



Top team: Counties Manukau under-17s finished runners-up at their national championship and have been voted Netball Counties Manukau's team of the year.

Netballer 'honoured' by award

By ALAN APTED

Kirsten Hurley is the first player to win back-to-back Counties Manukau netballer of the year awards.

The win capped a sterling year for the 19-year-old 1.81m centre/wing defence who played for the Counties Manukau under-21s, the Counties Manukau premiers, made the Silver Ferns under-21 squad and was drafted into the Mystics squad as a training partner.

Hurley says she was shocked when she was named at the Netball Counties Manukau prizegiving at the Ardmore Marist Rugby Club at Bruce Pulman Park in Papakura.

"It's quite an honour to be honest," the engineering student says.

"It's an honour because this year especially we've had a lot of girls from Counties Manukau get into tournament teams and representative squads ... girls like Nadia Loveday who made the New Zealand Emerging Talent squad.

"Because of those achievements it was an honour to win this year

and to win it for the second time in a row is special."

Hurley believes her performances for Counties Manukau at the national netball championships swayed the judges.

Her season highlights include playing in the Counties Manukau under-21s that beat Wairarapa at the nationals in Porirua and getting back into the New Zealand under-21 squad again.

Hurley's biggest let-down was Papatoetoe Rangers losing their Counties Manukau Regional Netball League title to Aztec.

"It was disappointing to lose the final because we'd really set our goals to win the title."

Hurley is just glad to catch her breath after a hectic season of club and representative netball. But her two immediate goals will prevent her from putting her feet up for too long.

The first goal is to get back into the New Zealand under-21 squad again. She isn't disheartened by not breaking into the under-21s this year, believing time is still on her side.

But she is dogged



The best: Kirsten Hurley, the Papatoetoe Rangers and Counties Manukau centre and wing defence, is Counties Manukau netballer of the year.

about keeping her place in the squad and improving her game.

Time as a Mystics training partner will help bring her game up to speed, she says. But it also gives her an inside lane into the ranks of professional netball.

"My other goal is to get a contract with the Mystics for 2013," she says.

"The Mystics have con-

tracted their players for next season. I'm looking at a contract for the season after."

The player she wants to emulate is Silver Fern Laura Langman.

"Laura plays the kind of style I'd like to achieve."

Like many high achievers in sport, Hurley juggles sport and studies.

The former St

Kentigern College pupil is now studying engineering at Auckland University.

"I'm quite interested in how things work and how the world all fits together," she says.

Netball New Zealand president Sheryl, Lady Wells and Netball New Zealand board member Carole Maddix were the guests of honour at the packed awards dinner.

Netball Counties Manukau prizegiving

By ALAN APTED

Papatoetoe Rangers and Counties Manukau centre Kirsten Hurley won the major award at the Netball Counties Manukau prizegiving at the Ardmore Marist Rugby Club in Papakura last week.

The full list of winners is:

Player of the year: Kirsten Hurley, team of the year: Counties Manukau under-17s, coach of the year:

of the Year: Rebecca Jeans; bench official of the year: Nina Smith.

Players of the tournament: Under-17s Nicole Jensen; under-19s: Caitlin Riedstra; under-21s: Annemarie Fowle; New Zealand Championship team: Samantha Rowe.

Players recognition: Nadia Loveday, Elizabeth Ene, Kirsten Hurley, Ashley Fennessy, Miraneta Lemalu, Stephanie Collins, Nicole Jensen, Samantha Rowe,

Chanelle Campbell, Olivia van Diepen and Caitlin Riedstra.

Umpire recognition: Megan Lockwood, Olivia Caldwell, Rebecca Jeans, Catherine Scott, Debbie Shoebridge and Raewyn Ronaldson.

Coach Recognition: Adrienne Morrin, Vicki Morgan, Carolyn Pou and Winnie Hauraki.

Bench official recognition: Nina Smith, Sue Miller, Carolyn Frew, Kim Hillgrove, Rachael Smith, Julie Mackey, Sue McKinnon

Centre volunteer awards: Kim Falwasser, Harley Henare and Lovey Rakuraku (Netball Manurewa), Deshawn Pele, Michelle Stanaway (Mangere Otahuhu Netball Centre); Bernie Loomans and Tania Tonga (Papakura Netball Centre), Louise Ennor, Heather Kindness and Pauline Coultas (Howick Pakuranga Netball Centre) and Heather McLeod, Heather West and Sue West

IN BRIEF

Duathlon

The Grid Kids Duathlon series kicks off in Pukekohe on November 6. It coincides with the Sunday racing of the motorsport championship at Pukekohe Park Raceway to enable children to be part of the motorsport action. By entering the duathlon, kids also receive free tickets to the racing which follows the event and the chance to be a "grid kid" at the start of the racing. The duathlon is open to 6 to 13-year-olds. See www.gridkids.com.