

Chih-yuen was sunk at about 3.30 P.M. and the King-yuen at 4.48. By this time the Chinese fleet was in the greatest disorder, its line broken, some of its vessels in full flight, and all coherence gone. The fire of the Japanese fleet was now principally directed against the two large iron-clads, but the fourteen-inch armor of these resisted the heaviest guns in the Japanese fleet, and, though their upper works were riddled and burnt, they were able to continue the battle.

In the fight here described the Japanese had shown a discipline and a skill in naval tactics far superior to those of their foes. They had kept at a distance of about four thousand yards from their antagonists, so as to avoid their heavy fire and make the most advantageous use of their larger number of rapid-fire guns and also of their much better marksmanship. The result of the battle was not due to greater courage, but to superior skill and more effective armament.

At nightfall, as the torpedo-boats had now joined the Chinese fleet, the Japanese drew off, not caring to risk the perils of a battle at night with such antagonists, both sides being also exhausted by the long fight. The next morning the Chinese fleet had disappeared. It had lost four vessels in the fight, and a fifth afterwards ran ashore and was blown up. Two of the Japanese ships were badly damaged, but none were lost, while the total loss in killed and wounded was two hundred and eighteen, nearly half of them on the flag-ship. The Chinese lost far more heavily, from the sinking of a number of their ships.