

Back of the nyet

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There was a feeling of “the day after the Lords Mayor’s Show” in Kaliningrad yesterday. Belgian, English and Russian fans had partied late into the night and it was a fine line between raucous fun and messy behaviour.

The three games that Kaliningrad hosted have undoubtedly made an impression on the city and its people, who have never seen this kind of participation. Thursday’s fixture was the one the authorities were the most worried about and yet there has been great openness. What stood out for me most was the friendliness between everyone here of all nationalities.

Kaliningrad’s involvement as a host city is now over. And for the first time in two weeks the clouds were grey and a solitary Belgian flag hung from a window in the Soviet-style Kaliningrad Hotel telling its own story.

