

Krzyzewskiville is ready and waiting for Michigan tonight

By Mark Snyder Detroit Free Press Sports Writer Filed Under Sports Michigan Wolverines Big Ten Crisler Arena
2:29 PM, December 3, 2013 |

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DURHAM, N.C. — They began lining up Saturday, their bodies in the present while their minds were days away.

This is Krzyzewskiville, the tent city that sprouts for big-time Duke basketball games, endorsed by legendary coach Mike Krzyzewski himself.

Nick Stevenson, 18, of Mississippi was with the first group onsite, at 12:40 a.m. Saturday, setting up for the season's first [game](#)

[for](#) which tents were allowed.

“It was very, very empty, so we set up our tent and went to [sleep](#)

[,”](#) Stevenson said. “We figured that was the ideal time to get the best seats.”

When the doors open tonight, about an hour before Michigan faces Duke in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge, the students will be allowed into Cameron Indoor Stadium according to the numbers assigned to them based on their arrivals. Stevenson, who will be painting his body from the waist up, will be right in the middle of the student section, with his tentmates.

Students have been game-prepping this way since at least 1986, with the university now organizing and containing the area.

There are line captains who record when students arrive, keep them in a designated area and give instructions about which games are big enough to allow tents.

Among the challenging parts for campers is following the requirement that one-third of each tent group must stay with the tent at all times. Between classes, eating and trying to get back to [home](#)

[for](#) essentials, it's a juggling act.

“It's difficult to schedule with people still trying to go to class,” said Monica Vercillo, 18, from northern Virginia.

Jack Stylli's group, which arrived at 3 p.m. Monday, is further back in line, in the No. 54 spot.

“The idea is that we're in there, and that's what we really care about,” Stylli said.

The Duke student section has set the model for others nationwide — former U-M coach Tommy Amaker, a former Duke player and assistant coach, had student bench seating installed at Crisler Arena a decade ago — and should be raucous tonight.

“We have our ‘Dirt Page’ going,” Stylli said. “It's a secret until it comes out. The Dirt Page is basically any intel you have on the (opposing) players that can distract them during the game. It's on Facebook and it's

also printed out and handed out as we walk in.”

Krzyzewskiville was quiet this morning, with only the minimum number of students holding their space. But as game time approaches, it will start to fire up, just like overnight, when it was difficult to sleep, most said.

Catriona Harvey is a freshman from nearby Chapel Hill, N.C., where bitter rival North Carolina is located. But she grew up a Duke fan and attended games when she was younger.

This was her first game camping experience — in a small tent with only one other girl — but she knows how rowdy it will be inside.

“When you’re in the student section, it’s way different,” she said, comparing it to sitting in the rest of the crowd. “By the end of the game, you feel like you’ve run a marathon.”

As long as the Blue Devils cross the finish line first, it’ll be worth it.

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