Back of the nyet

VYNER WORLD CUP DRAW No 11 VOLGOGRAD

he build-up to kick off of today's game has been wonderful: Nigeria v Iceland in Volgograd with everything to play for. Last night I stayed 40km outside Volgograd on a campsite alongside the River Volga, where I visited the world's largest statue of Lenin.

Driving back into Volgograd this morning I am stopped three times at roadside police checks. Photos are taken of my passport, my Fan ID is checked and the van is searched for guns by sniffer dogs each time.

I arrive at the fan zone in the centre of town at midday and the atmosphere is building. It is 35C but I cannot resist

walking to the ground. Today's drawing is an accumulation of this walk leading up to kick-off: the fans, the landmarks, from the fan zone, past the theatre to the Hilton Park Inn and finally the stadium. It is a day to smile whatever

the result.

