



CHRISTCHURCH JUNIOR CRICKET ASSOCIATION

CJCA Year 8 2024 Review and Preview

1st May 2025

The season just past has been a challenging one for many in Community Cricket – the introduction of the PlayHQ system certainly took a lot of administrative time and took time away from other tasks that generally we can do during the season.

The current Year 8 intake started the season as year 7's in our Festivals (2022) and for many in Saturday Cricket. Players were involved either in 30 over Saturday morning Cricket (6 ball over MAX) or Afternoon Year 7 Premier which allowed for up to Thirty - 8 ball overs - this resulted in games that on average lasted $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ an hour longer than the window that Saturday morning provides and also provided better playing conditions with no dew and no pressure from following games.

We finished the year with 27 teams playing Year 7 Saturday Cricket.

January 2025 Festivals

In January the CJCA had 4 teams participate in the "Canterbury Year 7/8 Festivals" held in Blenheim and Westport – the Westport team was a blend of Year 7's and 8s as we only had 35 Year 8 boys nominate this year.

This number of teams was down on what we normally see participating in January Festivals and we hope that more players will want to play in the offerings in January 2026 which are in the process of being scheduled.

In February/March we had our Summer Festival and there were 6 teams participating and these evenly selected teams had some great games on Grass at Burnside Park.

The Year Ahead

Planning is well underway for the next 11 months.

Pre-season training will ALL BE AT THE SIR RICHARD HADLEE CENTRE.

Pre-season Training registrations will open in June with the year 8 programme running at 5.30pm-7pm on Saturdays and 12noon - 1.30pm.

This Programme will commence on the 9th of August (Saturdays) and 10th August (Sundays) and run for 6 weeks.

Umpiring Course

The CJCA will again facilitate an Umpiring Course to aim to upskill those current Year 8 boys to “Level 1” certification. Last year we had 42 Boys complete the course which is currently planned for September (TBC) with both morning and afternoon options – the course has in the past taken place at the Umpires Pavilion adjoining Hagley Oval. There is no cost to this course and those successfully completing the course will then be better placed to Self-Umpire in Youth Cricket at the start of the 2026 Youth season and also be able to umpire at CJCA Festivals once they exit our Association.

Spring Festival

Year 8 Spring Festival dates are 19th October and 2nd and 9th November and aims to be concluded before Show Weekend weather dependant. Registrations will open in August.

This Festival is planned to be at Burnside Park on grass and will feature 4 20/20 games and a longer format game on the 3rd day.

Registrations will close for the January Festivals during the Spring Festival – only brand new CJCA Festival players will need to be assessed so we can again look to balance teams these assessments are planned for Sunday the 12th of October.

January Festivals 2026

In January 2026 the CJCA Year 8 (2024) will participate in Canterbury Regional Festivals these will be 3 1/2 day Festivals held at either Timaru (South Canterbury) or Christchurch between the 5th and the 8th of January 2026 (Monday to Thursday) – players will have the option to choose to be considered for either or both of these options prior to teams being organised.

The Timaru event is their higher “Tier” - the CJCA will select TWO 10 person teams after the completion of the Spring Festival – boys will have the option of being considered for just the “Tier 1 event” (Timaru) or the “Tier 2 event” (Christchurch) or either. Last year there was one additional CJCA Year 8 team in the secondary Festival but as we have dropped one of our Tier 1 teams due to Nelson rejoining Tier 1 we may have two additional teams.

It is vital that given the CJCA will select teams that we still provide opportunities for those not selected in the TWO teams to play in the South Canterbury Festival. This is just a “moment in time” selection and players are still developing.

Prior to 2020 only two CJCA teams (20 players) were chosen for the previous “South Island Festival” with others not having any Festival - now we have additional Festivals in which more players can still experience a good cricket festival before they exit the CJCA system and move into Youth Cricket. More Players, More Festivals – more opportunities.

Parental support of players at this time is vital and the CJCA has noticed a general improvement in the way that all players regardless of which teams they are selected for deal with this.

The general camaraderie established through CJCA cricket since this intake began in August 2023 has meant a positive playing environment in which players develop relationships and positive sportsmanship - not only in CJCA cricket but in their Saturday and other cricket – this is one of the highlights that the CJCA wishes to develop in its participants.

The CJCA will appoint an independent selector to oversee the processes of the selection group which will be established leading into the Spring Festival. As this selection group would have seen the boys through 5 internal and 2 external (January) Festivals since these boys entered the CJCA “System” they have a good knowledge of performances at both CJCA level and on Saturday play. Ability, attitude and team balance (spinners/keepers etc) are major factors when these teams are chosen.

Plan for January 2026

The CJCA is still keen to ensure a “team environment” so the team WILL STAY TOGETHER AS A SQUAD – the CJCA is currently seeking a booking that will accommodate the two CJCA teams and supervising adults in Timaru – the cost for this will be mainly user pays – current estimates are \$420 per player for all costs (Accommodation, Meals, Playing Gear and Fees) this includes the costs for the 4 supervising adults that will stay with the team.

It is hoped that Tier 1 teams will be announced soon after the completion of the Spring Festival and then other team will be confirmed shortly after. It is hoped we can arrange warm up games for all of these teams against other districts or internally in early December.

End of the CJCA journey

Following the 2026 January Festivals current Year 8 boys will leave CJCA co-ordinated cricket and move into Youth Cricket which is facilitated by the Christchurch Metropolitan Cricket Association “Metro”.

Boys during term 3-4 will be getting their secondary schools organised and many schools have established Cricket programmes that will have Cricket Camps in late January as they organise their Year 9 teams – for those attending schools without such programmes options exist via both the North West and Sydenham Youth Cricket Clubs to play and be developed at an appropriate level.

I’d like to ask that regardless of which teams that boys are selected for that we continue to have parents willing to assist in the management of teams in January. I’d like to thank all the parents who have assisted in any capacity to date over the last 2 years – be it as a scorer, coach, manager it has all made for a cohort that has developed friendships between both children and adults and I hope the final ½ of a season that we have as a group will remain to be a positive one for all involved.

I especially wish to thank Rob Dixon for his involvement and his core group of coaches/managers who have assisted him over the past couple of years.

I hope your child has had a positive experience with Cricket as a Junior player and hope that should there have been any roadbumps over the journey that we have been able to smooth these and make your CJCA experience a positive one.

We pride ourselves on our openness and hope that should be concerned about anything either at Club/School or Association level that you have the confidence to approach me.

Should anyone require further information about any aspects of Cricket be in Club/School Cricket or CJCA Cricket please get in touch.

Please email me gm@cjca.org.nz

Rob Wilkinson
General Manager - CJCA