

TRAIL BLAZERS

Lillard and fiancée have twins

Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard and his fiancée Kayla Hanson had twins on Thursday.

On Sunday, Lillard scored 39 points during a 116-113 win over the New York Knicks.

After the game, Lillard said he hadn't slept much the past few days but was more at peace than he had ever been.

"I was really happy, I was really at peace," he said. "I was with my fiancée the last three or four days. I've been laying in a hospital bed since Wednesday. I haven't been in my own bed."

Lillard said being a father to Damian Jr. changed his life in March 2019.

"The thing that I enjoy and love the most is being his dad, and going home to him every night, and being around him every day," Lillard said. "That's something that I think has allowed me to be a better player because I don't take wins and losses home. I'm not as emotional about it once I leave the arena. He just brings me that happiness and that peace, and that love that I know I'm gonna have regardless of whether we win or lose or whether I'm struggling, or whatever the case may be."

Having twins has taken those feelings up a notch. The girl is named Kali Emma Lee Lillard and the boy is named Kalii Laheem Lillard.

Sleep clearly is overrated for Lillard, who made 11 of 17 shots Sunday, all 11 of his free throws and added eight assists to his 39 points.

The Blazers' game Monday night against the Oklahoma City Thunder ended after the Bulletin's press deadline.

—The Oregonian

MLB

Spring training could be delayed

The Cactus League and Arizona community leaders have asked Major League Baseball to delay the start of spring training due to coronavirus concerns just over three weeks before pitchers and catchers are supposed to report.

The Cactus League made the request in a letter to Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred obtained by The Associated Press on Monday. The letter was co-signed by the mayors of Mesa, Scottsdale, Surprise, Glendale, Goodyear and Peoria, as well as representatives from Phoenix and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

Arizona is averaging just over 7,000 new coronavirus cases per day, but the Cactus League cited data in its letter from the University of Washington's Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation projecting a sharp decline in infections by mid-March, down to as few as 3,072 daily. Spring camps are set to open the week of Feb. 15, with the regular season set to start on April 1.

Despite the roiling case numbers, the NHL's Arizona Coyotes are hosting 3,450 fans for home games in Glendale, while the NBA's Phoenix Suns are playing without fans. High school sports are also still operating. The Cactus League hosts 15 MLB clubs.

—Associated Press

BEGINNING OF DESPAIR



A year after Kobe's death, the mourning and misery continue

BY JERRY BREWER • The Washington Post

A year later, the tears have not stopped. They flow with an anguish as fresh as that dreadful Sunday when word spread that Kobe Bryant's helicopter had crashed. They are tears not just for a fallen superstar, however. It turns out that his death presaged 12 months of prevalent despair, a misery from which we have yet to emerge.

Kobe Bean Bryant — who grew up on the big stage, rebuilt his image after shame and created a basketball afterlife that rivaled his superstar playing

days — died last Jan. 26 in a horrific accident that also killed his 13-year-old, basketball-loving daughter, Gianna, and seven others. It was an unforgettable tragedy, an evolving icon gone at 41. But in the devastation of the past year, it came to be just the first unshakably bad thing.

The nation mourned for weeks. The Kobe and Gianna public memorial wasn't until about a month later. Los Angeles, Bryant's adopted home, continues to weep. Yet there's still a sense that the grieving process was truncated. There was always someone else to mourn, something else to inspire sorrow.

See **Kobe** / A7

People lift weights on a sidewalk outside the Hardcore Fitness gym, due to pandemic restrictions, under a mural honoring NBA star Kobe Bryant and his daughter Gigi near Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles on Monday. Bryant, who became one of the greatest basketball players of his generation during a 20-year career with the Lakers, died in a helicopter crash with his daughter Gigi and other passengers a year ago.

Damian Dovarganes/AP

Super Bowl LV

BRADY BLOCKADE

Buccaneers' legendary QB stands in the way of Chiefs' 2nd straight title

BY BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

Considering that there has been no repeat NFL champion since the 2004 season, clearly some major obstructions have gotten in the way.

For the Chiefs, that hurdle wears a No. 12 jersey and is the last guy to pull off the feat.

After demolishing Buffalo for the AFC title, the Chiefs head to Tampa looking to complete the double. It's been done eight times, twice by the Steelers. But there's never been such a gap for a repeat winner, and after winning its first Super Bowl in a half-century last year, Kansas City seems primed to end that string of failures.

Except for that massive road-block named Tom Brady.

"The job's not finished," Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes acknowledges. "We're going to Tampa, we're trying to run it back."

To do so, young Mr. Mahomes, you'll need to beat that old man and his penchant for collecting trophies and rings.

"We've just got to be ourselves," added Mahomes, at 25 a mere 18 years younger than Brady. (Heck, Mahomes' father is only 50 years



Jeffrey Phelps/AP

Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady looks to pass against the Green Bay Packers during the NFC championship in Green Bay, Wisconsin on Sunday.

old.) "I trust my guys over anybody."

The rest of the world has learned to trust Brady over most anybody.

The quarterback of the Patriots when they took the Lombardi Trophy for the 2003 and 2004 seasons, Brady owns a nonpareil six rings altogether. He's headed to his 10th Super Bowl, and the big game will be played at Raymond James Stadium, which happens to be the Buccaneers' home field. Add another record to Brady's ledger.

"The belief he gave everybody in this organization, that this could be done," says Bucs coach Bruce

Arians of Brady. "It only took one man."

When Brady signed as a free agent with one of the historically worst franchises in the sport — the Bucs won their only visit to the Super Bowl 18 years ago, hadn't been to the playoffs since the 2007 season, and have a 278-429-1 overall record — faith was reborn in Tampa.

A leap of faith, it seemed. Like needing a Hail Mary for the Bucs to rise to the championship level. Then they went 11-5 to become a wild-card team spending all of January on the road.

See **Brady** / A7

NFL | SEAHAWKS

Olsen retires after leaving his mark in Seattle

BY GREGG BELL

The (Tacoma, Wash.) News Tribune

"It was a great ride."

That's how Greg Olsen views his 14-year career in the NFL.

That's how he retired Sunday.

The 35-year-old former Super Bowl and three-time Pro Bowl tight end posted his retirement message on his social-media accounts online two weeks after his only season with the Seahawks ended with a first-round playoff loss.

He has a job as a football analyst for Fox Sports television — plus his wife and children, their charity and his work for kids with congenital heart disorders — waiting for him.

"To the countless teammates, coaches and staff members in Chicago, Seattle, and especially Carolina, I thank you," Olsen wrote Sunday. "You molded and shaped me into the person I am today. I'll cherish those personal relationships more than anything else. This career is built on relationships, and in that area I was so fortunate."

Olsen was the Bears' 31st-overall choice in the first round of the 2007 draft. In 2015 he had 77 catches for 1,104 yards and seven touchdowns. He made his second of three straight Pro Bowls for a 15-1 Carolina Panthers team that beat Seattle on their way to Super Bowl 50. The Panthers lost that title game to Denver.

When Olsen signed with Seattle 12 months ago for one season and \$7 million, he said winning the Super Bowl was his purpose.

See **Olsen** / A7