

Challenges ahead for Counties

By **ALAN APTED**

Counties Manukau netball has a local derby double-header in the Lois Muir Challenge in Otara on Sunday.

They play Auckland-Waitakere at 9am and North (North Harbour) at 1.30pm.

The home side will have it tough against Auckland-Waitakere, one of two unbeaten

teams in the competition.

Counties Manukau and North have yet to win a match. Also on show will be Waikato and Bay of Plenty.

North face Bay of Plenty at 10.30am and Waikato play Auckland-Waitakere at midday.

The three Counties Manukau teams in the Super12 series – Papatoetoe Rangers,

Mellons Bay and Aztec Premiers – head into the penultimate round of the competition still searching for a win.

Aztec manager Briar Martindale says the team has done a lot of soul searching about why they lose games they should have won.

“We led College Rifles by 10 in the first quarter only to lose by three – 44 to 41.

“We lost to Collegiate by the same score. It was another match we squandered.

“There is a lot of soul searching going on as players and coaching staff try to turn it around.”

Aztec play Auckland-Waitakere top seeds MAGS Capil at the Auckland Netball Centre in Glen Innes tomorrow at 7pm.

The Papatoetoe Rangers, 44-35 losers to Collegiate in the last round, host College Rifles at the Otara Leisure Centre tomorrow at 7pm.

Mellons Bay face Shore Rovers at Carmel College on the North Shore tomorrow at 6.30pm. They were beaten 68-41 by Waikato University in Otara last Friday.