

What are the odds of brothers meeting in a Super Bowl? Not as high as you might think

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Before Donna Kelce delivered homemade cookies to her sons earlier this

week, she contemplated the odds of Jason and Travis Kelce set to become the first brothers to play on opposing teams in the Super Bowl.

"It's like having a [lottery ticket](#) and punching it," she told *USA TODAY Sports*. "I think the odds are just astronomical."

But two [professors](#) with an expertise in statistics crunched the numbers and said the chances of brothers facing off in the NFL's marquee game are no Lotto-type long shot.

Gary Lorden, a mathematics professor emeritus at California Institute of Technology, estimated the odds are 40-to-1.

Sheldon Jacobson, a professor in the department of computer science at the University of Illinois, estimated the odds are 25-to-1 to 75-to-1 depending on the variables.

It will take place Sunday when Jason Kelce, a center with the Philadelphia Eagles, and Travis Kelce, a tight end with the Kansas City Chiefs, and their respective teams face off in Super Bowl 57.

"I was surprised how good these odds are," Jacobson told *USA TODAY Sports* by email. "But with so many brother pairs, it adds up quickly."

During the Super Bowl era, 323 documented sets of brothers have played in the NFL, according to figures compiled by the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Jacobson said the 25-to-1 odds are based on "ideal conditions"—such as the brothers being distributed across the NFC and AFC and all teams having the same chance of making the Super Bowl.

"Very unlikely, but it does provide a best-case scenario," he said, adding

that skewing the data "here and there" led to estimates ranging from 60-to-1 to 75-to-1 for the brother-vs.-[brother](#) matchup.

"The fact that we've now seen it once in 57 years is consistent with those numbers," he said.

With 40-to-1 odds, Lorden said, the situation is equally likely to occur or not occur every 25 years.

Those calculations suggest the history being made by the Kelces is overdue.

"It's not really anything I would call remarkable at all," Lorden said, adding that his estimate was conservative. "I wanted to nudge it in the direction where if it were somewhat rare based on my analysis, then I would say so. But it's not."

The Kelce brothers have joked about a Super Bowl rematch. The [odds](#) of that happening?

Well, the teams would have to meet in the Super Bowl in back-to-back years—something that has happened only once. The Dallas Cowboys and Buffalo Bills played each other in the Super Bowl in 1993 and 1994.

Then the brothers would have to escape injury. And Jason Kelce, who has hinted at possible retirement, would have to return for the 2023 season. And ...

"That analysis gets more challenging," Jacobson said. "Let's just say it's highly unlikely."

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