

Taynuilt 1, 2, and 3.

There is some confusion concerning the spelling of the name of the golf club in Taynuilt. The name of the first club, formed in 1891, is shown as Bonawe in the Annuals, but newspaper items four or five years later covering its activities have it as Bonaw. The second club, whose course was opened in 1905, named as Bunawe and also, in newspapers, as Bonawe, but it appears to have lasted only a year as another course was opened in 1906. I also had difficulty with an accurate location of the courses, so the map locations are approximate.

Scotsman November 30th, 1891
Taynuilt

Formation Of Club

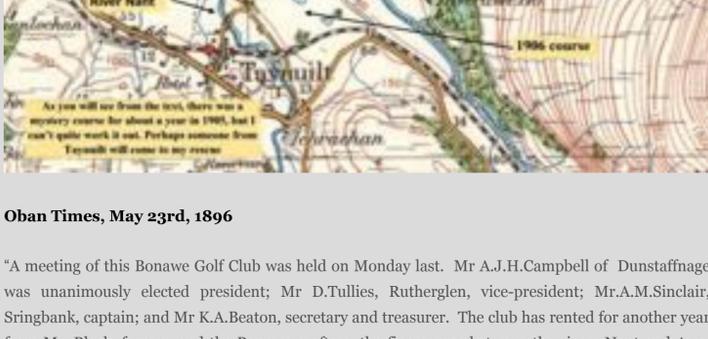
A meeting of residents favourable to the forming of a golf club was held in Taynuilt Hotel on the evening of Friday last. A.A.L. Campbell of Lochneill occupied the chair. It was unanimously resolved that a committee be appointed, consisting of Dr MacNaughton, Mr D. Macdonald, Taynuilt, and Mr David Baird, to select a suitable course, and to take steps towards the formation of a club, to be called the Bonawe golfing club.

Scotsman April 5th, 1892

Bunawe Golf Club. Instituted 1891. A 9 hole course at Bruachroy.

“The new course of the Bonawe Golfing Club was played over for the first time on Saturday. The day was fine, and some enjoyable rounds were played. Amongst those who played were Dr Macnaughton, Bonawe; Messrs Honeyman, Oban club; Campbell, Taynuilt; McDonald, Taynuilt; McColl, captain, Bonawe club &c.

Mr Honeyman, in laying out the ground, has availed himself cleverly of the natural conformation of the somewhat hummocky and heathery “braies aboon Bonawe” to form a unique course. There are peat bogs to get over, and some clumps of heather where straying balls will be difficult to recover. The scenery is of the grandest description.”



Oban Times, May 23rd, 1896

“A meeting of this Bonawe Golf Club was held on Monday last. Mr A.J.H.Campbell of Dunstaffnage was unanimously elected president; Mr D.Tullies, Rutherglen, vice-president; Mr.A.M.Sinclair, Sringsbank, captain; and Mr K.A.Beaton, secretary and treasurer. The club has rented for another year from Mr. Black, farmer, and the Bonawe crofters, the fine course between the rivers Nant and Awe, which has for several years past been so much appreciated by summer visitors.” (OT 23.5.1896)

Last recorded 1902.

Oban Times, July 15th, 1905

Taynuilt Golf Course

A golf course is the latest addition to the many attractions of Taynuilt. The proposal was first set on foot some years ago, but it was not looked upon with favour by the inhabitants and house letters. Succeeding years, however, and the want of golfing facilities have enlightened those who had been against the project. It is feared that Taynuilt is going back in the matter of house – letting, and the reason is not far to seek. In the last two or three years almost every tourist when negotiating for the letting of a house, made an enquiry as to the golfing facilities. The village had none to offer, and the golfing inclined tourist went elsewhere for his summer holiday. The inhabitants have now seen the error of their ways, as it were, and have bestirred themselves. Conscious that the village was not as it should be, a number of influential gentlemen took up the matter of forming a golf course. In this they were ably supported by those who had originally gone against the project.

The golf course is now an accomplished fact. Mr Duncan MacIntyre, Argyll Hotel, Oban, and Mr William S. Menzies, secretary of the Oban golf club, visited Taynuilt recently, and carried through the work of laying off the golf course, which is situated on both sides of the public road, beyond the river Nant – just close to the Bonawe Ferry. The course is an ideal one, and the hazards are splendid. The game, it is expected, will be taken up with enthusiasm, and once matters are set agoing, it is hoped that the number of tourists will receive a much needed impetus.

Oban Times April 14th, 1906

Bonawe Golf Club The New Course

The new course, laid out by Mr William Fernie of Troon, was opened for a fortnight on Tuesday of this week, so as to give an opportunity to parties visiting the neighbourhood at Easter to appreciate the excellence of this fine course, but the play cannot be continuously made until June 1st next, as the land will be in the hands of the tenant farmer until the 28th May. It will be a great attraction to the district in addition to the splendid fishing for which Taynuilt and Bonawe are famous. Arrangements have been applied for to the railway company to issue special golfers tickets from Oban, Connel, Lochawe and Dalmally, and Oban golfers would do well to spend some days in a trial of the new course. As the days are now so long it is quite possible to run down by the 4.15pm train from Oban and play the round in good time to return by the 9pm train. All particulars can be had from the club secretary and treasurer, Mr MacMillan, merchant, Taynuilt, whose establishment is on the way from the station to the course.

Description Of The Course

The following is the report by Mr William Fernie on this course when first proposed in October last giving the lengths of the holes viz :-

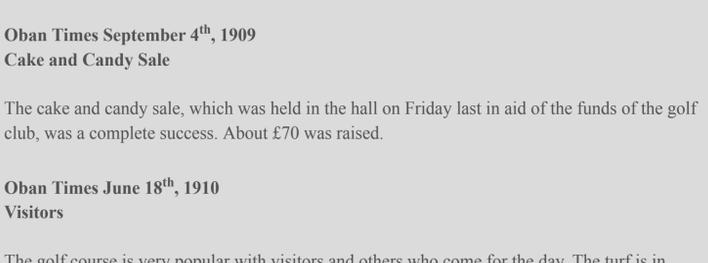
Having been instructed by the Lochnell Estate Trustees to advise them with reference to the laying out of a golf course on the Lochnell estate at Taynuilt, I visited and inspected the ground proposed. This consists for the most part of what are known as the Bonawe Parks lying to the North of the line of the Callander and Oban Railway, and between the river Awe on the East and the river Nant on the West. These parks consist of fine old pasture, and are of undulating and highly diversified character, interspersed with clumps of trees and containing three small ponds or tarns.

The soil and character of the grass are very suitable for the formation of a golf course, and an excellent nine-hole course extending to about 2700 yards has been laid out on a plan recommended by me, while room is left for ultimately extending the course to the full eighteen holes if this should be desired.

The holes are varied in character (some of them possessing natural features which form capital hazards) and the putting greens are admirably situated and of ample size, while it would be difficult to surpass in beauty the surroundings which the course possesses. The mountains of Ben Cruachan, Ben Staray, and others of the Glen Etive range are prominent features in the landscape, while Loch Etive, with its picturesque shores and the mountains of Mull and Lorn are seen from many points. I annex a note of the lengths (approximately) of the different holes.

The course, with proper attention, should be in good order for play early in the summer, and I am confident that it will prove a success and add greatly to the attractions of Taynuilt. A convenient site for a clubhouse will be found near the first teeing ground and within 200 yards of Taynuilt railway station and village.

	Length
First Hole	212 yards
Second Hole	379
Third Hole	194
Fourth Hole	228
Fifth Hole	260
Sixth Hole	450
Seventh Hole	258
Eighth Hole	420
Ninth Hole	220



Layout Sketch from Glasgow Evening Times, June 1906

Scotsman May 26th, 1906

Bunawe Golf Club. Instituted 1906. A 9-hole course, laid out by Willie Fernie, on the Lochnell estate, to the north of the Callander and Oban Railway, bounded on the west by the River Nant and on the east by the River Awe. The ground consists of old pasture and is of an undulating and highly diversified nature interspersed with clumps of trees and containing three small ponds or tarns. The soil and the character of the grass are very suitable for golf. Room is available for ultimately expanding the course to the full 18 holes if desirable.. The holes are varied in character, all of them possessing natural features which form capital hazards. The putting greens are admirably situated and are of ample size, while it would be difficult to surpass in beauty the surroundings.

Length of Course, 2621 yards

Hole No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Length in yards	212	379	194	228	260	450	258	420	220

Beautiful scenery, bracing air, and very even natural ground. (WWG)

Oban Times September 4th, 1909

Cake and Candy Sale

The cake and candy sale, which was held in the hall on Friday last in aid of the funds of the golf club, was a complete success. About £70 was raised.

Oban Times June 18th, 1910

Visitors

The golf course is very popular with visitors and others who come for the day. The turf is in splendid condition and the attendant seems well up to his business ; while those who play on it pronounce it one of the pleasantest courses in the country.

Scotsman, August 11th, 1914

Name changed to Taynuilt Golf Club. First mentioned 1907.

The Bonawe Course

The scattered village of Taynuilt lies not far from the base of Ben Cruachan. The golf course, which was laid out by Tom Fernie, of Troon, eight years ago (writes a correspondent), is situated on the meadow land stretching between the hill ground and Loch Etive. Few more charming situations could have been chosen, and it is a pity that this golf course is not better known than it is. It is only a nine-hole course, but it could easily be extended to eighteen, and this would be done if the course were being better patronised. The broad expanse of Airs Bay on Loch Etive lies to the North-West of the course, and in the opposite direction rise the towering heights of Ben Cruachan. Across the golf course there blows on our faces now the strong air straight from the mountain, and now the breezes of the loch, carrying a salt sniff of a recollection of the open sea, which is only some ten miles away. There several emmances on the course from which views of hill and loch can be had, and players gladly relax for a few moments from the energy of their game to enjoy the lovely scenery.

“The Caledonian Railway line to Oban forms the southern boundary of the course, and the first hole is within reach of the sound of the River Nant as it hastens to the sea. Generally, it may be said, the course is over fine old turf, which has not known a plough for generations. Where a mole has sent up a few mounds you can see that thee is peaty soil beneath, but the course is fairly well drained. The long grass at various points in the fairway requires to be kept well down, but if you keep the line you get fine brassy lies throughout. The bunkers are mostly natural ones, such as rabbit burrows and dykes, and they are a change to players who are accustomed only to artificial sand bunkers. At the second hole we pass the ruins of an ironwork which used to be the centre of a busy industry here fifty years ago, when the supply of local timber was more plentiful. The third hole is a blind one and sporting, the drive being from beside the railway over a wooded knoll; the fourth hole, which skirts the other side of it, has a very narrow fairway between two rows of trees. The fifth, or “Loch” hole, gives good sport, there being a whiny mound to the left and a small loch behind the green. Several of the trees are placed on the brows of rising ground, and afford tempting places for long drives. The sixth and eighth holes, which are the longest, measure 350 and 400 yards respectively. The greens are on the small side, but many of them are of exceedingly good turf and are well kept. All that this course needs is to be played on, and as the place comes to be developed we may look to the course becoming more and more a favourite one.”

Membership 55. Last recorded 1914.

The entire Bonawe estate was offered for sale as a single lot in 1914, including ‘Taynuilt Golf Course’. In the absence of further references, it can be assumed that the club folded following the sale, or perhaps the onset of WW1 forced its closure.

Oban Times August 31st, 1929

Taynuilt Golf Course

Resuscitation of golf club

Public meeting of those interested in resuscitation of course in Taynuilt Hall on 2nd September.

Oban Times, October 20th, 1934

Taynuilt

New golf course

It is hoped that by next summer Taynuilt will once again have a golf course. A lease has been taken of the land used for the same purpose in pre-war days, and the promoters were fortunate in securing the services of the famous golfer, Sandy Herd, former Open Champion, and now professional to the Moor Park club, to lay out the course. Mr Herd declared the site an excellent one, then turf, subsoil, and terrain being of the very best. He was particularly struck with the possibilities of the turf, and predicted for Taynuilt a very fine golf course. Arrangements are being made for the opening to take place at Easter. Mr Herd, during his stay, was the guest of Major Ian Bullough of Inverawe.

Scotsman April 26th, 1935

Taynuilt Golf Club. First mentioned 1934.

“A new nine-hole golf course was opened at Taynuilt yesterday, when an exhibition four-ball match was played between Alex Herd (Moorpark) and C B Macfarlane, the Scottish Internationalist, and R Bannafor, the local professional, and R B Denholm, the Scottish Internationalist.

At the opening a speech was made by Major Bullough, of Inverawe, and the first ball was driven by Sandy Herd. About 300 spectators witnessed a close match which Denholm and Bannafor won by two holes. The best ball score was 70, and Denholm had the best individual score of 71.” (S 26.4.1935)



The exhibition match

Sandy (Alex) Herd

“A 9-hole course was laid out in 1934 by Sandy Herd and the undulating nature of the site with its gravel subsoil greatly impressed him. Length 2,705 yards, Par 70(18). Activities still suspended owing to war-time conditions.” (SGC Mar 1947).

Membership 120. Did not re-open after WW2.

The present club was founded in 1987.