



Taken 30th April 1977

Convent Old Girls players gather
around. Photo taken Windsor Park
Courts for my retirement.

Mrs Rona McCarthy, a familiar figure to many Hastings netballers, has called it quits after 36 years as coach of the Convent Old Girls team.

Mrs McCarthy is pictured with team members as they warmed up before a game this morning.

Although she retired at the start of the netball season three weeks ago, Mrs McCarthy is still keeping a close eye on the team.

"My heart is still there—you can't give it up when it's in your blood," she said.

Mrs McCarthy, formerly Rona Tong, began playing netball at school and was a member of the Hastings West End team for some years before being asked to coach Convent Old Girls.

She was a player-coach for the team for a "long time" before concentrating on coaching.

A Hawke's Bay representative player for eight years, she was twice chosen for the North Island team.

She was also selected to play for New Zealand in 1937, but the team's proposed tour was cancelled.

Many COG players have gone into representative teams, and in 1940 they won every competition from Hastings to Poverty Bay.

Netballers today lacked the dedication that existed in the past, said Mrs McCarthy.

"It's nothing for a girl to pick up the phone and say she can't make it to practice, without giving a reason."

She is a life member of the Hastings and Hawke's Bay netball associations and has a service award from the New Zealand association.

Mrs McCarthy, as an athlete, held the New Zealand 80-metres hurdles title for some years and gained a bronze medal in this race at the British Empire Games in 1938.