower Millie Griffin and beach volleyballer Thomas Turner. And here's a fun fact: some of Australia's biggest sporting stars got their start at the Youth Olympics, including paddler Jess Fox and swimmers Emma McKeon, Kyle Chalmers and Kaylee McKeown. They all went on to win Olympic gold!

You can watch some events live and free on 9Now and 9Go!, although with lots of competition happening while Australia's asleep, you might prefer catching the highlights each afternoon. I've popped a link to the team and the broadcast times in the episode notes.

Who knows? You might spot someone you'll be cheering for at a future Olympics!

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Meanwhile, Point of Law won yesterday's Melbourne Cup at Flemington, with Zahrann second and Juja Kibo third. Royal Supremacy had led for much of the race, stretching roughly 15 to 20 horse lengths ahead of the chasing pack! But that enormous lead wasn't enough to hold them off. Point of Law took the honours when it mattered.

https://www.olympics.com.au/games/dakar-2026/team/

https://tvblackbox.com.au/page/2026/10/31/where-to-watch-the-2026-youth-olympic-games-in-australia/

SPIN THE GLOBE

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Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops. And today, we've landed in China, where a mountain-climbing competition has given a whole new meaning to the words … robot uprising.

Because these robots were literally going UP. Up Mount Tai, a famous mountain where Chinese emperors made special journeys hundreds of years ago. On Monday, it hosted the World Mountain Robot Challenge.

Around 90 teams sent their machines up an ancient stone path with more than 3,000 steps. There were robots with two legs, robots with four … and robots having a very bad day. One wearing a bandana (yes, really) collapsed in a heap, and another tumbled down a flight of stairs and landed next to a rubbish bin. Ouch.

Some raced to be the fastest, while others had to carry eggs and watermelons without smashing them. The winning four-legged robot zoomed up the 3.9-kilometre course in just under 44 minutes. Most people take at least two hours!

It's all about testing how robots cope in the real world, where wonky ground makes every step a challenge. Although I reckon carrying the groceries up thousands of stairs deserves a medal all by itself.

https://www.euronews.com/video/2026/11/02/humanoid-robots-climb-chinas-mount-tai-in-unusual-challenge

SPACED OUT

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Imagine spending more than a year living with the same three people … without being able to pop outside for a walk or visit your friends. For four NASA volunteers, that's been life for the past 378 days. And they've just stepped out of a pretend mission to Mars!

Let's unpack this.

The mission was to help scientists work out what humans will need to live and work on the real planet Mars - requiring them to live for over a year on a pretend Mars built right here on Earth.

But this was no year-long holiday. There were crops to grow on pretend Mars, equipment to fix, workouts to do and pretend spacewalks to complete, which NASA calls "Marswalks." Even their messages with the outside world were delayed by up to 22 minutes, copying how long it can take messages to travel all the way between Earth and Mars.

And it wasn't exactly roomy. Their home was a 3D-printed habitat located in Houston, Texas, measuring just 158 square metres. That's only a little bit bigger than a third of a basketball court. Oof!

The crew finally walked out on Saturday, which just happened to be Halloween. And after 378 days cooped up together, I reckon a change of scenery would feel pretty out of this world.

https://www.reuters.com/science/crew-nasas-simulated-mars-mission-emerges-after-378-days-isolation-2026-11-01/

ANIMAL KINGDOM

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It's spring … flowers are blooming, chicks are hatching, and some protective bird parents are making their feelings very clear. Just ask Louis, a 12-year-old from north-east Victoria, who says the same magpie has swooped him every spring for six years!

Experts say magpies can recognise faces and remember people for ages, and Louis reckons his red hair and massive mullet make him extra easy to spot.

So, if a magpie swoops you, stay calm and walk away, without running or flapping your arms. A hat, sunglasses or an umbrella can protect your head, and if you're on a bike, hop off and walk it. Best of all, avoid nesting areas if you can.

Meanwhile, near Townsville in north Queensland, pensioner Mal Richards has a different feathered problem: a female emu called Eric. Eric follows Mal around while he does his chores and leaves plenty of poo behind. Locals love her, but Mal would like his personal space back, please. Rangers say she's not causing any real trouble, but people should give her room and not feed her.

Talk about tenacious, which is a fancy way of saying you don't give up easily! And for more determined emus, check out our Shortcut on the Great Emu War. Turns out humans have quite a history of being given the runaround by these big birds.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-11-03/magpie-swooping-schoolboy-in-years-long-grudge/107270052

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-11-01/eric-the-emu-terrorising-pensioner/107288146

THE S'QUIZ

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

1. In which African country are the Youth Olympic Games being held?
2. How many days did the NASA volunteers spend in their Mars simulation?
3. Name the two types of troublesome birds mentioned in today's Animal Kingdom. Half a point for each.

SHOUT OUTS

It's Wednesday, November 4 – on this day, wayyy back in 1922, archaeologist Howard Carter's team uncovered a stone step in Egypt's Valley of the Kings. It led down to the

tomb of Tutankhamun… an ancient Egyptian pharaoh whose burial site and treasures had been hidden for more than 3,000 years. Amazing!

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today…Leona from Roswood and Zach from Riverview

Belated shoutouts go to … Kaiusfrom the Gold Coast, Skanda from Red Hill, Jacob from Pymble and Arlo and Eilik from NSW

Classroom shoutouts go to… year 5/6 with Ms B at Faith Lutheran College in Tanunda, class 6L with Mr Lawrence at Red Hill Primary School in Canberra and class 4 Blue with Mrs Wright and Mrs Worland at Catherine Macauley School in Orange.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Senegal
2. 378
3. Magpie and Emu

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you'd like a shoutout, or if you want a classroom shoutout, or parents, if you'd like to shout out a class or a wonderful teacher… drop us a line at squizkids@thesquiz.com.au or fill out the form on our website.

And finally: if you love Squiz Kids, we'd love you do us a favour and hit follow on Apple Podcasts or Spotify or wherever you're listening to us. And while you're there, why not share this episode with someone you think would enjoy it too? The only way we can continue to do what we do is by growing and in order to grow, we need your support -

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.