

Colts keep starting DT off free-agent market

By **MICHAEL MAROT**
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — Margus Hunt enjoyed playing in Indianapolis so much last season he decided to stick around for two more years with the Colts. And he didn't give anyone else a chance to weigh in.

One week before Hunt was set to become a free agent, the starting defensive tackle agreed to a new contract assuring he will play a key role as the Colts' promising young defense tries to take the next step.

"They clearly were trying to keep me here," Hunt said on a conference call with reporters shortly

after the deal was announced Tuesday. "The offer that was put in place sounded great, and I didn't want to leave this kind of a locker room behind, and where it's heading. I didn't want to leave that behind and it worked out."

ESPN first reported Hunt would receive \$9 million over the next two seasons, terms a person with knowledge of the deal confirmed to The Associated Press. The person requested anonymity because Indianapolis does not release terms of contracts publicly.

Hunt, 31, might have been able to get more on the open market after starting 15 games last season and posting career highs in tackles (30), sacks (five) and tackles for loss (13). He also forced one

fumble, recovered another and showed the skills that made him a second-round draft pick in 2013.

But Hunt liked the fit — on the field and in the locker room — after Indy changed coaches and switched back to a 4-3 defensive front.

The Colts liked the results after moving the 6-foot-8, 298-pound lineman from defensive end to defensive tackle, partially because of need but also because his length and quickness made him a disruptive force on the interior line.

General manager Chris Ballard told reporters last Wednesday he wanted to keep Hunt and intended to meet with his agent during the NFL's annual scouting

combine, which ended Monday in Indy.

It didn't take long to work it out.

"I was really hoping this contract would happen sooner rather than later, so it wasn't really a hard decision as to whether we should play the market or not," Hunt said. "I knew if a situation developed where I could be back here in this market and with these guys, it was a no-brainer."

Ballard prefers using salary-cap space to keep his own players whenever possible. He's already re-signed three key players this offseason — kicker Adam Vinatieri, right guard Mark Glowinski and now Hunt — and he could make more moves before the mar-

ket opens next Wednesday. The most likely in-house candidates would be safety Clayton Geathers and cornerback Pierre Desir.

But with roughly \$105 million in cap room, Ballard still has plenty of money to plug holes. And he has Hunt back to help.

Hunt was originally drafted by Cincinnati and made 84 tackles and had 7 ½ sacks in four seasons with the Bengals. He joined the Colts as a free agent in 2017 and played primarily as backup that season.

"I don't know if the stars aligned or what happened, but I was able to have a great year," Hunt said. "Hopefully I can keep progressing and we can have a great year."

SCOREBOARD

Local schedule

■ TODAY, MARCH 6

Prep Track and Field
Jasper at Bloomington North Indoor Meet 6:00

■ THURSDAY, MARCH 7

No events scheduled

■ FRIDAY, MARCH 8

No events scheduled

Bowling

AT JASPER/Eastown Recreation Center

■ MARCH 5

■ TUESDAY MORNING FUN LEAGUE

Margarita Gals 3, Butterflies 1

Knock Outs 2, Ten Pins 2

Jab Squad 4, Bye 0

High games and series — Jane Bell 190-176-158-524, Brenda Labhart 150-164-453.

■ MARCH 4

■ MONDAY NIGHT BOOSTER LEAGUE

Double AA Drywall 8, Lemond's Cleaning 0

Impressions Printing 6, Carpenters 2

Superior Ag 6, Basket Case Brewing Company 2

Crazy Cajuns 6, Ferdinand News 2

High games and series — Josh Hart 257-246-700, Paul Lemond 245-225-639, Harley Zehr 187-225-202-614, Brad Obermeier 225-599, Chelsea Kiefer 198-222-592, Jace Mathies 580, Lee Correll - 213, Anthony Schmitt - 212, Becky Gadlage - 176, Betty Harrison - 176.

Prep basketball

■ AREA IHSAA REGIONAL PAIRINGS

CLASS 4A AT SEYMOUR

Saturday's Games

Jasper (16-9) vs. Center Grove (19-8), 10 a.m.

Bloomington South (23-3) vs. Jeffersonville (19-5),

Noon

Championship

Winner of Game 1 vs. Winner of Game 2, 8 p.m.

CLASS 3A at Southridge

Saturday's Games

Batesville (15-10) vs. Princeton (20-5), 10:30 a.m.

Evansville Memorial (16-9) vs. Silver Creek (21-3), 12:30 p.m.

Championship

Winner of Game 1 vs. Winner of Game 2, 8 p.m.

CLASS 2A at Paoli

Saturday's Games

Linton (24-3) vs. Paoli (23-3), 10 a.m.

Northwestern (Hanover) (25-1) vs. Tell City (20-5),

Noon

Championship

Winner of Game 1 vs. Winner of Game 2, 8 p.m.

CLASS 1A at Loogootee

Saturday's Games

Lanesville (14-11) vs. West Washington (10-15), 10 a.m.

Evansville Day (11-11) vs. Barr-Reeve (23-2), Noon

Championship

Winner of Game 1 vs. Winner of Game 2, 8 p.m.

College basketball

■ SCHEDULE

All Times EST

Wednesday, Mar. 6

EAST

LIU Brooklyn at Sacred Heart, 6 p.m.

Marquette at Seton Hall, 6:30 p.m.

Penn St. at Rutgers, 7 p.m.

Iowa St. at West Virginia, 7 p.m.

George Washington at Fordham, 7 p.m.

Richmond at UMass, 7 p.m.

St. Francis Brooklyn at Robert Morris, 7 p.m.

Wagner at Fairleigh Dickinson, 7 p.m.

Bryant at St. Francis (Pa.), 7 p.m.

SOUTH

Missouri at Georgia, 6:30 p.m.

St. Bonaventure at Davidson, 7 p.m.

Louisiana Tech at FAU, 7 p.m.

Southern Miss. at Old Dominion, 7 p.m.

Rice at Charlotte, 7 p.m.

FIU at Marshall, 7 p.m.

LSU at Florida, 7 p.m.

Detroit at N. Kentucky, 7 p.m.

UTSA at W. Kentucky, 7:30 p.m.

Texas A&M-CC at McNeese St., 7:30 p.m.

SIU-Edwardsville vs. Morehead St. at Evansville, Ind., 7:30 p.m.

New Orleans at SE Louisiana, 8 p.m.

Northwestern St. at Nicholls, 8 p.m.

South Florida at Tulane, 8 p.m.

Arkansas at Vanderbilt, 8:30 p.m.

Georgia Tech at NC State, 9 p.m.

MIDWEST

La Salle at Dayton, 7 p.m.

Youngstown St. at Oakland, 7 p.m.

Duquesne at Saint Louis, 8 p.m.

Providence at Creighton, 8 p.m.

Georgetown at DePaul, 8:30 p.m.

Ohio St. at Northwestern, 9 p.m.

Clemson at Notre Dame, 9 p.m.

UT Martin vs. E. Illinois at Evansville, Ind., 10 p.m.

SOUTHWEST

Cent. Arkansas at Sam Houston St., 7:30 p.m.

Incarnate Word at Houston Baptist, 8 p.m.

Middle Tennessee at UTEP 9 p.m.

Oklahoma St. at Baylor, 9 p.m.

FAR WEST

Oregon St. at Washington, 10 p.m.

Fresno St. at San Diego St., 10 p.m.

Wyoming at San Jose St., 10 p.m.

UC Riverside at Long Beach St., 10 p.m.

Oregon at Washington St., 11 p.m.

Boise St. at New Mexico, 11 p.m.

Thursday, Mar. 7

EAST

St. Peter's vs. Marist at Albany, N.Y., 5 p.m.

Temple at UConn, 7 p.m.

Navy at American U., 7 p.m.

Army at Lehigh, 7 p.m.

Delaware St. at Md.-Eastern Shore, 7:30 p.m.

Fairfield vs. Manhattan at Albany, N.Y., 7:30 p.m.

Niagara vs. Monmouth (NJ) at Albany, N.Y., 10 p.m.

SOUTH

Cincinnati at UCF, 7 p.m.

South Alabama at Coastal Carolina, 7 p.m.

Troy at Appalachian St., 7 p.m.

North Florida at Liberty, 7 p.m.

Savannah St. at SC State, 7:30 p.m.

NC Central at NC A&T, 7:30 p.m.

Florida A&M at Bethune-Cookman, 7:30 p.m.

Coppin St. at Morgan St., 7:30 p.m.

Howard at Norfolk St., 8 p.m.

NJIT at Lipscomb, 8 p.m.

Alabama A&M at Jackson St., 8:30 p.m.

Alabama St. at Grambling St., 8:30 p.m.

High Point vs. Gardner-Webb at Buies Creek, N.C., 8:30 p.m.

MIDWEST

Iowa at Wisconsin, 7 p.m.

Valparaiso vs. Indiana St. at St. Louis, Mo., 7 p.m.

California Baptist at Rio Grande, 8 p.m.

Indiana at Illinois, 8 p.m.

Evansville vs. Illinois St. at St. Louis, Mo., 9:30 p.m.

SOUTHWEST

Louisiana-Lafayette at UALR, 7:30 p.m.

Louisiana-Monroe at Arkansas St., 8 p.m.

Southern U. at Prairie View, 8:30 p.m.

Alcorn St. at Texas Southern, 8:30 p.m.

SMU at Houston, 9 p.m.

FAR WEST

N. Colorado at S. Utah, 8:30 p.m.

UCLA at Colorado, 9 p.m.

Idaho at Weber St., 9 p.m.

Grand Canyon at Utah Valley, 9 p.m.

Pacific vs. Pepperdine at Las Vegas, Nev., 9 p.m.

E. Washington at Idaho St., 9:05 p.m.

Hawaii at UC Davis, 10 p.m.

UC Irvine at Cal Poly, 10 p.m.

Southern Cal at Utah, 10 p.m.

CS Bakersfield at Seattle, 10 p.m.

UC Santa Barbara at CS Northridge, 10 p.m.

Montana St. at Sacramento St., 10:05 p.m.

Montana at Portland St., 10:05 p.m.

California at Stanford, 11 p.m.

Portland vs. San Diego at Las Vegas, Nev., 11:30 p.m.

Friday, Mar. 8

EAST

Brown at Princeton, 4 p.m.

Bowling Green at Buffalo, 6 p.m.

Harvard at Cornell, 7 p.m.

Yale at Penn, 7 p.m.

Dartmouth at Columbia, 7 p.m.

SOUTH

W. Carolina vs. VMI at Asheville, N.C., 5 p.m.

Minnesota at Maryland, 6:30 p.m.

Miami at Virginia Tech, 7 p.m.

The Citadel vs. Samford at Asheville, N.C., 7:30 p.m.

Saint Joseph's at VCU, 9 p.m.

MIDWEST

Bradley vs. Missouri St. at St. Louis, Mo., 3:30 p.m.

Akron at Kent St., 7 p.m.

N. Illinois at Ball St., 7 p.m.

Cent. Michigan at W. Michigan, 7 p.m.

E. Michigan at Toledo, 7 p.m.

Miami (Ohio) at Ohio, 7 p.m.

N. Iowa vs. S. Illinois at St. Louis, Mo., 9:30 p.m.

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Pro basketball

■ NBA GLANCE

All Times EST

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Toronto . . . . .	.46	19	.708	—
Philadelphia . . . . .	.41	23	.641	4½
Boston . . . . .	.39	26	.600	7