

Hastings, MI, July 2017, After Action Report

I'm not really sure to where the weather we actually received was supposed to go, but I am sure they were jealous because the temperature we had was fantastic. I may have even used a blanket on Friday night. Many thanks to John Vohlken for not only his duties as Sergeant Major, but also for keeping the mosquitoes away with spraying. TJ Berlucchi really added to the weekend with his drumming (getting some help from Russ Paul on occasion).

Saturday morning, we started off with some drill that was performed quickly and efficiently. Organizationally we had a lot of various companies combining to form the battalion. Scott Cummings commanded 1st Company, Marty Walker (although I tried to promote Ryan VanMaldegen) had second company (and we were all so glad Marty didn't have another 'episode' like he did in 2016), 3rd Company was Robbie Giorlando (with some instruction from Ian Fulford and Russ Paul), and 4th company was Captain Douglas McComas. (more on THAT guy later... :)) All did well, but I wanted to point out the performance of Robbie Giorlando. I believe this was the first time I have seen him command a company in a battalion formation and his performance was very solid. Also thanks to Scott Cummings who made sure I didn't invert the battalion during drill!

The battle on Saturday was out in the High Meadows. Union forces came in from the road and wrapped around the spectator hill which I believe they enjoyed. The battle wrapped around both sides and the Cav (led by Kevin Yeager) was very helpful in sweeping up the Rebs. We had a significantly higher number of troops on the field and ended the day with a victory.

Saturday Parade was held on the Village Green and Greg Swank helped facilitate one of the better parades I have seen in a long time. I briefly left for dinner Saturday evening. When I returned it was reported to me some of the men were being treated at the hospital in town. I went there immediately and found Captain Douglas McComas, who was either fatigued by battle or drunk... maybe both. Before the evening was over Captain Douglas McComas was in a duel with another Officer and unfortunately it did not go well for him.

The tactical on Sunday was the regular fare. Scott Cummings and his crew were out on the field with picket responsibilities. The Rebs did a fantastic job covering the field and at one point gave us a great volley as they came in behind us, well done! Sunday's drill went well, with a special note on Marty Walker's 2nd Company's volleys which were outstanding (I am guessing Ryan had drilled them earlier). The battle on Sunday was held on the Village Green and gave the Cav the opportunity to open up the battle for us. Kevin and his crew dusted up the Rebs who were very aggressive during the opening of the battle. Although we came down two different roads, we eventually deployed ourselves across the width of the field. Eventually the Rebs were driven back through town and surrendered. A big 'thank you' as always to the Reb command staff. Greg Van Wey could not make it, but Bill Adams took his place, both of these men are fantastic and have been very flexible to work with.

Last, I appreciate the skills of our Wing Commanders Denny Whiting as well as Dave Bauman, thank you both.

As mentioned, the 49th Indiana will be fielding a company for Hale Farm, so we'd love to have anyone fall in with us who is interested, dates are Aug 12/13.

Colonel Van