

## Chilean-American War 1892

Semi-Historical Timeline for the Naval Battle of Coquimbo  
May 2, 1892

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**November 28, 1891:** Newly-elected President (formerly Admiral) Jorge Montt, refuses to offer indemnity to the US government after the “Baltimore Incident” of October 16, 1891.

**December 1891 - January 1892:** With the assistance of Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, the US government develops and begins to execute plans for a war with Chile. Montt decides upon a strategy to protect Valparaiso and concentrates his naval and land forces to that effect.

**January 11, 1892:** The SS Marietta, carrying coal and supplies for the joint US/Balmacedist forces, is stopped and seized by the Chilean torpedo gunboat ALMIRANTE CONDELL off Caldera.

**February 10, 1892:** Following a series of skirmishes, Balmacedist forces with support from US marines capture the port of Caldera, thus providing US naval forces a base of operations during the conflict.

**February 26, 1892:** The newly completed battleship CAPITAN PRATT arrives at Valparaiso. Having been rushed to completion, the ship has not undergone acceptance trials.

**February - March, 1892:** US forces continue to reinforce Caldera and the decision is made to mount an attack on Valparaiso. Preparatory landings north of Concepcion are unopposed but landings at Quinteros Bay meet stiff resistance. Less than half the intended forces are landed and the gunboat CONCORD is abandoned after running aground while attempting to support the landings.

**April 8-9, 1892:** Montt’s plan for the “defense of Valparaiso at all cost” begins to bear fruit as the combined assault by Balmacedist and US forces on the three forts protecting the harbor are defeated. Although Fort Valdivia is briefly captured by forces under the command of Captain Gustavo Ramos-Alcedo, the Chileans quickly regain control of the fort and summarily execute the captain along with the rest of his men. The planned naval assault on Valparaiso scheduled for the morning of April 9 is aborted.

**May 1, 1892:** With Valparaiso secure, Montt decides it is time to take the offensive. Acting on intelligence reports of a planned landing near Coquimbo on May 2, the battleship CAPITAN PRAT, cruisers ESMERALDA and PRESIDENTE PINTO along with the torpedo gunboats ALMIRANTE LYNCH and ALMIRANTE CONDELL, sortie for Coquimbo.

**May 2, 1892:** As the landing operations are in progress, covering force (cruisers SAN FRANCISCO, CHARLESTON, BALTIMORE and ATLANTA along with gunboats YORKTOWN and BENNINGTON) sight the approach of the Chilean squadron at 0712 and the Battle of Coquimbo begins.



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**Aug. 28, 1891—** *USS Baltimore* (C 3) and *USS San Francisco* (C 5) landed a party commanded by Captain William S. Muce, USMC, to guard the U.S. Consulate at Valparaiso during the Chilean civil war.

**Oct. 16, 1891—** Incident at the True Blue Saloon: Two sailors was killed and several injured when a liberty party from the cruiser *USS Baltimore* became embroiled with a mob of Chileans at the True Blue Saloon in Valparaiso. The Chilean foreign minister made offensive remarks which only aggravated the ensuing crisis so that by December war between the United States and Chile appeared possible.



# THE NAVAL BATTLE OF COQUIMBO

(Chilean-American War of 1892)

May 2, 1892

## G.O.D. SETUP INFO

With Valparaiso secure, Chilean President Jorge Montt decides it is time to take the offensive. Acting on intelligence reports of a planned landing by combined US/Balmacedist forces near Coquimbo on May 2, the battleship CAPITAN PRAT, cruisers ESMERALDA and PRESIDENTE PINTO along with the torpedo gunboats ALMIRANTE LYNCH and ALMIRANTE CONDELL, sortie for the area. As the landing operations are in progress, the covering force of the US South Pacific Squadron (cruisers SAN FRANCISCO, CHARLESTON, BALTIMORE and ATLANTA along with gunboats YORKTOWN and BENNINGTON) sights the approach of the Chilean squadron two minutes after sunrise and the Naval Battle of Coquimbo begins.

### SITUATION REPORT

2 May 1892 (0712 LCT)

Visibility is CODE 8 (VERY CLEAR)  
Sunrise 2 May: 0710 Local  
Seas are 5-6 feet from the SW  
Winds are from S-SE 6-9 knots

### CHILEAN FORCES

Course of Chilean formation is 350-degrees  
Cruising speed at start is 15 knots  
Maximum formation speed is 16 knots  
Formation is line ahead  
Interval is 500 yards except for a 4,000-yard interval between PRESIDENTE PINTO and CAPITAN PRAT

ALMIRANTE LYNCH  
ALMIRANTE CONDELL  
PRESIDENTE PINTO

CAPITAN PRAT (f)  
ESMERALDA

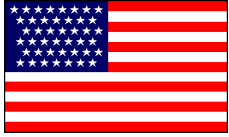
### AMERICAN FORCES

Course of both formations is 010-degrees  
Cruising speed at start is 10 knots  
Maximum formation speed: 17 knots  
Formation is line ahead  
Interval is 500 yards

CHARLESTON (f)  
BALTIMORE  
SAN FRANCISCO

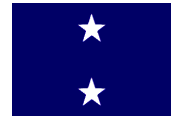
ATLANTA, YORKTOWN and BENNINGTON are located 15,000 yards due east. They are in line-ahead formation and steaming at 13 knots on course 075 true.

Bearing of smoke from Chilean squadron at 0712 is 157-degrees true, range 20,000 yards from SAN FRANCISCO.



UNITED STATES NAVY

THE NAVAL BATTLE OF  
COQUIMBO  
(Chilean-American War of 1892)  
May 2, 1892



Rear-Admiral Belknap

TOP SECRET

SITUATION REPORT

2 May 1892

0712 LCT

Visibility is CODE 8 (VERY CLEAR)

Sunrise 2 May: 0710 Local

Seas are 5-6 feet from the SW

Winds are from S-SE 6-9 knots

Formation is line ahead:

CHARLESTON (f)

BALTIMORE

SAN FRANCISCO

Course: 010-degrees

Speed: 10 knots

Maximum formation speed: 17 knots

Interval: 500 yards

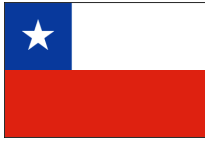
ATLANTA, YORKTOWN and BENNINGTON are located 15,000 yards due east. They are in line-ahead formation and steaming at 13 knots on course 075 true.

ORDERS AND INTELLIGENCE:

Your formation is steaming northward after having reached the southern boundary of your patrol area. At 0650, ATLANTA, YORKTOWN and BENNINGTON were detached with orders to proceed inshore and provide gunfire support to the landings. At 0712, smoke is reported by SAN FRANCISCO bearing 157-degrees true, range 20,000 yards.

1. Maintain patrol west of landing areas and seek to engage any and all hostile naval forces attempting to obstruct or otherwise compromise landing operations at Coquimbo.

2. Provide additional naval gunfire support to landing operations as requested.



ARMADA DE CHILE

# THE NAVAL BATTLE OF COQUIMBO

(Chilean-American War of 1892)

May 2, 1892



Vice-Admiral Torres

## SECRETO SUPERIOR

### SITUATION REPORT

2 May 1892

0712 LCT

Visibility is CODE 8 (VERY CLEAR)

Sunrise 2 May: 0710 Local

Seas are 5-6 feet from the SW

Winds are from S-SE 6-9 knots

Formation is line ahead:

ALMIRANTE LYNCH  
ALMIRANTE CONDELL  
PRESIDENTE PINTO

CAPITAN PRAT (f)  
ESMERALDA

Course: 350-degrees

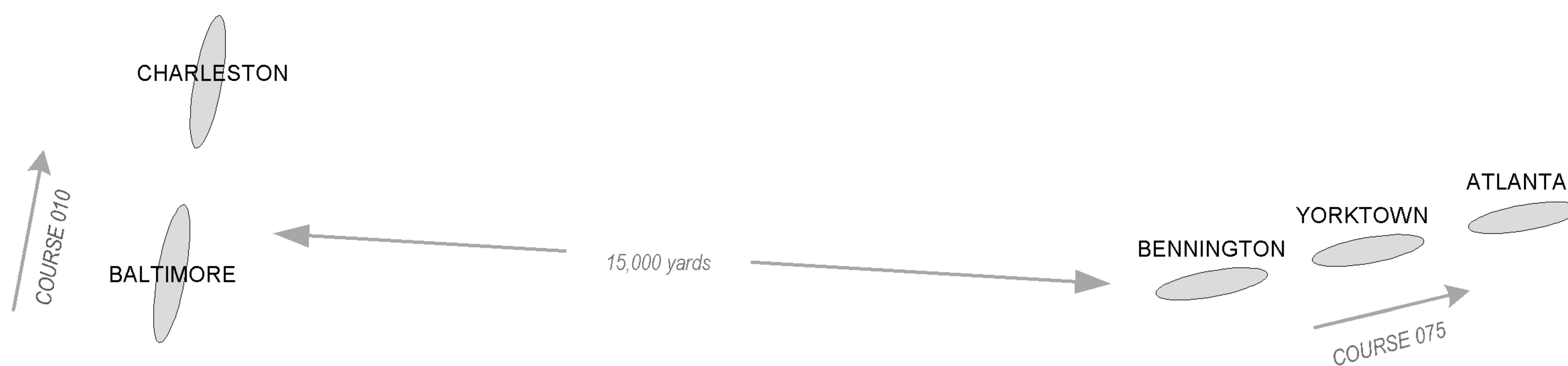
Speed: 15 knots

Maximum formation speed: 16 knots

Interval: 500 yards (except for a 4,000-yard interval between PRESIDENTE PINTO and CAPITAN PRAT)

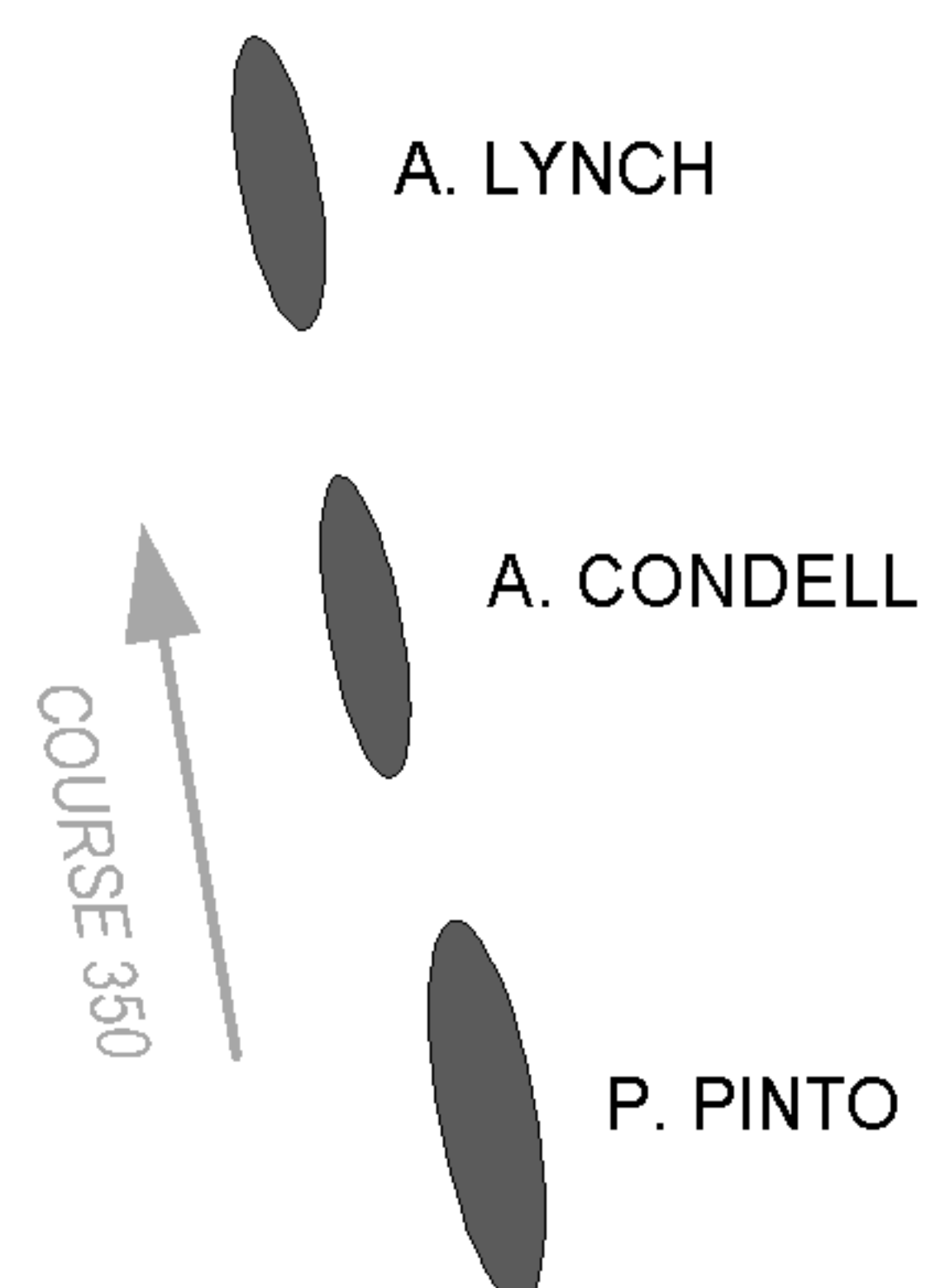
### ORDERS AND INTELLIGENCE:

1. Primary objective is disruption of rebel landing operations near Coquimbo.
2. Engage supporting American naval forces at your discretion.



SAN FRANCISCO

FROM USS SAN FRANCISCO  
BEARING: 157 TRUE  
DISTANCE: 20,000 YARDS



CAPITAN PRAT is 4,000 yards astern of PRESIDENTE PINTO and is followed at 500-yard interval by ESMERALDA

**NAVAL BATTLE OF COQUIMBO**  
May 2, 1892