

Ben Koyack was a “five-star” tight end coming out of Oil City High School in 2010. He went to Notre Dame, where he was a starter his senior year in 2014, drafted by the Jacksonville Jaguars in the seventh round the following spring and, as of December 2019, is still collecting an NFL paycheck.

Koyack, 6-5, 258, has been with the Jags all through his professional career, although they released him just before the start of the 2019 season. But when they sustained a series of injuries to their tight ends, they re-signed Koyack on Nov. 13 and he continued to see action in a backup role.

Through games of Dec. 1, Koyack has 25 catches for 208 yards and a touchdown in his career. His big moment as a pro came on Jan. 7, 2018 when he caught a pass for the game’s only touchdown in Jacksonville’s 10-3 playoff victory over the Buffalo Bills.

He also had a signature moment his senior season at Notre Dame when he caught a game-winning 22-yard touchdown from quarterback Everett Golson on fourth down against Stanford.

A record-setting receiver at Oil City, Koyack became a blocking tight end at Notre Dame, and that’s what he has been ever since, both college and in the pros.

Koyack became a starter at Notre Dame his senior season. He made seven starts while appearing in 37 games before his senior years. He finished his college career under coach Brian Kelly with 44 catches for 532 yards and five touchdowns.

Koyack was thought to be a “Penn State lock” before Notre Dame offered. (Penn State fans on message boards freaked when he announced he was going to Notre Dame.) He committed to Notre Dame in April of his junior year. Ohio State recruited him heavily and Pitt also was in the picture.

From Wikipedia (edited):

On Dec. 22, 2014, it was announced that Koyack had accepted his invitation to play in the [2015 Senior Bowl](#). Koyack impressed team representatives and scouts in practice while working with Tennessee Titans’ tight ends coach Mike Mularkey. On Jan. 24, 2015, Koyack played in the Senior Bowl for Tennessee Titans’ head coach Ken Whisenhunt’s North team and caught two passes for 19 yards and a touchdown. He caught a 10-yard touchdown pass from Oregon State quarterback Sean Mannion in the second quarter of the North’s 34-13 victory over the South.

He was one of 19 collegiate tight ends to attend the NFL Scouting Combine in Indianapolis. Koyack opted to perform in limited drills at the combine and only meet with representatives from NFL teams. On March 31, 2015, Koyack attended Notre Dame’s Pro Day along with 10 other teammates. His time of 4.79 in the 40-yard dash would’ve tied for fourth among all tight ends at the combine. His overall performance in combine drills was mediocre as his vertical ranked last (30 inches) of his position group and his bench press would’ve ranked ninth. At the conclusion of the pre-draft process,

Koyack was projected to be a fourth or fifth round pick by NFL experts and scouts. He was ranked as the seventh best tight end prospect by NFLDraftScout.com.

But he wasn't taken until the seventh round of the draft, the 229th player overall and the 14th tight end.

On May 14, 2015, the Jacksonville Jaguars signed Koyack to a four-year \$2.34 million contract that includes a signing bonus of \$69,300.

More from Wikipeida (edited):

Throughout training camp, he competed against Clay Harbor, Nic Jacobs, and Connor Hamlett for a roster spot. He was waived Sept. 14 as a part of the Jaguars final roster cuts. The Jaguars opted to have only four tight ends on their active roster, including Mercedes Lewis, Julius Thomas, Jacobs and Harbor. After clearing waivers, Koyack was signed to the Jaguars' practice squad on Sept. 6, 2015. He spent his entire rookie season developing on the practice squad.

On Jan. 4, 2016, the Jaguars signed Koyack to a reserve/futures contract. He competed with Jacobs, Braeden Bowman and Neal Sterling for a roster spot. He made the active roster and was named the backup tight end behind Lewis and Thomas to start the regular season.

He made his professional regular season debut in the Jags' season-opening 27-23 loss to the Green Bay Packers. On Sept. 24, 2016, Koyack underwent successful surgery to repair a slight tear in his meniscus. He suffered the tear four days earlier during practice and was inactive for the next two games. On Oct. 26, 2016, Koyack caught five passes for 41 yards in a 36-22 loss at the Titans. His first career reception came in the fourth quarter on a seven-yard pass by quarterback Blake Bortles.

Koyack saw an increased snap count after offensive coordinator Greg Olson was fired on Oct. 29, 2016. On Nov. 13, he earned his first career start and caught three passes for 35 yards in a 24-21 loss to the Texans. Head coach Gus Bradley was fired after before Week 15 after the Jaguars posted a 2-12 record. He was replaced by assistant head coach/offensive line coach Doug Marrone. On Jan. 1, 2017, Koyack had three receptions for 25 yards and a touchdown during a 24-20 loss at the Colts. He scored his first career touchdown on a 14-yard pass by Blake Bortles. Koyack finished the 2016 season with 19 receptions for 161 receiving yards and a touchdown in 14 games and seven starts.

Although the Jaguars traded Thomas to the Dolphins, Koyack still faced competition for the second tight end position from newly acquired free agent Mychal Rivera in 2017. Marrone named him the Jaguars' second tight end behind longtime veteran Lewis to start the season after Rivera was placed on injured reserve due to a lingering hand injury.

On Oct. 15, 2017, Koyack caught a 21-yard pass during a 27-17 loss to the Rams. In Week 9, he made his first start of the season during the Jaguars' 23-7 win against the Bengals. He finished the 2017 season with five receptions for 38 yards in 16 games.¹

The Jaguars won the AFC South and made the playoff and Koyack caught his first career playoff TD against Buffalo. He added a 21-yard catch the next week against the Steelers in a 45-42 victory. The

Jags' season ended the next week with a 24-20 loss to New England in the AFC championship game,

On Sept. 1, 2018, Koyack was waived/injured by the Jaguars and was placed on injured reserve. He was released on Sept. 8. He was re-signed by the Jaguars on Nov. 12.

On Sept. 1, 2019, Koyack was released by the Jaguars, but re-signed Oct. 9, after starting tight end, James O'Shaughnessy, suffered a season-ending torn ACL in a week 5 loss to the Carolina Panthers.

Koyack was born April 9, 1993. He was a state champion in the javelin as a junior at Oil City, where he also played baseball (shortstop) and basketball through ninth grade. He comes from a musically inclined family, and plays several musical instruments himself. His mother, Karen, is a retired music teacher and his father, Dave, is a social worker.

A 2011 OCHS graduate, Koyack was a Parade magazine All-American and a first team all-stater in high school.

Koyack was a free agent in 2020, and wasn't signed by anybody.