

that after this win Bangladesh is a better team now," Lipu says confidently.

Dave Whatmore

Dave Whatmore, the national team coach, is a relieved man now. Regarded as one of the craftiest men in the business of coaching, Whatmore's appointment in 2003 created quite a buzz. But things didn't work out at least as good as many of the cricket followers would have loved to see. Dave, whose two years contract is scheduled to expire soon, has himself been in a not so comfy position. For Whatmore the win could not have come at a better time.

"I am extremely satisfied," he says. "Each of the players has done his best to earn the victory." He, however, has reserved a special mention for the spin wizard Enamul Haque Jr. "Enamul is the find of the series. He is a talented spinner and an able partner of the veteran spinner, Md Rafique," he says. Team spirit, he believes, is what differentiated Bangladesh's performance in that particular match. He is also full of praises about Bashar's captaincy. "He has led the team very well. I have a good understanding with him, while he also enjoys full confidence of his team mates. He is very considerate to all and treats everybody equally. Such attitude of the captain has greatly contributed to the team spirit," he points out.

Players and coaches alone cannot bring about success in any sports if there aren't devoted organisers at both national and local levels. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, an industrialist, politician and a passionate cricket fan, is one of those who has pushed Bangladesh cricket many steps further up the ladder. Bangladesh got both their one-day status in 1997 and test status in 2000, during Saber's tenure as the President of BCB. Saber is believed to be the man whose aggressive and zealous campaign won Bangladesh both the status. However, Bangladesh's bad performance in test gave Saber's critics the perfect opportunity to take jabs at him. But, as Bangladesh scored their maiden test win Saber came back strongly: "Where are those people who have been criticising us for getting test status?"

While Saber is ecstatic over the victory, he emphasises that this success will have to be maintained. Both Saber and Ahmed believe that due attention should be paid to our local cricket. "We will have to take cricket outside Dhaka and spread it to the district and even thana level if



The Body language says it all; Enamul Haque Jr. sends another Zimbabwean batsman back to the pavilion.

we are to sustain our good work. Initiatives should be taken to arrange school cricket regularly," points out Ahmed. Saber also advocates introducing 3 day and 4 day matches in the league without which he believes our players will never have the test temperament.

Bangladesh, with their 226-run win over Zimbabwe at Chittagong on January 10, 2005, registered their maiden victory in their 35th Test. With this win, New Zealand's unwanted record of registering the first win in their 45th Test, would be intact in Test annals.

Photo: AFP and Star File