

WI for biennial World Cup

ST JOHN'S, Antigua, Feb 20: West Indies want cricket's World Cup to be staged every two years instead of every four years, reports Reuter.

Caribbean officials are also seeking to host the 2003 edition of the game's most prestigious limited-overs tournament.

The West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) is to meet here on Saturday to finalise plans for its bid, ahead of an International Cricket Council (ICC) meeting in Malaysia next month, said board secretary Andrew Sealy.

England are hosting the next World Cup in 1999 and South Africa have been awarded the 2003 event, although the West Indies are still challenging for it.

They are also pushing to host an earlier World Cup if the ICC approves a proposal to have the tournament every two years instead of every four.

Sealy said on the Caribbean News Agency's (CAN) radio sports programme on Tuesday: "The West Indies have a two-fold attack basically."

"We feel that we are entitled to the World Cup in 2003...but outside of that fact, we are also keen to have the World Cup changed from every four years to every two years, and we are suggesting that 2001 is when the next World Cup could be held after 1999."

At the ICC meeting in Malaysia, the WICB's position will put forward by president Pat Rousseau, vice-president Julian Hunt and chief executive officer Steve Camacho.

The WICB is "cautiously optimistic" the final decision over the 2003 venue — not expected until the traditional full ICC meeting at Lord's in July — will be in its favour.

England keep cruising



CHRISTCHURCH, Feb 20: Alec Stewart and Graham Thorpe shared a 170-run stand Thursday as England scored a four-wicket victory over New Zealand in the first limited-over cricket international at Lancaster Park, reports AP.

New Zealand made 222 for six from their allocated 50 overs and England responded with 226 for six with seven balls to spare.

Thorpe made 82 and Stewart contributed 81 as England continued the good form they showed in their 2-0 Test series win over the Kiwis.

Surrey teammates Thorpe and Stewart led a recovery after England had lost two early wickets for only 28 — including skipper Mike Atherton for 19.

"There was a lot of work to be done when I came into the crease," said Thorpe. "But we both struck the ball well and that took a lot of the pressure off."

England looked to be cruising to victory until Thorpe and Stewart both fell to Heath Davis.

They were quickly followed by John Crawley and Dominic Cork to leave the tourists wobbling on 218 for six, but Nasser Hussain — unbeaten on 11 — steadied the innings and Robert Croft hit the winning boundary.

Several of the New Zealand bowlers were wayward and all-rounder Chris Cairns, his head shaved to raise money for charity during the meal break, conceded 25 runs in four overs.

New Zealand also paid the penalty for not taking advantage of a flying start.

Having won the toss in the first day-night match at the

ground, the Kiwis raced to 75 in the first 15 overs before losing their way.

Opener Nathan Astle top-scored with 50 and the Kiwis were lifted by a spirited performance from left-hander Chris Harris, who hit a bold 48 not out from 51 balls to help seal a reasonably competitive total.

Harris shared a 55-run stand with captain Lee Germon for the sixth wicket to help get some

Park, Auckland on Sunday

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of Thursday's day-night limited-over first cricket international between New Zealand and England at Lancaster Park:

NEW ZEALAND

Young c Thorpe b Mullally	14
Astle c Thorpe b Tufnell	50
Parore c and b Tufnell	26
Fleming c Stewart b Tufnell	34
Cairns c Mullally b Tufnell	15
Harris not out	48
Germon b cork	19
Patel not out	1
Extras: (lb-8, nb-2, b-1, w-4)	15
Total: (for 6 wickets, 50 overs)	222
Fall of wickets: 1-24; 2-87; 3-100; 4-134; 5-148; 6-203;	

Bowling:

O	M	R	W
Cork	9	0	51
Mullally	5	2	21
Croft	10	1	41
Gough	10	0	46
Tufnell	10	1	22
Thorpe	6	0	32

ENGLAND

Knight c Germon b Doull	8
Atherton b Patel	19
Stewart c Astle b Davis	81
Thorpe b Davis	82
Hussain not out	11
Crawley b Doull	0
Croft c Young b Davis	5
Croft not out	8
Extras: (w-6, lb-6)	12
Total: (for six wickets in 48.5 overs)	226
Fall of wickets: 1-28; 2-28; 3-198; 4-205; 5-207; 6-218	

Bowling:

O	M	R	W
Doull	10	0	33
Patel	7	0	43
Astle	4	0	26
Cairns	4	0	25
Davis	8.5	0	44
Larsen	8	0	23
Harris	7	0	26

Result: England won by four wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Phil Tufnell (England).

PHIL TUFNELL ... m-o-m

momentum back into the New Zealand innings after left-arm spinner Phil Tufnell had cut through the middle-order.

Tufnell, who was alleged to have smoked marijuana at a restaurant on Monday night, produced his best one-day figures of four for 22 in an excellent 10-over spell to put the breaks on the New Zealand run rate.

At the end of his spell, he raised his cap theatrically to the capacity 25,000 crowd. He was later named man-of-the-match.

The second match of the five-match series is at Eden

Careless Steffi!

NEW YORK, Feb 20 (AP): Steffi Graf has been the subject of many items in the American magazine Sports Illustrated over her career. But not like this.

The world's No 1 ranked woman player posed as part of the weekly's annual winter swimsuit issue, running through the sand and splashing in the surf for the benefit of the

camera wearing several different bikinis.

Graf said she was not bothered that so many will see so much of her.

"I mean, if it were Playboy, that would be another thing," she told the magazine.

The swimsuit issue has been an annual tradition for Sports Illustrated for 33 years, which is both its by widely read issue for most and its most controversial. The magazine annually draws protests from feminist groups and receives letters from readers canceling their subscriptions — some of which are published.

Shot on exotic locations, the swimsuit section has grown in size and stature from being part of the regular weekly edition to its own "special issue."

Graf gets her own eight-photo spread on the magazine, adjoining but separate from the main photo spread — dedicated to the bikini — which features the model Tyra Banks.

Graf isn't the only athlete that is the subject of photos in the swimsuit section. Also in the main photo spread is beach volleyball player Gabrielle Reece.

The Brazilian belted 18 aces, won 29 of 32 first serve points and did not commit a single double fault.

"For me, this was pretty nice," Kuersten said. "One year ago I was sitting by my TV at home watching (Agassi) play."

Kuersten was also matching Agassi's groundstroke for groundstroke and blasting winners by the American star even before Agassi re-sprayed

Fourth-seeded Wimbledon runner-up Malvina Washington, also slowed by injury he suffered in winning a Davis Cup singles match against Brazil, dropped a 7-6, 6-3 decision to 108th-ranked Argentinian Javier Frana.

In other second-round upsets, Germany's Alex Radulescu beat sixth seed Jason Stoltenberg of Australia, Armenian Sargis Sargsian ousted ninth-seeded American Alex O'Brien, Guillaume Raoux of France knocked out 14th seed Mark Woodforde of Australia, and Jeff Tarango bounced 16th-seeded fellow American Vince Spadea.

Two time champion Todd Martin, the third seed, escaped the fate of so many of his seeded brethren by taking out American qualifier Bryan Shelton 6-4, 6-4.

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