

Shaquille Leonard: I Felt Like I Hurt The Team Last Year.



By Jorden Hampton April 21, 2023

Shaquille Leonard is a competitive football player. However, Leonard's competitiveness hurt him mentally during the 2022 season. Leonard said, "I felt like I hurt the team last year whenever I was on the field." Leonard delivered the news during a media interview Wednesday.

Leonard's 2022 campaign was the hardest of his career. Leonard was trying to get back into form after having back surgery over the summer.

Leonard couldn't move the way he wanted and saw his production decrease. Leonard said, "I see myself on the tape in practice and I look slow. In the game, I look slow."

Leonard is used to using his speed to cover offensive skill players. Leonard also uses his speed to create turnovers and move sideline to sideline on the gridiron.

Leonard was placed on injured reserve on November 12, 2022. Leonard never returned to the field and had another back surgery.

Leonard's 2022 campaign fit the Colt's disappointing season. Indianapolis finished 4-12. Frank Reich was fired, and Indy's quarterback situation was awful.

The Mental Aspect

Athletes must face their mental demons when it comes to injuries. Leonard said, "There's been so many times where I'm thinking, Will I ever be back to 53? Will I ever be back to the Maniac?"

It's hard to think a player of Leonard's caliber would ponder these thoughts. Leonard is one of the best off-the-ball linebackers in the NFL.

Leonard rehabbed in Tampa Bay with fellow Linebacker Zaire Franklin. Leonard took his time and focused on his rehab.

Shaquille Leonard's Injuries

Leonard has faced other [injuries](#) during his career. Leonard strained his groin in 2020 and suffered a back injury. Leonard dealt with a pedal ankle sprain in 2021. Leonard suffered a vertebral disc bulge in 2022. Leonard also fractured his nose and suffered a concussion in 2022.

Career Stats

Despite the injuries, Leonard has performed at a high level. Since 2018, Leonard has recorded 549 tackles, 15 sacks, 17 forced fumbles, returned six fumbles and has 12 interceptions. Leonard has scored one defensive touchdown.

Leonard is a three-time first-team All-Pro (2018, 2020 and 2021). Leonard won Defensive Rookie of the Year in 2018.

[Shaquille Leonard \(gridironheroics.com\)](https://www.gridironheroics.com/players/Shaquille-Leonard)