

Kobe Bryant

Kobe Bryant, in full Kobe Bean Bryant, born August 23, 1978, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.—died January 26, 2020, Calabasas, California,

Bryant played basketball at Lower Merion High School in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, where he received several national Player of the Year awards and broke the southeastern Pennsylvania scoring record set by Wilt Chamberlain with 2,883 points. Bryant opted to forgo college and declared himself eligible for the NBA draft when he graduated from high school. The Charlotte Hornets chose him with the 13th pick of the 1996 draft. He was traded to the Lakers shortly thereafter and became the second youngest NBA player in history when the 1996–97 season opened.

Quotes

I don't want to be the next Michael Jordan, I only want to be Kobe Bryant.

These young guys are playing checkers. I'm out there playing chess.



Bryant led the league in scoring during the 2005–06 and 2006–07 seasons, and in 2008 he was named the league's MVP for the first time in his career. Bryant won his fourth NBA title in 2009, and he was named the finals MVP after averaging a stellar 32.4 points per game in the series. He led the Lakers to their third straight Western Conference championship in 2009–10, and he was once more named NBA finals MVP after the Lakers defeated the Boston Celtics in a seven-game series. All of a sudden, it was silent," Sherri Rosenthal, of Newbury Park, told the Ventura County Star. "Then there was screaming and crying. Someone said, 'Gather here. Let's do a moment of silence and prayer.'"

Bryant, who had four daughters with his wife, Vanessa, dedicated himself to boosting women's sports in recent years, coaching and mentoring basketball players around the world. The academy attracted athletes worldwide, offering an opportunity for high-level training that focused on both physical and mental aspects of competition.