

## Talansky, Bookwalter Riding Strong At Tour de France

Written by Whitney Noble  
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After the completion of nine stages, our Bobcat alumni Andrew Talansky (Garmin Sharp) and Brent Bookwalter '06 (BMC Racing) are holding strong in

22nd and 85th place, respectively, as they welcome the first day of rest.

As the historic race celebrates its 100th anniversary, the riders continue pacing through the 3,404 kilometer race which will conclude on Sunday, July 21. The tour includes 21 stages (seven flat, five hilly, six mountain, two individual time trials, one team time trial and two rest days) over the course of 23 days.

"It's very rewarding to watch our young men who wore the green and gold kits for Lees-McRae compete on the highest stage of their sport in the Tour de France," said Craig McPhail, director of athletics for Lees-McRae College. "It's a tribute to our staff who recruited them, our area in which they trained and developed, as well as our community who got the chance to watch and ride with both Brent and Andrew."

Since the race began on June 28, both Bookwalter and Talansky have endured successes and a few scary moments.

During stage 5, Bookwalter was involved in a crash with several other riders. A spokesperson for the BMC Racing Team told media, "[Bookwalter] was taking a drink when the rider in front of him suddenly swerved. [Bookwalter] only had one hand on the handlebars at the time so [he] couldn't react like normal. [He has] a little bit of soreness and lost a little bit of skin, but [he is] OK."

Bookwalter has also seen many places in the standings, moving from as far back as 111th place all the way up to his current standing in 85th. Talansky has been making moves as well. He began further back in 67th place and has made it up as far as 12th place! He's currently riding in 22nd.

After making it to 12th place at the end of the first mountain stage, Talansky told Cycling News, "I'm not with the top five guys right here, right now, but I am kicking around in the front group and I can hang on. Mentally knowing that is helpful."

Keep an eye on the Lees-McRae College Athletics Facebook page for updates on our riders' progress. For information about cycling at Lees-McRae College, please contact the Athletics Department at 828-898-8725.

**Photo Courtesy: Andrew Talansky, LMC Athletics**