

Jackson 2023 After Action Report

My apologies for the delayed report. We had a bunch of things at home getting ready for our expected baby arrival that needed doing. Jackson started with a big gust on Thursday night for the few that arrived as a huge storm swept through the area with tornado warnings that caused many branches to come down and needed the organizers to delay everyone's arrival on Friday to afford them time to clean up and reset. Friday arrival went very smooth, though. I arrived on site mid-afternoon to get the camp laid out and then watch people filter in and get set up. Just like at Hastings, there were many old friends greeting each other with handshakes and hugs and many a helping hand to get camps set up. A meal was served by the event organizers which many partook and enjoyed. Friday night saw many sitting around campfires until wee hours of the morning catching up and telling stories.

Saturday came around to some bleary-eyed soldiers crawling out of tents to the smells of campfires, breakfast, and coffee. A meal was again offered for breakfast by the event organizers which many partook of and enjoyed. We went out to drill shortly after breakfast which was a good thing as we had lots of fresh fish in the group. Company drill was the name of the game for most of our time on the drill field to get the new members acclimated to being on the field. A few battalion maneuvers were tried, mostly successfully, and then we all went back to camp. There was a very successful guard mount that was enacted all weekend with sentries challenging any and all that tried to enter the camp, including me. I was chastised by the 3rd Michigan's Corporal of the Guard for leaving camp out of uniform which caused the sentry on duty to mistake me for a local farmer! If only the other sentries all weekend were so diligent in their duties! We performed a combined dress parade before the Saturday engagement, where Camp Chase trooped the line again for us like last year. That is a really cool sight we don't get to see hardly ever, and is a great addition to the formation, so I'd like to again express my gratitude to them for joining us there. The afternoon battle was a victorious fight with us beginning the scenario firing a volley on the Confederate ranks and pushing them over the hill on the field. We chased them up the hill, and were repulsed by a heavy volume of fire. The Michigan Cavalry Brigade contingent with us, ably led as always by Cap. Kevin Yaeger, then took his mounted troopers into the fight. The cavalry forced the Confederate formation into square which allowed the infantry companies led by Lt. John Vohlken on the right flank, Cap. Andrew McComas in the center, and Cap. Scot Spiekerman on the left flank to get over the hill and engage. We spread out across the field in order to maximize our effectiveness in forcing the Confederate formation to retreat. An entire company of enemy infantry was captured by the cavalry, allowing the remaining infantry to push the remaining confederate forces into works. The artillery, led by Cap. Paul Fay, gave a resounding amount of fire to support the infantry assault which finally forced the Confederates into their works and surrender the position. Saturday evening closed with some men venturing up to the Peacock for some shared socialization and music, and more men crowded around campfires in camp sharing the camaraderie that we all enjoy.

On Sunday, we awoke to a very chilly morning and the much deeper than usual Reveille from our battalion bugler Mark Heath who treated us to a different than usual horn he acquired from some nefarious sutlers. Sunday drill went much smoother with most of the men falling back into familiar territory of maneuvers and formations. After getting back to camp, a guard mount was posted again to keep the camp safe. The afternoon battle repeated the same scenario as Saturday with us pushing the Confederates over the hill and the MCB engaging them forcing them into square. We took some devastating casualties in our third company on the left flank when some of the enemy artillery fired on us, which put part of the formation in peril, but we ended up being victorious again forcing the surrender of the Confederate forces. After the battle, tents and camps disappeared quickly and efficiently with

everyone being packed up and out of the military camp before 5pm. I would like to take one final thought to express my gratitude to my staff for the weekend who enabled a very successful campaign. Thank you to Ryan VanMaldegen for again serving as my second in command, to Tom Emerick for serving as the battalion Adjutant, to Robbie Giorlando who signed up to be an aide, but was pressed into service filling the duties as the battalion Sgt Major for the weekend, and to the field music who joined us for the weekend (Mark and Nick). Let's keep the forward momentum going, keep bringing positive experiences, and keep pushing towards Chickamauga in a few weeks. I hope to see you all on the field again soon.

As always, your obedient,

Col. Miner