Considered the epitome of French technological innovation, the Paris-class ships Paris and Jean Bart were both launched in 1900. The Jean Bart earned worldwide recognition when it tangled with the HML Leviathan in Egypt in 1910. That brief engagement stunned military experts, who thought the older Leviathan would quickly gain the upper hand thanks to the expertise and training of the Royal Sky Fleet.

The Jean Bart, however, demonstrated that French gunnery skills were on a par with, if not superior to, those of their British counterpart. While the engagement was a draw, the Jean Bart showed superb maneuvering capabilities.

Her 100mm main guns caused enough damage to force the Leviathan into dock for nearly two months of refit and repair. The French made good press, with the Jean Bart spending less than two weeks repairing the “damage to her bow paint” inflicted by the Leviathan.

Paris-class Battleship

Dimensions: 405 ft. x 110 ft. x 81 ft. (excluding funnels & masts)
Complement: 510 (600 as flagship)
Weight: 18,400 tons
Engines: Inverted triple expansion, producing 19,100 shaft hp (max. speed 25 knots)
Fuel: (coal) 905 tons; max 1,825 tons
Armament: 4-274mm, 12-138mm, 4-75mm, 2-launch bays