

New Zealand Fives Courts

A history of the fives courts of New Zealand

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NZ Fives Courts v1.0

This document contains a summary of known fives courts in New Zealand (past and present). Much of the information comes from the article written by Charles Lamb for the Fives Annual Review 2007-2008.

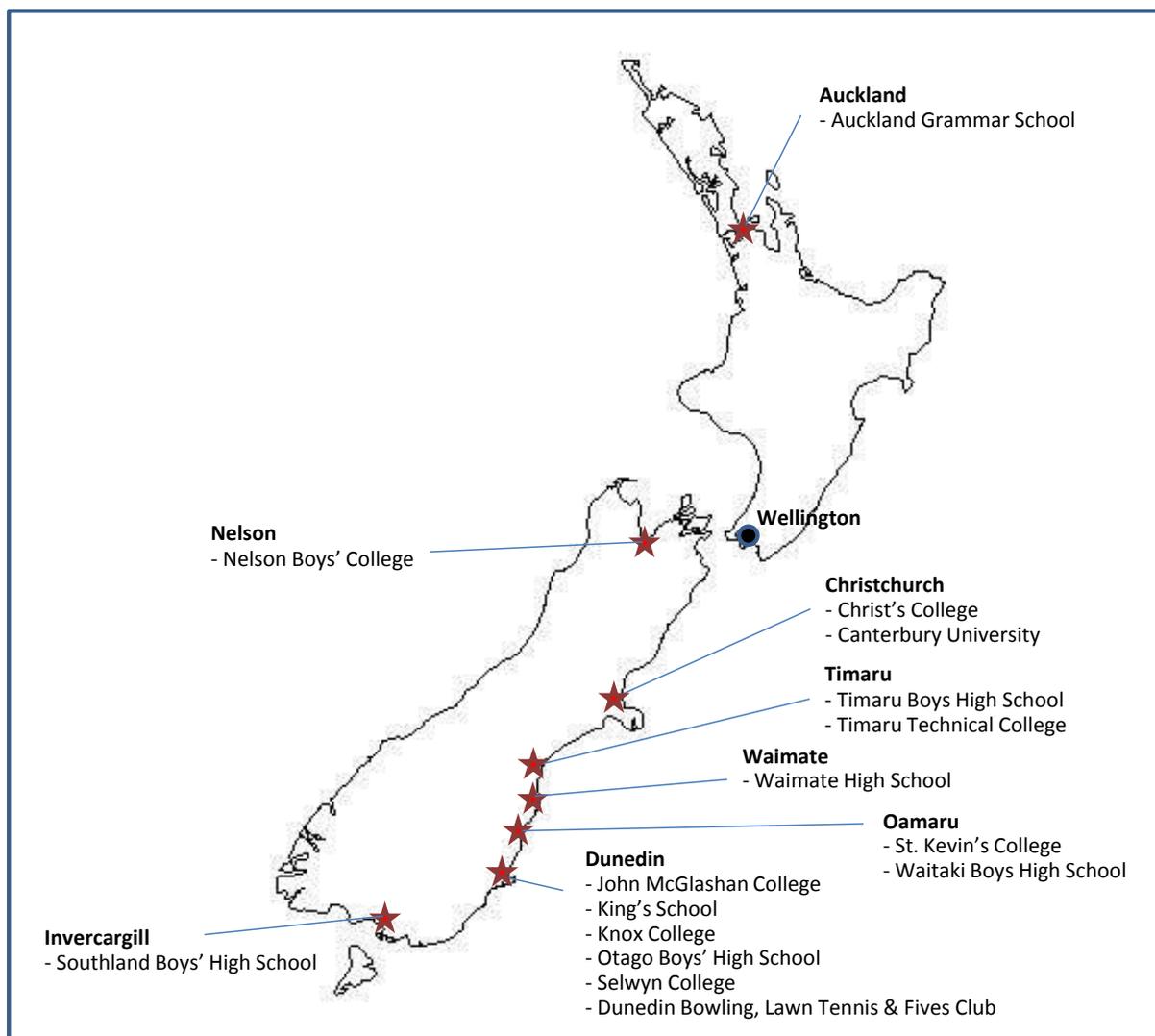
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New Zealand Fives Courts

There are records for a surprising number of fives courts in New Zealand, some still existing but most now redeveloped. Currently we have information for 16 locations. Most are in South Island (6 being located in Dunedin) and are associated with Schools. All courts seem to be of the 3-wall variety (see Nelson Boys' College for the only known example of a court converted into 4-wall for squash). The earliest references seem to be from about 1880.

The map below shows the locations of the courts in New Zealand (past and present) that we know about.



Map showing locations of New Zealand Fives Courts

A summary of court information is shown in the table below, and more detailed notes are then provided for each location. Much of this information comes from the article written by Charles Lamb for the 2007-2008 Fives Annual Review. This work followed a visit by Charles to New Zealand during his gap year.

New Zealand Fives Courts

Summary Chart

Geographically sorted North to South				Court Summary											Ph?	Comments
Location	Name	Type	In use	Info Date	Description	Type Fives	# Cts	Date		Usage		Last known				
								Built	End	Early	Late	Date	Usage			
North Island																
Auckland, NZ	Auckland Grammar School, NZ	School	N	2014	No. of courts?	3-Wall		1880	1916	1880	1916	1916	Redevd			
				2014		3-Wall	15	1916	1990	1916	1990	1990	Redevd	Y	Replaced by English Block	
				2014	A few cts	3-Wall		1990	2005	1990	2005	2005	Redevd		Replaced by Sports Centre	
South Island																
Nelson, NZ	Nelson Boys' College, NZ	School	Y	2014		3-Wall	2	1915	1941	1915	1941	1941	Redevd		Some Fives played in 1914	
				2014	3-wall, 2 conv to 4-w	3-Wall	10	1950		1950	2008	2008	In use	Y	Squash is played on the two 4-wall	
Christchurch, NZ	Christ's College, Christchurch, NZ	School	N	2014		3-Wall				1960	1963		Redevd			
	Canterbury University, Christchurch NZ	School	N	2014	1 ct used by Fudge Shop (1990-2011)	3-Wall	2					2011	Redevd	Y	Located in what is now the Arts Centre, damaged in 2011 earthquake	
Timaru, NZ	Timaru Boys High School, NZ	School	N	2014	No information	3-Wall				1946	1946				Fives played here in 1946	
	Timaru Technical College, NZ	School	N	2014	No information	3-Wall				1948	1948				Now Mountainview HS. Site now occupied by Aoraki Poly	
Waimate, NZ	Waimate High School, NZ	School	Y	2014		3-Wall			1980		1980	1980	Redevd		Made way for classroom	
				2014		3-Wall	4	1980		1980		2008	In use	Y		
Oamaru, NZ	St Kevin's College, Oamaru, NZ	School		2014	Handball cts	3-Wall				1966		1988	2008	2008	In use	Dormant?
	Waitaki Boys High School, Oamaru, NZ	School	N	2014	Impressive block	3-Wall	8					1970	2003	2003	Dormant	Y
Dunedin, NZ	Dunedin Bowling, Lawn Tennis & Fives Club, NZ	Club	N	2014	Little info. No Fives from 1941	3-Wall			1882		1882		1972	Redevd		Club disbanded in 1972
	John McGlashan College, Dunedin, NZ	School	N	2014	6 cts to 1993	3-Wall	3	1973			1973	2008	2011	Redevd	Y	Some 1-wall still played; cts made way for a new building 2011-12
	King's School, Dunedin, NZ	School	N	2014	No information	3-Wall										
	Knox College, Dunedin, NZ	University	N	2014		3-Wall	2	1913	1960	1913	1958	1960	Redevd			
	Otago Boys' High School, Dunedin, NZ	School	Y	2014	3 cts still used	3-Wall	3				2008	2014	2014	In use	Y	
Invercargill, NZ	Southland Boys' High School, Invercargill, NZ	School	N	2014		3-Wall						1906				
				2014		3-Wall	2	1907				1907				
				2014		3-Wall	2	1934				1934				
				2014	Built by boys	3-Wall	3	1953	1986	1953	1986	1986	Redevd			
				2014		3-Wall	3	1986	2006	1986	2006	2006	Redevd		Made way for new gym	

Auckland Grammar School (AGS)

These are the only confirmed courts in North Island. Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: Mountain Rd, Mt Eden, Auckland

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: 15 at its peak
- Dates: First courts circa 1880; 15 courts built in 1916 demolished 1990; a few courts built to replace these in 1990, demolished in 2005



An historic aerial view of the Auckland Grammar School courts (circa 1916)

Christchurch: Christ's College

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: Christ's College, Rolleston Avenue, Christchurch

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Unknown
- Dates: Unknown build date for the courts but the School dates from 1856; the game was certainly played between 1960-63; courts demolished Jan 2013
- Archivist: jteal@christscollege.com (charges may apply for research)

DH visited the school in Jan 2014 and learnt that the school had been badly damaged in the Feb 2011 earthquake, resulting in a redevelopment programme still ongoing. The fives courts were demolished as a part of this rebuilding circa Jan 2013, making way for a new school block.

The picture below shows the main school quad with some older buildings sitting alongside some new buildings erected as part of the rebuilding programme.



Picture showing the main quad at Christ's College, Christchurch (Jan 2014)

Christchurch: University of Canterbury (aka Fudge Cottage 1990-2011)

Address: The Arts Centre, Rolleston Avenue, Christchurch

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Two
- Dates: Unknown build date for the courts but the University building dates from 1877; the courts had been put to reuse by 1990 (occupied by Fudge Cottage)

The photo below was taken when the right hand court was in use as a shop "The Fudge Cottage". From the picture, it looks as though these courts were adjacent to the former University of Canterbury Buildings in Christchurch (now the Arts Centre), or one of the two schools that existed on this site (see below).



"Fudge Cottage" - Picture is from Andy Pringle Google map of Fives locations

Fudge Cottage

Originally located (1990) at Christchurch's historic Arts Centre, damage to the site from the February 2011 earthquake forced a relocation of both the kitchen and shop to the Bishopdale Mall in North West Christchurch.

Arts Centre

The Christchurch Arts Centre was a hub for arts, crafts and entertainment in Christchurch. It is located in the neo-gothic former **University of Canterbury** buildings and is listed as a Category I building by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Following the 2011 Christchurch earthquake, the complex is closed and will require major repair work. It will open again in stages with the last buildings expected to reopen in 2019.

The Arts Centre is located on Rolleston Avenue just opposite the Botanical Gardens, and quite near to Christ's College.

Arts Centre History

The Arts Centre buildings are tied to the establishment of the **Canterbury University College** – now the **University of Canterbury** – and two of the city's secondary schools.

Construction began with the building of the Clock Tower block (1877) – the first building in New Zealand to be designed specifically for a university.

The **Girls' High School** (1878) building opened the following year, followed by the **Boys' High School** (1881) three years later. Other buildings were added as the University expanded. Both schools would move off-site in 1881 and 1926, respectively.

The last stone building to be completed was the Engineering Block, in 1923.

By the mid-1950s the university's increasing roll required a move to a larger campus. By 1978, the university had fully re-located to the suburb of Ilam, where it remains today. The buildings were then transferred to the Arts Centre of Christchurch Trust Board to be used for a variety of arts-related activities, including art and artisan studio spaces, cafés and restaurants, theatres, cinemas, retail, outdoor markets, galleries and public performances. The Arts Centre became known as a key destination for visitors and locals alike.

In 2010 and 2011 the Canterbury region was struck by a series of devastating earthquakes. Due to damage sustained from the earthquakes, an extensive seven-year, \$290 million restoration programme is underway. During this period of restoration, there will be a gradual phased re-opening of the site.

The courts will no doubt be redeveloped (if not already) as part of the rebuilding scheme. One assumes the courts are not part of the "Listed Building" status.

Dunedin Bowling, Lawn Tennis & Fives Club

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: Dunedin; exact location unknown

Courts

- Type: 3-wall

New Zealand Fives Courts

- Number of courts: One
- Dates: Club formed in 1882; became Dunedin Bowling Club in 1941; disbanded in 1972

The date information is from “The Hocken” Sports Archives (University of Otago).

Charles reports that it is unclear whether the Club had its own courts or whether they used other courts at a local school. However, the Fives courts are mentioned in a number of articles in the Otago Times documenting the Club AGM’s:

1887: *“There had been no fives match during the year, the court not having been patronised as it should have been”.*

1893. *“The fives and tennis courts were not used so much as formally during the summer months on account of the usual frequenters indulging so much in the game of bowls, but since the closing of the green the courts have assumed their usual lively appearance.”*

These references seem to indicate that there was one court and that this court was certainly on the Club’s own premises.

Dunedin: John McGlashan College

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 2 Pilkington St, Maori Hill, Dunedin

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Originally 6, reduced to 3
- Dates: 6 courts built in 1973, reduced to 3 in 1993; these were redeveloped in 2011-12 to make way for a new building; boys still play against a wall (1-wall “fives”)



John McGlashan College, Dunedin

Information updated following DH visit to the College Jan 2014.

Dunedin: King's School

Address: 270 Bay View Rd, South Dunedin

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Unknown
- Dates: Unknown build date for the courts but the School building dates from 1936; the courts were in use in 2009 (evidence from John Bell at Otago Boys' High School); fives is not listed amongst sports played on the School web-site

King's School is a Year 9 to 13 (ages 12 - 17 years) school in Dunedin.

Information added following a DH visit to Otago Boys' High School, Dunedin, where he met John Bell (teacher) who had played fives at King's School. He still holds a cup for winning a fives event there some 5 years ago! It may be possible to get more information about the courts from John.

Dunedin: Knox College

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 3 Arden St, North East Valley, Dunedin

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Two
- Dates: Two courts built in 1913; in 1957 part of the wall collapsed, killing a man; after a further three years (1960) the courts were converted into a car park

Dunedin: Otago Boys' High School

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 2 Arthur St, Littlebourne, Dunedin

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Three
- Dates: Unknown build date for the courts but the University building dates from 1885; the courts are still in use

This School has three 3-wall fives courts still being used informally by the boys. There are no matches or competitive organised events. The game is generally played with a tennis ball (or similar).

DH visited the School in Feb 2014 and spoke to a master (John Bell) who used to be master i/c of Fives. As an aside, he said he had played fives himself at a local school in Dunedin, King's School - see separate entry.

New Zealand Fives Courts



Otago Boys High School, Dunedin



The three courts at Otago Boys High School, Dunedin

In addition to playing on the above courts, apparently the boys play an invented game in lunch breaks in the natural angles formed by other parts of buildings nearby, shown below.



Other areas where "fives" is played at Otago Boys HS, Dunedin

Dunedin: Selwyn College

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 560 Castle St, Dunedin

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: One

- Dates: Court built in 1893; repaired in 1968; redeveloped at some point afterwards

Invercargill: Southland Boys' High School

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 181 Herbert St, Invercargill

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Varied over time; in total 5 sets were built, each consisting of blocks of 2 or 3
- Dates: First courts built sometime before 1906; several sets of courts were built between 1906 & 1986 but in 2006 the last surviving courts were demolished to make way for a new gymnasium

Nelson: Nelson Boys' College

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 67 Waimea Road, Nelson

Courts

- Type: 3-wall; a back wall was added to 2 courts to provide usage for squash
- Number of courts: 10 at its peak
- Dates: First courts (2) built in 1915, demolished in 1941; 10 new courts opened in 1950



The row of open backed courts at Nelson Boys' College (10 courts)



Back walls have been added to 2 of the courts at Nelson Boys' College

Oamaru: St. Kevin's College

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 57 Taward St, Oamaru North

Courts

- Type: Handball
- Number of courts: St. Kevin's has no fives courts but possesses handball courts (number unknown)
- Dates: School established 1927; courts built in 1966 to replace previous structure used for handball

Oamaru: Waitaki Boys High School

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: 10 Waitaki Avenue, Oamaru

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Eight
- Dates: Unknown; the game was popular until the 1970s



The block of courts at Waitaki School

Timaru Boys' High School

Address: 211 North St, Timaru

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Unknown
- Dates: Unknown build date for the courts but the School building dates from 1880; the courts were in use in 1946 (evidence from Rev John Sinclair at Dunedin First Church); fives is not listed amongst sports played on the School web-site

Timaru Boys' High School is a state secondary school for boys from Year 9 - 15 (ages 12 - 19 years).

This information is from a DH discussion with Rev John Sinclair at The Dunedin First Church Feb 2014. John knew of fives being played at Timaru in 1946. He was also aware of the death caused by a fives wall collapsing at Knox College, Dunedin. The collapsed wall is mentioned in the Charles Lamb article.

Timaru Technical College

Address: 32 Arthur St, Timaru Central (site now occupied by Aoraki Polytechnic)

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Unknown
- Dates: Fives played here in 1948

Originally named Timaru Technical College and later Timaru College, Mountainview High School was founded in 1901;. In 1983 the school relocated to the current Pages Road site and was renamed Mountainview High School. The Timaru Technical College site became Aoraki Polytechnic.

Information about the fives from Suzanne Puckle who has an elderly relation in Timaru who remembers fives being played at the Technical College.

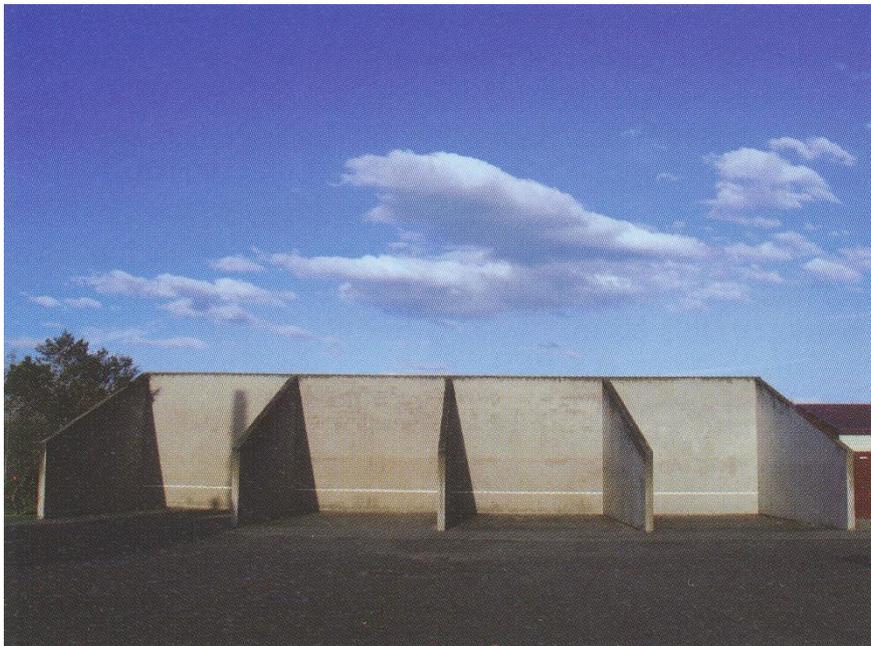
Waimate High School

Further information, see Charles Lamb doc.

Address: Paul St, Waimate

Courts

- Type: 3-wall
- Number of courts: Four
- Dates: Four courts built in the early 1980s; some earlier courts had been demolished to make way for classrooms.



The four courts at Waimate High School

Other Possible Locations in NZ

There are rumours of courts in the Rotorua and Tauranga areas in North Island.