Football fever takes to streets today in Clemson

Parade at 6 p.m.; first home game is Saturday

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A new football season arrives in Clemson with the traditional First Friday Parade, starting at 6 p.m. today, and more than 70,000 football-starved fans expected for the 6 p.m. kickoff of the first home game Saturday, when the Tigers play Middle Tennessee State University.

The First Friday parade starts at the intersection of State 93 near the president's house and follows State 93 to the intersection of Williamson Road.

College Avenue (State 93) will be blocked off, as will side roads in that area during the parade, said Clemson Police Chief Jimmy Dixon.

The theme for this year's parade is "We're 'All In' for Clemson," chosen to mark a new era in Tiger football under head coach Dabo Swinney, who starts his first full season Saturday.

A pep rally will follow the parade at Riggs Field.

Sponsored by the student organization Central Spirit and the Clemson Alumni Association, the parade will feature colorful floats built by sororities, Tiger Band, the cheerleaders and Rally Cats, the Tiger and Tiger Cub mascots, Miss First Friday and more.

The grand marshal will be Levon Kirkland, the former Clemson football standout and NFL Pro Bowl player who was inducted into Clemson's Athletic Hall of Fame in 2001 and now works in the admissions office.