

Back of the nyet

TIM VYNER
WORLD CUP
DRAW
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Russia is a nation used to celebrating goalkeepers and now it has a new hero in Igor Akinfeev whose remarkable save in the penalty shoot-out defeat of Spain sparked a night of celebration in Moscow.

In the Taganskaya area of the capital, there is a large hand-painted mural of Lev Yashin on the side of an apartment block built in 1915. Yashin, who was known as "The Black Spider", has his image on the official Fifa World Cup poster as well. He played for Dynamo Moscow in the Fifties and is widely regarded as the player who revolutionised how the position is played.

I read once that the goalkeeper is the most respected position in Russia, stemming from the Soviet Union era when everyone worked together as one for the state. And it was the goalkeeper, therefore, who, as part of the team, is also celebrated as the maverick within it.



WORLD CUP DIARY
ROB BAGCHI

Long walk to victory

Sweden's manager Janne Andersson starts his seven-mile walk to work from his home on Lidingo Island at 6am, using the time for "uninterrupted thinking". One pink-shirted betting company ad man decided this was the perfect opportunity for fans to convey their thoughts to him via billboards along the way and he took the torrent of advice in good part. In the spirit of success having many fathers but failure being an orphan, they will probably want some of the credit, too.



A fan of vintage fashion

Gary Lineker's son, George, wore one of his father's England 1986 World Cup match shirts to the game on Tuesday, noting that he had "nicked" it from the "old man's" trophy cabinet. Lineker Snr responded with admirable restraint, saying "Whaaatttt? Make sure it does come home", which we understand it



did, hopefully in better shape than George, who tweeted 17 hours later: "Jesus, my head hurts."

Where you were when Dier scored?

As well as breaking "The Curse" England have got the hang of social media in an engaging and self-deprecating style. None better than Kyle Walker, who embraced losing his dignity when hobbled by cramp and photoshopped himself into the victory charge with a "Daddy, what did you do in the Great War" quip: "Dad, can you



show me that photo of you guys running after reaching the quarter-final?" - "Nah, son".

The miracle of Omsk

On the day Russia beat Spain, the Omsk Circus's 18-year-old parrot Felix laid an egg, the *Moscow Times* reports, and the circus believes not that they had Felix wrong all along, but that it laid down its gender for Mother

Russia. "He literally sacrificed himself," said the circus. "For it's not a mere coincidence that Russia reached the World Cup quarter-finals for the first time on June 1 when the rooster laid an egg." Not a coincidence, no.

How Southgate's waistcoat fits with other sartorial statements

By Alan Tyers

Sir Alf Ramsey's hat at 1970

Sir Alf sported this natty lid for England's disappointing Mexico 1970 defence of their World Cup crown. A superbly "Englishman abroad" look, strongly suggesting that he found the foreign sun altogether unacceptable and wished he was back in Blighty. Alas, that happened sooner rather than later.

Joachim Low's black or midnight t-shirt 2018

The German manager is famous on the touchline for two things. One of them not good: his habit of having a rummage on himself and then smelling his fingers. The second, though, is his simple and stylish signature t-shirt. Sometimes black, sometimes midnight, always suave.

Jorge Sampaoli's sleeve tattoos 2018

The Argentine may have turned out to be a pretty hopeless manager of a national side, but taking one look at these hardman sleeve tattoos, who would want to tell him to his face? Looked more like a bouncer than a football manager, but he and his lacklustre team were soon ejected.

Marcello Lippi's 2006 cigar

Smoking a cigar while managing a team to glory in the World Cup final? Hard to imagine how one human being could get any cooler. Only Ian Botham's Headingley 1981 lah-di-dah comes close to this for combining sporting greatness with manly insouciance

Gareth Southgate's navy waistcoat

The wildly popular England manager now finds himself in the unlikely position of being a fashion icon: Marks and Spencer (who make our Gareth's signature garment) report that waistcoat sales are up 35% since Friday. If England win it, expect waistcoat-wearing to be taught in schools.

Mick McCarthy's white shorts at World Cup 2002

Roy Keane's favourite manager went for shorts wherever possible during the 2002 Japan and South Korea World Cup, strongly giving the impression that he wouldn't mind getting out on the pitch himself. Strangely, Roy chose not to give his views on Mick's trunks, unless you count the bit about "sticking the World Cup up your bollix".

