

BtN: Episode 18 Transcript 23/06/15

Coming up:

- We take a look at the controversy surrounding toy guns.
- Learn all about Ramadan from some kids taking part.
- And should ten pin bowling be an Olympic sport?

Hi I'm Nathan and you're watching Behind the News. You can see all of those stories later. But first let's take a look at the biggest headlines this week. Here's the wire.

The Wire

Last week we told you about allegations the Australian Government has paid people smugglers to turn their boats around. Well now the Labor party has been accused of doing the same thing when they were in office.

Opposition leader Bill Shorten has denied it but hasn't ruled out paying people smugglers for other reasons. Meanwhile the United Nations has hit out at Prime Minister Tony Abbott saying paying smugglers is wrong and may end up encouraging more boats to come.

But so far the PM is still refusing to say if it happened or not.

TONY ABBOTT: There's really only one thing to say here and that is we have stopped the boats.

To school news and a high school in South Australia has decided to get rid of grades 8-10. Instead they're going to put kids in classes together depending on where they're at in each separate subject.

The school says it's all about making sure all kids are well prepared for Years 11 and 12.

An angry letter from Taylor Swift has forced the most powerful company on earth, Apple, to change its mind about its new music streaming service.

Apple had originally decided not to pay artists for any songs played during a three month free trial that it's going to offer to customers. But that made Taylor angry!

She said, while she's got plenty of money, missing three months of payments could be really tough for young and emerging musicians. So she threatened to pull out and within a day Apple had changed its mind.

And finally, remember Chloe who told us about 'Pirate day Friday' earlier in the year?

CHLOE: So dress up like a pirate and enrol your schools at Pirate Day Friday.com and help show support and help raise awareness for childhood brain cancer.

Well it was held for the first time a couple of weeks ago. And many kids got involved including this school in Tassie.

KIDS: We really wanted to help so we asked our teacher, and the whole school dressed up as pirates, we raised 264 dollars and 55 cents. And we wish the best of luck to all people with brain cancer, especially Chloe.

Great work to everyone who supported her campaign.

Wind Farms

Reporter: Eloise Fuss

INTRO: Now to wind farms which were a hot topic of conversation last week after the Prime Minister said they "make a lot of noise" and are "visually awful". He also suggested that he wished there were fewer of them in Australia. But how many are there and how do they actually work? Eloise visited a school that can tell us.

ELOISE FUSS, REPORTING: They're taller than a 20 story building, with blades, heaps longer than a bus. They're wind turbines, and these ones happen to sit pretty close to this school.

Rapid Bay Primary School is here, in South Australia. And just here, is the Starfish Hill Wind Farm.

ANIKA: There are about 23 wind turbines there, and they generate electricity.

NICHOLAS: Not many schools would have wind turbines nearby so it's pretty rare to have.

The wind farm helps fund this school, and for these kids, use it as a chance to learn more about wind energy.

BRUCE: I made a wind turbine out of cardboard tubing and some Lego.

ANGUS: We have a poster tube, covered that with paper and we have a drink bottle lid and some cut out pieces of cardboard.

They also know exactly how wind turbines work.

ANGUS: The wind comes in from the front to make it turn, it goes into the generator and then gets sent down through to the power station. It works opposite to a fan, so it creates energy instead of using energy to make it spin.

But what happens if the wind isn't blowing?

Angus: Well when there's no wind, you're out of luck!

Over the past few years, wind farms have popped up in many places across the country. They only work in places that are windy enough. But there's now about 70 farms nation-wide, with close to 1700 wind turbines on them. All up, they produce enough energy to power 1.3 million homes. They'll never provide power all day, every day, but they are pretty effective in the right conditions.

But whether we'll see many more wind farms, has been a hot topic of discussion lately. Because some politicians, like the Prime Minister, have said they really don't like them.

PRIME MINISTER, TONY ABBOTT: Up close they're ugly. They're noisy.

The kids from Rapid Bay primary say they've heard similar things.

NICHOLAS: Some people don't like wind farms because they look ugly and not natural for the environment.

ANGUS: Some people don't like them because they're noisy and when you're living near them they can be a bit annoying.

But, they've also heard people say they have different opinions too.

NICHOLAS: Some people think the opposite, like they look good and they're good for the environment, because instead of burning coal you're just harnessing the power of the wind.

BRUCE: I reckon they're good for the environment because they make lots of energy and it's not like coal which can make massive black clouds.

NICHOLAS: To me they remind me of helicopters.

By 2020, the Government has promised that 20% of Australia's energy will come from clean or renewable energy, that's things like solar and wind power, which can never run out.

NICHOLAS: I think we'll see more in the future when people start realising that they're a good thing for the environment.

So that's how these kids feel about wind farms. But what about you? Let us know on our website.

Toy Gun Debate

Reporter: Nicholas Maher

INTRO: Now, pictures of a young boy holding a toy gun near the site of the 2014 Sydney siege got a lot of people angry recently. Some said it was dangerous because it could have been mistaken for a real weapon. Others said it was

disrespectful. But pretty soon the debate shifted to whether kids still need to play with toy guns at all. We're going to find out what you think about that with a poll. But first here's Nic with more.

BARTENDER: What'll it be?

GOOD GUY: Milk. Full cream.

BAD GUY: I thought I told you to get out. This place ain't big enough for the two of us.

GOOD GUY: I ain't going nowhere.

NICHOLAS MAHER, REPORTING: Playing with toy guns is something kids have been doing for a really long time. In the past they were used to encourage kids to enlist in the army when they got older. Then as TV shows and movies became more popular, kids began using toy guns to imitate their favourite on-screen heroes.

COMMERCIAL: The gun and hip slung Mattel holster are specially made for a fast draw.

And today many kids still play with them. But recently, one toy gun caused some big issues.

NEWSREADER: A photo of a young boy carrying an imitation AK-47 assault rifle has angered parents and experts.

A kid was photographed holding a big toy gun outside a cafe where a violent siege happened last year. It got a lot of people talking about whether toy guns should still be used at all.

Some people worry that playing with toy guns can make kids think violence is okay and that it doesn't properly teach them about the consequences of dangerous weapons.

BARTENDER: Are you okay?

GOOD GUY: Yeah, it's just foam.

BARTENDER: Oh.

Another problem is that while kids might be playing with fake guns, sometimes they can create really dangerous situations.

Not all toy guns look fake and over the past few years, there have been a number of kids around the world who've been hurt or even killed because people thought the toy guns they were carrying were real.

NEWS REPORT: The object that looks like a handgun we now know is really a toy pellet gun.

It's a big reason why a lot of the toy guns these days are really colourful, or have an orange tip on the end to make it more obvious they're fake.

On the other side of the toy gun debate though, there are people that think kids should still be able to play with toy guns.

They say it's just a bit of fun and a big part of growing up.

GOOD GUY: I'm out!

BARTENDER: Here, use this one.

They reckon playing games like this actually help teach kids about the difference between right and wrong.

BAD GUY: Okay, okay I give up, I give up.

GOOD GUY: I'm taking you to the sheriff.

So, that's the arguments for and against toy guns. What do you think?

KID 1: I reckon kids should be able to play with them because they're a fun toy.

KID 2: Maybe at your house but not in public because people can mistake them for real guns and be highly dangerous.

KID 3: I think they should be allowed because they're fun to have wars with your family and friends.

KID 4: They shouldn't be banned but when you use them it should only be at home.

KID 5: Sometimes I reckon they teach you about how guns work and whether or not you like them.

Online Poll

Okay, as promised it's poll time. Do you think kids should still play with toy guns? Head to our website to place your vote.

Now, last week we asked you if overseas groups should be able to buy Australian farms. We had a lot of you vote; nearly 5000 and most of you went with no. As always, thanks for sharing your opinion.

Ramadan

Reporter: Carl Smith

INTRO: Heaps of young Muslims across Australia have now begun marking the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. But what is actually involved? To find out we sent Carl to meet up with some of the kids taking part.

CARL SMITH, REPORTING: This is the first food 14 year old Ali and his family have had all day. They haven't had anything to eat or drink since sunrise this morning! It's because they're celebrating a special time of year in their religion, called Ramadan.

Ali is a Muslim which means he follows the religion of Islam. During the month of Ramadan most Muslim people do something called fasting. That means they don't eat or drink anything between sunrise and sunset for a whole month!

They can't even drink water through the day! It's pretty tough, but for people like Ali it's a really important part of his religion.

ALI: It's just to feel how the poor people feel, you know they don't get to have a lot of water and food so that's mostly what it's about. It's a test.

Just like other religions, Islamic people have certain times of the year to celebrate their faith, and Ramadan is one of them. During that month they spend more time thinking about their religion, kind of like Christmas or Easter for Christians or Rosh Hashanah for Jewish people.

During Ramadan Muslim people learn more about the Islamic religion by reading from their religious book which is called the Quran, and the fasting is to help them focus on that.

Each year Ramadan starts on a slightly different date, because the name Ramadan is actually the name of a month in the Islamic calendar and that calendar is a little bit different because it's based on the cycles of the moon.

Although many Muslims don't eat or drink through the day during Ramadan they do have some extra big meals before dawn and after sunset. Because having no food or water at all for a whole month would be impossible! But even with these big meals Ali says Ramadan can still be pretty hard.

ALI: "It's a little bit hard, especially, like sometimes we have football games. We still play but we don't drink water!"

And he and his cousins say going to school can be tricky too.

KARIMA: Usually my friends come with these amazing lunches from like different places and I'm like in the classroom and they're all eating their lunch and recess and I'm like you know waiting for the bell to go, so that's probably the hardest part.

ALI: Yeah it's a little bit hard, I get hungry really easily.

SALEH: I haven't told anyone about it because I moved to this new school and I haven't fasted there yet. Tomorrow will be my first day fasting at my new school.

Around the world there are more than 1.6 billion Muslim people. That's almost one quarter of the world's population! But not all of them fast during Ramadan. People who are pregnant, elderly or people who are sick often don't. And kids can only start doing it after they've reached puberty.

But some do practice fasting before then often just for a few days. Ali has been fasting for Ramadan since he was 10 and he says it's a bit easier this time.

ALI: It was really hard back then you get more used to it.

And although it's a tough month, these guys love learning about their religion. And it doesn't hurt that there's a big party called Eid when the month wraps up!

KARIMA: At the end we get this big celebration and we go to the mosque and we do our morning prayer and stuff like that and it's really fun to meet up with family and stuff.

ALI: Well there's a lot of food we're allowed to eat yeah! And there's rides and it's a lot of fun.

Ramadan can be a real challenge but these guys wouldn't have it any other way.

Quiz 1

Okay, quiz time now. What is the symbol for Islam?

Is it -

A cross

Two hands praying

Or A crescent moon and star

The answer is a crescent moon and star.

Learning Pressure

Reporter: Eloise Fuss

INTRO: Next, we're heading to South Korea where students get some of the best school marks in the world. But what is their secret to success? Well as Eloise found out it's a mix of hard work and a fair bit of pressure. Take a look.

In South Korea, maths teachers can be treated like celebrities. Ads for online tutoring, look more like movie trailers. There's even pop songs about academic success.

SONG: Fantastic marks and the uni you've dreamed of, miracle is getting closer, give it all.

For many South Korean kids doing well at school isn't just important - it's everything.

South Korea used to be a really poor country, lots of kids couldn't read, and their economy wasn't very good. But in the last 30 years they've turned it all around.

South Korea is now one of the most technologically advanced countries on earth. Its economy is thriving. And its students are achieving some of the best maths and literacy results in the world. But to make this happen, South Korean kids have to study incredibly hard.

In Australia, most kids do about 7 hours of school work a day, plus a bit of homework. But in South Korea they do double that - up to 15 hours a day!

That's definitely the case for Kim Seo Hyeong. Right now she's getting ready for her final high school exams. She says, "that everyone works hard in Korea, so you think a lot about how you also need to work just as hard as people around you." She arrives at school at around 7:30 in the morning, where some kids have been studying so late that they fall asleep on their desks.

When school's finally over for the day, you might think it's time to relax. But in South Korea, the school work continues. Most kids either study by themselves or pay to go to 'cram schools' for even more lessons. Often until 11 o'clock at night.

But for some kids the pressure is just all too much. This boy ran away from home because he couldn't live up to his family's expectations.

BOY: Grandfather told me to study hard because it's a good academic school and I shouldn't put the school to shame, and it was hard. I think if parents stop forcing their children to study so hard, and help them do what they want to do, there will be fewer situations like this.

Most would agree that school work and learning is a good thing, and there are many who admire how well South Korea has done. But it's led some people to ask, how much school work is too much?

SONG: Even when sleep as sweet as candy tempts you, fight it, endure it, you can't fall, give it all!

The Score

Okay, Sport time now. Here's some of the best stories around.

Australia has defeated Brazil one-nil in the round of 16 knockout match at the Women's World Cup in Canada. In wet and windy conditions, Kyah Simon scored the winning goal in the 80th minute.

COMMENTATOR: And Australia take the lead over Brazil. Kyah Simons 5th World Cup goal and nothing less than the Matildas deserve in this one.

Next up, the Matildas will face either Japan or the Netherlands in the quarter finals.

The Queensland Firebirds have won the Trans -Tasman Netball Championship beating the Swifts in a nail-biting game in Brisbane. With less than a minute to go the Swifts were up 56 to 55 but the Firebirds fought back to win by 1 goal!

COMMENTATOR: "The Queensland Firebirds are going to hold on they've claimed it, can you believe it!"

It was Queensland's first grand final win since 2011 after two years of runners-up heartbreak.

And surfing can be hard enough without having to share your board with this many people! 66 people crammed onto a surfboard at a beach in California. To break the world record for the most people simultaneously riding a wave on a single board!

Quiz 2

Okay finally today, we're going to hear about some new sports hoping to break into the Olympics. But first let's test your Olympic knowledge with a quiz.

When did Australia first host the Olympic Games?

Was it 1956

1986

2000

The answer is 1956. And it was held in Melbourne.

New Olympic Sports

Reporter: Nicholas Maher

INTRO: Okay finally today, the 2020 Olympic Games are on the lookout for some new sports and 26 recently put up their hand. Some of them you might expect to get the nod some you might not. Here's Nic with more.

NICHOLAS MAHER, REPORTING: For some people, bowling is just a bit of fun or something you do at birthday parties. But for Jamie, it's a serious sport.

JAMIE: I've been bowling for 12 years and I grew up doing it so it's my favourite sport. I just really love it I find it really interesting.

Jamie's part of the South Australian state team for bowling. But she'd love to take it even further one day and bowl her way to Olympic gold.

JAMIE: If I was selected to go over there it'd be amazing thing to be in the Olympics for bowling.

At the moment, that's not possible because bowling isn't included in the Olympics. But that's something the sport would love to change. That's why bowling is one of 26 sports that recently put up their hand for a spot in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Here are some of the others: There's ballroom dancing, ultimate Frisbee, korfbal, roller derby, snooker, surfing, chess and even tug of war!

While most of them have never been at the Olympics before, believe it or not, tug of war actually has but it was taken off the list to make way for other, more popular games in 1920.

It's not the first time the Olympics have decided to change things up by bringing in some new events. In fact, heaps of different sports have come and gone ever since the games began all the way back in Ancient Greece in 776 BC. That's almost 3,000 years ago!

Back then, it was pretty different to the Olympics we know today. For one thing, a lot of the competitors didn't wear clothes. Yep, pretty much everything was done in the nude and events were mostly picked because they showed off skills useful in hunting or on the battlefield.

When the modern Olympics were reborn more than a century ago, a lot of the traditional events like athletics returned. But, they were joined by things like tennis, basketball and soccer which are much more popular.

The last time a bunch of sports competed for a place in the Olympics only 2 made the cut: Golf and Rugby sevens. So, competition for spots is pretty tough.

Jamie says she hopes bowling gets the nod because it would make a big difference.

JAMIE: It would have a huge publicity for bowling. A lot more people would get into bowling and see that it's not just a fun thing for parties and having fun. It's a serious sport and a lot of people put a lot of time and effort into doing it.

But in the meantime, Jamie's going to keep training hard. And you never know, one day she could be rolling for Olympic gold!

Closer

And that's it from us for this week. See you next time!