

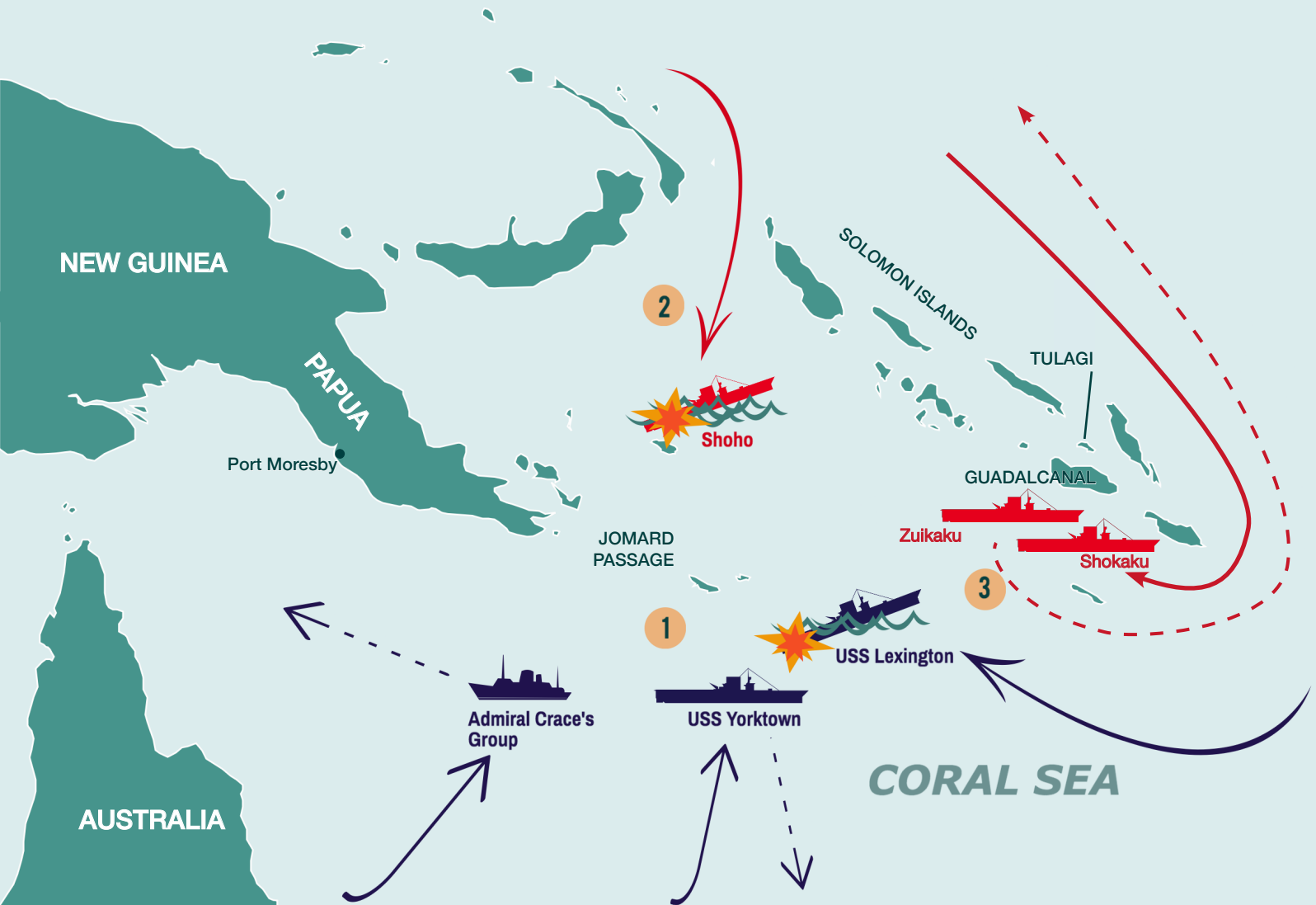


www.history.navy.mil/CoralSea

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE

# BATTLE OF THE CORAL SEA

The first air-sea battle in history shows how this strategic victory of World War II inspired the spirit of innovation that continues today and gives the U.S. Navy its competitive edge.



The Battle of the Coral Sea was the first time in history where combat between two fleets took place solely by carrier plane. Furthermore, the Japanese advance in the Pacific was halted for the first time since the outbreak of war on Dec. 7, 1941.

1

MAY 1-6, 1942

- Adm. Fletcher's Task Force 17 of USS Lexington (CV 2), USS Yorktown (CV 5), and an attack group meet in the southeast Coral Sea to make day and night attacks on enemy surface craft.
- Australian allies of Rear Adm. Crace's ANZAC Squadron join Task Force 17.
- May 4: USS Yorktown (CV 5) launches an air attack on a Japanese naval base on Tulagi Island.

2

MAY 7, 1942

- Adm. Fletcher detaches the support group of cruisers and destroyers under Rear Adm. Crace to intercept the Japanese Port Moresby invasion force as it departs from the Jomard Passage.
- American planes hit the Port Moresby Covering Group, sinking the Japanese small carrier Shoho and one cruiser.

3

MAY 8, 1942

- The carrier battle ensues.
- The Japanese strike quickly, scoring hits on both Lexington and Yorktown.
- Lexington cannot sustain the damage she takes and sinks in the Coral Sea.
- Zuikaku and Shokaku are damaged but able to return to Japan.

## RESULTS

- Port Moresby remains in Allied control.
- Shokaku and Zuikaku cannot recover in time to fight in the Battle of Midway, reducing the Japanese carrier strength by a third.
- The Southwest Pacific front is stabilized.
- The U.S. Navy sees its first strategic victory at sea against the Imperial Japanese Navy.