

ANALYSIS

Colts playoff hopes teetering with QBs hurt

BY MICHAEL MAROT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indianapolis Colts confirmed their worst fear Monday.

Starting quarterback Daniel Jones suffered a torn right Achilles tendon during another devastating loss at Jacksonville. Then came more bad news. Backup Riley Leonard arrived at the team complex with an injured right knee.

It's a two-punch combination the Colts (8-5) simply cannot afford as their once-promising season teeters, their playoff hopes fade and coach Shane Steichen and general manager Chris Ballard are likely to start hearing more questions about their future prospects.

Amid all that, their hunt for a new quarterback has them linked to a surprise name — 44-year-old Philip Rivers — who may need a crash course in the Colts' playbook, especially if Leonard can't play Sunday at Seattle (10-3).

"Chris and his staff are working through that right now, so you guys will probably have an update Wednesday when I talk to you guys," Steichen said. "But we're working through that."

Leonard, a rookie, did what he could in his first extensive action Sunday, though he didn't exactly look like he could navigate a couple wins out of Indy's final four games. Veteran Brett Rypien joined the practice squad Oct. 15 and still isn't on the active roster, though Steichen said Rypien probably would start if Leonard can't go next weekend.



Phelan M. Ebenhack | Associated Press

Indianapolis Colts quarterback Daniel Jones (17) grabs his leg after an injury during the first half of an NFL football game against the Jacksonville Jaguars, Sunday in Jacksonville, Fla.

And the best in-house hope — Anthony Richardson — also may be out. The No. 4 overall draft pick in 2023 still has not practiced since fracturing an orbital bone in mid-October. While Steichen hopes he can return this season, it doesn't appear Richardson will be cleared to practice this week.

Where does that leave Indy now?

"We really can't dwell on it," defensive end Kwity Paye said. "We have second and third stringers and backups for a reason and those guys are going to have to be ready to step up when their number is called. Just fill the position as they can and try to make some plays."

Perhaps most discouraging is that last month, Indy appeared poised to end its four-year playoff drought. The Colts held a seemingly comfortable lead in the AFC South as they fought for the conference's No. 1 seed. Since then, everything has unraveled.

The Colts have lost three straight and four of five, dropping into a tie

for second in the division race, one game behind Jacksonville. They are trying to fight their way out of the No. 8 seed without their starting quarterback and maybe their backup quarterback as they head to Seattle before playing back-to-back home games against San Francisco (9-4) and Jacksonville (9-4) and a regular season-ending trip to Houston (8-5).

How desperate are they? Well, they're bringing in Rivers who hasn't taken a snap since leading the Colts to the playoffs in 2020 and has been a high school coach in Fairhope, Alabama, since retiring in January 2021.

Losing a player who spent the first half of this season in the MVP discussion was emotionally jarring Sunday. The lingering ripple effects could be much more damaging, though, especially if Leonard can't play — and they all know it.

"The offense has to be tailored around the quarterback, for sure, on what he does well, and then you go," Steichen said.

Winter Olympics hockey will be played on shorter ice than NHL

BY DANIELLA MATAR AND
STEPHEN WHYNO
AP SPORTS WRITERS

MILAN — Hockey, one of the premier events at the Winter Olympics and one that is welcoming NHL players back for the first time in more than a decade, will take place on ice that is shorter than NHL-regulation size.

Men's and women's games at two arenas will be played in rinks that are 60 meters long by 26 meters wide, or 196.85-by-85.3 feet. NHL dimensions are 200 by 85 feet (60.96 by 25.908 meters), so the Olympic ice will be slightly wider and more than 3 feet shorter.

The International Ice Hockey Federation approved the Milan rinks, which fit one of the governing body's standard sizes and was used by the Pittsburgh Penguins and Nashville Predators for two games in Stockholm in November.

The IIHF shifted to the NHL dimensions at the Olympics beginning in 2018 and used again in 2022. The 2026 Games in February mark the first time NHL players will be at the Olympics since 2014 in Sochi.

The IIHF on Monday confirmed the different size was in place in Milan without explanation.

"While these dimensions differ slightly from a typical NHL rink, they are consistent with IIHF regulations, match the rink size used at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games and are fully consistent with the dimensions the NHL requires as part of its Global Series Game arena specifications,"



Luca Bruno | Associated Press

A worker prepares the Ice Skating Arena where some Ice Hockey matches of the Milan Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics will take place, in Rho, outskirt of Milan, on Friday.

the federation said. "All involved, the IIHF, the Organizing Committee, NHL, NHLPA, IOC and the relevant venue authorities agree that the differences in rink specifications are insignificant, and should not impact either the safety or quality of game play."

Olympic hockey had been played on international ice of 60 by 30 meters (196.85 by 98.4 feet) in 1998, 2006 and 2014, with a slight variation in Salt Lake City in 2002. It was played on NHL-sized ice in Vancouver in 2010 because of the existing arenas.

"It's the same for every team, and I think that's the bottom line," Finland men's hockey general manager Jere Lehtinen told The Associated Press. "Our coaches, maybe it's more interesting and something you need to pay attention more."

Canada general manager Doug Armstrong first brought up the ice being slightly off from NHL regulation size on a podcast in early September and then discussed it again in October. National federations have been aware of the specs for

quite some time; Canada assistant coach Peter DeBoer broached the topic recently on a radio show, raising questions about why it's not NHL-sized ice.

The ice dimensions will be the same in both hockey arenas in February: the main arena that is still being built and the smaller, temporary venue that is situated inside an exhibition center.

Construction at the Stagiulia Ice Hockey Arena — the new, 16,000-seat venue on the outskirts of Milan — is going down to the wire and organizers told The AP that there was "no plan B."

A test event had to be moved to the Rho Ice Hockey Arena and new test events at the main venue aren't scheduled until Jan. 9-11, less than a month before the first puck is dropped. Workers on Friday were still putting the finishing touches to the venue in Rho, just three days before the start of the IIHF Group B Under 20 World Championship that will serve as a

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NBA Cup quarterfinals set for this week; history at stake

BY TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

All eight teams left in the running for the NBA Cup are now playing for a shot at going to Las Vegas for the tournament semifinals, along with a chance of picking up more than \$500,000 per player as a reward for claiming the title.

And for the Oklahoma City Thunder, there's something more: History is at stake.

The NBA Cup quarterfinal games — Miami at Orlando, New York at Toronto, Phoenix at Oklahoma City, and San Antonio at the Los Angeles Lakers — are scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday. The winners will head to Vegas for semifinal games this weekend.

If the Thunder beat the Suns, they'll improve to 24-1 this season and tie Golden State for the best 25-game start in NBA history.

There are also cash

incentives: Players on the quarterfinalist teams have already assured themselves of \$53,093 apiece in a bonus, with two-way players getting half that much. A trip to the semifinals, along with a chance of picking up more than \$106,187.

A semifinal win guarantees players \$212,373 in bonus money, and players with standard contracts on the Cup-winning roster will get \$530,933 apiece. Again, two-way players get half of whatever the bonus amount is.

WHERE TO WATCH AND LISTEN

All seven remaining games — the quarterfinals, semifinals and title game — are on Amazon Prime. Some quarterfinal games will also get local-market coverage, while the semifinals and final are Prime exclusive.

ESPN Radio will also broadcast the three games from Las Vegas — the semifinals on Saturday and

the championship game on Dec. 16.

The NBA said Monday that more than 40 million people in the U.S. watched group stage games across Amazon Prime, NBC/Peacock and ESPN this season, which is up 90% from those rounds last year.

MIAMI HEAT AT ORLANDO MAGIC

Tuesday, 6 p.m. ET
Records: Heat 14-10, Magic 14-10

Season series: Magic lead 2-0 (Magic 125, Heat 121 in Orlando on Oct. 22; Magic 106, Heat 105 in Orlando on Dec. 5).

NBA Cup history: Heat are 7-5 all-time in Cup games, in quarterfinals for first time, qualified for knockout stage this year by winning Eastern Conference wild card at 3-1; Magic are 10-3 all-time in Cup games, in quarterfinals for second consecutive year, won East Group B this year at 4-0, seeking first semifinal appearance.

Outlook: It'll be the third of five meetings between the Sunshine State rivals this season, and the first two were down-to-the-wire thrillers in Orlando. ... Heat have lost three straight for the first time this season. ... Magic just got Paolo Banchero back from injury, then lost Franz Wagner with a high ankle sprain in a loss at New York on Sunday. Wagner won't play Tuesday, while Miami expects to get starting guards Tyler Herro and Davion Mitchell back in the lineup.

NEW YORK KNICKS AT TORONTO RAPTORS

Tuesday, 8:30 p.m. ET
Records: Knicks 16-7, Raptors 15-10

Season series: Knicks lead 1-0 (Knicks 116, Raptors 94 in New York on Nov. 30).

NBA Cup history: Knicks are 10-4 all-time in Cup games, are the only team in the NBA to reach the Cup quarterfinals in all three years of the event, won East Group C with 3-1 record, seeking first semifinal berth; Raptors are 6-6 all-time in Cup games, in quarterfinals for first time, won East Group A this year at 4-0.

Outlook: Knicks have won seven of their last eight games and 14 of their last 18. ... Knicks are 0-2 in quarterfinal games in Cup play, losing by a combined 32 points. ... Raptors have had wild ups and downs this season. They started 1-4, then went unbeaten in four Group Stage games in Cup play during a stretch

where they went 13-1. Problem is, they're 1-5 since that stretch.

PHOENIX SUNS AT OKLAHOMA CITY THUNDER

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. ET
Records: Suns 14-10, Thunder 23-1

Season series: Thunder lead 1-0 (Thunder 123, Suns 119 in Oklahoma City on Nov. 28).

NBA Cup history: Suns are 9-4 all-time in Cup play, in quarterfinals for second time (2023), seeking first semifinal appearance, qualified for knockout stage this year by winning Western Conference wildcard at 3-1; Thunder are 10-5 all-time in Cup play,

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ABSOLUTE

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LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

DAVIESS COUNTY FISCAL COURT

SECOND READING NOTICE:

The Daviess County Fiscal Court at their meeting to be held on Thursday, December 18, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at the Daviess County Courthouse, Room 201, 212 St. Ann Street, Owensboro, Kentucky, will have summary second reading of the following ordinance & consider same for passage:

10-2025 KOC 520.3 (2025) – An Ordinance Authorizing the Establishment of Regulations, Restrictions, and/or Limitations on Speed Limits, Stopping, Parking, and Operation of Vehicles on County Roadways

Copies of the full text of the ordinance is available for public inspection in the County Judge/Executive's Office, Courthouse, Room 202, 212 St. Ann Street, Owensboro, Kentucky, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. & on-line at www.daviessky.org.

The Daviess County Fiscal Court certifies that the summary above is true, correct & written in a way calculated to inform the public of their content.

DAVIESS COUNTY FISCAL COURT

BY: Brooke Hagan, Fiscal Court Clerk

PREPARED BY:

John Burlew

Daviess County Attorney

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MESSENGER-INQUIRER

*Customer count & earnings listed are approximate.