

When I bought the Mavs, I knew there would be tons of things I couldn't anticipate and wouldn't be ready for until I faced them head on. One of the most visible, but least enjoyable elements of owning a team is that you are in charge of the Good Guy/Bad Guy Ledger.

In other words, I have to determine whether the guys who have played or worked here in the past are BFF (Best Friends of the Mavs Forever), or AYFR (Are You For Real – as in the Nelly Song)

When I got to the Mavs, I wanted to make sure that former Mavs were around to help create a connection between current and past. Although the standings hadn't been kind to the Mavs as of Jan 2000, that didn't matter. Some of the first things I did was offer Rolando Blackman and Derek Harper their choice of jobs. Brad Davis was already here and I opened the door to pretty much any Mav who had played here.

To open the door for former Mavs, we created the position of Player Development Coach. I didn't care how many we ended up with. it was a way for our players to get personal attention from guys who had been in the league and for the guys to get into the NBA in a coaching capacity and to start to build a coaching career. I caught a lot of heat. We still hear stories about how the Mavs have more coaches than players, , but its worked out great. From Greg Dreiling to Morlon Wiley to Mark Bryant to Popeye Jones, guys have come back and been huge helps to our team. If you played here, you were BFF.

Things started to get sticky with the trade of Nick Van Exel. The media wanted to know how the organization would respond to Nick when he returned as part of the TrailBlazers. Then of course things got far stickier with [Steve Nash](#) and [Michael Finley](#).

Both are great guys. Both are great players. Both have been integral parts of the Mavs turnaround over the past 7 years. Both are now former Mavs. Both play for teams that are huge rivals of ours. As do, or have a long list of guys who have been Mavericks that I really like. From Erick Strickland to Robert Pack to Ced Ceballos, Gary Trent, Shawn Bradley and Sean Rooks, to Eddie Najera, Etan Thomas, Raef LaFrentz, Juwan Howard, Darrel Armstrong, Josh Powell, Rawle Marshall and others that escape me as I write this. Guys that were traded or we didnt resign at our choice. Those are guys who once they retire, will always have the opportunity to come back and be part of the Mavs organization.

If a guy has given 110pct in effort for this organization, I can't do anything but respect them. People in this league like to think that respect is defined by how much you pay someone. Its not. If you can play, someone in this league will pay you. **Respect is defined by what you do for someone when no one is watching or writing about it.** Few guys are in the league as long as 10 years. All of them are out of the league for much, much longer than that. Thats when it counts. When you don't need anything from the former player and you are still willing to help. If you gave 110pct to the Mavs, I will return the respect and always try to help.

Im the same way in all of my businesses. When we started Broadcast.com , the first people I tried to hire were former MicroSolutions people. When we started HDNet and when I bought the Mavs, I looked to MicroSolutions and Broadcast.comers that worked for me to come help in our new businesses.

The 2nd part of the BFF side of the ledger is retiring numbers. Honestly, this is a tough decision. There have been so many great players in our organization. My first pass on criteria is that I want to wait till we win a championship before I retire any more numbers. Championship banners and retired numbers look great next to each other. They balance each other out. Im not saying I wouldn't change my mind on this, but as of now, thats where I stand.

As far as the other side of the list. The AYFR side. Well lets just say there are 2 individuals that are on that side of the ledger / People who quit on the Mavs and who were more concerned with getting paid than putting in a honest days work to get an honest days pay. There are 3 people in all of my other businesses combined in the last 25 years that just quit on me and basically stole from me. In any of my businesses, if you quit on me, if you take money without doing the work. Thats unforgivable.

Should any of them ever come back to Dallas, looking for anything, Im just going to play them [Ride Wit Me](#).

Petty, but satisfying.