

**TREES IN TOURNAMENTS****ROLAND HÄGGKVIST and ANDREW THOMASON***Received 16 May, 1988*

Let  $f(n)$  be the smallest integer such that every tournament of order  $f(n)$  contains every oriented tree of order  $n$ . Sumner has just conjectured that  $f(n) = 2n - 2$ , and F. K. Chung has shown that  $f(n) \leq (1 + o(1))n \log_2 n$ . Here we show that  $f(n) \leq 12n$  and  $f(n) \leq (4 + o(1))n$ .

**1. Introduction**

It is clear that every sufficiently large tournament contains all oriented trees of order  $n$ . Indeed, Fan Chung noticed that every tournament of order  $(1 + o(1))n \log_2 n$  has this property, since a tournament of order  $n$  has a dominating set of order  $\lceil \log_2 n \rceil$ . Sumner [see 1] has conjectured that every tournament of order  $2n - 2$  has this property, and this has been proved by Reid and Wormald [1] in the special case where the tree is a caterpillar with a directed spine.

Our aim in this paper is to find an absolute constant  $c$  such that all tournaments of order  $cn$  contain all oriented trees of order  $n$ . In the first theorem we show that  $c \leq 12$ , in the third we improve this to  $c \leq 4 + o(1)$ . Furthermore we give sharper estimates on the orders of tournaments containing all oriented trees of order  $n$  with at most  $k$  end-vertices.

**2. Notation**

If  $G$  is an oriented graph, or for that matter a digraph, an edge from a vertex  $x$  in  $V(G)$  to a vertex  $y$  in  $V(G)$  is denoted by  $xy$ , the notation  $N_G^+(x)$  for  $x$  in  $V(G)$  stands for the set  $\{y : xy \in E(G)\}$  and  $E_G^+(x)$  denotes the set  $\{xy : xy \in E(G)\}$ . We put  $d_G^+(x) = |N_G^+(x)| = |E_G^+(x)|$  and define  $N^-$ ,  $E^-$  and  $d^-$  similarly, dropping the subscript  $G$  most of the time. The induced oriented subgraph of  $G$  spanned by a set  $X \subset V(G)$  is denoted  $G[X]$ . For an oriented tree  $T$  and a vertex  $v \in V(T)$  we define  $T^+(v)$  to be the set of components of  $T - v$  incident with  $N^+(v)$  and similarly we define  $T^-(v)$ .

### 3. Main theorems and proofs

The central idea of our proofs is that of the  $p$ -heart  $h_p(T)$  of an  $n$ -order tree  $T$ , defined (for an integer  $p \geq 2$ ) to be the tree spanned by those edges  $e$  in  $E(T)$  for which each of the two components of  $T - e$  has order at least  $n/p$ . If there are no such edges,  $h_p(T)$  will denote the unique vertex of  $T$  whose deletion leaves components each of order less than  $n/p$ . Note that  $h_p(T)$  is connected, so it is indeed a tree. Moreover, for  $p \geq 3$ ,  $h_p(T)$  has at most  $p - 1$  endvertices, because the removal of an end-edge of  $h_p(T)$  from  $T$  leaves a component of  $T$  order at least  $n/p$ , and so if  $h_p(T)$  has  $k$  endvertices then  $h_p(T)$  has order at most  $n - k\lceil n/p \rceil + k$ . Note furthermore that  $T - h_p(T)$  has all components of order less than  $n/p$ , that is, at most  $\lceil n/p \rceil - 1$ .

Our approach to finding an oriented tree  $T$  in some large tournaments  $S$  is first to find the  $p$ -heart  $h_p(T)$  of  $T$  in a subtournament of  $S$  spanned by vertices of large indegree and outdegree. We then find the components of  $T - h_p(T)$  in the remainder of  $S$ , in such a way that these components are joined in  $S$  to the end-vertices of  $h_p(T)$  so as to form  $T$ . The existence of the  $p$ -heart of  $T$  in  $S$  is established by using results concerning trees with a bounded number  $k$  of endvertices. We begin by proving a simple lemma which we state in a general form, although we shall use only the cases  $k \leq 5$ . A much stronger form of the lemma (at least for  $n$  large compared with  $k$ ) will be proved as Theorem 8 below, but for now let us be content with the following.

**Lemma 1.** *Every oriented tree of order  $n$  with  $k$  end-vertices is contained in every tournament of order  $2^{k-2}n + 1$ .*

**Proof.** For  $k = 2$ , the lemma states that every oriented path of order  $n$  is contained in every tournament of order  $n + 1$ , which is precisely Corollary 2 in [2]. So we may proceed by induction on  $k$ . Suppose that  $T$  is a tree of order  $n$  with  $k \geq 3$  end-vertices, and let  $S$  be a tournament of order  $2^{k-2}n + 1$ . Choose a branch-vertex  $v$  of  $T$  (what is, a vertex of total degree at least three), and note that each component of  $T - v$  has at most  $k - 1$  end-vertices. Put  $a^+ = 2^{k-3}|T^+(v)| + 1$  and  $a^- = 2^{k-3}|T^-(v)| + 1$ . Since at most  $2a^+ - 1$  vertices of the tournament have outdegree less than  $a^+$ , and at most  $2a^- - 1$  have indegree less than  $a^-$ , there are at least

$$2^{k-2}n + 1 - 2^{k-2}(|T^+(v)| + |T^-(v)|) - 2 = 2^{k-2}n - 2^{k-2}n + 2^{k-2} - 1 \geq 1$$

vertices  $u \in V(S)$  with  $d_S^+(u) \geq a^+$  and  $d_S^-(u) \geq a^-$ . Choose one such vertex. By the induction hypothesis we may find  $T^+(v)$  in  $S[N_S^+(u)]$  (finding the components one by one if necessary) and  $T^-(v)$  in  $S[N_S^-(u)]$ . Hence we find  $T$  in  $S$  as required. (In fact we can find  $T$  in any tournament of order  $2^{k-2}n - (4^{k-2} - 1)/3 + 2^{k-2}$ , by the same method, but we shall not need this.) ■

We are now ready to prove our first Theorem (the Theorem will be improved for large  $n$  by Theorem 10).

**Theorem 2.** *Every oriented tree of order  $n$  is contained in every tournament of order  $12n$ .*

**Proof.** Suppose that the theorem is false, and let  $n$  be the smallest integer for which it fails. Clearly  $n \geq 5$ . Let  $T$  be an oriented tree of order  $n$  and  $S$  a tournament

of order  $12n$  which fails to contain a copy of  $T$ . Let  $t$  be the order of  $H = h_6(T)$ . Recall that  $H$  has  $k \leq 5$  endvertices and that  $t \leq n - k\lceil n/6 \rceil + k$ . By examining the four cases  $2 \leq k \leq 5$ , plus the case  $t = 1$ , we see by Lemma 1 that  $H$  can be found in any tournament of order at least  $9n - t - 44\lceil n/6 \rceil + 50$ . For instance, in the case  $k = 4$ , the most critical case, we know that  $H$  can be found in any tournament of order  $4t + 1$ . We must then check the inequality

$$4(n - 4\lceil n/6 \rceil + 4) + 1 \leq 9n - (n - 4\lceil n/6 \rceil + 4) - 44\lceil n/6 \rceil + 50$$

or

$$0 \leq 4n - 24\lceil n/6 \rceil + 29,$$

which is correct.

For each vertex  $v \in V(H)$  let  $U^+(v)$  be the set of components of  $T - H$  incident with  $N_T^+(v)$  and define  $U^-(v)$  similarly. We may suppose that  $\sum_v |U^-(v)| \leq \sum_v |U^+(v)|$ , so that  $\sum_v |U^-(v)| \leq \lfloor (n - t)/2 \rfloor$ .

Now set  $a^- = 11\lceil n/6 \rceil + \lfloor (n + t)/2 \rfloor - 12$  and  $a^+ = 11\lceil n/6 \rceil + n - 12$ . There are in  $S$  at least

$$12n - 2a^- + 1 - 2a^+ + 1 \geq 9n - t - 44\lceil n/6 \rceil + 50$$

vertices  $w$  with  $d_S^+(w) \geq a^+$  and  $d_S^-(w) \geq a^-$ . Choose some copy  $H^*$  of  $H$  spanned by these vertices. We finish by finding copies of  $U^-(v)$  and  $U^+(v)$  is  $S$  joined appropriately to  $H^*$ . This works if we first find all  $U^-(v)$ 's for  $v \in V(H)$ , and then look for the  $U^+$ 's. To see this, note that when we seek  $U \in U^-(v)$  joined to the vertex  $w \in V(H^*)$  corresponding to the vertex  $v \in V(H)$  there are at least

$$d^-(w) - t + 1 - \left( \sum_v |U^-(v)| - |U| \right) \geq 11(\lceil n/6 \rceil - 1) + |U| \geq 12|U|$$

vertices of  $N_S^-(w)$  so far unused. Then when we return to insert some  $U' \in U^+(v)$  we see that

$$d^+(w) - t + 1 - \left( \sum_v |U^-(v)| + |U^+(v)| - |U'| \right) \geq 11(\lceil n/6 \rceil - 1) + |U'| \geq 12|U'|$$

and so likewise  $U'$  may be found.

We thereby find a copy of  $T$  in  $S$ , contradicting the choice of  $T$  as a minimal counterexample to the theorem, whence no such counterexample can exist, and the theorem is proved. ■

The choice of  $p = 6$  in the proof above was not critical; any value of  $p \geq 5$  will yield some constant  $c = c(p)$  such that all tournaments of order  $cn$  contain all oriented trees of order  $n$ . In fact the choice  $p = 7$  yields  $c = 35/4$ , which is better than that claimed in Theorem 2. However the use of larger values of  $p$  results in a deterioration, because of the need to use the feeble Lemma 1 for large  $k$ .

In order to improve Theorem 2 for large  $n$ , it will be enough to improve Lemma 1 in the case when  $n$  is large compared with  $k$ . We shall aim to find a function  $g(k)$ , such that the function  $2^{k-2}n + 1$  in the lemma can be replaced by  $n + g(k)$ . Now

in an oriented tree  $T$  of (large) order  $n$ , with a small number  $k$  of endvertices, most vertices are of (total) degree 2. The tree can then be thought of as a collection of at most  $2k - 3$  oriented paths fastened together on some way. Provided these paths are not directed they can easily be found in our tournament by means of the following Proposition, which is a weak amalgam of Theorems 3, 4, and 5 of [2].

**Proposition 3.** *Let  $P$  be an oriented path of order  $n$  with at least two blocks (maximal directed subpaths), whose first and last blocks have lengths  $k$  and  $l$  respectively. Let  $S$  be a tournament of order  $n + 5$ , and let  $K, L$  be disjoint subsets of  $V(S)$  with  $|K| = k + 3$  and  $|L| = l + 3$ . Then there is a copy of  $P$  in  $S$ , with its initial vertex in  $K$  and its end vertex in  $L$ .*

Different argument are needed to find the paths of  $T$  if they are directed, that is, consist of a single block, and this is where the excess  $g(k)$  vertices will be needed. But it is time now to turn technical. The reader may prefer to skip Lemma 6, or even to Theorem 8, on a first reading.

Given a tournament  $S$ , and disjoint subsets  $X, Y \subset V(S)$ , the notation  $X \Rightarrow Y$  means  $xy \in E(S)$  for all  $x \in X$  and  $y \in Y$ . The notation may be abused somewhat; for instance if  $X = \{x\}$  we may write  $x \Rightarrow Y$ , or if  $R = S[X]$  we may write  $R \Rightarrow Y$ . The notation  $R = \langle x_1, \dots, x_r \rangle$  means  $R$  is a transitive tournament with  $V(R) = \{x_1, \dots, x_r\}$  and  $x_i x_j \in E(R)$ ,  $1 \leq i < j \leq r$ .

**Lemma 4.** *Given a tournament  $S$  and an integer  $p$ ,  $0 \leq p \leq |S| - 1$ , there exists a directed path  $P = x_1 x_2 \dots x_p$  (empty if  $p = 0$ ) in  $S$  and a maximum transitive subtournament  $R = \langle x_1, \dots \rangle$  in  $S - P$  such that  $x_p x \in E(S)$ .*

**Proof.** The proof is by induction on  $S$ ; the lemma is trivial if  $|S| = 1$ . If  $|S| > 1$  we choose a maximum transitive subtournament  $R' = \langle v, \dots \rangle$  of  $S$ . If  $|N_S^-(v)| \geq p$  we are home by choosing a directed path  $x_1 x_2 \dots x_p$  in  $S[N_S^-(v)]$  and letting  $R = R'$ ,  $x = v$ . If  $|N_S^-(v)| < p$  we choose a Hamilton path  $x_1 x_2 \dots x_{q-1}$  in  $S[N_S^-(v)]$ , set  $x_q = v$ , and by induction find  $x_{q+1} x_{q+2} \dots x_p$  and  $R$  in  $S - N_S^-(v) - v$ . ■

Let  $m(S)$  be defined as the maximum order of a transitive subtournament of  $S$ . It is easily shown that if  $|S| \geq 2^m$  then  $m(S) \geq m + 1$ .

**Lemma 5.** *Let  $u \geq 1$ ,  $m \geq 0$  and  $p \geq 3$  be integers, let  $S$  be a tournament of order at least  $u + p + 2^{m+u+2}$ , and let  $R$  be a transitive subtournament of  $S$  with  $|R| \geq m(S) - m$ . Then there exists a set  $U \subset V(R)$ ,  $|U| = u$ , a directed path  $P = v_1 v_2 \dots v_p$  in  $S - U$ , a tournament  $S' \subset S - U - P$  and a transitive subtournament  $R'$  in  $S'$ , such that  $U \Rightarrow v_1$ ,  $v_p \Rightarrow R'$ ,  $U \Rightarrow R'$ ,  $|S'| \geq |S| - u - p - 2^{m+u+2}$  and  $|R'| \geq m(S') - m'$ , where  $m' = m + u + 3$ .*

**Proof.** Let  $R$  be  $\langle x_1, x_2, \dots, x_r \rangle$ . We note that  $|S| \geq 2^{m+u+2}$  whence  $m(S) \geq m + u + 3$  and  $r \geq u + 3$ . Let  $Z = \{x_1, \dots, x_{u+2}\}$ , let

$$Y = \{v \in V(S - R) : vx_i \in E(S) \text{ for all } x_i \in R - Z\}$$

and

$$X = \{v \in V(S - R - Y) : vx_i \in E(S) \text{ for some } x_i \in Z\}$$

Note that  $|Y| < 2^{m+u+2}$ , for otherwise  $S[Y]$  contains a transitive subtournament of order  $m + u + 3$ , which together with  $R - Z$  forms a transitive subtournament of

order  $m(S) + 1$ , a contradiction. We proceed in one of two ways, depending on the order of  $X$ .

If  $|X| \geq p - 2$ , we choose a directed path  $v_2 v_3 \dots v_{p-1}$  in  $S[X]$ . Since  $X \cap Y = \emptyset$ , there is an  $x_i \in R - Z$  such that  $x_i v_2 \in E(S)$ . Put  $v_1 = x_i$ . Likewise there is an  $x_j \in Z$  with  $x_{p-1} x_j \in E(S)$ , since  $x_{p-1} \in X$ , and we put  $v_p = x_j$ . Now choose  $U \subset Z - x_j$  with  $|U| = u$ , and let  $R'$  and  $S'$  be the tournaments  $(R - Z) - x_i$  and  $S - U - P - Y$  respectively. Then clearly

$$U \Rightarrow v_1, \quad U \Rightarrow R', \quad v_p \Rightarrow R', \quad |R'| \geq |R| - u - 3 \geq m(S) - m' \geq m(S') - m'$$

and  $|S'| \geq |S| - u - p - 2^{m+u+2}$ .

Otherwise,  $|X| = q \leq p - 3$ . If  $q = 0$  let  $U = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_u\}$  and  $v_1 v_2 = x_{u+1} x_{u+2}$ ; if not, choose a directed path  $v_2 v_3 \dots v_{q+1}$  in  $S[X]$ . In the latter case there are as in the preceding paragraph vertices  $x_i \in R - Z$  and  $x_j \in X$  with  $x_i v_2 \in E(S)$  and  $v_{q+1} x_j \in E(S)$ . We put  $v_1 = x_i$  and  $v_{q+2} = x_j$ , and choose  $U \subset Z - x_j$  with  $|U| = u$ . Hence in both cases we find  $U$  such that  $|U| = u$ , a path  $P' = v_1 v_2 \dots v_{q+2}$  containing  $X$  with  $U \Rightarrow v_1$ , and such that  $(U \cup \{v_{q+2}\}) \Rightarrow S - Z - P' - Y$  (by the definition of  $X$ ). Applying Lemma 4 to  $S - Z - P' - Y$  we find a directed path  $P^* = v_{q+3} v_{q+4} \dots v_{p-1}$  and a maximum transitive subtournament  $R^* = \langle v_p, \dots \rangle$  of  $S - Z - P' - Y - P^*$ , with  $v_{p-1} v_p \in E(S)$ . Note that  $v_{q+2} v_{q+3} \in E(S)$  since  $v_{q+2} \Rightarrow S - Z - P' - Y$ , so we may put  $P = v_1 v_2 \dots v_p$  and  $R' = R^* - v_p$ . Then  $v_p \Rightarrow R'$ ,  $U \Rightarrow R'$ , and putting  $S' = S - Z - P - Y$  we get  $|S'| > |S| - (u + p + 1) - 2^{m+u+2}$  and  $|R'| \geq m(S') - m'$ .  $\blacksquare$

**Lemma 6.** *If  $T$  is an oriented tree of order  $n$  we may label the vertices of  $T$  as  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n$  and the edges as  $e_1, e_2, \dots, e_{n-1}$  such that if  $e_i = x_j x_{j'}$ , then  $j \leq i < j'$ .*

**Proof.** Induction on  $|T|$ . Choose an end-vertex  $x$  of  $T$ . If  $yx$  is an edge of  $T$  we label the vertices of  $T - x$  as  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{n-1}$  in the approved way, and put  $x_n = x$ ,  $e_{n-1} = yx$ . Otherwise, if  $xy$  is an edge of  $T$  we label the vertices of  $T - x$  as  $x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n$  and the edges as  $e_2, e_3, \dots, e_{n-1}$  such that the lemma holds, and we put  $x_1 = x$ ,  $e_1 = xy$ .  $\blacksquare$

**Lemma 7.** *Suppose that the oriented tree  $T$  of order  $n$  has  $k$  end-vertices, and furthermore that the oriented paths in  $T$  induced by the vertices of degree 2 in the underlying tree of  $T$  are directed; that is, for each  $v \in V(T)$ , either  $d^+(v) = d^-(v) = 1$  or else  $v$  is an end-vertex or a branch-vertex or adjacent to an end-vertex or branch-vertex. Then  $T$  is contained in any tournament of order  $n + 2^{8k^3}$ .*

**Proof.** First note that the tree  $T$  has at most  $k - 2$  branch-vertices. Let  $M$  be the subforest of  $T$  induced by the end-vertices, branch-vertices, and all vertices of distance at most  $k + 1$  from an end-vertex or branch-vertex. Then  $M$  has  $c \leq 2k - 2$  components, and since each component is the union of at most  $2k - 3$  paths of length at most  $2k + 3$ , each component has order at most  $(2k - 3)(2k + 3) + 1 \leq 4k^2$ . The edges of  $T$  not in  $M$  consist of  $c - 1$  directed paths between the components of  $M$ . Applying Lemma 6 to the tree  $T^*$  whose vertices are the components of  $M$ , with an edge in  $T^*$  from the vertex  $C$  to the vertex  $C'$  if and only if there is a path from  $C$  to  $C'$  in  $T$ , we see that we may label the components of  $M$  as  $C_1, C_2, \dots, C_c$ , and the paths of  $T - M$  by  $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_{c-1}$  such that if  $P_i$  joins  $C_j$  to  $C_{j'}$  then  $j \leq i < j'$ .

Now the endvertices of  $P_i$  are of distance at least  $k + 1$  from any branch-vertex or end-vertex of  $T$ . So  $C_j \cup P_i \cup C_{j'}$  contains a directed path

$$u_j^i \dots u_i^i v_1^i v_2^i \dots v_{p_i}^i u_{i+1}^i \dots u_{j'}^i,$$

each vertex having degree two in  $T$ , with  $u_j^i \in C$ ,  $u_{j'}^i \in C_{j'}$ , and  $p_i \geq 3$ . Let

$$C_j^* = C_j \setminus \{u_l^i; 1 \leq i \leq c-1, 1 \leq l \leq c\} \quad \text{for} \quad 1 \leq j \leq c.$$

It follows that a tournament will contain  $T$  if it contains  $c$  transitive tournaments  $U_1, \dots, U_c$  with  $|U_i| = 4k^2 + c$ , and  $c-1$  directed paths  $P_i^* = v_1^i v_2^i \dots v_{p_i}^i$ , all disjoint, with  $U_i \Rightarrow v_1^i$ ,  $v_{p_i}^i \Rightarrow U_{i+1}$  and  $U_i \Rightarrow U_{i+1}$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq c-1$ . For then  $C_j^*$ , along with any required vertices  $u_j^i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq c-1$ , can be found in  $U_j$ .

We complete the proof by showing any tournament  $S$  of order  $n + 2^{8k^3}$  contains transitive subtournaments  $U_1, \dots, U_c$ , and paths  $P_i^* = v_1^i v_2^i \dots v_{p_i}^i$  as described. Let  $u = 4k^2 + c$  and  $m_i = (i-1)(u+3)$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq c$ . By  $c-1$  applications of Lemma 5 we find tournaments  $S = S_1, S_2, \dots, S_c$  with  $|S_{i+1}| \geq |S_i| - u - p_i - 2^{m_i+u+2}$ , transitive subtournaments  $R_i \subset S_i$  with  $|R_i| \geq m(S_i) - m_i$ , sets  $U_i \subset V(R_i)$  with  $|U_i| = u$ , and paths  $P_i^* = v_1^i v_2^i \dots v_{p_i}^i$ , such that  $S_{i+1} \subset S_i - U_i - P_i^*$  and the  $U_j$  and  $P_i^*$  satisfy the conditions of the previous paragraph. So it will be enough to show that  $|S_i| \geq u + p_i + 2^{m_i+u+2}$ , so that the lemma can be applied for the  $i$ -th time ( $i \leq c-1$ ), and that  $|S_c| \geq 2^{m_c+u}$ , so that  $|R_c| \geq u$  enabling us to find  $U_c$ .

However,

$$|S_i| \geq |S| - (i-1)u - \sum_{j < i} p_j - \sum_{j < i} 2^{m_j+u+2},$$

so the inequality  $|S_i| \geq u + p_i + 2^{m_i+u+2}$  follows if

$$|S| - iu - \sum_{j \leq i} p_j - \sum_{j \leq c} 2^{m_j+u+2} \geq 0.$$

Hence it is sufficient to verify the second of these. But  $\sum_{j < c} p_j < n$  so the left hand side is at least

$$\begin{aligned} 2^{8k^3} - (c-1)u - 2^{u+2} \sum_{j \leq c} 2^{m_j} &\geq 2^{8k^3} - 2^{(c-1)u} - 2^{u+2} \left( \frac{2^{c(u+3)} - 1}{2^{u+3} - 1} \right) \\ &\geq 2^{8k^3} - 2^{(c-1)u} - 2^{c(u+3)} \\ &\geq 2^{8k^3} - 2^{c(u+3)+1} \\ &\geq 0 \end{aligned}$$

since  $c \leq 2k - 2$  and  $u = 4k^2 + c$ . ■

We are now ready to prove a theorem which shows that the Sumner conjecture is far from sharp for trees with few end-vertices.

**Theorem 8.** *Let  $T$  be an oriented tree of order  $n$  with  $k$  endvertices. Then  $T$  is contained in every tournament of order  $n + 2^{512k^3}$ .*

**Proof.** Consider a maximal oriented path  $P$  in  $T$ , each of whose vertices, including the end-vertices, have degree 2 in the underlying tree of  $T$ . If  $P$  is not directed, we let  $P^*$  be a maximal subpath of  $P$  having distinct end-blocks each of length 1. Let the end-vertices of  $P^*$  be  $u$  and  $v$ , with  $u$  adjacent to  $x \in V(T - P^*)$  and  $v$  adjacent to  $y \in V(T - P^*)$  in the underlying undirected tree of  $T$ . We then remove  $P^*$  from  $T$  and add to  $T - P^*$  new vertices  $u_j$  and  $v_j$ ,  $1 \leq j \leq 4$  plus edges  $u_jx$  (or  $xu_j$ ) and  $yv_j$  (or  $v_jy$ ),  $1 \leq j \leq 4$ , according as  $ux \in E(T)$  (or  $xu \in E(T)$ ) and  $yv \in E(T)$  (or  $vy \in E(T)$ ). If we do the appropriate operation for all such non-directed paths  $P$  the components of the resulting forest each have at most  $4k$  end-vertices and satisfy the condition of Lemma 7 with  $k$  replaced by  $4k$ . Thus we may find this forest in any tournament of order  $n + 2^{8(4k)^3} = n + 2^{512k^3}$ . But now by Proposition 3 above we may find the paths  $P^*$  with end-vertices in the sets  $\{u_1, u_2, u_3, u_4\}$  and  $\{v_1, v_2, v_3, v_4\}$ , and so we find  $T$ .

**Lemma 9.** *Let  $b$ ,  $c$  and  $t$  be positive integers, and let  $S$  be a tournament of order  $2b + 2c + 4t - 5$ . Then  $V(S)$  contains a set  $X$ ,  $|X| = t$  such that  $d_{S-X}^+(v) \geq b$  and  $d_{S-X}^-(v) \geq c$  for each vertex  $v \in X$ .*

**Proof.** We choose the elements  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_t$  as follows. Having chosen  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{i-1}$ , let  $S' = V(S) - \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{i-1}\}$ . Then, since  $|S'| \geq 2(b+t-i) + 2(c+t-i) - 1$  we may find  $x_i \in S'$  with  $d_{S'}^+(x_i) \geq b + t - i$  and  $d_{S'}^-(x_i) \geq c + t - i$ . Clearly  $X$  has the desired properties. ■

**Theorem 10.** *Let  $T$  be an oriented tree of order  $n$ . Then  $T$  is contained in any tournament  $S$  of order at least  $4n(1 + 11/k + 2^{512k^3}/n)$  for each  $k \geq 3$ .*

**Proof.** Let  $T^*$  be the  $k$ -heart of  $T$  and put  $t = |T^*| + 2^{512k^3}$ . Let  $b = c = n - |T^*| + 11\lfloor n/k \rfloor$ . By Lemma 9 we may find a subset  $X$  in  $S$ ,  $|X| = t$  with  $d_{S-X}^+(v) \geq b$  and  $d_{S-X}^-(v) \geq c$  for each  $v \in X$ . By Theorem 8 we find  $T^*$  in  $X$ . But then, as in the proof of Theorem 2, the conditions on  $X$  enable us to find the rest of  $T$  in  $S - X$ , since each component of  $T - T^*$  has order at most  $\lfloor n/k \rfloor$  and can be found in any tournament of order  $12\lfloor n/k \rfloor$  (by Theorem 2). ■

**Corollary.**  $f(n) \leq 4n(1 + o(1))$ .

**Proof.** By choosing  $512k^3 \approx \log_2 n - \log_2 \log n$  in Theorem 10 we have

$$f(n) \leq 4n \left( 1 + \frac{c}{(\log n)^{1/3}} + \frac{1}{\log n} \right)$$

for some constant  $c$ . ■

### References

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