



INSIDE: Special 18-page commemorative section

Dallas Mavericks: 2011 NBA Champions

JEAN-JACQUES TAYLOR: Coach Rick Carlisle found the perfect balance this season. 2CC TIM COWLISHAW: Mark Cuban's calm side was his best. 2CC

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On top of the world



David Woo/Staff Photographer

The newly crowned world champion Dallas Mavericks were greeted by a frenzied crowd as they arrived at Dallas Love Field on Monday. Owner Mark Cuban led the way with the Larry O'Brien NBA championship trophy. Dirk Nowitzki followed with his Finals MVP trophy, Jason Terry flew close behind, and Tyson Chandler recorded it all on his phone.

Mavs are greeted as conquering heroes

By TOM BENNING
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The Mavericks fans waited for the proof.

Minutes turned into hours at Dallas Love Field on Monday morning. Temperatures crept into the 90s. The crowd on the fence along the tarmac swelled into the hundreds, all eager to catch a glimpse of the team that vanquished the mighty Miami Heat.

And then — out of the sky — there it was.

Mavericks owner Mark Cuban stepped off the team plane around noon and hoisted high the NBA championship trophy.

The crowd roared and shrieked and danced.

After 31 years of lottery picks, playoff disappointments and otherwise bungled

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Cuban can't silence joy as he reaps rewards

By BRANDON GEORGE
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MIAMI — No one should be surprised that another Mark Cuban investment has paid off in full.

The Mavericks owner, a self-made billionaire, has a way of closing deals and strutting away with an I-just-stole-your-lunch-money smile. That was just the look he had Sunday night after

watching his team fulfill his dream of winning the NBA championship.

Five years after blowing a 2-0 lead in the NBA Finals against the Miami Heat, the Mavericks finished their business this time. They closed out the team everyone outside of South Beach grew to despise with a 105-95 Game 6 victory over the Heat

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Team-first mentality carried Dallas to title

By BRAD TOWNSEND
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When they began training camp Sept. 27, the Mavericks were an NBA afterthought, a team with too many misfit older players and too much emotional baggage.

Late Monday morning, they landed at Love Field as NBA champions. They hoisted their gleaming gold cargo, the Larry O'Brien title trophy,

while thousands cheered what NBA experts are calling the quintessential team.

How did this crystallize in nine months?

How did a team with a soft reputation become a strong-willed juggernaut that barged through the playoffs with a 16-5 record, with a penchant for comebacks and a cutthroat road demeanor?

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INSIDE

VICTORY PARADE set for Thursday, and Mark Cuban says he'll pick up the tab. **10A**

FANS SNAP UP championship gear. **10A**

EDITORIAL: "Mavericks do themselves proud, win the right way." **14A**

JACQUIELYN FLOYD: With the Mavs' title, the good guys really do win. **1B**

THE MAVS' home court at AAC should be fully paid off by the city by summer. **1B**

ARTS & LIFE: We draft the players for a Dallas Mavericks movie. **1E**



THE WILL TO WIN

CAPTURE THE MAVS' SEASON

The award-winning journalists and photo-journalists of *The Dallas Morning News* chronicle the Mavericks' 2010-11 season in a 144-page book titled *The Will To Win*. For more information or to order a copy, visit mavsbook.com.