

# Netball teams battle to qualify

By **ALAN APTED**

Winning a place in Counties Manukau's regional Premier Netball League is not the cake-walk it once was.

The league's popularity has reached new heights. A record 18 teams have entered the league's two-day qualifying tournament at the

Papakura Netball Centre at Bruce Pulman Park on June 4 and 5.

Only nine spots are available, three in the premier division and six in division two.

Netball Counties Manukau business manager Nicole Terrill says the league has really taken off since it moved indoors.

"The girls really like playing indoors. Teams are now able to have bench officials and scorers on the sidelines."

This year's league starts on June 10 at the Otara Leisure Centre, Rosehill College and the Manurewa Netball Centre. Matches will be played on Friday nights at 6.30pm and 8pm.

Defending champions Papatoetoe Rangers and Aztec Premiers and Mellons Bay get automatic entry to the premier ranks. That's because they were the three top teams from last year.

Manurewa Rugby, winners of division two last season, will be looking to get promoted this year.