

# Back of the nyet

TIM  
VYNER  
WORLD CUP  
DRAW  
No 20 MOSCOW

The World Cup went up a notch again with the home win against Spain on Sunday. The streets were buzzing all night and I expected a quiet day yesterday. But it was Brazil v Mexico in the afternoon for a place in the quarter-finals and by 5pm the fan zone was once again alive. On Sunday the whole of Moscow appeared to be white, blue and red, and yesterday it was a sea of yellow and green. The game was in Samara, but there were plenty of Brazilians and Mexicans. I set myself the challenge to draw as many fans as I could. The fan zone is set in front of the dramatic Moscow State University building from the 1940s and used as the logo for the 1980 Olympics. The sea of fans and screens could not be more contrasting. Wherever I have been on this trip, I have seen Mexican fans. It seems odd to think of Russia without them now.



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## Uruguay players tease Griezmann

Uruguay's players are laying on the mind games before they meet France in the quarter-finals. "[Antoine] Griezmann is very Uruguayan, he passes himself off as a Uruguayan, midfielder Nahitan Nandez (below) said of Les Bleus' star man, who will come up against Atletico Madrid team-mates Jose Gimenez and Diego Godin. "We hope he behaves well on the pitch and remembers he is half-Uruguayan!" Nandez said, slightly desperately.



## Psychic octopus fails to progress

The latest instalment in the World Cup Psychic Animals series is a rather harrowing one. Rabio, a Hokkaido-based octopus who reportedly predicted all three of Japan's group-stage results, was sold to a market and chopped into pieces before a ball had even been kicked in the knockout stages. "I hope



Rabio's successor will accurately tip the results of all games," said owner Kimio Abe, optimistically.

## Moscow metro broadcasts victory

The World Cup is an underground success – quite literally. Russia's penalty-shootout success over Spain was watched by 350,000 passengers on the Moscow metro system, thanks to a network of nearly 9,000 screens installed before the tournament.



## Mexico fall at familiar hurdle

Talk about finding your level: poor old Mexico, who consistently find themselves cruising through their Concacaf qualifying campaign, have now fallen at the last-16 hurdle at every World Cup since 1994. If the World Cup could have a mid-table side, Mexico would be it.



## Top of the crops Best and worst haircuts at Russia 2018



**Neymar (Brazil)**  
More styles than goals, including a wet-look fringe, ridiculed by Eric Cantona.

**Nabil Dirar (Morocco)**  
Started with the Moroccan flag etched into the side of his scalp, and then went orangey-blond. Make your mind up, Nabil.



**Cho Hyun-woo (South Korea)**  
Nicknamed "Dae-hair" in Korea, both for his haircuts and the Spanish goalkeeper.



**Sergio Ramos (Spain)**  
Having shaved off his goatee, Ramos then looked to have tried to cut his own hair.



**Javier Hernandez (Mexico)**  
He and Miguel Layun went blond against Brazil – to emulate Romania in 1998?



**Diego Laxalt (Uruguay)**  
Gap-year braids on a 25-year-old? Fifa surely has the authority to step in here.



**Nestor Pitana (Argentina referee)**  
The official sported the most ambitious comb-over since Bobby Charlton in 1970.



**Ramin Rezaeian (Iran)**  
Defender was clearly trying to cheat the Fifa statisticians by gaining an inch or two.



**Anibal Godoy (Panama)**  
An angular effort that evoked memories of early-90s Will Smith.



**Ricardo Gareca (Peru manager)**  
Iggy Pop's milder-mannered younger brother was in charge of a buccaneering side.