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Manta mine



Manta mine

(Italy)

Notes:

This 1970s vintage seabed mine remains one of the most potent types in it's category. It has a magnetic fuse and a 375lb HE warhead. It can be laid in waters 10'-400' deep.

Combat usage:

Iraq (the only export customer) used it's limited stockpile of Mantas during Operation Desert Storm. At 04:35 local time on 18 February 1991, the cruiser *USS Princeton* (CG-59) was operating in the northern Persian Gulf (59' water depth) when it detonated a Manta 15' off it's port beam. The area had previously been marked as "demined" illustrating the severe difficulty in sweeping mines of this type. About two and a half seconds later, a second mine of unknown type detonated about 1/5th of a mile away, apparently a sympathetic detonation caused by the first. The Manta caused severe damage to *Princeton*, including loss of the port side propulsion train. The problems were aggravated by automatic sprinklers in the aft 5" gun mount which activated unnecessarily. However, within three hours flooding had been stopped and *Princeton's* AN/SPY-1 Aegis radar brought back online. *USS Princeton* was assisted by *USS Beaufort* (ATS-2) and *USS Acadia* (AD-42) to Bahrain for emergency repairs. The commander of Task Force 151 later said that of the eight Coalition members operating minesweepers during Desert Storm, only the USN's were successfully able to sweep Mantas and then only with great difficulty. The AN/SQQ-32 active HF sonar aboard the *Avenger* class minesweepers was said to be key.

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