



**June 19-22, 2008**

**Thur. 26** Hike day with John and I leaving from Alpine Inn to the top of Little Switzerland due to some pain left in JTs back he wanted to save it for riding. Hike miles: 2 at the most....

**Fri. 27** A breakfast made of homemade breads by the Inn was an eye opener getting the ride started around 10:30sh. We head up to Little Switzerland going south, dropping down onto Hwy 80 into Burnsville where we had lunch at The Garden Deli. Great food and eating outside was a treat. Heading back we would find that many hills were in our way and teams took their time to enjoy the scenery. Eric/Jo did more than the rest by turning back onto the Parkway the wrong way taking them closer to Mt. Mitchell and not Little Switzerland. The rescue wagon would go back to pick them up. Happy Hour was much appreciated. Dinner was at Little Switzerland Café with a few teams walking after dinner the short distance back down the hill in the dark and trying to wear off their dinner desserts. Miles: 62

**Sat. 28** A good ride heading north towards Apple Orchard and destination Linville Falls -- team Double D Coughlin, Team Wilmington (Duncan/Laura) and Team Task enjoyed the cool weather. Canadian Tony tailed us on his single and would make it look easy climbing on the Parkway. Dropping off the parkway into Linville Falls (by the Lodge) we had an outstanding lunch with blackberry cobbler and ice cream as Susanna's appetizer to start off. Outside ambiance and great friends made this a worthy stop. Happy hour started earlier than expected but what the heck two days in the saddle we all deserved a few beers. Dinner was at Grassy Creek Golf Course in Spruce Pine with excellent food and beverage. Our server was a hoot as she mimicked some Italian voice over. We would all head to bed from a tired day in the saddle upon return to Alpine. Miles: 48

**Sun. 29** Our last day at Alpine Inn with Susan and Ron Lough (owners) having made us all feel like family for our stay. Team Eric/Jo bowed out in riding as Fri. was a very long day for them in the saddle having been off the bike for a few weeks. I think they made the right decision after teams started back up the hill with ohhs, ahhs, ouch sounds along the way. With rain overnight the roads were damp in places and a slight fog in lower areas off the parkway. All teams were under the concession that 6 miles out and 6 miles back would be a good mileage. Voted and agreed. We would say our good byes to Tony and wish him safe travels back to Canada. Team Task and Coughlin would go to Skyline Inn up the road and eat breakfast at noon. Miles: 13

Thank you teams for allowing us to get together once again for another successful Blue Ridge weekend. Either we are getting older and feeling old or those hills are getting bigger and uglier. We did this section a few years back and I don't recall slugging up some of them. It was the year my back was out and it was no fun then. It seemed easier but just a slow go. Spoiled on those long downhills making up for the long climb up them.

For those that would like to stay at Alpine Inn I know Susan and Ron would love to have you as guests. The Inn is a quaint, rustic atmosphere lodge hanging off the bluff of Green Mountain. To visit the Inn go to <http://www.alpineinnnc.com/default.htm> Tell them TailWind sent you.