

Cycling Inks Five for 2014-15 Slate

Written by Chris Parker
Thursday, 20 March 2014 10:41

Lees-McRae Director of Cycling Tim Hall is pleased to announce the signing of five cyclists for the 2014-15 academic year.

Joining the Bobcats in August will be Taylor Allison, Elliott Baring, Preston Jones, Connor Stark and Ethan Young-Kershaw. Picture above is riders in alphabetical order by last name, left to right.

"These first five signings are a big step forward for our program. Coach PJ Noto and I are both excited at the opportunity to work with all five of these promising student-athletes," praised Hall.

Taylor Allison – Roxbury, N.Y.

Allison is a professional downhill rider who raced for Team Drop in 2013. The Roxbury, N.Y., native has a focus on mountain biking. She won Oak Mountain and finished second overall Pro in the 2013 Gravity East Series. She won 13 races from 2009-11 while she came through the categories before turning professional and has won four total races since then.

Elliot Baring – Cumming, Ga.

Baring's focus is mountain bike and cyclocross. He finished 16th in STXC and 14th in Super D at the Mountain Bike Nationals in 2013. The Cumming, Ga., native, placed 26th in the Hendersonville UCI and 30th in the Cincy Kings UCI cyclocross races.

"Taylor and Elliott will both make an immediate impact on our elite team at mountain bike nationals, and Elliott should become a top cyclocross racer as well. Taylor's gravity experience at the pro level fills much needed depth on our women team, and Elliott will help us reload our men's team after losing Kerry Werner to graduation. I expect both riders will be difference makers and help elevate all of their teammates."

Preston Jones – Bethlehem, N.H.

Jones' focus will be road and mountain bikes. His natural ability is climbing, so his skills should sharpen greatly in the High Country trials and roads.

Connor Stark – Waxhaw, N.C.

Stark's focus is mountain bike racing. The Waxhaw, N.C., native, finished third overall in the Charlotte Winter Short Track Series and the Charlotte MTB Summer Series. He earned three victories through the 2013 season and claimed silver in the NC State MTB Championship for juniors.

Ethan Young-Kershaw – Westport, Maine

Young-Kershaw's focus will be road and cyclocross. He notched multiple top-10 finishes in both road and cyclocross. The Westport, Maine, native hails from the Northeast Bicycle Club.

"Ethan, Preston, and Connor show great potential for the future. All three are versatile riders on and off road who show great promise to thrive in our environment at Lees-McRae. All of the recruits were attracted to having world class trails and roads at their doorstep. Plus, all wanted to be a part of a progressive collegiate program that offers the chance to boost their future opportunities in the sport."

"We have quite a few offers still on the table to recruits all over the U.S. and internationally. Our goal is for all of them to be wearing the Bobcat uniform next fall, and if so we greatly improve our chances at winning an 11th team championship."

Hall and Noto plan to attend the NorCal/SoCal California State MTB Championship in May before traveling to the Road Nationals in Wisc. and Mountain Bike Nationals in Pa. Interested riders should contact them in advance so we can plan to meet there in person, or for them to search for us at the race venue.

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Recruits are encouraged to contact Coach Hall at hallt@lmc.edu and include a race resume. They are asked to fill out the cycling recruit questionnaire and to begin the application process for admissions.