

What will happen with Jake Grove?

Written by Roberto Yanes
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ROBERTO'S FIN FRIDAYS



Profootballfocus.com behind premier New York Jets center Nick Mangold, but when Grove went down with his injury, the door was opened for backup center Joe Berger. Berger took advantage of the opportunity replacing Grove with ease and had his best season as a pro.

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Grove began this year's training camp as the starting center, but after the first practice, Berger began to share time as the starting center with Jake Grove. Perhaps it was a motivational ploy by the Dolphins, or maybe they saw something in Grove they did not like, but Berger once again was given the opportunity and made the best of it. The centers continued to split time until Grove went down with an apparent knee bruise that kept him out of camp for a couple of days, but since Grove's return after the knee injury he has not seen another snap with the starters. Grove has been injury prone his whole career and injuries are something the Trifecta does not accept. Injuries are the reason the Trifecta traded guard Justin Smiley. Injuries and a possible new replacement are not the only issues affecting Grove. He has a high priced contract, and in an uncapped year, the Fins could be looking to shed the big contract of a player who is not so often on the field.

On Wednesday, [Armando Salguero](#) of the Miami Herald reported that Joe Berger had beaten out Jake Grove for the starting center position. Salguero wrote the following: "I am told by the same source that Joe Berger has similarly beaten out Jake Grove for the starting center job." The Dolphins unofficial announcement of Joe Berger becoming their new starting center, made public by Salguero, has to be the biggest surprise from this year's training camp.

Various thoughts came to my mind yesterday after reading the announcement of Berger becoming the Dolphins starter at center. The first thought was, what will become of Jake Grove? The Dolphins could approach the demotion of Grove several ways, they can keep him around as Berger's backup, they can trade him or they can simply cut him. While I don't believe Grove will be released, are the Dolphins really willing to keep around a \$30 million dollar back up? If Salguero's sources are correct, and Berger remains the starter for Miami, I could see the Dolphins placing Grove on the trade block, but trading the center is a very big possibility.

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You probably think the idea of trading Grove is crazy. Who would back up Joe Berger? The Dolphins have the players to make the move very possible. They currently have Cory Procter, who has played center under this regime before while at Dallas. The Dolphins could trade Grove and move Procter back to center. In case the Dolphins decide to trade Grove, they also have Richie Incognito, who has been a starting center in this league. In fact, Steven Jackson's best year was while Incognito manned the center position for the Rams.

You may be asking yourself if these moves affect the Guard position, but I don't think so. The Fins guards are Richie Incognito, Donald Thomas, John Jerry and the newly added veteran Randy Thomas. There is also the possibility that the Dolphins could regain recently injured O-lineman, Nate Garner, who started eight games last year at both guard spots. The Dolphins have more than enough depth at the position to make the trade of Grove possible.

Perhaps Armando Salguero's sources are wrong, maybe Joe Berger tanks in the next remaining games, but the truth is that as of today, Grove's status with the Miami Dolphins is not guaranteed. The Dolphins are a team that is not afraid to admit their mistakes and find answers to them right away. We have seen them replace high-priced free agents who did not live up to their contracts before, and it seems that Jake Grove could be the next one on their list..

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