

Wave of popularity

Cricket in Christchurch has never known such a wave of popularity as the one giving nightmares to the Canterbury Junior Cricket Association. There will be problems in handling the vastly increased numbers of young players this season, and in finding enough grounds for them to play on.

Last summer, the association had 135 teams to look after. Already the new total has reached 183, and it is likely to pass 200 before long.

One club, Lancaster Park, has so far entered only three teams — two in the A grade, and a girls' team. When the club sorts it all out, it is likely to have about 15 teams.

The association's publicity officer, Mr Derek Cockburn, said yesterday that there were 28 entries from Old Collegians and 22 from Burnside-West Christchurch-University, this club having more than 250 newcomers to the game. East Christchurch-Shirley (17), New Brighton (11) and Sydenham (13) have, like Old Collegians, held a number of beginners aside for basic coaching in nursery groups. Hoon Hay W.M.C. has 10 teams, including one of

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girls.

Mr Cockburn said that teams from the Sumner, Heathcote and Belfast clubs had made a welcome return to the ranks of Saturday morning junior cricket.

Amendments and additions to the grades will be made after Labour weekend. At present, the groupings are: A grade, 36; B, 46; C, 46; D, 43; E, 12.

The influx of young players may be giving the association headaches, but the controlling body is very happy that years of effort are showing such a rich reward.