



Winnie Hauraki

Coach takes rap for loss

By ALAN APTED

Counties Manukau Netball coach Winnie Hauraki accepts responsibility for Counties Manukau slipping one place in the rankings after the national championships in Wellington last Friday.

Hauraki says the strategies she chose for the final playoff match against North didn't work and the players can't be blamed for the 27-point loss.

"I was looking for something that North hadn't seen from us before," she says.

"I thought the strategies were good enough to win us the game or get us close, but it didn't work.

"That was really disappointing for me. I can't fault the girls because they certainly did their bit to play as hard as they could."

Counties Manukau are now ranked fourth in division two and 10th overall after the 69-42 loss to North in the playoff for third and fourth. They had beaten Eastern 57-27 and Tasman 55-32 to qualify for the playoffs.

But the news wasn't all that bad for Counties Manukau. Wing defence

Hurley was named in the New Zealand under-21 squad and 17-year-old Nadia Leonard was among seven players named in the emerging talent accelerant squad.

Hurley, who plays club for the Papatoetoe Rangers, was also one of three Counties Manukau players picked as training buddies to train with the Northern Mystics.

Her clubmate goalshoot-goal attack Caitlin Riedstra and wing attack-centre Samantha Rowe (Mellons Bay) are the other two players.

The three are the first players from Counties Manukau to be called into the Mystics.

Hauraki says it's great news for the trio.

"It's a step up for them," she says. "It probably represents the skill level that those three girls showed at the tournament for them to be noticed.

"Now it's about them taking the opportunities offered them."

Hauraki says the selection of the Counties Manukau players reflects well on Mystics' coach Debbie Fuller who took time out to watch Counties Manukau play.

Hauraki is undecided about coaching Counties Manukau next season.