

ships, of no value as fighting vessels. The Chinese fleet was composed of twelve vessels and six torpedo-boats, though two of the vessels and the torpedo-boats were at a distance, so that the effective fighting force on each side was composed of ten ships-of-war. The Chinese fleet included the two great ships already named, the Ting-yuen and Chen-yuen. The latter, as has been said, were heavily armored. The other Chinese ships were lightly protected, and some of them not at all. None of the Japanese vessels had external armor, their protection consisting of steel decks and internal lining down to the water-line.

On perceiving the enemy's ships, Admiral Ito, of the Japanese fleet, at once gave orders to his captains to prepare for action. Ting, the Chinese admiral, did the same, drawing up his fleet in a single line, with the large ships in the centre and the weaker ones on the wings. Ito, who proposed to take advantage of the superior speed of his ships and circle round his adversary, drew up his vessels in a single column with the Flying Squadron at the head.

The action began at 1 P.M., the Chinese opening fire at about six thousand yards, the Japanese reserving their fire until at half that distance. Ito headed his ships straight for the centre of the Chinese line, but on drawing near they swerved so as to pass the Chinese right wing, their speed being at the same time increased. As the Yoshino, which led the movement, came up, she became a target for the whole Chinese fleet, but her speed soon carried