

Colts Training Camp Preview: Linebackers.



By [Jordan Hampton](#) July 26, 2022 Updated: July 26, 2022 [No Comments](#) 2 Mins Read

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The Indianapolis Colts veterans report to training camp on July 26 and Darius Leonard will begin camp on the pup list. Leonard was placed on the list because he is still recovering from back surgery. The All-Pro linebacker had back surgery in June to fix an issue that was bothering him during the 2021 season.

The Colts enter the 2022 season with new defensive coordinator Gus Bradley. Bradley has spent many years in the NFL. He was the defensive coordinator for the Seahawks during their “legion of boom” era and most recently was the defensive coordinator for the Las Vegas Raiders.

Linebackers will be called upon during training camp



INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA – NOVEMBER 10: Darius Leonard #53 of the Indianapolis Colts reacts after a play against the Miami Dolphins in the third quarter at Lucas Oil Stadium on November 10, 2019 in Indianapolis, Indiana. (Photo by Justin Casterline/Getty Images)

Leonard is the leader of the Colt's defense and the other linebackers on the roster will have to fill the void left by him. Colts have a solid group of linebackers that include Bobby Okereke, Zaire Franklin, E.J Speed, and Brandon King.

The Colts had the 10th best defense in the NFL last season. Indianapolis's defensive success begins and ends with the linebackers. While Leonard is sidelined his fellow linebackers have to show they can lead the defense. They also have to be able to communicate at the line of scrimmage and diagnose the plays. Studying the playbook and asking questions during defensive meetings will benefit the other linebackers.

The linebacker position is asked to do a lot in the Colt's defense. Linebackers are responsible for defending the run, making sound tackles, and running sideline to sideline in coverage. Taking the ball away is the most important skill for the Colt's defense. In 2021, Indianapolis ranked second in the NFL with 33 takeaways. Darius Leonard recorded eight forced fumbles which was first in the league.

If the Colt's core of linebackers that contribute and play at a high level the Colt's defense is in good hands. Leonard can get help during the season from his fellow linebackers and the colts can produce more takeaways.