

First impressions of SE: It's cute, it's more than capable

And Apple's new, smaller iPhone has a familiar feel

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USA TODAY



FIRST LOOK **NEW YORK** As a guy who is fully invested in phablet-sized phones, including my own iPhone 6 Plus, I'm not the ideal candidate for the iPhone SE, which Apple started taking pre-orders for Thursday. If you missed it, the \$399 and \$499 SE model have a 4-inch display just like the iPhone 5s, and a similar design.

I plan to spend a bit of time living with a smaller form-factor iPhone again, but now that I've got one in my hands here are a few quick thoughts:

The SE will appeal to people who don't like the phablet size. I've suspected as much ever since Apple announced its new phone Monday, but the SE got a quick, positive reaction from the people I showed it to around my office. OK, so it's not a scientific study. But one editor who's not into gadgets and who still carries around an iPhone 3G — yes, with its 3.5-inch display, it's actually a device she'd be moving up in size from — told me that she'd actually consider buying this one. Her first reaction to the SE: "Whoa!"

Aside from size, how does the SE differ from the 6S or 6S Plus with which it shares most specs? The SE brings most of the advanced capabilities of the state-of-the-art iPhone 6S or 6S Plus, including Apple's robust A9



JULIE JACOBSON, AP

From bottom, the iPhone 6S Plus, 6S and SE are stacked on top of each other for comparison. The \$399 and \$499 SE model have a 4-inch display just like the iPhone 5s, and a similar design.

The baby iPhone is, well, like an adorable baby. You want to pick it up and hold it, and when you do you get that warm and fuzzy feeling. ... Somehow my comparatively ginormous "Plus" model is nowhere near as cute.

processor, M9 motion processor, 12-megapixel rear camera with the ability to capture "Live Photos" (a snippet of video comes before and after still images) and

capture 4K video.

What it lacks is 3D Touch, the pressure-sensitive technology that leads to different outcomes depending on how hard you press against the display. That's a nice, if non-essential, feature.

Meantime, there are two settings on the 6S and 6S Plus that are missing on the SE simply because they're not necessary given the size. One is called Reachability. On a larger iPhone when you gently double-tap the home button the top portion of the display moves down toward the bottom, which lets you better handle the bigger display with one-hand.

The second missing feature is the Display Zoom setting that lets you choose either standard size on-screen icons and controls or, given the more generous screen real estate, a larger-zoomed view.

Cuteness counts. The baby iPhone is, well, like an adorable baby. You want to pick it up and

hold it, and when you do you get that warm and fuzzy feeling. While I've already indicated that I'll more than likely stick with a larger phone — for starters, I can see what's on the screen better — somehow my comparatively ginormous "Plus" model is nowhere near as cute.

The new iPhone is a familiar iPhone. The only accommodation in the SE is the size, and if you have a 5s there will be virtually no adjustment. Everything else is familiar, from setting up the device to running (all the same) apps.

If you're counting on new features — water resistance, say, or fast wireless charging as on the Samsung Galaxy S7 — you'll have to hold out for an iPhone 7 or whatever Apple chooses to call its next device. If all goes according to the usual plan, we won't see anything of the sort before the fall.

FBI rejects 2 iPhone hacking theories

Won't name 'outside party' helping with passcode issue

Elizabeth Weise and Kevin Johnson
USA TODAY

Law enforcement officials Thursday threw cold water on two recent theories on how the FBI was attempting to hack into an iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino terrorists but wouldn't name the mysterious "outside party" that is trying to help it navigate Apple's built-in passcode encryption.

FBI Director James Comey, in response to a reporter's question at a briefing, said making a copy of the iPhone's chip in an effort to circumvent the password lockout "doesn't work." Comey wouldn't identify the company that's helping it or discuss details of the technique.



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

FBI Director James Comey

A widely discussed scenario in the security world, put forward by a staff technologist at the ACLU, has been that the FBI had found a way to remove crucial chips from the iPhone, make digital copies of them and then run multiple passcode attempts against the digital copies, while keeping the phone's software itself untouched.

That would avoid tripping the self-erase program built into the iPhone, the security hurdle that's at the crux of the U.S. government's legal fight with Apple.

Law enforcement officials speaking on background debunked another report that had named Israeli forensics firm Cellebrite as the mystery firm helping it break into the phone.

On Wednesday, the Israeli newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth* reported that the company that specializes in extracting information from cellphones was the mysterious "outside party." The FBI had previously bought kits for extracting data from cellphones from Cellebrite.

The officials, who are not authorized to speak publicly on the matter, declined to identify the outside party.

On Monday, in a surprise shift in the month-long public dispute between the U.S. government and Apple, the DOJ had asked that a hearing on the case set for Tuesday be canceled. It told the court that an unnamed outside party had come forward with a possible solution to getting into the iPhone that wouldn't require Apple's assistance, and that it would update the court by April 5.

No matter what, Comey said there needs to be agreement about how to handle the broader privacy-vs-security question. "We still have to, as a country, resolve this conflict," Comey said.

Telecom, Internet upstarts and the old guard led volatile market

John Shinal
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USA TODAY



THE NEW TECH ECONOMY **SAN FRANCISCO** With a week left in one of the most volatile quarters ever for U.S. tech stocks, a look at trading volumes and price movements reveals where most of the action has been.

In summary: It's been in the telecom sector, along with other venerable big cap names and several Internet upstarts.

The top two U.S. carriers, AT&T and Verizon, posted double-digit stock price gains amid heavy volume since the beginning of the year.

AT&T was the fifth-most traded tech stock over the past three months and is up 13% this year.

ACTIVE TECH STOCKS

Top 10 most active tech stocks (based on three-month average trading volume) and year-to-date stock performance:

Stock	Shares (millions)	YTD gain/loss
1. Apple	46.2	flat
2. Microsoft	40.9	-1.5%
3. Facebook	35	+10%
4. Cisco Systems	1	+5.5%
5. AT&T	28.1	+13%
6. Intel	25.7	-6%
7. Twitter	23.4	-30%
8. Sprint	21.6	-8.5%
9. Netflix	19.1	-10%
10. Verizon	17.6	+16.5%

SOURCE: USA TODAY RESEARCH

Verizon gained 16.5% as the 10th-most active.

The strength and volume of those two dividend-paying stocks shows that even tech investors — known for their attraction to risk — flee to safety when the overall market starts to gyrate.

Remember, Nasdaq began the year with a 13% drop through mid-February, which was followed by a 10% rebound.

While Apple, Microsoft and Cisco Systems were no surprises among the top 10 most-active stocks so far this year, relatively new issues such as Facebook, Twitter and Netflix were also hot.

Facebook was the third-most-traded stock, based on its average volume over the past three months.

Most of that was buying: Its shares are up 10% year-to-date on strong revenue growth and better-than-expected first-quarter results.

For Twitter and Netflix shareholders, the heavy trading was not so welcome as the two stocks have dropped 30% and 10%, respectively, so far this year.

Sprint also had a lousy quarter on heavy volume, falling 8.5% as it was passed by T-Mobile as the No. 3 wireless carrier and said it wouldn't bid in a new auction of

U.S. wireless spectrum.

Among the other most-active tech stocks in the first quarter, Intel shares fell 6.5% and Microsoft dropped 1.5%; both suffered from a more-mature PC market.

Cisco rose 5.5% as Wall Street gave a thumbs-up to new CEO Chuck Robbins.

Apple, the most-active stock and still the most valuable U.S. company, had its own unique quarter.

While it was in the news a lot because of its new iPhones and privacy battle with the FBI, the company's shares as of today are almost exactly where they started the year.

Meanwhile, Google parent Alphabet, which briefly passed Apple as the most valuable U.S. company, was not among the 20 most-active tech stocks during the quarter.

Note: Look here March 31 for my column on which tech stocks had the best (or worst) first quarter.

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Problem unsolved

Browns shouldn't stop searching for franchise QB after signing Robert Griffin III, 3C



AMBER SEARLS, USA TODAY SPORTS

Going the extra mile

Third baseman Nolan Arenado is stepping up as Rockies' MVP and mentor to young shortstop, 8C

SPORTSLINE



BOOKER, LEFT, AND BRYANT BY USA TODAY SPORTS

FIRST WORD
I AM 1-0 VS. KOBE. THAT IS THE MEMORY THAT I GET TO TELL EVERYBODY, AND THERE IS GOING TO BE PROOF OF IT."

Devin Booker, the Suns' 19-year-old rookie guard who scored 28 points in his one and only game against retiring Lakers star Kobe Bryant. Bryant played in his desert finale Wednesday, scoring 17 points in Los Angeles' 119-107 loss. When Bryant started his NBA career, Booker wasn't born.

TWEET OF THE DAY

@DGreen_14
My family is most important to me. Proud to do my part for the women in my life. #LeanInTogether
Spurs forward Danny Green, lending his support to the LeanIn.org-NBA partnership that empowers women and encourages men to support women in their lives.

SECOND TWEET THE DAY

@CoachArtBriles
Congrats to Baylor Football Heisman Trophy winner @RGIII - we know him as Robert #BrownsGotGood
Baylor coach Art Briles, on quarterback Robert Griffin III, who signed a two-year, \$15 million deal with the Browns on Thursday.



GARAGIOLA, LEFT, AND YOGI BERRA, 1975 AP PHOTO

LAST WORD
"I DON'T EVER REMEMBER THEM TOGETHER NOT LAUGHING. THEY WERE TWO FUNNY GUYS TO BEGIN WITH, BUT THEY LOVED TO BUST EACH OTHER'S CHOPS AND TALK ABOUT ALL THE OLD ITALIAN GUYS ON THE HILL (IN ST. LOUIS), WITH NICKNAMES THAT YOU CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER, THEY'RE SO CRAZY. BUT THEY JUST A HAD A GREAT TIME TOGETHER."

Lindsay Berra, on grandfather Yogi Berra's life-long friendship with fellow major league baseball player Joe Garagiola, who died Wednesday. Lindsay Berra was on Fox 5's "Good Day New York" on Thursday.

Edited by Thomas O'Toole

USA SNAPSHOTS®

Huskies' run



Note Through 2016
Source NCAA
ELLEN J. HORROW AND JANET LOEHRKE, USA TODAY

Tough competitor hides a kind heart



Steve Springer
Special for USA TODAY Sports

PHOENIX Beyond the "Black Mamba," past the gritted teeth, behind the steely gaze, out of ear-shot of the trash talking, there is another Kobe Bryant.

This one prefers to stay in the background, generally unseen and unknown by the public. The Kobe Bryant loved or hated by fans is demanding of teammates and vicious with opponents, a tough and unyielding figure in

search of another shot, another win, another ring.

The lesser-known Bryant is much different — kind and considerate and with a big smile. That's the Bryant whom Linda and Joe Heredero will never forget.

The couple from Lake Havasu, Ariz., had three children, daughters Rhiannon and Desiree and a son, Joey.

In 2009, Joey, then 21, was diagnosed with an aggressive, high-

► **STORY CONTINUES ON 6C**



RICHARD MACKSON, USA TODAY SPORTS

"The chance to impact people's lives is so much bigger than the game itself," Kobe Bryant says.

NCAA TOURNAMENT



JAMIE RHODES, USA TODAY SPORTS

Kansas' Perry Ellis, left, who scored 27 points, takes a shot over Maryland's Diamond Stone in the first half Thursday.

ELLIS LIFTS KANSAS

Senior's 27 points carry No. 1 seed into Elite Eight

Gerry Ahern

@USATGerryAhern
USA TODAY Sports

LOUISVILLE In what has become the year of the senior, Perry Ellis followed the script to perfection.

Ellis broke out for 27 points in powering top-seeded Kansas to a 79-63 victory against No. 5

Maryland on Thursday night in an NCAA tournament South Region semifinal at KFC Yum Center.

Junior Wayne Selden Jr. chipped in with 19 points for Kansas.

That offset the efforts of Maryland's big two — Rasheed Sulaimon (18 points) and Melo Trimble (17).

The Jayhawks shot 46.8%

from the field and dominated on the glass 43-28. The Terrapins, meanwhile struggled from three-point distance (20%)

KU (33-4) extended the nation's longest winning streak to 17 games. The Jayhawks are in the Elite Eight for the 21st time, the sixth time under coach Bill Self.

Maryland (27-9) led for most

of the first half before Selden knocked down a three-pointer with 55 seconds left for a 34-32 KU lead.

The Jayhawks had gone more than 43:15 without a three before the make.

The Jayhawks face No. 2 Villanova on Saturday for a spot in the Final Four.

► **Oklahoma rolls, 2C**

Regarding Boeheim, it's complicated

Success clear, but legacy clouded by off-the-court woes

Nancy Armour

narmour@usatoday.com
USA TODAY Sports



CHICAGO Jim Boeheim doesn't make it easy on anyone. Not the NCAA, not referees, not the media, not even his own players.

So why on earth would anyone think Syracuse's Hall of Fame

coach could be so easily defined? Cranky or candid, brilliant coach or serial scofflaw, callous or caring to a fault — in truth, he's all of what you see and none of what you think. If you can't reconcile that, that's not his problem.

"I think there's a lot to him maybe that the general public

doesn't get to see," Gonzaga coach Mark Few said Thursday.

With the expiration date already stamped on his career, there is no question Boeheim is one of the best coaches the game has ever seen. He has won more

► **STORY CONTINUES ON 5C**



DAVID BANKS, USA TODAY SPORTS

Syracuse's Jim Boeheim aims for his fifth Final Four berth and second national title.

HIELD GETS A LOT OF HELP AS OKLAHOMA TOPS A&M

George Schroeder
@ByGeorgeSchroeder
USA TODAY Sports

ANAHEIM, CALIF. Their best player is not exactly a secret. Everyone knows who Buddy Hield is and what he can do, seemingly at any moment. But what often gets lost in all the attention paid to Oklahoma's shooting star — meaning publicity, and defense, and beyond — is this:

The Sooners are a whole lot more than a national player of the year.

No. 2 seed Oklahoma's full range of weaponry was on display during a convincing 77-63 victory against No. 3 seed Texas A&M in a West Region Sweet 16 matchup Thursday at Honda Center. Sure, Hield finished with 17 points. He hit some of those three-pointers that drop jaws and shook very good defense on drives for shorter baskets. But his teammates can play a



USA TODAY SPORTS
Buddy Hield scored 17 points.

little, too. Four other Sooners finished in double figures. And it was more than the statistics. During a pivotal run in the first half in which Oklahoma climbed out of an early seven-point deficit, outscoring the Aggies 29-9, Hield contributed four points. He finished the first half with 11.

Junior guard Jordan Woodard led the Sooners with 22 points, including several key three-pointers. Off the bench, freshman forward Christian James added 12 points, all on 4-for-6 three-point shooting. Ryan Spangler and Khadeem Lattin each scored 10 points.

Oklahoma advanced to the Elite Eight, where the Sooners will face either No. 1 seed Oregon or No. 4 seed Duke on Saturday.

VILLANOVA ROLLS

Villanova and the Big East are again elite, thanks in large part to the play of senior guard Ryan Arcidiacono.

Arcidiacono outdueled Miami (Fla.) counterpart Angel Rodriguez in a classic backcourt matchup as the second-seeded Wildcats advanced to the NCAA South Region final with a 92-69 win Thursday at KFC Yum Center in Louisville.

The Wildcats shot 63% from the field, 67% from three-point range and 95% from the line.

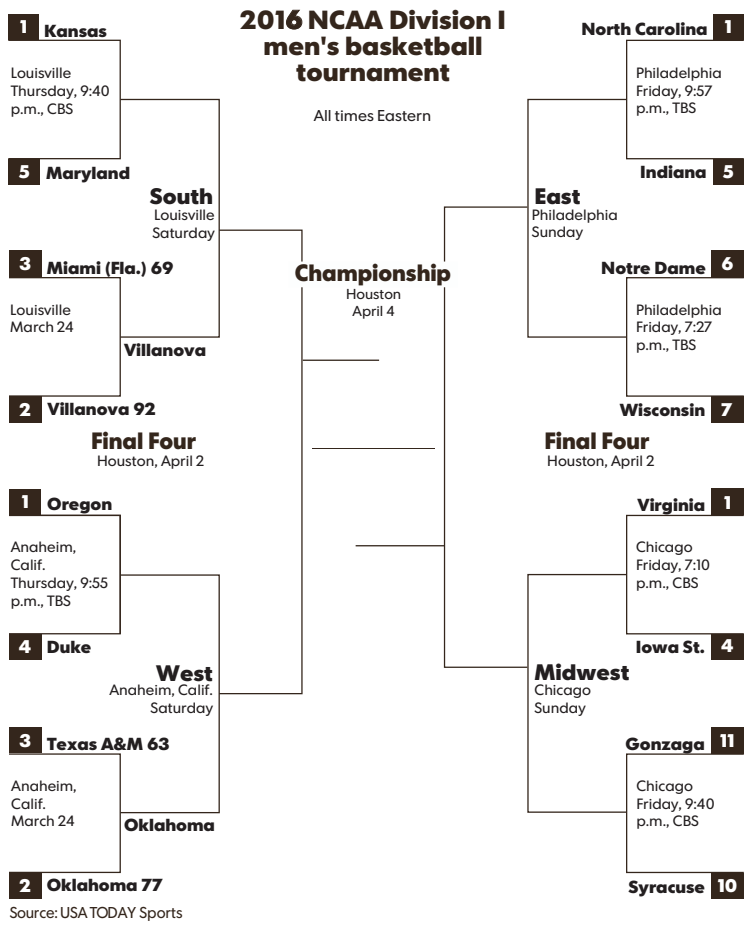
"We're playing the best basketball we've played all year," coach Jay Wright said.

Villanova (32-5) will face the Kansas-Maryland winner Saturday for a Final Four spot.

Arcidiacono had 21 points, four assists and three steals. Rodriguez, too, was strong for Miami (27-8) with 13 points, eight assists and two steals.

Villanova is seeking its first Final Four appearance since 2009 and second in the last 30 years. The Wildcats were upset in Round of 32 of the tournament in the past two years as a No. 2 and No. 1 seed.

Contributing: Gerry Ahern



Paige looks to end UNC career on high note

After struggles, guard regains scoring touch

Nicole Auerbach
@NicoleAuerbach
USA TODAY Sports

PHILADELPHIA Marcus Paige is the first to admit he did not have the kind of senior season he had envisioned.

It started with an injury and featured a prolonged shooting slump at midseason.

"It hurt to see him struggling the way he was because he really wants to help," teammate and friend Brice Johnson said. "He's one of the leaders of this team. ... He was getting down on himself at times. You could tell he was beating himself up. But as long as we were winning, it was fine. When we lost, he'd take it harder than other guys because he felt like he wasn't doing anything." Fortunately for Paige, the regu-



BOB DONNAN, USA TODAY SPORTS

"These are my last couple of weeks to ever wear a UNC jersey. I might as well enjoy it," Tar Heels guard Marcus Paige says.

lar season ended, and the time of the year that really counts began. In his last four games going back to the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament, Paige has scored in double figures. He hadn't had a stretch of scoring that consistent since around the New Year. He also was 5-for-12 from three-point range in North Carolina's first two NCAA tournament games. And he has been terrific on the defensive end.

"I just tried to put the regular season behind me," Paige said Thursday, a day before his top-seeded Tar Heels take on No. 5 Indiana in the Sweet 16. "This is a new chance for me to not worry about my percentages or how I've been doing from the field and just play. These are my last couple of weeks to ever wear a UNC jersey. I might as well enjoy it."

Count North Carolina coach Roy Williams among those enjoying Paige's recent run of success. Paige is one of Williams' favorite players, and the coach got choked

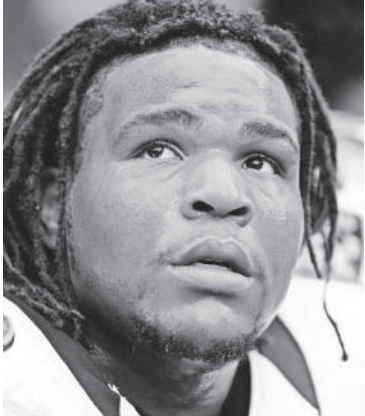
up during Paige's senior night speech this month.

"This year, he came in with such great expectations," Williams said. "He got off to a great start. Then he gets hurt, misses the first six games, and the ball just hasn't gone in the basket for him. But even in that time period when the ball hadn't gone in the basket, he's been fantastic defensively, still continued to be a great leader and really helped the team in so many ways. The respect that the other coaches have for him has helped him."

"I mean, remember, we're playing Virginia Tech, and Marcus goes this way and Justin Jackson starts going the other way, and both defenders go with Marcus. We throw the ball to Justin Jackson. He lays it up."

"So he does do so many different things for us, and I can't put a value on it just by looking at his points or his steals or his assists or anything, because he's the leader of the team."

IN BRIEF



THOMAS CAMPBELL, USA TODAY SPORTS
Terrence Cody, shown in 2012, was convicted of several misdemeanors.

EX-RAVEN GETS 9 MONTHS IN DOG'S STARVATION DEATH
Former Baltimore Ravens defensive tackle **Terrence Cody** has been sentenced to nine months in jail in connection with the death of his dog. Cody, 27, was sentenced Thursday in Baltimore County Circuit Court. He had been convicted of several misdemeanors in connection with the starvation death of his dog **Taz**. He was also convicted of illegally possessing and neglecting an alligator. Taz, a Canary mastiff, lived in Cody's former home in Reisterstown, Md.

EX-SOCCER STAR SENTENCED TO 6 YEARS FOR CHILD SEX
Former England soccer international star **Adam Johnson** has been jailed for six years for child sex offenses. The former Manchester City and Sunderland winger showed no emotion as he was sentenced at Bradford Crown Court on Thursday. Judge **Jonathan Rose** said the 15-year-old victim suffered severe psychological harm. Johnson pleaded guilty to one charge of sexual activity with the girl and another of "grooming" — building an emotional connection with a child to gain trust for sexual motives. Johnson, 28, denied two further charges of sexual activity with the schoolgirl, and he was found guilty of only one of them by a jury this month. Johnson, who played 12 times for England, was released by English Premier League club Sunderland in February.

BACK INJURY TO SIDELINE NORRIS AT START OF SEASON
Daniel Norris will start the season on the disabled list. After seeing a back specialist Thursday, the Detroit Tigers left-hander was diagnosed with three non-displaced fractures in the spinal process, according to team trainer **Kevin Rand**. The diagnosis, Rand said, sounds a whole lot worse than it is. Regardless, Norris will not be ready to start the season. He won't pick up a baseball for five days, and the timetable for his return has not changed. "We don't know exactly," manager **Brad Ausmus** said. "But as soon as the pain goes away. Really, it's once he feels better. It doesn't seem to be anything long term." Norris lasted only 26 pitches in his latest start, which came three days after he was scratched because of the same symptoms.

ROYALS' COLLINS TO HAVE 2ND TOMMY JOHN SURGERY
Kansas City Royals reliever **Tim Collins** will need Tommy John elbow surgery for the second time. The team said Thursday that he tore his elbow tendon again while rehabbing. The Royals had been optimistic he would return in May. Then he experienced soreness while throwing recently, and the team ordered an MRI. The 26-year-old left-hander has not pitched since Game 6 of the 2014 World Series. His initial reconstructive elbow surgery came during last spring training. Collins led American League relievers with 93 strikeouts in 2012 and is 12-17 with a 3.54 in 228 bullpen appearances over four seasons. He is set to make \$1.48 million this year.

FEDERER SAYS HE HURT KNEE WHILE PREPARING KIDS' BATH
Roger Federer wasn't playing tennis when he hurt his knee two months ago. He was playing Dad. Federer said he was preparing a bath for his twin daughters when he turned and heard a click in his left knee, leading to surgery for the first time in his career Feb. 3. "It was a very simple movement, probably a movement I've done a million times in my life," Federer

said Thursday. "I didn't think much of it when it did happen." Soon his knee was swollen and required arthroscopic surgery to repair torn cartilage. He's scheduled to return from his layoff Friday against longtime rival **Juan Martin del Potro** in the Miami Open.

MICHIGAN STADIUM TO HOST CHELSEA-REAL MADRID GAME
Chelsea's preseason exhibition game against Real Madrid on July 30 will be played at Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor. The game was announced Tuesday, and the site was made public Thursday. A 2014 exhibition between Manchester United and Real Madrid at Michigan Stadium drew 109,318, a record for soccer in the USA.

TULSA DROPS MEN'S GOLF
The University of Tulsa has announced plans to end the men's golf program. Athletics director **Derrick Gragg** said Thursday that the decision was made after a review of the program and discussions by university administrators and trustees. Gragg said six university golfers would be affected and the university would honor their scholarships or help them to transfer to another program. Also affected is 30-year TU golf coach **Bill Brogden**.

AUSTRIAN SKIER RECEIVES 4-YEAR BAN FOR DOPING
Austrian anti-doping authorities have banned cross-country skier



KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV, AFP/GETTY IMAGES
Harald Wurm was suspended for using the banned substance cobalt.



KIM KLEMENT, USA TODAY SPORTS
The Tigers' Daniel Norris has three non-displaced fractures in his back.

Harald Wurm for four years for blood doping. The Austrian Anti-Doping Legal Committee said Thursday that it suspended the two-time Olympian for taking the banned substance cobalt and using several prohibited methods for blood enrichment, which boosts endurance. The committee said Wurm, 31, has not appealed the decision. The ban dates back to the start of his provisional suspension three months ago and ends Dec. 12, 2019. Two years ago, Wurm's teammate **Johannes Duerr** was banned for life by the federation after being kicked out of the 2014 Sochi Games for using EPO.

AUSTRALIAN RACE WALKER AT LAST CAN CLAIM '12 GOLD
Four years later, **Jared Tallent** can call himself Olympic champion. When the Australian race walker was beaten to the gold medal in the 2012 London Games by **Sergey Kirdyapkin**, Tallent thought the Russian was cheating. Last year, Kirdyapkin was handed a retroactive three-year doping ban. But the sanction imposed by the Russian anti-doping agency didn't cover his results in the Olympics, letting him keep the 50-kilometer gold Tallent thought should be his. The Russian ruling was overturned Thursday by the Court of Arbitration for Sport, putting Tallent in line to finally claim his gold. China's **Si Tianfeng** would move up to silver, with bronze going to Ire-

land's **Rob Heffernan**. The Switzerland-based court also extended punishments for five other Russian athletes whose results it found improperly were allowed to stand despite doping bans.

BELGIAN WINS 4TH STAGE OF TOUR OF CATALONIA
Belgian rider **Thomas de Gendt** won the mountainous fourth stage of the Tour of Catalonia while **Nairo Quintana** took the overall lead after surpassing his title rivals in the Pyrenees on Thursday. De Gendt got the win for his Lotto Soudal team after finishing the 107-mile route from Baga to Porte Aine, Spain, that featured two special-category summits in just under five hours. Quintana was next up the snowy ascent, crossing over a minute later after he dropped **Alberto Contador** and **Chris Froome** among the other favorites to take the lead from **Daniel Martin**. De Gendt caught and passed fellow solo rider **Pieter Weening** up the final 12-mile climb to the finish. De Gendt's previous career win came in the Tour of Catalonia in 2013.

RIO CANCELS CYCLING TEST BECAUSE TRACK NOT READY
Rio de Janeiro Olympic organizers have called off a test event for track cycling because the wooden track has not been installed in the new velodrome. The test event was scheduled for April 30-May 1. Rio spokesman **Mario Andrada** said he was "120%" sure the venue would be ready for the Olympics. The Games open Aug. 5, and track cycling is scheduled for Aug. 11-16. Andrada said the velodrome would be fully ready by May 31, and he said a small training event would take place there June 25-27. Despite countless problems plaguing South America's first Olympics, Rio organizers have been largely successful completing venue construction. The velodrome has been the most problematic. Construction repeatedly has been delayed. The test event initially was scheduled for mid-March.

From staff and wire reports

BROWNS SHOULD KEEP SEEKING QB

Griffin likely isn't long-term solution

Nate Davis

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USA TODAY Sports

ANALYSIS Signing Robert Griffin III gives the Cleveland Browns additional options heading into next month's draft but probably shouldn't deter them from selecting a quarterback early.

Head coach Hue Jackson has a reputation as one of the NFL's most creative offensive minds, but he's accustomed to pocket passers — Joe Flacco, Jason Campbell, Carson Palmer and Andy Dalton. RG3 has not proved to be that kind of quarterback and might have little chance to become one in Cleveland, which just let 40% of its starting offensive line go in free agency. A two-



GEOFF BURKE, USA TODAY SPORTS

"If they draft a quarterback, (I'll) take the guy under my wing," new Browns quarterback Robert Griffin III says.

year contract permits Griffin little time to learn the playbook and adapt to a talent-deficient club whose best offensive skill player, receiver Josh Gordon, remains suspended. And RG3's injury history isn't likely to improve if he's

again running for his life.

Bottom line, Griffin is worth the flyer, but the Browns should remain in the market for the franchise quarterback they've sought since Bernie Kosar starred in Cleveland three decades ago.

Goalkeeping dilemma tests Klinsmann

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GUATEMALA CITY With the World Cup qualification process preparing to pick up steam, U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann faces a selection dilemma that is entirely unfamiliar.

For nearly two decades, goalkeeper is the one position no U.S. coach has had to fret about, with the steady conveyor of talent between the posts providing stability on the last line of defense.

However, ahead of Friday's game vs. Guatemala here and a matchup against the same opponent Tuesday in Columbus, Ohio, Klinsmann said the team is at a goalkeeping crossroads.

"You have the right instinct," he said when quizzed on the matter at a media briefing Thursday. "We are going to split it up."

That likely means Tim Howard will tend the net in one of the matches, with Brad Guzan performing in the other. Both have had tough seasons and will hope that national team duty can provide a welcome confidence lift.

Howard, a loyal and successful player for the national team who was first choice in the last two World Cups, lost his first-team place with Everton of the English Premier League this season and recently announced he will return to Major League Soccer with the Colorado Rapids.

Guzan's form has been patchy for a dismal Aston Villa team that sits rock bottom in the EPL and is almost certain to be demoted to English soccer's second tier at the end of the season.

"The transition (in the past) probably was easier, it was different," Klinsmann said. "Maybe (there were) three, four very strong guys, established players. Now, Tim is 37. Brad is going through a nightmare year with Aston Villa."

"I have to start already with the World Cup to look who is

next. We are going through everyone. We are looking at every goalkeeper in MLS, every (American) goalkeeper in different countries. I have to deal with it the way it is."

By way of example, Howard, despite being a highly respected goalkeeper from early in his career, had to wait his turn behind Brad Friedel and Kasey Keller before earning his chance in U.S. colors.

But there are no young, proven commodities behind Howard and Guzan. Mexico-based duo William Yorborough and David Bingham form part of the 26-man squad for the Guatemala trip, but seeing either get playing time would be a major surprise.

Meanwhile, Klinsmann has rammed home to his players the importance of winning both games during this international stretch. Doing so would clinch a spot in the CONCACAF region's final qualification stage, before focus shifts to the Copa America tournament to be staged on American soil this summer.

Journeys to play in Central

America are never simple affairs though, as Klinsmann is well aware.

"Every time is tricky; every time you don't know what to expect, you don't know what the ref is doing," Klinsmann said. "But you want to control the game and tell them from the beginning that we are here to take three points. (The Guatemalans) will be feisty; they will be aggressive. We have to not give anything away, not get provoked, not lose our minds."

The USA sits atop qualifying Group 3 with four points. Trinidad and Tobago also has four points but is expected to collect maximum points from its pair of matches against St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Guatemala has three points from two games.

The top two will progress to CONCACAF's final World Cup qualifying pool.

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MARTA LAVANDIER, AP

Tim Howard, practicing Monday in Miami Shores, Fla., was the USA's starting goalkeeper in the last two World Cups.

BRILLIANT, ELEGANT CRUYFF CHANGED GAME

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APPRECIATION

Dutch soccer legend Johan Cruyff died Thursday after a battle with cancer, according to an announcement from his official website. He was 68.

Perhaps no player did more to usher in the modern age of soccer than Cruyff. His singular genius as a player and a manager forever changed the game.

Born in Amsterdam, Cruyff joined the Ajax youth system at 10 and became the greatest product ever of its "total football" philosophy, which called on every player to be able to play any position at any given moment. Cruyff could do it all, and in 1973 FC

Barcelona paid a then-record fee to bring him to its club. He immediately led Barcelona to La Liga's championship.

"There have been four kings of football — (Alfredo) Di Stéfano, Pelé, Cruyff and (Diego) Maradona — and the fifth has not yet appeared," former Argentina and Barcelona coach César Luis Menotti famously said. "We are awaiting the fifth, and it is sure to be (Lionel) Messi, but so far he is not among the kings."

Cruyff's influence on the game is hard to overstate. There is the move that bears his name, the Cruyff turn, the first move taught to most youngsters learning the game.

It's a move that seems so simple now — fake a kick, tuck the ball behind the back leg — but that was so much of Cruyff's genius. He made the game look simple and easy, when it was and is so

far from that. He added style to soccer, made it graceful. He not only invented the Cruyff turn but also did it better than anyone else. He didn't just do a move; he performed it.

His influence still hangs over the sport. When Messi performed an audacious penalty kick this year in which rather than shooting on goal he passed the ball gingerly to a teammate, who ran up and finished it, guess who did it first?

As a manager, no man did more to modernize and revolutionize the way the game is played. The way Spain's national team and Barcelona play now — short passes, possession, tactical domination — that's Cruyff. It doesn't exist without him. He saw a more beautiful way to play the game and demanded it from his teams. From there, other managers saw that the game didn't

have to just be kicking the ball up-field and running after it. Gorgeous soccer was possible. And if you could play that way, why play any other way?

Cruyff's résumé is impressive: 405 goals in 711 appearances; he won the European Cup three times, La Liga once, the Dutch Eredivisie league eight times and the Ballon d'Or three times. As a manager, he tacked on another European Cup and four La Liga titles.

Cruyff was not a saint — his brash and outspoken style got him into trouble on more than one occasion. In 2011, he was criticized heavily for confronting Edgar Davids, another Dutch soccer legend, after being accused of saying Davids was only on the Ajax supervisory board "because he was black."

Cruyff leaves behind a wife and three children.

At 2-0, Speith, Day, McIlroy look to weekend play

Steve DiMeglio

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USA TODAY Sports

AUSTIN Jordan Spieth is glad to be back in Texas.

Jason Day is happy he made it to the first tee.

The top two players in the world moved to 2-0 in pool play in the World Golf Championships-Dell Match Play Championship with decisive wins Thursday at gusty Austin Country Club.

World No. 1 Spieth is getting his swing in order as he marches toward defense of his green jacket in the Masters in two weeks, providing proof with a 5 and 4 rout of Victor Dubuisson. Day got his back in order after tweaking it Wednesday and whipped Thongchai Jaidee 5 and 3.

The two are among 13 players who are 2-0 and control their destiny in getting into the Sweet 16 after Friday's elimination round. Also among the undefeated set is world No. 3 Rory McIlroy, a 3-and-1 winner against Smylie Kaufman.

"My swing has been coming



ERICH SCHLEGEL, USA TODAY SPORTS

"My swing has been coming around. I've been working hard on it for the last month or so," Jordan Spieth said.

around. I've been working hard on it for the last month or so. Really started showing signs of that work this week," said Spieth, the Dallas native who hasn't been in contention on Sunday in his last four starts. "Been able to flight the ball nicely. I had one

bad swing back on 11, but really played solid golf. ... It's nice, especially with the ball striking and the wedges. I'm really starting to see that hard work that we've been putting in. My ball control is there, especially in this wind. It's nice to be able to hold posture,

hold my alignment and not get too far off. ...

"It's all about the putter now. That's what still needs more work. That's what I need to feel a higher level of comfort with. But striking the ball the way that we have thus far is going to win us matches, which is nice, but I would like to roll some putts in as well."

It was all about the back for Day. After receiving treatment Wednesday and Thursday morning, Day deemed himself fit enough to play. Then he drove the first green with a 3-wood, the 372-yard shot coming to rest 11 feet from the pin. He canned the putt, won the next hole and was in control.

"It's not too bad. Yesterday it was definitely sore," said Day, who added that he has a disk problem. "I did a lot of therapy yesterday and made sure I did protocols every hour and felt pretty good. Came out today not really knowing if I was going to play or not. I warmed up very nicely on the range and decided to give it a shot. And I stretched pretty much on every hole."

McIlroy faces Kevin Na, also

2-0. Their match is one of three that pit undefeated players against each other.

"I guess any time you come into the match play, you go and you play one match and you try to get through and hopefully you move on to the next and you try to do the same thing," McIlroy said. "It's a little bit different tomorrow, knowing that I'm playing Kevin and you win or you're heading home. So probably be a little bit more intensity tomorrow."

Phil Mickelson is 2-0 after a 1-up win against Daniel Berger, who hurt his wrist on his approach shot on the final hole. With the match all square, Berger's tee shot was left of the fairway near a stand of rocks. Berger nicked the rocks on his downswing and missed the ball. He then conceded the hole.

Mickelson, 45, has beaten Matthew Fitzpatrick, 21, and Berger, 22. Mickelson faces Patrick Reed (2-0), who defeated Fitzpatrick 4 and 3.

"It's going to be a difficult match," Mickelson said. "A difficult challenge but a fun challenge."

NCAA TOURNAMENT

Wisconsin united in tough times

Team embraces coaches dealing with illness, loss

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USA TODAY Sports

PHILADELPHIA His father's cancer diagnosis had come about a month earlier, and days were not getting any easier for Greg Gard.

He struggled, trying to comprehend the brutality of brain cancer. He struggled, watching his mother do the same as she watched her husband suffer. He struggled with the idea of struggling.

Then, in mid-June, close friend and fellow Wisconsin assistant basketball coach Lamont Paris pulled Gard aside. Paris had lost his father when he was 23 to a heart attack; he understood how suddenly life could change and how it never would be the same again. Paris' father never got to see his son coach a game.

"I told him one day he would think about his dad and be able to smile," Paris told USA TODAY Sports. "I knew that was the furthest thing from his mind right then. We talked about that and some of the experiences that his dad was able to witness — the births of all three of his children, his grandchildren, to back-to-back Final Fours, everything. All those things he was able to enjoy in his life.

"Some people don't get that. I didn't get that — not just the Final Fours, but the life experiences that I didn't get to share with a loved one."

To Gard, the conversation brought a sense of finality, which he wasn't truly ready to accept just then.

"I didn't want to accept what could be the reality of it," Gard told USA TODAY Sports. "At the time, I didn't want to hear that. That meant the end was coming for my dad. But I think, as I look back through the whole journey with my dad, that little comment, I think, helped me gain perspective and gain an appreciation for what was about to happen over the next four, five months with my dad. ...

"Someone sent me a card after he passed. It said to appreciate the little things because one day



MARY LANGENFELD, USA TODAY SPORTS

Assistant coach Lamont Paris, left, and head coach Greg Gard find solace in Wisconsin's success.

you're going to look back and realize they were the big things. That comment, at the time, I thought was a little thing. But it's been a big thing."

GAINING PERSPECTIVE

Though Gard still chokes up when he talks about his father, the perspective he's gained allows him to enjoy this basketball season, one that has included him becoming Wisconsin's head coach, taking over after Bo Ryan resigned in December. Gard earned the permanent job after a second-half turnaround that secured an NCAA tournament bid, an achievement considering his mind often floats to the one person who's not here to see it all.

Still, Gard can smile and enjoy this with these Badgers, who have always embraced him but grabbed hold of him even tighter in October when Glen Gard died. The entire team took a bus 60 miles to Highland, Wis., to attend the funeral.

"They didn't have to say anything," Gard said. "I could feel it."

The same feeling permeates the Wisconsin locker room even now, as the seventh-seeded Badgers prepare to face No. 6 seed Notre Dame in the Sweet 16. It's yet another underlying feeling of

sadness amid a surprisingly successful season — this time centered on Paris.

Paris received word March 14 that his mother, Kathy Gutierrez, had had a stroke.

"That was the original diagnosis, after they'd done a CT scan," Paris said. "They were certain at that point. ... At the time, it was as grim as I thought it could possibly be."

Paris immediately went to a hospital in Findlay, Ohio, where his mother lay in critical condition. His two brothers, Marcus and Brian, were there, too. As the Badgers prepared for the NCAA tournament's first round, Paris agonized over the decision of whether to join the team. He eventually met the team in St. Louis about 24 hours before the Badgers' game against Pittsburgh.

"She would have wanted me to do it," Paris said.

About five hours after the team returned to Madison after beating Xavier in the early hours of Monday morning, Paris was back on a plane to Ohio.

As it turned out, once his mother stabilized a little and doctors were able to do an MRI, they ruled out the stroke. Paris said doctors still weren't sure what caused his mother's condition but

said, "Her body basically went septic."

"It wasn't (a stroke), but it's a host of other problems," Paris said. "Multiple organ failure, pneumonia, infection. Her breathing has been bad. ...

"She's made some progress. There were some things that took place that I'm so glad I witnessed. She was able to open her eyes and communicate. But she's still a long way away from being out of the woods.

"To me, I focus on anything positive and any improvement she's made. For example, she's off the ventilator, temporarily at least."

SANCTUARY ON COURT

Paris also has tried to focus on the Wisconsin basketball program, which has embraced him just as it did Gard five months ago. Gard called basketball a sanctuary for him back then; Paris echoed the same sentiment.

"It's been unbelievable, exactly what I needed," Paris said. "Every team is close and says they're a family, but it really hits home when you have a situation like this, right when you need it the most."

Sometimes it's just a player putting his arm around Paris. Or

"Every team is close and says they're a family, but it really hits home when you have a situation like this."

Wisconsin assistant coach Lamont Paris

just checking in to see how he's holding up. Or making a joke, anything to get Paris to crack a rare smile.

"To be honest, this is probably one of the only forums I could be in where I could genuinely smile," Paris said. "Being around this, being around these guys, being in this environment."

But the pain still seeps into the joy, too; they're intertwined. Paris described an emotional embrace he shared with Gard after the Badgers beat Xavier on a buzzer-beater to advance to the Sweet 16, recognizing what both of them had gone through and were still processing.

Every day, both coaches remind themselves of that.

"I've had an extra assistant coach all year — my guardian angel," Gard said. "I keep his funeral program in my suit pocket for every game. There are good moments and bad moments. Before games, especially, when I go to put it in and I look at it ..."

Gard's voice trailed off. He changed the subject, but not really, bringing up a song by country singer Cole Swindell that had been out for a few months. It's called *You Should Be Here*. The lyrics are crushing.

"Same thing, he just makes it big in Nashville and his dad passed away right before it happened," Gard said. "The video is unbelievable, too. They show him in Nashville, cutting his record. Then they show him at the cemetery."

"I've listened to it twice. It's tough."

You should be here, standing with your arm around me here.

Cutting up, cracking a cold beer, saying cheers, hey y'all it's sure been a good year.

It's one of those moments, that's got your name written all over it.

And you know that if I had just one wish it'd be that you didn't have to miss this.

You should be here.

Tourney success final hurdle for Virginia seniors

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CHICAGO There were no No. 1 seeds or Atlantic Coast Conference championships when Malcolm Brogdon and Anthony Gill enrolled at Virginia, just a belief that the core and culture being built by Tony Bennett would lead the program to something better than it had experienced before.

What's happened since then is almost hard to fathom: In a league with North Carolina, Duke, Louisville and Syracuse, nobody has been more successful over the last three regular seasons than the Cavaliers.

But as Brogdon, Gill and two other Virginia seniors reach the unforgiving moment of NCAA tournament play where their college careers could be 40 minutes from ending, it's undeniable that Virginia's national image will be directly tied to winning two games this weekend in the Midwest Region beginning Friday against No. 4 seed Iowa State.

If Virginia can reach its Final Four in 32 years, the transformation into a legitimate power will be complete. If the Cavaliers exit a third consecutive NCAA tournament before the seeding suggests they should, the label of March underachiever will be hard to shake.

"I told our guys, I think nothing can take away the success they've had for the amount of time this group of seniors (has been around), what they've established with conference championships and the regular season and in the ACC tournament," Bennett said. "(But) what a finishing piece (it would be) for this group to advance."

Over the last three seasons, Virginia is 88-18 with two regu-

"I think a lot of us, especially the seniors, are aware of this being our last go-round, so we want to do it right."

Virginia senior Mike Tobey

lar-season ACC titles, a conference tournament championship and a streak of 45 consecutive weeks ranked in the top 13. By any measure, it's a crazy level of accomplishment for a program that reached just two NCAA tournaments between 1998 and 2011.

But it will be hard to celebrate that run without the validation of a deeper run than the Sweet 16, where the Cavaliers stalled in 2014 as a No. 1 seed with a loss to Michigan State.

"We thought we could have gone further that year," reserve forward Evan Nolte said. "It makes us hungry, but every team that has been to the tournament has that unless they win it all."

While it's true that 67 disappointed teams exit the NCAA tournament every year, the barometers a program can reach over this three-week span always get far more attention and celebration than anything that was accomplished in the four months prior.

It's not entirely fair given the often random nature of a one-and-done tournament, but it's reality. And for a program such as Virginia, where the regular-season dominance is at risk of being diminished without a big tournament breakthrough, it could be downright cruel.

"I think a lot of us, especially the seniors, are aware of this be-



DAVID BANKS, USA TODAY SPORTS

Anthony Gill and his fellow Virginia seniors have had great success in the regular season but not in the NCAA tournament.

ing our last go-round, so we want to do it right," senior center Mike Tobey said. "For that team two years ago, it was our first time being there. Having some of that experience is a big thing, being on that stage before."

It's almost counterintuitive that a three-year run such as Virginia's and the legacy of a core that has experienced so much success comes down to one weekend, but it represents the classic conundrum of college basketball. What matters more: proving your worth over a 31-game season or one bad night in a tournament?

Last year the Cavaliers had another opportunity to advance as a No. 2 seed. Again, they got

tripped up by Michigan State, which undeniably had a worse regular season and earned only a No. 7 seed. But by the end, the Spartans were in the Final Four and Virginia didn't even reach the second weekend, making it harder to appreciate what the Cavaliers had done up until that point.

"It's been in the back of our minds since we lost last year, because we thought we were better than that," Nolte said. "But what's great is, you try to turn the page and learn from it."

Iowa State, the Cavaliers' opponent Friday, knows the feeling. The Cyclones were a No. 3 seed last year coming off a Big 12 tournament title and seemingly play-

ing well enough to make a Final Four. As it turned out, they were the first team eliminated from the NCAA tournament after a shocking 60-59 loss to Alabama at Birmingham, an image of which Iowa State star Georges Niang keeps as the background on his cellphone.

"The picture is of me with my hands over my head and just a depressed look on my face," Niang said. "If I woke up a little bit tired, maybe I'm going to hit the snooze button, but when I see that screen saver it makes me realize I've got to get up and go get after it. I think it's just a little extra motivation for me to get up and go chase after this dream."

Similar forces are driving the Cavaliers, especially knowing it's the last go-round for the group that took Virginia from nothing to national prominence.

"You have to use that," Bennett said. "It's a great teacher. Last year getting outplayed against a tough team, that makes you hungry to try to advance. Two years ago, we played a heck of a game in the Sweet 16 and Michigan State got the better of us. It doesn't take away from what's been built, what's been established all those games before, but it's an opportunity to be at this spot and take the next step."

It sounds so simple for Virginia: One step forward, and a lifetime of labels changes. But even for No. 1 seeds, the pressure of the NCAA tournament makes everything seem that much harder.

"I'll think there are more things that me and my team could have accomplished (if Virginia loses Friday)," Brogdon said. "But honestly, if that's the case, then it wasn't meant to be, then God had a different plan for me and my teammates. That's really how I see it."

NCAA TOURNAMENT

MIDWEST REGION



Senior Malcolm Brogdon, left, is Virginia's top scorer at 18.6 points per game.

Previews for Friday's Midwest Region semifinal games in Chicago:

No. 1 Virginia (26-7) vs. No. 4 Iowa State (23-11)

Time, TV: 7:10 p.m. ET, CBS
Why Virginia will win: That the Cavaliers are one of the country's best defensive teams is a given. They are coached by Tony Bennett, who learned at the hands of the master, dad and former Wisconsin coach Dick Bennett. But Virginia is equally formidable at the other end of the floor. All-American Malcolm Brogdon has scored in double figures in all but the first game of the season, and three other players — Anthony Gill (19), Marial Shayok (11) and London Perrantes (10) — joined him the first two games of the NCAA tournament. The senior-laden team doesn't get flustered, either, scoring better in the second half than it has in the first.

Why Iowa State will win: The Cyclones, forward Georges Niang in particular, have some unfinished business. Seeded third in the last two NCAA tournaments, Iowa State was expecting to reach the Elite Eight — or beyond — for the first time since 2000 only to make early exits. The Cyclones were upset by UAB in the first round last year. The year before, they lost to eventual national champ Connecticut in the Sweet 16, a game Niang missed after breaking his foot. With Niang a senior, this is his Cyclones team's last chance to have the kind of tournament performance it knows it is capable of.

No. 11 Gonzaga (28-7) vs. No. 10 Syracuse (21-13)

Time, TV: 9:40 p.m. ET, CBS
Why Gonzaga will win: Gonzaga got hot at the right time, winning its last seven games to ensure itself a spot in the NCAA tournament. During that span, four players — Kyle Wiltjer, Domantas Sabonis, Eric McClellan and Josh Perkins — have averaged in double figures. The Bulldogs might be the highest seed left, but the way they dismantled third-seeded Utah shows they can play with anyone.

Why Syracuse will win: Syracuse has been leading a charmed life since Selection Sunday, so what's to say it won't continue? The Orange weren't even supposed to be here, losing five of six games, including a one-and-done appearance in the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament. But they handled Dayton and routed Middle Tennessee. Deep runs in the NCAA tournament require some luck and, so far, all the breaks seem to be going Syracuse's way.

Nancy Armour

EAST REGION



Bronson Koenig hit a three at the buzzer to send Wisconsin to the Sweet 16.

Previews for Friday's East Region semifinal games in Philadelphia:

No. 6 Notre Dame (23-11) vs. No. 7 Wisconsin (22-12)

Time, TV: 7:27 p.m. ET, TBS
Why Notre Dame will win: The Irish face a formidable challenge; the style of play they're up against is very different from that of their last opponent, Stephen F. Austin. But Mike Brey is a terrific coach who's great at in-game adjustments. The core of Demetrius Jackson, Zach Auguste and Steve Vasturia is playing as well as any other group in the country right now.
Why Wisconsin will win: There's just something about the Badgers and the NCAA tournament. This group seemed destined to miss the Big Dance for the first half of the season but was rejuvenated under new coach Greg Gard. The Badgers relied on Bronson Koenig's heroics to knock off No. 2 seed Xavier on Sunday, and they know they can win another close one if need be. Team chemistry is at an all-time high, and that's always an important ingredient for Wisconsin in March.

No. 1 North Carolina (30-6) vs. No. 5 Indiana (27-7)

Time, TV: 9:57 p.m. ET, TBS
Why North Carolina will win: The Tar Heels finally are playing the type of basketball they're capable of. If Brice Johnson gets his double-doubles, Marcus Paige finally starts hitting threes and the rest of the team continues to play well on



Yogi Ferrell totaled 38 points in Indiana's first- and second-round wins.

both ends, this is a championship-caliber squad. The key for UNC in this matchup will be containing Indiana point guard Yogi Ferrell. If the Heels can do that, they'll win.

Why Indiana will win: The Hoosiers have the best win of the tournament, a victory against red-hot and fourth-seeded Kentucky in the Round of 32. They have confidence — something they've gained throughout the season after early stumbles — and the talent to pull of this upset. In addition to Ferrell, Thomas Bryant is a major scoring threat and is coming off a big game against the Wildcats.

Nicole Auerbach



Jim Boeheim watches as his players huddle at a practice Thursday in Chicago.

Champ but no charmer

► CONTINUED FROM 1C

than 70% of his games in four decades at Syracuse, a stat made all the more impressive because the Orange belonged first to the rough-and-tumble Big East only to leave for an even bigger meat grinder in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

He has made the NCAA tournament more often than not, usually for extended stays. Syracuse has played in the title game three times, winning it all in 2003. He has mentored the likes of Carmelo Anthony, Derrick Coleman and Rony Seikaly.

But a pristine legacy on the court is complicated by his actions off of it.

He was suspended for nine games this season and forced to vacate 101 wins for a series of NCAA violations. A longtime assistant was fired after being accused of sexual abuse by two Syracuse ball boys. Bernie Fine denied the allegations and was never charged, but Boeheim later settled a defamation lawsuit filed by the ball boys.

Boeheim is hardly the only big-name coach whose reputation is clouded by controversy. Rick Pitino sat out the postseason because of a scandal at Louisville involving sex parties for players and recruits. Roy Williams is awaiting the NCAA's verdict on an academic fraud probe. John Calipari will be dogged by questions about his recruiting methods until the day he retires.

But those coaches are cut some slack because they're engaging and personable. Boeheim's personality is rough and unforgiving, and he doesn't seem to care if that costs him in the court of public opinion.

Last weekend, after Syracuse reached the Sweet 16, he ripped all of those who'd said the Orange didn't belong in the tour-

namment. Never mind that that was pretty much everyone or that the doubts were the result of Syracuse losing five of its last six games in the regular season to finish 19-13.

Asked Thursday about his withering criticism of Tyler Roberson — "If I had anyone else, he wouldn't play a minute" — and whether it could hurt him in recruiting, Boeheim shrugged it off.

"Pushing players, we all do it. Trust me," Boeheim said. "I'm just not afraid to tell you. We all push, and that's the way players get better. And at the end of the day, they want that."

"So they understand eventually. They may not always like it while they're there, but at the end of the day I think they have an appreciation that you're just trying to get the best out of them and to help their team win more."

Which is the point. Boeheim's bottom line is the betterment of the game, be it that of his players, Syracuse or others in the coaching fraternity who seek his counsel or friendship.

Boeheim's work with the U.S. Olympic team might be well known, but Few said what isn't is the work he puts in with the other U.S. teams.

"He gives up a lot of time for just the good of basketball," Few said, "and I don't think people realize this."

And Boeheim doesn't much care. See what you want, think of him what you will. Just know that things are rarely as easy as they seem.

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Walker gives Hornets shot in arm

Technique tweak
pays off with
better accuracy

Jeff Zillgitt
@JeffZillgitt
USA TODAY Sports

Charlotte Hornets point guard Kemba Walker made a slight adjustment to his jump shot. As he brought the basketball up to shoot, he moved the ball a few inches to his right, away from his face.

Sounds like a simple change. But it's not, not when a player has been shooting that way for years.

"It was tough, especially early on when I wasn't making shots during the summer," Walker said. "I said, 'I can't do it. I'm going back to my old shot.' I was having doubts."

But Hornets shooting coach Bruce Kreutzer, who identified the flaw and revealed it to Walker through video, encouraged the student to stick with the new shot.

"I had a few games early in the season where the shot felt so good, and I just stuck with it," Walker said.

The proof is in the percentages. Walker is shooting career highs from the field (42.9%) and three-point range (37.1%, up from 30.4% last season) and averaging career highs in points (21) and rebounds (4.5).

The 26-year old guard is a major reason the Hornets are 41-30 and have been one of the hottest teams in the league since Feb. 1. Though he didn't make the All-Star team, he is having an All-Star season.

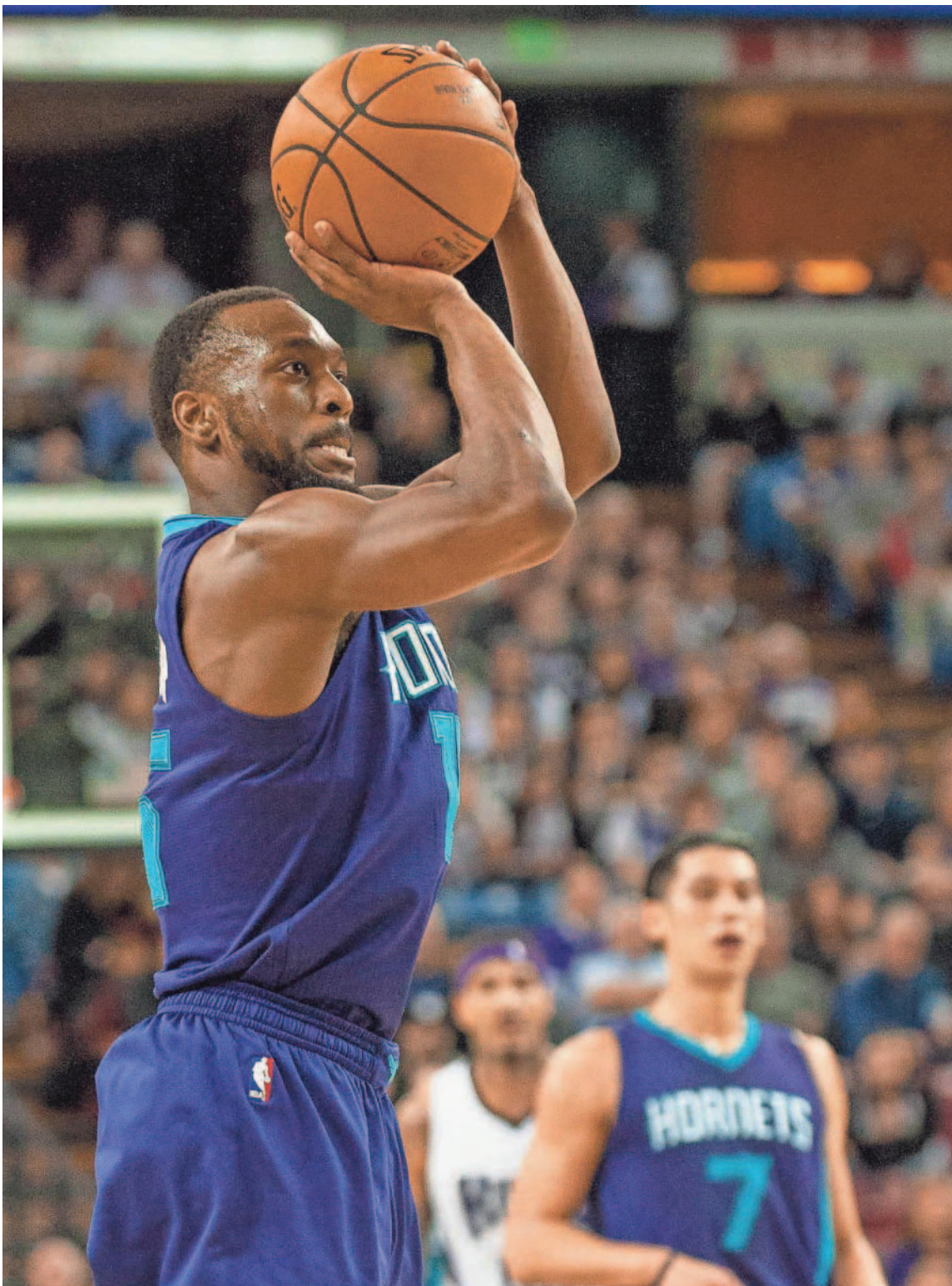
"The first thing is that he's playing with more skilled teammates," Hornets coach Steve Clifford said. "People don't always take that into consideration. The space on the floor that you have to play with is determined by your teammates."

Clifford also pointed to the work Walker did with Kreutzer on his shot and with assistant coach Steve Hetzel on his pick-and-roll game.

"In the summer he was so diligent about it, and then he's continued it through the year," Clifford said. "He worked so hard, and it's paying off."

Kreutzer said Walker's elbow flared out on his old shot and led to an inconsistent result — missing right or left.

Tucking the elbow in before



ED SZCZEPANSKI, USA TODAY SPORTS

A technique change has helped Kemba Walker post career-high percentages in shooting.

the release — to form the V that shooting coaches stress — leads to "an angle that's going to be conducive to making baskets using the whole 18-inch cylinder," Kreutzer said.

"It's not a minor thing when you think about just moving it over a little bit. It was his work ethic — shooting hundreds and hundreds of shots a day, and not just shooting them for volume but shooting them for quality.

When you get more comfortable, that becomes the norm. He was willing to make those corrections. He wholeheartedly bought into it."

The Hornets use the pick-and-roll often, sixth most in the league, and rank sixth in points per possessions (.86) on it. Walker runs pick-and-rolls 46.4% of the time and ranks sixth among point guards in points per 100 possessions (.89), according to

NBA.com/stats.

Using his speed and ballhandling ability, Walker was solid in this area, but refining his pick-and-roll game made him more effective.

"He knows how to freeze his defender, and that allows the defender to be screened and creates so much separation at the point of the screen," Hetzel said. "That creates the whole advantage of the pick-and-roll. That's where

POWER RANKINGS

Rank	Team	LW
1	Warriors	1
2	Spurs	2
3	Cavaliers	3
4	Thunder	5
5	Raptors	4
6	Clippers	6
7	Heat	10
8	Hawks	11
9	Hornets	8
10	Grizzlies	9
11	Celtics	7
12	Trail Blazers	12
13	Pacers	13
14	Pistons	14
15	Bulls	17
16	Mavericks	16
17	Rockets	15
18	Wizards	19
19	Jazz	18
20	Bucks	22
21	Nuggets	20
22	Magic	21
23	Knicks	23
24	Kings	24
25	Pelicans	25
26	Timberwolves	26
27	Suns	28
28	Nets	27
29	Lakers	29
30	76ers	30

LIST OF VOTERS

USA TODAY Sports' Sam Amick, Kevin Spain and Jeff Zillgitt; USA TODAY Sports Media Group's Michael Singer; HoopsHype.com's Jorge Sierra and Raul Barrigon; The Indianapolis Star's Candace Buckner; The (Phoenix) Arizona Republic's Paul Coro; Detroit Free Press' Vince Ellis; USA TODAY Sports Weekly's Howard Megdal.

he's gotten so much better."

Walker's improved shot also makes him a better pick-and-roll player. If a point guard can't shoot from the outside, defenders just sag and go under the pick, which negates the point guard's ability to drive past the defense.

But with Walker making shots, the defender sometimes has to go over the screen, which allows Walker to use his speed and drive to the basket where he can pass or shoot. Options are a point guard's friend.

"He has a natural flow to the way he plays and puts a lot of pressure on his defender," Hetzel said. "They're always on edge not knowing what moves he's going to make. He has the ability to make them pay for what they decide.

"Nothing is more important than the work he did with Bruce. Changing his shot allowed his pick-and-roll game to completely open up because of the difference in the way teams have to guard him."

Parents recall star's visit with dying son

► CONTINUED FROM 1C

grade form of bone cancer.

In February 2010, his left leg had to be amputated when the cancer spread. A month later, the cancer had entered Joey's lungs. In May, with fluid filling his lungs, Joey was airlifted to a Los Angeles-area hospital.

Through it all, Joey continued to follow his beloved Los Angeles Lakers and Bryant, his favorite player. It was Joey's refuge from reality.

"How cool would it be if I actually got to meet Kobe," Joey told his family. They knew that would be the ultimate boost for his sometimes-sagging spirits.

While keeping a low profile, Bryant has been heavily involved in charity work over the years, but he usually cut back during the playoffs, determined to keep his focus sharp. When the request to see Bryant was made, the Lakers were beginning the Western Conference finals against the Phoenix Suns, Joey's hometown team. Still, Bryant agreed to talk to Joey.

On May 17, 2010, two days before the meeting, Joey's temperature shot up to 106 degrees.

"Can I still go?" he asked his oncologist, William Tap, according to the family.

"If I said no, would you listen?" Tap replied.

He didn't need to hear Joey's answer. He already knew what it would be. "All right," Tap said. "But if you go, you have to get Kobe to sign something for me, too."

Despite his pain and high fever, Joey managed a smile.

When he woke up on the morning of May 19, his temper-

"His connection to Joey has been a source of pride for us all these years. ... Watching Kobe, I felt there was a part of Joey I could still see."

Linda Heredero

ature had dropped. His determination to keep his date with his hero had been rewarded.

"Joey's biggest worry was that, if he didn't get better, he would make Kobe sick right in the middle of the playoffs," Linda said.

After the Lakers defeated the Suns that night to go up 2-0 in the series, after Bryant had dressed and met with the media, he walked into a private room at Staples Center where Joey, his mother and his sister Rhiannon waited.

"Hey, Joey, where were your seats?" Bryant asked, going on to describe his own experience watching a game as a teenager.

They chatted. Bryant signed every item Joey had brought with him and took pictures with the family.

When Bryant finally left, Joey's face was glowing.

"He talked to me like he had known me for years," Joey said. "We chatted like we were old buddies."

"What a class act," Linda said



SANDY HOOPER, USA TODAY SPORTS

After his last game in Phoenix on Wednesday night, a 119-107 Lakers loss, Kobe Bryant met with the Herederos, above. Joey Heredero's picture with Bryant is still up on Joey's Facebook page.

of Bryant. "He took the time in the middle of all he had going on to light up a young man's life."

On June 11, just over three weeks after he met Bryant, Joey died.

He was buried in a Kobe Bryant jersey. Six days later, the Lakers beat the Boston Celtics in Game 7 of the NBA Finals for Bryant's fifth and, as it turned out, last championship.

But for that brief time, Bryant was all Joey talked about. The photo on his Facebook page was a picture of the two of them. The Lakers superstar was the subject of nearly every conversation Joey had with hospital visitors.

"Kobe Bryant brought some joy and happiness to my son's life in his last few weeks," Joe said.

"Life stood still for Joey after they met."

Bryant's meeting with Joey was not an isolated act of kindness for him. Bryant volunteers for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, NBA Cares and the Boys Club and Girls Club of America. Also, he and his wife operate the Kobe and Vanessa Bryant Family Foundation, and he has partnered with others to form the Kobe China Fund.

Bryant, with retirement just around the corner, made his final appearance Wednesday in Phoenix, facing the Suns at Talking Stick Resort Arena. The Heredero family, including son-in-law Roger Keller and 2-year-old grandson Jake, came out to say goodbye.

"When Kobe announced his

retirement," Linda said, "I felt like we were losing a family member. His connection to Joey has been a source of pride for us all these years, and now we are losing that tie. I feel like the thread that Joey and I had is broken. It was the one thing I still had. Watching Kobe, I felt there was a part of Joey I could still see. This is closure for us."

One connection will remain. Joey's picture with Kobe is still on his Facebook page.

Bryant took time to meet with the Herederos after the game.

"Being able to play this game is a blessing because of nights like this," Bryant said. "The chance to impact people's lives is so much bigger than the game itself. That's the real magic in what we do."

BASEBALL

Arenado is Rockies' MVP, mentor

Third baseman takes shortstop Story under wing

Bob Nightengale

bnighten@usatoday.com
USA TODAY Sports



SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ. Colorado Rockies third baseman Nolan Arenado, shoving a forkful of pan-cakes into his mouth, barely looks up from his cellphone when the question is posed.

"Nolan, you ever going to hit another single again?"

Arenado takes another bite and, without the slightest hint of a smile, says, "Gee, I sure hope not."

This is the way Arenado's spring has gone. Arenado, who hit 42 home runs last season, entered Thursday batting .605 with six doubles, one triple and three homers in 38 at-bats. He had struck out twice, leaving scouts trying to recall witnessing such a display.

"When he makes an out, we're kind of in shock," Rockies first baseman Mark Reynolds said. "We look at him and say, 'Dude, like really?'"

And then there's the defense. Arenado, 24, hasn't even played three full seasons yet has three Gold Gloves, leading major league third basemen last season in virtually every defensive category, from total chances to double plays to range factor.

"I don't know if I've ever seen anybody, at any position, who impacts the game defensively like Nolan," Rockies manager Walt Weiss said.

Despite all the accolades, perhaps Arenado's greatest accomplishment has been to minimize the elephant in the room.

The nameplate has been taken down.

The locker is empty.

It belonged to Rockies shortstop Jose Reyes.

Reyes was told to go home



MATT KARTOZIAN, USA TODAY SPORTS

Nolan Arenado comes off a season in which he tied for the National League lead with 42 homers.

pending resolution of his domestic violence case — he faces a trial date of April 4 in Hawaii — but also faces a lengthy suspension from Major League Baseball.

Arenado has no control over the fate of Reyes, who is due \$22 million in salary this season and next. He has, however, played a big role in how the Rockies might respond on the field.

Just ask Trevor Story.

He is a 23-year-old who has never played a day in the big leagues but is a week away from being the first shortstop since 2006 not named Troy Tulowitzki to be in the Rockies' opening-day lineup.

"I knew playing in the organization the last five years that shortstop was kind of locked up," Story said, "but now I'm trying to take advantage of the opportunity."

Oh, is he ever. The Dallas Cowboys enthusiast from Irving, Texas, is playing stellar defense and hitting .314 with four homers and 10 RBI this spring.

"Everything is going pretty

well," Story said. "But I'm not sure I'd be having this kind of spring without Nolan. He's the one who's helped me so much. He's made it all possible.

"He's been a huge influence on me."

Arenado might be only 19 months older than Story, but with Tulowitzki with the Toronto Blue Jays and Reyes awaiting his court date, he has accepted and embraced the clubhouse leadership role.

When Arenado walks into the door each morning, everyone sees his desire to not only become the best player in the game but also lift the Rockies out of obscurity after they finished a total of 121 games out of first place the last five seasons.

"He's taught me so much by just being around him," said Story, who has a locker next to Arenado. "He's taught me about playing the infield. Practicing with the intensity he does. Being as focused as he is.

"It's rubbed off on me. I always thought I worked hard, but he

takes it to another level. I want to emulate it.

"I've never played with a third baseman with that much range. And with both of us being aggressive covering that kind of ground, we feel like nothing can get by us."

Arenado, the son of a Cuban father and a Puerto Rican mother and named after Hall of Fame pitcher Nolan Ryan, walks, talks and breathes baseball. He grew up a Los Angeles Dodgers fan, idolized Derek Jeter, Alex Rodriguez, Albert Pujols and Adrian Beltre and tries to pattern his game after Scott Rolen and Matt Holliday.

In the great bat flip debate of this century, he takes the head-down route.

"That's not my thing," Arenado said. "I've never done it. Not to disrespect anyone who does it, but I believe in doing it the right way. There's a way to go about your business, and it's not bat flipping.

"The trouble is we're seeing so many different things nowadays,

we don't know what is right or what is wrong. Nobody knows anymore. The game's changing. I was taught that when you hit a homer, you had to sprint around the bases. I always thought it was cooler to put my head down and run than bat flipping.

"These days, you watch the Little League World Series, and these kids are pimping home runs and stuff. We all laugh, but you're like, 'That's crazy.'"

"It's just not right. You need to respect the game."

It's also time Arenado starts getting respect himself. He tied Bryce Harper in the National League with 42 homers, led the league with 130 RBI and set a major league record for extra-base hits (89) by a third baseman — and finished eighth in the 2015 MVP race. He was omitted from 10 of the 30 writers' ballots.

Don't blame Coors Field for grossly inflated numbers. He led the league with 22 homers on the road and was tied for second with 56 RBI away from home.

"It bothered me a little bit, I'm not going to lie," Arenado said. "That's OK. You usually don't get the credit you deserve when you're losing. Winning changes everything.

"We plan to change that here."

Arenado, who lives in downtown Denver during the season, would like to be around when the Rockies start winning. He talks with reverence of the passionate fan base.

He also watches the collection of young arms in the organization and sees hope. And he looks to the left of him on the field and sees promise in Story.

"He's surprising a lot of us," Arenado said. "What he's doing is pretty special. I hope he's with us, because he's deserving of the spot.

"The way he plays, his style reminds me of Tulo. We've got a good thing going now. I think we're about to have some fun around here."



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NASCAR

Taking stock of who's hot, who's not at Easter break

Mike Hembree

@mikehembree

Special for USA TODAY Sports

FONTANA, CALIF. Now, they rest. Well, maybe.

Following long-established tradition, the engines of the Sprint Cup Series will be silent on Easter weekend. For the first time since mid-February, there is no Cup race this weekend. After five consecutive weeks of points events, plus the Sprint Unlimited exhibition race Feb. 13, Cup drivers and teams aren't on the road this weekend.

It's an early-season opportunity to review and reset, a chance to evaluate goals and perhaps adjust expectations. And to enjoy a few off days before the carousel resumes its wild spinning April 3 at Martinsville Speedway.

Some teams will relax with a few off days. For others, the first few weeks of the season have represented a loud wake-up call — and perhaps added some workload.

For Jimmie Johnson and his Hendrick Motorsports team, the break should be just that. He's the only driver with more than one win, he's second in points and he's riding high after eclipsing Dale Earnhardt Sr.'s victory total of 76 Sunday at Auto Club Speedway.

"We make sure to emphasize with our guys that they do celebrate the victories, go out and enjoy it, whether that be going out and partying at a club or going out and getting an ice cream with the kids," said Chad Knaus, Johnson's longtime crew chief. "Whatever your way of celebrating is, we want to make sure they do that. This will give the guys plenty of opportunity to do that before we go to Martinsville, so I'm glad about it."

Who else might be in a celebratory mood five races into a long season?



KELVIN KUO, USA TODAY SPORTS

Kevin Harvick, left, leads the Sprint Cup standings and has not finished worse than seventh in the first five races.

► **Kevin Harvick:** He "lost" Sunday's race because of a late-event caution, but Harvick's 2016 worksheet looks like this: fourth, sixth, seventh, first, second. No Easter goose eggs here.

► **Joe Gibbs Racing:** In five races, Gibbs' four drivers (Kyle Busch, Carl Edwards, Denny Hamlin and Matt Kenseth) have totaled 12 top-10s, including a Daytona 500 win by Hamlin. Busch had four consecutive top-fours before a late-race tire issue wiped out a solid run Sunday.

► **Hendrick Motorsports:** Although the Gibbs team seems to have reacted best to NASCAR's new lower-downforce package, Hendrick also has gotten strong performances from Johnson, Dale Earnhardt Jr. and its rookie driver, Chase Elliott (nine combined top-10s). Kasey Kahne has struggled to break into the top group (one top-10).

► **Team Penske:** Brad Keselowski has a win and two ninth-place runs, while Joey Logano has three top-six finishes and none worse than 18th.

And, on the flip side:

► **Roush Fenway Racing:** The team's rough road continues.

Greg Biffle's best finish is a 13th, and Trevor Bayne has managed a top run of 17th. Ricky Stenhouse Jr. put a little sunshine in the team's season Sunday by finishing fifth.

► **Danica Patrick:** She hasn't burst through the mediocrity bubble. Her best finish is a 19th at Phoenix International Raceway.

► **Chip Ganassi Racing:** The team has a best finish of seventh (by Kyle Larson in the Daytona 500) from its two drivers (Jamie McMurray was a season-high 10th Sunday).

When teams roll into Martinsville for the first short-track race of the year, the target — again — will be on Johnson, a winner eight times at the paper-clip-shaped oval.

The only active driver close to Johnson on the Martinsville wins list is Hamlin with five.

For struggling teams hoping to make up lost ground in the early spring, Martinsville might hold few answers.

Short but tough, it's not a place that inspires rebounds but one that rewards experience and patience.

Patrick, Busch fined for actions in California

Brant James

@brantjames

USA TODAY Sports

Acting out was an expensive proposition for NASCAR drivers last weekend at Auto Club Speedway.



USA TODAY SPORTS

Kyle Busch

Defending Sprint Cup champion Kyle Busch was fined \$10,000 and placed on NASCAR probation for the next four Sprint Cup points races for skipping his news media session after the Xfinity Series race, in which he finished second.

The driver also had made derisive comments toward NASCAR on his radio Saturday after that race, but he wasn't fined for those.

Danica Patrick was fined \$20,000 and placed on NASCAR probation through the completion of the next four Cup races after walking toward traffic to show frustration with Kasey Kahne after being wrecked in Sunday's Sprint Cup race.

Martin Truex Jr.'s crew chief, Cole Pearn, already on probation, was not sanctioned for a Twitter barb aimed at Joey Logano after an incident in the Cup race.

Busch's penalties culminated a frustrating Xfinity Series race at Auto Club Speedway, where a late tire failure ruined a chance for a record fourth win in a row. Busch led 133 of 150 laps but was passed on the final lap by Austin Dillon when his left front tire shredded. Busch would have won with the field frozen had NASCAR issued a caution for his tire failure.

Over the team radio he carped, "Debris all over the racetrack, and they don't throw a yellow. I'm just so pleased with you, NASCAR. Thanks. Y'all are awesome. Fixing races. How about ..."

Busch subsequently shirked a NASCAR-requested media center

appearance for his second-place finish.

Patrick was so incensed with being wrecked by the lapped car of Kahne at the same 2-mile oval that she climbed the banking to gesture toward him under caution after exiting the No. 10 Chevrolet, which had smoke filling the cockpit. Since 2014, after sprint car driver Kevin Ward Jr. was struck and killed by Tony Stewart while approaching traffic under caution, NASCAR rules prohibit drivers from exiting their cars (unless they are in imminent danger, as in this case) and from walking onto the racing surface.

Pearn, angry at an incident in which Logano's approach to Truex caused the No. 78 Toyota to brush the wall, ruining a car that had led laps, tweeted a slur at Logano. Pearn later apologized on Twitter. Logano had taken responsibility for the incident after the race, in which Truex finished 32nd.

It is not the first time Pearn has made headlines this season. He sat out the race at Phoenix International Raceway and incurred a fine for a roof flap infraction. He already was on probation for a similar incident at Daytona International Speedway.

In February, NASCAR senior vice president of racing operations Jim Cassidy said in explaining why the sport was further defining its behavior policy: "We didn't spell it out as clearly as we could, so I think the perception might have been (penalties were decided by), 'Do as you see fit.' Certainly, we don't want the perception that anything we do is, 'Do as you see fit,' because we are so far from that today as a sport."

In outlining what penalties could be levied for certain behaviors, the sanctioning body indicated it could have only a mild response such as a mandatory meeting, warning or probation for situations such as heat-of-the-moment actions, venting or driver-to-driver confrontations.

Contributing: Jeff Gluck



Remembering Garry Shandling

Master of satire and creator of 'The Larry Sanders Show' is dead at age 66 **4D**



FRAZER HARRISON, GETTY IMAGES

LIFELINE

HOW WAS YOUR DAY?

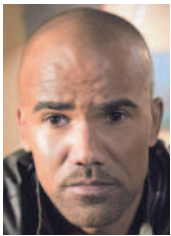
GOOD DAY WILL SMITH



FILMMAGIC

The actor will receive the Generation Award at this year's 25th anniversary MTV Movie Awards. Smith, a five-time movie award winner, has two wins for best male performance for his roles in 'I Am Legend' and 'Ali.' The show airs April 10 at 8 p.m. ET/PT on MTV.

BAD DAY FANS OF SHEMAR MOORE



CBS

Moore is leaving CBS' 'Criminal Minds' after 11 seasons as Derek Morgan. Wednesday night's episode was Moore's last after his character's pregnant wife survives a shooting and he leaves the force to spend more time with his family.

THEY SAID WHAT? THE STARS' BEST QUOTES

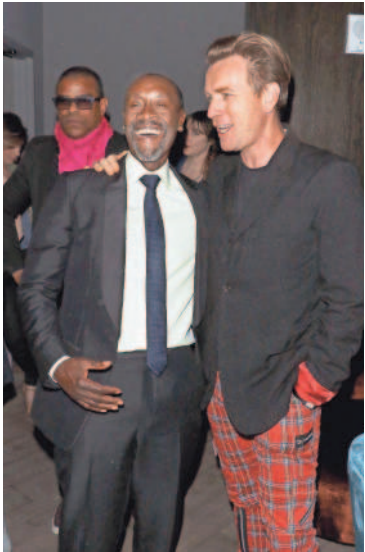
"[The 3-year-old] was sick last month and Dax had said, 'Should we put on a movie? Should we blow her mind and put on 'Frozen'?' And we did, and about 15 minutes in she said, 'Mommy, I think you should turn this off.' She didn't like it." — Kristen Bell to Jimmy Kimmel about her children's reaction to her popular Disney film



WIREIMAGE

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

A stylish Don Cheadle and plaid-clad Ewan McGregor joked around at the after-party Wednesday night for the New York premiere of Cheadle's film 'Miles Ahead.' The film, directed by and starring Cheadle, explores the life of jazz great Miles Davis.

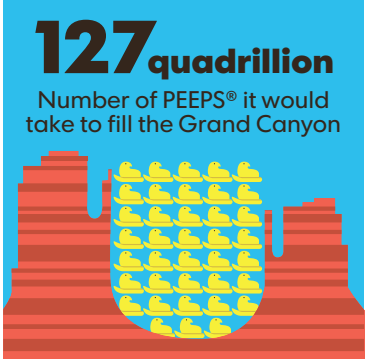


JIM SPELLMAN, WIREIMAGE

Compiled by Mary Cadden

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MOVIES



DAN MACMEDAN, USA TODAY

WATCH THE CAPE WARS UNFOLD OVER 'DAWN OF JUSTICE'

Cavill, Gadot, Affleck are at home in their cinematic universe

Andrea Mandell
USA TODAY

BURBANK, CALIF. There's a red light casting a glow over this tiny dark room where Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman assemble. The vibe is eerie, broken only by the odd sound of a shrill landline ring.

"It's for you," Ben Affleck says to Henry Cavill.

Superman gamely answers. "Hello? They hung up," he says as Gal Gadot laughs.

The three hit the big screen Friday in the much-awaited *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, an epic squaring off of two caped comic-book giants with a new Lex Luthor (Jesse Eisenberg) and the resurrection of the mysterious Wonder Woman (Gadot).

"She's not a goody two-shoes," says Gadot, 30. "She is a peace-seeker, but at the same time if the fight comes she will fight, and she can fight and she's a warrior."

In director Zack Snyder's new film, we find Superman fighting for his good name, his motives questioned by the public after a rescue mission goes awry.

"Supes always knew the world was going to fear him. His father warned him about that at a young age, as you saw in *Man of Steel*" (also directed by Snyder), says Cavill, 32. "He wasn't really prepared for a group of people accusing him of evil."

"He's always trying to do the best thing. I think hearing it for the first time was a real blow to him."

Cue an untrusting Batman.



MOVIE PHOTOS BY WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Henry Cavill (Superman), Gal Gadot (Wonder Woman) and Ben Affleck (Batman) open a new chapter in the big-screen superhero story Friday with *Batman v Superman*.

Wary of Superman's otherworldly power, Affleck's vigilante has taken the baton from Christian Bale and leaned into his darkness, brutally branding his victims with the fiery shape of a bat.

The root of Batman and Superman's beef, of course, lies in comics history, and Snyder says that in the movie he embraced "the most iconographic way to kind of level the playing field" between man and alien.

Getting to this particular Gotham was a long road. Two years ago at casting, Affleck (just off his *Argo* Oscars win) was skeptically branded "Batfleck," and Gadot's figure was dissected by the masses.

Affleck, 43, gives a shrug. History, he says, has shown you're judged by the final product, "whether you do well and move the audience. The rest of the stuff is a lot of noise."

Friday marks the unfolding of an enterprise for DC Comics and an important stepping stone to *Justice League: Part One*, the forthcoming character mash-up (and Warner Bros.' answer to Dis-

ney and Marvel's *Avengers*), which films in London next month. Wonder Woman, Aquaman and the Flash are getting their own spinoffs, too.

Fans will find a tonal difference between Marvel movies such as *The Avengers* and *Batman v Superman* — one some critics have branded too low on old-fashioned fun.

Affleck points to the darker source material. "There's a DNA of the comic books that goes back a long time that separates the personality of the DC books vs. the Marvel books," he says.

The two cinematic universes are "a little bit different, but essentially you're splitting hairs," Affleck says. "They're all movies about people who wear costumes and have superpowers."

As for who won the cape wars on set?

They laugh. "It's walking backward you have to learn how to do," Cavill says. "You've got to kick the cape before you step."

Affleck grins. "There's nothing as ignominious as stumbling over your own cape to make you feel unheroic."

ALBUM OF THE WEEK

Get into Zayn's 'Mind of Mine'

REVIEW
MAEVE
MCDERMOTT

Somewhere between wearing color-coordinated outfits in One Direction and posing shirtless on magazine covers, Zayn Malik shed his last name; bulky, uncomfortably nostalgic, irrelevant. As the only member to depart the multi-million-dollar global industry that is 1D, Zayn has spent the year since carving out a new prototype for early-20s stardom: tattoos, supermodel girlfriends, snippets of songs teased to hungry fans on Snapchat.



GETTY IMAGES

Mind of Mine (★★★ out of four), Zayn's debut solo album, finds the 23-year-old establishing his footing in the R&B world he left pop stardom to join, with an ambitious statement: 18 songs about nebulous love, irresponsible nights and the trappings of youth. A step away from boy-band coyness toward darker beats and more brazen sexuality, it's an almost-mature and contemporary-sounding work that carries over one important aspect from his 1D days: that sublime voice.

The seemingly obvious narrative of *Mind of Mine* is the former boy-bander's sexual rebellion. From the his first decipherable lyrics, *Pillowtalk*'s sordid opening lines, Zayn makes it clear: This isn't a 1D record. But that doesn't mean Zayn pushes away fans who grew up loving One Direction and have aged into his newly realized maturity, mostly treating his songs' female companions with compassion. He opts out of the predatory instincts underlying the come-ons of contemporary R&B even while embracing its sonic cues, steering clear of The Weeknd's sadistic undercurrents and Drake's selfish confessional booths. Even when he's admitting his faults and engaging in bad behavior, urging away a potential flame on *Rear View* or trading conflicted come-ons with Kehlani on *Wrong*, when he sings "we," he seems to mean it.

It's hard to fault *Mind of Mine* for its stacked opening run of songs, its mood swinging from the swooping ballad *It's You to Befour*'s dark shuffle and the woozy *Drunk*. But maintaining momentum over 18 tracks is a struggle for even seasoned artists, and *Mind of Mine*'s second half falls into a hazy lull. The moments that do stray from *Mind of Mine*'s gloom-funk aesthetic, carefully cultivated by producer Malay, are charming detours — such as the classic pop pianos on *Fool For You*, the closest the album gets to 1D nostalgia.

Mind of Mine succeeds as a catchy, sexy and fully modern take on contemporary R&B. But listeners can hear Zayn's true departure from 1D not in his stray profanities or cloudy beats, but in the quiet

few moments of *Intermission* — *Flower*, a warbling interlude sung in Urdu, the language of Zayn's father. Its plainly sung melody couldn't likely find its way onto a One Direction tracklist, and yet, it's here. In the middle of his debauched, disco-ball-adorned coming-out party, it's our truest introduction to a new realization of Zayn, minus last name.

Download: *Befour*, *Wrong*, *She Don't Love Me*

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TRAVEL

DISPATCHES



MCOLLIGON, GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO
Cape Lookout in North Carolina is a favorite stretch of sand.

Best national park beaches

The winners of the 10Best Readers' Choice Awards for Best National Park Beach are in. Nominees in the contest, sponsored by USA TODAY and 10Best.com, were chosen by a panel of experts and voted on by the public.

- 1. **Cape Lookout**, Cape Lookout National Seashore, N.C.
- 2. **Johnson Beach**, Gulf Islands National Seashore, Fla. & Miss.
- 3. **Assateague Beach**, Assateague Island National Seashore, Md. & Va.
- 4. **West Beach**, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Ind.
- 5. **Sand Beach**, Acadia National Park, Maine
- 6. **Rialto Beach**, Olympic National Park, Wash.
- 7. **Esch Road Beach**, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Mich.
- 8. **Cape Hatteras Beaches**, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, N.C.
- 9. **Coast Guard Beach**, Cape Cod National Seashore, Mass.
- 10. **Trunk Bay Beach**, Virgin Islands National Park, U.S.V.I.

CHIME IN
A new Readers' Choice contest category launched this week. Vote for Best Archaeological Site at 10best.com/awards/travel/.



JACK GRUBER, USA TODAY
Online travel agencies are starting to line up hotel options in Cuba.

New options open to Cuba

Two major travel developments were announced during President Obama's historic trip to Cuba. Cruise giant Carnival Corp. will launch its first voyages from the USA to Cuba in May. The parent company of Carnival and nine other cruise brands said Monday that the Cuban government had approved its previously announced plans to begin sailings to the island nation out of Miami. The cruises, which already are on sale, will be operated biweekly by the company's Fathom brand. The trips will take place on Fathom's 704-passenger Adonia. The Fathom cruises to Cuba are considered "people-to-people" trips, one of 12 approved travel categories. Carnival first announced plans for Cuba cruises in July but noted that they would be contingent on approval by the Cuban government. That approval came late Monday in the form of signed agreements between Carnival and Cuban authorities. Meanwhile, Booking.com, an online travel agency, soon will offer the ability to instantly book hotel rooms in Cuba. The company, part of the Priceline Group, says it has signed up 10 hotels and expects to offer more. "We just got the final approvals from Cuban authorities, and we expect to start having properties live on the site within weeks," says Leslie Cafferty of the Priceline Group. "Our teams are flying to Cuba right now to work with our partners to load rates and availability." U.S. airlines are negotiating to launch daily commercial flights to Cuba.

Gene Sloan and Nancy Trejos



PHOTOS BY MORGAN SLOAN

Cruise operators reveal the undisturbed heart and lifeblood of India

Gene Sloan
USA TODAY

BANDEL, INDIA In the dusty waterfront town of Bandel, down an arm of India's Ganges River, the arrival of the American-filled Ganges Voyager II is a rare enough event that it causes a commotion. As passengers from the Uniworld-marketed river ship emerge onto a local street, barefoot children come running from nearby homes to get a closer look, and they're soon joined by clusters of sari-wearing women and their shawl-wrapped husbands. Within minutes a crowd has appeared, like spectators to a parade, to ogle the odd-looking foreigners, even as they are being ogled back. And then what begins as halting interactions — a quick wave, a shout of "hello" — soon turns into an all-out cultural exchange: The two groups snap and share pictures of each other, laughing, shaking hands and even talking in broken English. "It's exhilarating," says Jill Lockyear, 66, of Dallas, after pulling away from a huddle of children giggling at the pictures on her camera. "I had no idea they would be so welcoming." Call it the final frontier of river cruising. Flowing more than 1,500 miles from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal, the Ganges is the latest — and last — of the world's great inland waterways to draw the attention of major river cruise operators. With the debut of the Ganges Voyager II in January, California-based Uniworld became the first major American cruise company to offer regular voyages on the river. Another U.S.-based cruise seller, Vantage Deluxe World Travel, also has begun offering a handful of trips a year on the Ganges, as has tour operator Abercrombie & Kent. The two companies are sharing a vessel with Australian cruise seller APT. Kicking off in Kolkata (once called Calcutta), and focusing on a branch of the river near the Bay of Bengal known as the Hooghly, the sailings offer a taste of a part



of India still relatively untouched by tourism. In Kalna, a bustling riverfront town, passengers ride pedal-powered rickshaws to centuries-old Hindu temples covered in exquisite terra cotta carvings and then stroll back through a lively local market. At Matiar, a village known for its brass works, the allure is the many family owned workshops where artisans churn out vases, platters and other objects. The city of Murshidabad offers the ruins of a historic Islamic site and the European-style palace of local rulers during British times. Still, it is the spectacle of the Ganges itself that is perhaps the biggest allure of the sailing. Sacred in India and inextricably intertwined in the daily lives of millions of its citizens, the Ganges is, like so much of the country, an assault on the senses that is both wonderful and horrifying: The colorful clusters of sari- and loincloth-clad bathers washing in the river, sometimes just feet away from others using it as a latrine; the party boats blasting Punjab Pop; the cremation fires along the riverbank; the dead animals — here a goat, there a cow — floating toward Kolkata. Passengers stroll through the small village of Baranagar, where extended families live alongside their cows and goats in tidy mud-and-brick compounds. Everything from eggplant and tomatoes to papaya fill surrounding gardens, and the pathways are lined with rice drying in the sun.

In front of one home, a woman rolls locally grown tobacco into cigarettes to sell at the market, while another molds cow dung into tubes to use as cooking fuel. "This is what I was hoping to find," says Julia Kellogg, 53, of Milwaukee, walking past men sowing rice in a flooded field. "The ship really is allowing us to get into the heart of the country." For many passengers, the rural flavor of long stretches of the Ganges is a surprise. Towns and villages are separated by miles of low-lying, fertile fields covered in a verdant patchwork of yellow-flowered mustard, coriander, chick peas, spinach and other crops. Farmers work by hand, with few machines, alongside their children, who shout and wave at the passing boat. The lower Ganges isn't the only destination on the agenda. The trip starts with a whirlwind, five-night overland tour through the "Golden Triangle" of cities at the core of many India tours: Delhi, Agra (home of the Taj Mahal), and the "pink city" of Jaipur. The stops offer a chance to see Indian urban life in all its colorful, crazy chaos: The riot of tricked-out trucks, tuk-tuks, rickshaws and animal-pulled carts fighting for inches on ever-crowded streets; the masses of people cooking, eating and even bathing on the sidewalks. And, of course, the cows. Holy, fed by the locals and often free-roaming, they wander down major thoroughfares, blocking traffic. Built locally in India, the Ganges Voyager II isn't as refined as Uniworld's ships in Europe. Still, it's a comfortable vessel with cozy public areas including an air-conditioned indoor lounge, a sun deck with covered seating, a restaurant and a small spa. Cabins are contemporary and spacious. For passengers such as Diane Downing, a 72-year-old retiree from Commerce, Texas, it's the perfect vehicle for exploring villages and towns outside of the big cities. "If you have a true interest in learning about India, this is a great way to go."

River cruises on the Ganges Voyager II explore one of the world's great inland waterways, which until now has been virtually untouched by tourism.

Passengers visit Murshidabad, where they can ride horse-drawn carts to visit a historic mosque.

Before the river cruise are visits to several cities, including Agra and a sunset stop at the Taj Mahal.



APPRECIATION



PHOTOS BY DAN MACMEDAN, USA TODAY; SHOUT FACTORY; BOB RIHA JR., USA TODAY

Garry Shandling, TV’s mocking mirror

He shared the soul of his alter ego, Larry Sanders, but he was so much more

Gary Levin
USA TODAY

Garry Shandling was more like his TV alter ego than he’d care to admit. The comedian, who died Thursday at 66, was, like HBO’s fictional talk-show host, neurotic and deeply insecure. But he also was a brilliant comic mind whose satire tapped into the neuroses of many in Hollywood. *The Larry Sanders Show*, which aired 89 episodes from 1992 to 1998, was one of HBO’s earliest breakouts. Critically beloved for its lacerating look about the ego clashes behind the scenes of a late-night talk show, it arrived just as real late-night television was undergoing its own upheaval with the retirement of Johnny Carson, the scheming by Jay Leno to succeed him and David Letterman’s subsequent defection to CBS. (Shandling turned down NBC’s offer to replace him.)

He created Sanders, along with Jeffrey Tambor’s unctuous sidekick, Hank Kingsley, and growling producer Artie (Rip Torn) by drawing from his own tenure as a fill-in for Carson, who launched Shandling’s performing career by booking him for a stand-up gig after he’d written sitcom scripts. *Sanders* followed an earlier series, *It’s Garry Shandling’s Show*, which ran for four years on Showtime and featured a slightly fictionalized Shandling as a neurotic single comedian, in which he sometimes spoke directly to the camera. One episode featured his appearance on a talk show, which sparked his idea for the later series. “I thought I could explore some real human behavior and emotion. I knew I could dig deeper,” he told USA TODAY in 2007. “People on the show were portrayed against type as being very apart from their personas, as these kind of obnoxious people they didn’t want to be seen as.”

The Larry Sanders Show had modest ratings but loyal fans, and it won its only Emmy for writing of its finale, by Shandling and Peter Tolan, that featured a starry lineup of cameos including Warren Beatty, Ellen DeGeneres, Carol Burnett and David Duchovny. Cast members Mary Lynn and the buzz surrounding it led Time Warner chief Jeff Bewkes, who then ran HBO, to pursue more projects including *Sex and the City* and *The Sopranos*. Shandling didn’t work much after that; in January, he appeared in pal Jerry Seinfeld’s Web series, *Comedians In Cars Getting*

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Shandling on the red carpet for the Emmy Awards in Los Angeles in 1998. Top, a scene from *It’s Garry Shandling’s Show*. Above, *The Larry Sanders Show* won two Emmys in 1998, one for writing and one for directing.

“People on the show were portrayed against type as being very apart from their personas, as these kind of obnoxious people they didn’t want to be seen as.”

Patrick Ryan
USA TODAY

Like every character on HBO’s *Girls*, Marnie Michaels has her haters. “People tell me often and very freely that they don’t like Marnie,” says Allison Williams, 27, who plays the uptight, hypercritical twentysomething. “I understand, obviously, but I always wish for a moment when Marnie could show herself to them and be a little more vulnerable, and for us to see her pain and what’s really going on in there.” That moment could arrive in Sunday’s episode (10 p.m. ET/PT), which centers almost entirely on the just-married friend of Hannah Horvath (*Girls* creator Lena Dunham). Williams describes the half-hour as a “real-life ‘choose your own adventure’ story” as Marnie wanders around New York alone after an argument with her new husband and musical partner, Desi (Ebon Moss-Bachrach). “The nature of their fight is not particularly profound or important, but you get the sense that the match is not as harmonious as she wanted, nor can she force it to be the kind of marriage she always imagined,” Williams says. “She could really use some help, and that’s where the episode starts: from a place of exasperation.” Although Williams stays tight-lipped about the specifics of Marnie’s trek, she teases that “there are definitely some surprises, which for a not particularly plot-heavy show are significant.” Those may include the reappearance of someone from Marnie’s past (hinted at in a teaser released by HBO), as well as an uncomfortable situation in which she tries on a different persona, wearing a revealing, red sequin dress. In taking some time for herself, “we get to see her fully across the emotional spectrum: with nothing left (and) still trying to put on a good face, and that’s, of course, a version of her our viewers are most used to seeing,” Williams says. And even if people don’t like Marnie more by the end of the episode, “at the very least, I don’t think it’ll be possible to avoid understanding



TELEVISION
Allison Williams brings out the inner Marnie in emotional ‘Girls’

CRAIG BLANKENHORN, HBO

Marnie (Allison Williams) strikes out on her own in Sunday’s *Girls*.

pected much more of a Marnie-ish demeanor from me,” Williams says. “One of my best friend’s reactions to that episode was fantastic. She was like, ‘I’ve always known you were a good actress, but having now seen the Marnie wedding and your own wedding, I can finally appreciate the difference between the two of you. You could so convincingly be a nightmare, but when you were being yourself, you were so chill about everything.’” “I was like, ‘Five seasons in and you’re convinced of my acting abilities. I’ll take it.’”

her better.” The actress, who starred in NBC’s *Peter Pan Live* musical in 2014, says it was “rewarding” to carry the brunt of this week’s *Girls* episode, given that Marnie has been mostly absent since her nuptials to Desi in the Feb. 21 season premiere. That episode saw her in typical bridezilla mode — making passive-aggressive demands of her bridesmaids, and clashing with her mom (Rita Wilson) over her “corny” flower crown — but Williams insists she was the complete opposite on her own wedding day, when she married CollegeHumor co-founder Ricky Van Veen last September. “We were different in literally every way, but I’m sure people ex-



MARK SCHAFER

Jessa (Jemima Kirke) and bridezilla Marnie (Williams) prepare for Marnie’s nuptials to Desi early in the season.