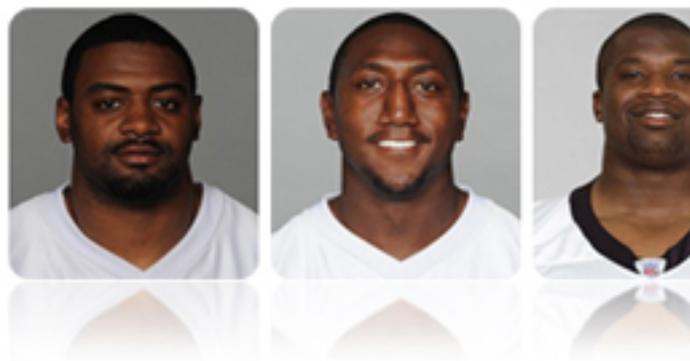


ROBERTO'S FIN FRIDAYS



Take a look at the Miami Dolphins' defense and the first word that will come to your mind is youth. In this year's draft, the Dolphins drafted defensive end Jared Odrick and outside linebacker Koa Misi, both rookies, who are expected to start at their positions. Also scheduled to start are cornerbacks Vontae Davis and Sean Smith, safety Chris Clemons and outside linebacker Cameron Wake, all who are in their second year in the NFL. The young defense is the reason fans and pundits are worried that the Dolphins will struggle defensively this year, but what they fail to see is the amount of veterans there are to help the Dolphins young defensive players.

The Miami Dolphins have done an excellent job of building a young talented defense for the future while sprinkling in a little veteran spice. The Dolphins have been very smart with the veterans they have added to the unit and the ones they have kept. These are players who are experienced, crafty, smart veterans that have played for good defenses, contributed in big games and have helped their past teams reach the Super Bowl.

Dolphins Young Defense Sprinkled With Just the Right Veterans

Written by Roberto Yanes

Thursday, 26 August 2010 19:25

The Trifecta wasted no time in signing free agent linebacker Karlos Dansby when free agency began. At the time, the move was considered to be the biggest move of the offseason, but after the Dolphins traded for Brandon Marshall, the signing of Dansby has gone under the radar. Fans and pundits have forgotten Dansby is one of the premier inside linebackers in the NFL, has played in a Super Bowl, and last year won his ex team, the Cardinals, a playoff game in the final play of the game. With only two years since playing in the Super Bowl, Dansby's playmaking ability and veteran presence should do wonders for the Dolphins young defensive unit.

Dansby is not the only veteran linebacker the Dolphins added this offseason. Who can forget about Tim Dobbins, who was acquired on draft day via trade? Dobbins is a young veteran linebacker with a ton of upside and a core special teams player. Just one of the many veterans Miami has added to its young defense.

After the Dolphins lost defensive end Phillip Merling in the offseason, they dialed up the numbers of two veteran defensive linemen and offered them contracts, which both signed. The signing of Marques Douglas and Charles Grant has proven to be two key additions and a blessing in disguise. Both players have flashed in preseason and shown why they have been so

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good for so long in this league. Douglas played for the best defense in NFL last year and Grant helped his team reach the Super Bowl. Grant has moved up the depth chart and has been the Dolphins best pass rushing defensive end in preseason. Douglas has received rave reviews from Coach Sparano for his wits, veteran leadership and play on the field. Neither player is expected to start or be a progress stopper for the younger players, but both have made enough of an impact to remain backups and contribute plenty with the way Miami rotates its defensive linemen.

The Fins continue to add veterans to sure up their defense and add depth. On Wednesday, the Dolphins traded fan favorite wide receiver Greg Camarillo to the Vikings for cornerback Benny Sapp. Sapp played for a Viking's defense that was ranked sixth best in the league last year. He is a nickel/slot corner, who is a sure tackler, special teams' ace and plays with mean streak. He is expected to fill in for the injured, Will Allen, until he returns and adds much needed experience and depth to a very young secondary.

After all is said and done the Dolphins have added five defensive players who helped their respective teams reach the post season last year. Dansby, Douglas, Dobbins, and Sapp all played in the playoffs last year, with Douglas and Sapp both playing in the AFC and NFC Championship games. Grant played for the Super Bowl Champions New Orleans Saints, and would have played in the post season and Super Bowl if not for a season ending injury. The five

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add experience, veteran leadership and know what it takes to help their team reach the post season and Super Bowl. Combine these new additions with all the experienced veterans the Dolphins already have, and what seems like a very young unit all of a sudden has the potential to become a real solid defense.

Roberto Yanes has been a member of FinHeaven for six years and goes by the name FinAtic8480 on our forums. He lives in Miami and has been a hardcore Dolphins fan for over 10 years.

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