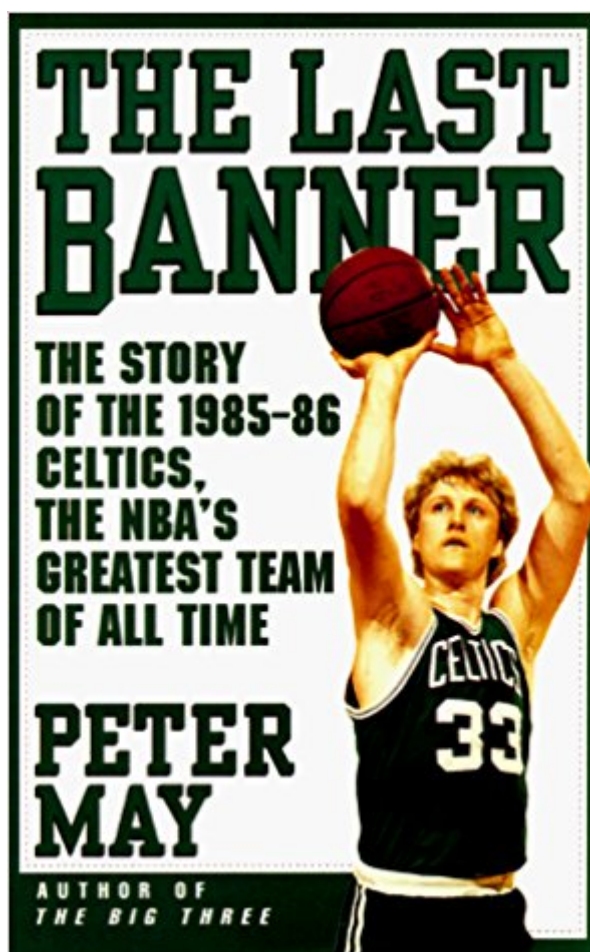


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The Last Banner: The Story Of The 1985-86 Celtics, The NBA's Greatest Team Of All Time



Synopsis

A portrait of the most recent Boston Celtics championship team, a squad that included Larry Bird and Robert Parrish, follows their amazing sixty-seven-win season and march to the NBA title.

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Customer Reviews

In their history the Boston Celtics have hung 16 NBA championship banners from the roof of their home arena, the last won by the 1985-86 team. The team ended the 1984-85 season by losing the seventh game of the final series, and those in charge felt the loss was a result of the weak bench, thus forcing the five starters to play too many minutes. So, in an unprecedented move, management got rid of all the bench players and restocked the team, their major acquisition being backup center Bill Walton. He joined Larry Bird, Robert Parrish, Kevin McHale, Danny Ainge and Dennis Johnson to form a team that went 67-15, with a 40-1 record at home, and, of course, won the championship. May, who covers the Celtics for the Boston Globe, makes a convincing case here for judging the team the best in NBA history, not so much for the talents of its players, which were considerable, but because of the dedication to teamwork and the lack of ego of the players. This careful analysis of the season is also a thorough portrait of each of the team members going back to childhood.

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Whether the 1985-86 Boston Celtics were the greatest NBA team of all time is certainly debatable, but there is little doubt they were the best of a long line of outstanding Celtic squads. May (The Big

Three, S. & S., 1994) argues here that although Larry Bird, Kevin McHale, Robert Parrish, Dennis Johnson, and Danny Ainge formed a potent starting five, it was the bench, led by Bill Walton, that lifted the team to championship status. As for the team's place in history, he contends "they played at a time when the competition was never better and the game was not yet contaminated by the ravages of expansion." How such a surfeit of talent came to be assembled and blended in a cohesive unit makes for an interesting study. For popular collections. William H. Hoffman, Ft. Myers-Lee Cty. P.L., Fla. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I ordered this book because of the great memories I have of that season and the Boston Celtics. The story line explains how the 1985-1986 team was assembled and provided background material on each player. It didn't provide a game-by-game review of the season but did highlight important games. The book I received, while technically "used" looked as if it was just off the printer's press. I would definitely order again from this vendor.

This is a very good overview of the 1985-86 NBA champion Boston Celtics. May does not only cover the season day to day, he gives background biographical information on all the Celtics. As good as the book is, I don't know that it's beyond doubt that the 1985-6 Celtics were the best team ever. Were they better than Shaq's Lakers or Jordan's Bulls? Hard to say and May certainly doesn't prove they were. Nonetheless, I highly recommend this book to NBA fans.

Enjoyed this book. Good coverage of the players and the season. If you are a fan of that era, you will enjoy this.

love it

THIS IS A VERY SIMPLE AND DOWN TO EARTH BOOK. I REALLY ENJOYED THIS BOOK. IT DOES A GOOD JOB GOING THROUGH THIS EXCITING SEASON WITH THE CELTICS LAST CHAMPIONSHIP. IT DOESN'T WASTE TIME AND STAYS ON TARGET ALL THE WAY. A GOOD INSIGHT ON MANY OF THE PLAYERS. ALSO A GOOD BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT HOW SOME TRADES WERE MADE. ABOVE ALL I ENJOYED HOW EACH MEMBER WAS BROUGHT TO THE TEAM AND HOW EACH CONTRIBUTED TO THE ULTIMATE GOAL. A VERY GOOD READ. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

As a Celtic fan from the 60's, I really needed to catch up on this particular year and see what the author had in mind for "the greatest team." I was not disappointed and enjoyed all the replaying of the crucial games and all the introspective's of the individual players and the histories behind them. I gained so much from reading this, and there wasn't one page I didn't want to read. This is definitely for the basketball purist and especially Boston C fans. All topics and important issues were addressed on the building of this great team.

I consider myself among the top handful of 1980s Celtic votaries, and as a former college basketball player from the 80s and student of the history of the NBA, this book was one of the most thrilling publications to which I have ever been exposed. I have a tape collection that includes about 35 of the 100 playoff and regular season games the 86 Celtics played, and I have maintained for years that this is the greatest team to ever grace a basketball court. After living through so many painful Bulls championships, capped by that revolting, 72-10 1996 season and all of the associated "Best Ever" pronouncements, I would, and still do, argue to friends and foes alike that the best teams of all-time were situated in the mid-1980s. The very best among the best, I argue, were the 85-86 Boston Celtics. Seeing May's book for the first time was like finding a beautiful resting place amidst a turbulent, seemingly endless sea of hostile waters, which, under this analogy, took the form of publications, paraphernalia, and television broadcasts extolling Michael Jordan, Dennis Rodman, Shaquille O'Neal, the Chicago Bulls, and the current NBA in all its shocking ineptitude and lack of substance. The reading is wonderful, and the memories the reading inspires are gratifying, especially when supplemented with the 86 Celtic game tapes I so greatly treasure. In short, May's book brings to life a much better era for the basketball purist, an era whose chief exponents, the 80s Lakers and Celtics, were represented at their pinnacle--by no matter of coincidence, the pinnacle of the sport of basketball itself--by the 85-86 Boston Celtics. Peter May, this is a breakthrough book that needs elaboration: perhaps a more thoroughgoing, analytical piece devoted to comparing the 80s NBA champions to their 90s counterparts, advancing the thesis that the 80s champions were the better teams. I would like to meet Peter May and express my appreciation to him directly for his wonderful project. I would also like to be! the individual charged with the duty of writing the successor, analytical piece discussed above. A great book about a team for the ages. Thank you, Mr. May. Dan Galperin, San Francisco, CA (dgalperin@dir.ca.gov)

Peter May's book about the 1985-86 Celtics is a great way for Celtics fans to experience the

franchise's greatest season for a second time. I was only 9 years old during that basketball season, meaning it was the first Boston sports championship I could really comprehend. I have vivid memories of watching those playoff games with my parents -- the Ralph Sampson fight with Jerry Sichting, the stunning home dominance, Bill Walton's impact off the bench, etc. But it was great, years later, when I was old enough to fully appreciate what that team had accomplished, to get a view from the inside. May has covered the Celtics for a long time, and he told some great anecdotes while presenting the season in a nice narrative. Because basketball teams only have 12-15 players, I felt like I knew them all when I finished the book. It's hard for me to say how a casual NBA fan, or a non-Celtics fan, would feel about this book. It's a book about one season and very little else; there are no cultural issues or prolonged looks into NBA history. But readers will learn more than what they got from watching the Celtics that season. It's not a classic by any means, but Celtics fans over the age of 30 would love it, and those under 30 will enjoy getting a closer look at the superstars -- including the original Big Three -- their parents have spoken so highly about for so many years.

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